

In an emergency,
strong communities
can be the key
to survival.



**Connect with your neighbors.
Be prepared to respond.**

Learn more at

prepare2respond.org

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A Guide To Preparing For Emergencies

from The LA County Department of Public Health

Over the years, Los Angeles County has experienced many disasters ranging from earthquakes and fires to mudslides and epidemics. While nobody can predict when the next major event will occur, this much we know for sure: With more than 10.1 million residents living in an area measuring 4,089 square miles, The Department of Public Health will need the assistance of the community to prepare for and respond to emergencies.

In a disaster, the people that surround you – your neighbors – will be the ones in your community that you and your family turn to for immediate help. And, very likely, they will turn to you.

The greater the devastation, the more you will need each other. Emergency responders such as firefighters, utilities and health-care providers will have more calls than they can handle. In some cases, the facilities housing them may have been damaged. In others, travel response times may be increased due to debris blocking the routes. Emergency responders may not be able to reach everyone who needs help in the first few hours, or even days.

A neighborhood that is educated in the proper emergency response procedures will suffer fewer serious injuries, less loss of life and reduced property damage.

Recent events around the world have taught us another important lesson at home.

A strong community is unshakeable.

That's because communities are made up of neighborhoods, and neighborhoods are made up of people. They give us strength. So does our cultural diversity. Our churches, temples and mosques are great examples. They help perfect strangers every day.

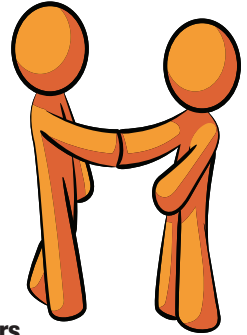
In fact, we believe that none of us who are part of a community are really alone or strangers. We are just neighbors who have not met yet.

So say hello.



Connect with your neighbors.

A strong neighborhood is the fundamental building block of a strong community. It is also the backbone of our country. They are all connected. So are people. We believe working together is critical to your survival, regardless of what the emergency is. Of course, there is no predicting the future. However, there is one simple thing you can do – all on your own – to eliminate at least one unknown. **Get to know your neighbors.**



You can start by getting to know your neighbors on a first-name basis.

- Introduce yourself.
- Discuss being prepared for any emergency.
- Exchange contact information.
- Know who to call for help and what their skills and resources are.
- Know who in your neighborhood is vulnerable – the frail and elderly, people with medical needs and families with young children.
- Organize a neighborhood meeting to discuss an emergency plan.

You can connect with your community by doing volunteer work.

- Check out Volunteer Opportunities with Los Angeles County, like the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) and Public Health Emergency Volunteer (PHEV) Network.
- MRC Los Angeles is comprised of medical, health, dental, mental health and other skilled professionals organized and trained to assist during public health emergencies. mrclosangeles.org
- The PHEV Network works with established community volunteer units that assist in responding to public health emergencies by creating a system to engage, train and deploy these groups. publichealth.lacounty.gov
- CERT training is a positive and realistic approach to dealing with emergency situations where citizens can be trained to make a difference. cert-la.com

Learn more at prepare2respond.org

Be prepared to respond.

Different events – natural and man-made – require different emergency responses. It is important to know what hazards exist in your neighborhood and how to prepare for them. Emergency preparedness means planning ahead, knowing what to do and how to do it.

Create a neighborhood plan that includes:

- A method of communication and a procedure to determine the status of every neighbor, such as a telephone tree
- A neighborhood skills and needs inventory
- A neighborhood map with exit routes
- A neighborhood contact list
- An emergency plan for every household
- A survival kit for every household (see checklist further on)



Review and update your neighborhood plan once a year.

- Outline what to do, how to find each other and how to communicate during different kinds of emergencies.
- Name two places to meet: one right outside your home and another outside your neighborhood, such as a library, community center or place of worship.
- Make sure everyone knows the address and phone number of your second meeting place.

- Know and practice all possible exit routes from your home and neighborhood.
- Choose an out-of-state friend or relative that household members can call if separated during a disaster.
- Make sure everyone's needs are met, especially seniors, children, people with disabilities, non-English speakers or people who don't speak your neighborhood's language and those who have pets.
- Practice your neighborhood plan with all household members and be sure they have a copy.
- Check on the school emergency plan of any school-age children you may have.

Stay informed and follow instructions from local officials.

- Listen to the news on television or radio.
- Receive e-mail alerts and updates from the county government.
- Connect with neighborhood resources.

Respond together.

There is no force on earth greater than people joining forces. And there is no strength greater than strength in numbers. In LA County, our idea of a strong community is 10.1 million people working as one.

What's your idea? Please tell us at prepare2respond.org

Take these six steps immediately following a disaster:

- 1** Make sure the people in your household are safe.
- 2** Activate your family or individual emergency plan.
- 3** Turn on your television or radio and tune it to a news channel to learn whether you should evacuate or stay where you are.
- 4** Put a "HELP" or "OK" card in your window as appropriate.
- 5** Activate your neighborhood telephone tree to check on your neighbors.
- 6** If your neighbors need help, organize a group or activity to help them get the assistance they need.

A survival kit lasts a few days. But a strong community lasts forever.

The most essential items of an emergency supply kit include at least a three-day supply of food and water for each person, first aid supplies, clothing, bedding, tools and emergency supplies. The rest of the items on our checklist below are recommended. While your survival kit may not include every item on our checklist, having some of these items on hand is better than having none of them.

Review your kit every six months. Replace the food and water and add necessary items as your family's needs change. Share this information with your neighbors.

Checklist

Water

- Store one gallon of water per person (or pet) per day.
- Store water in plastic containers, such as soft drink bottles.
- Avoid using containers that may break, such as glass bottles.



Food

- Select foods that require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking and little or no water.
- Select food items that are compact and lightweight.
- Most importantly, select foods that you and your family like.
- Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits and vegetables
- Canned juices, milk and soup
- High energy foods, such as peanut butter, jelly, crackers, granola bars and trail mix
- Special food for infants, elderly persons or persons on special diets
- Comfort food, such as cookies and candy



First Aid Kit

- Assemble a first aid kit for your home and one for each car.
- Sterile adhesive bandages in assorted sizes
- 2-inch sterile gauze pads (4-6)

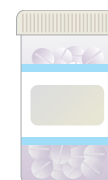


- 4-inch sterile gauze pads (4-6)
- Hypoallergenic adhesive tape
- Triangular bandages (3)
- 2-inch sterile roller bandages (3 rolls)
- 3-inch sterile roller bandages (3 rolls)
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Needle
- Moistened towelettes
- Antiseptic
- Thermometer
- Tongue depressor (2)
- Petroleum jelly or other lubricant
- Assorted sizes of safety pins
- Cleansing agent/soap
- Latex gloves (2 pair)
- Sunscreen



Non-prescription Drugs

- Aspirin or non-aspirin pain reliever
- Anti-diarrhea medication
- Antacid (for stomach upset)
- Syrup of ipecac (use to induce vomiting if advised by the Poison Control Center)
- Laxative
- Activated charcoal (use if advised by the Poison Control Center)
- Prescription medications



Tools and Supplies

- Eating utensils, cups and plates
- Solar, manual or battery operated radio and extra batteries
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Non-electric can opener
- Zip top bags
- Whistle
- Plastic sheeting
- Duct tape
- Map



- Gloves
- Wrench (to turn off gas and water)
- Crowbar
- Soap or antibacterial gel
- Toilet paper
- Feminine supplies
- Personal hygiene items, such as a toothbrush and toothpaste

Records

- Store important records and documents in a water-proof, portable container.
- Wills, insurance policies, contracts, deeds, stocks and bonds
- Passports, social security cards and immunizations records
- Bank account numbers
- Credit card account numbers and companies
- Inventory of valuable household goods and important telephone numbers
- Family records (birth, marriage and death certificates)
- Cash for necessities



Key Emergency Contacts:

Local Contact

Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Out of State Contact

Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Additional Resources.

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

www.ph.lacounty.gov/eprp

Ready: Prepare. Plan. Stay Informed

www.Ready.gov

Dial 211 for More Information

Day Care or School Phone Number

Immediate Family Phone Numbers

Where to Meet Outside of Neighborhood

Connect with your neighbors. Be prepared to respond.