



YOUR GET-PREPARED CHECKLIST



How to be ready when
disaster strikes

A BEFORE AND AFTER READINESS CHECKLIST

CARING 

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As one of its six key pillars of service, The Salvation Army began offering assistance to disaster survivors after a major hurricane hit Galveston, Texas, in September 1900, destroying the coastal city and killing thousands of people. At the request of The Salvation Army's National Commander, Frederick Booth-Tucker, officers (or pastors) from across the country moved into the Galveston area to help feed and shelter the survivors, while providing much needed emotional and spiritual support.

Since then, The Salvation Army has responded to numerous natural disasters, transportation accidents, civil unrest situations and terrorist attacks. By providing beverages, meals and emotional and spiritual care to first responders and survivors, The Salvation Army strives to bring hope and healing to people who find themselves in the midst of extremely difficult situations.

While each disaster creates its own unique circumstances and special needs, Salvation Army disaster relief efforts focus on seven core services, which may be modified based on the magnitude of the disaster and adapted to meet the specific needs of individual survivors. These include: training, food services, emotional and spiritual care, emergency communications, disaster social services, donations management and recovery.

As the first step in being ready to respond to an emergency is training, the following will guide you through preparing your family for a disaster.

BEFORE A DISASTER

1. Build out your home disaster-readiness kit.

Be sure to keep it in a designated place where all members of the household can access it. Include:

- Water (one gallon per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation)
- Food (at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food)
- Battery-powered or hand-crank radio and a NOAA
- Weather Radio with tone alert
- Flashlight
- First aid kit
- Extra batteries
- Whistle (to signal for help)
- Dust mask (to help filter contaminated air)
- Plastic sheeting and duct tape (to shelter in place)
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties (for personal sanitation)
- Wrench or pliers (to turn off utilities)
- Manual can opener (for food)
- Local maps
- Cell phone with chargers and a backup battery
- Cloth face coverings (for everyone ages 2 and above), soap, hand sanitizer and disinfecting wipes to disinfect surfaces
- Prescription medications
- Non-prescription medications such as pain relievers, anti-diarrhea medication, antacids or laxatives
- Prescription eyeglasses and contact lens solution
- Infant formula, bottles, diapers, wipes and diaper rash cream
- Pet food and extra water for your pet
- Cash or traveler's checks
- Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records saved electronically or in a waterproof, portable container
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person
- Complete change of clothing appropriate for your climate and sturdy shoes
- Fire extinguisher
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items
- Mess kits, paper cups, plates, paper towels and plastic utensils
- Paper and pencil
- Books, games, puzzles or other activities for children

BEFORE A DISASTER

2. Now, build a smaller one for work (to last 24 hours).

Include:

- Water (one gallon per person per day for at least one day, for drinking and sanitation)
- Food (at least a one-day supply of non-perishable food)
- Prescription medications
- Comfortable walking shoes
- A change of clothes
- Toothbrush/toothpaste

3. Don't forget your car. Include:

- Jumper cables
- Flares or reflective triangle
- Water (at least one gallon)
- Ice scraper
- Car cell phone charger
- Blanket
- Map
- Cat litter or sand (for better tire traction)

4. Identify an out-of-town contact

Choose an out-of-town contact and make sure all members of the household know the contact's phone numbers. After a disaster, it's often easier to make a long-distance call than a local call from a disaster area. In case of disaster, each member of the family should plan to check in with the out-of-town contact, who can share these safe check-ins with each caller.

5. Decide where to meet

In the event of an emergency, you may become separated from family members. Establish a meeting place for everyone to head toward if the time comes. Choose a place right outside your home in case of a sudden emergency, like an earthquake. Choose a location outside your neighborhood in case you can't return home.

6. Check that you have adequate insurance coverage

Talk with your insurance agent and make sure you have adequate coverage to protect your family against financial loss in case of disaster—especially for the disasters that are dominant in your area.

7. Train in turning off utilities

Locate the main switches for your household's water, gas and electricity and make sure your family members know how and when to turn them off (only do so if you suspect the lines are damaged or if local authorities instruct you to do so). Keep any tools you will need near gas and water shut-off valves.

8. Train in fire extinguishing

Ensure your family members know where to find your household's fire extinguishers and how to use them (the only way to know is to test them).

BEFORE A DISASTER

9. Test your alarms

Install smoke alarms on each level of your home, especially near the bedrooms. Install a carbon monoxide alarm in your home. Be sure to test these alarms and set an alert to switch the batteries, as needed.

10. Plan for those with disabilities and other special need.

Keep support items in a designated place, so they can be found quickly. (For those who have home-health caregivers, particularly for those who are bed-bound, it is essential to have an alternate plan if the home-health caregiver cannot make it to you).

11. Plan for your pets

Prepare a list of family, friends, boarding facilities, veterinarians and pet-friendly hotels that could shelter your pets in an emergency.

If you plan to take pets with you in case of disaster, be sure to have a kennel, adequate food supplies, medications and at least three days of water for them packed in your emergency supplies.

12. Prepare for different hazards

Include in your plan how to prepare for each hazard that could impact your local community and how to protect yourself. For instance, the actions you would take to protect yourself from a tornado are different from those you would for a fire.

13. Get certified to become a Salvation Army Emergency Disaster Services volunteer

Just like individuals and families must make preparations for potential dangers and threats, so too, disaster workers prepare by participating in training classes. To become a certified Salvation Army Emergency Disaster Services volunteer:

- Visit volunteer.usawest.org and complete the volunteer application.
- Select Emergency Disaster Services (EDS) as a preference for volunteering.
- Await further instruction on attending courses in incident management, canteen operations, food service, emotional and spiritual care, basic CPR training and basic first aid.
- Feel free to contact The Salvation Army near you and talk to the corps officer about EDS service.

AFTER A DISASTER

1. Assess the damage

- Administer first aid and get help for seriously injured people.
- Check for fires, electrical and other household hazards. (Spilled bleaches, gasoline and other liquids may produce deadly fumes when chemicals mix, or be a fire hazard. Contact your local fire department for information on how to clean up spilled chemicals.)
- If you smell gas or suspect a leak, turn off the main gas valve, open windows and get everyone outside quickly.
- Shut off any damaged utilities.
- Check on your neighbors, especially those who are elderly or disabled.

2. Listen to local radio and TV for information about where you can get disaster relief assistance, if necessary.

3. Call your out-of-town contact, if necessary, and check in.

4. Pray through 12 Bible verses to bring peace on page 7.

5. If you're willing and able, call your local Salvation Army office to learn about donation and/or volunteer opportunities.

Consider making a gift now to help The Salvation Army prepare for its next disaster response.



See more about The Salvation Army's emergency disaster services
https://westernusa.salvationarmy.org/usw_thq/help_disaster_survivors/

12 BIBLE VERSES TO BRING PEACE

The Bible is God's Word—full of truth for every situation we face in life. As the world endures quarantines, closures, and even panic during the coronavirus pandemic, God offers peace. His Word can displace anxiety and fear with hope and healing.

In fact, the phrase, do not be afraid, is found more than 300 times in Scripture. Jesus is described as the “Prince of Peace” for those who choose to let him reign over their lives. He offers peace for our troubled minds and freedom from fear. These verses about God's power to deliver us from fear are ones to hold on to in times of anxiety.

John 14:27

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

Isaiah 41:10

Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Philippians 4:6-7

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Psalms 27:1

The Lord is my light and my salvation—so why should I be afraid? The Lord is my fortress, protecting me from danger, so why should I tremble?

Exodus 14:13

And Moses said to the people, “Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will work for you today.”

Joshua 1:9

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.

Isaiah 41:13

For I am the Lord your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you.

Psalms 23:4

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

1 Peter 5:7

Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

2 Timothy 1:7

For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

Psalms 34:4

I sought the Lord, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears.

Finally, the entirety of Psalm 91 is a classic and often quoted passage about God's protection for those who seek refuge in God. Read it and find peace today.

For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways (Psalm 91:11).