

“Disasters – Preparing for the Unexpected”

Source: American Red Cross / Disaster Counseling Materials

MORE INFORMATION AVAILABLE: Local Red Cross Chapter, or on-line at www.redcross.org

Brochures: “Your Family Disaster Supplies Kit”; Stock #A4463; “Family Disaster Plan”; Stock #A4466
“Before Disaster Strikes; How to Make Sure You’re Financially Prepared; Stock #A5075)

Devastating acts on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon have left many of us concerned about the possibility of future incidents in the United States raising uncertainty about what might happen next. There ARE THINGS YOU CAN DO to prepare for the unexpected and reduce stress that you may feel now and later, should any type of emergency arise.

TAKE PREPARATORY ACTION

- **Create your own EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS PLAN** together with your friends and family
 - Choose an out-of-town contact your family or household will call or e-mail to check on each other and make sure every household member has that contact’s addresses and phone number (home, work, pager, cell); leave these numbers with your children’s schools and your at your workplace
- **Establish a MEETING PLACE**
 - Have a pre-determined meeting place away from your home and be sure to include any pets in these plans
- **Assemble a DISASTER SUPPLIES KIT**
 - Have some essential supplies on hand in an easy-to-carry container in case you need to evacuate your home or are asked to “shelter in place” and be sure to include special needs items for any household member (medications, etc.)
 - Include first aid supplies, a change of clothing for each household member, sleeping bag or bedroll for each, battery powered radio or television and extra batteries, food, bottled water, tools, cash and you may want to consider copies of important family documents (birth certificates, passports, licenses, etc.)
 - Copies of essential documents (powers of attorney, birth and marriage certificates, insurance policies, life insurance beneficiary designations, wills) should also be kept in a secure location OUTSIDE YOUR HOME
- **Check on the SCHOOL EMERGENCY PLAN of any school-age children you have**
 - You need to know if children will be kept at school until a parent or designated adult can pick them up or if they will be sent home on their own
 - Be sure the school has UPDATED EMERGENCY INFORMATION on your child(ren)

IF DISASTER STRIKES

Remain CALM and be PATIENT
Listen to radio/TV for instructions
Check for fires, hazards (gas leaks)
Leave gas on unless problems
Confine/secure your pets
Call your family contact

Follow advice of emergency officials
Locate, check yourself, family, home for injuries – damage
Shut off damaged utilities, open windows
Shut off water, electricity if you must evacuate
Do not light matches/candles or turn on electrical switches
Check on neighbors, especially those elderly or disabled

EVACUATION: Wear long-sleeved shirts, long pants, sturdy shoes. Take your disaster supplies kit. Lock your home. Use specified travel routes – don’t use shortcuts. Stay away from downed power lines. Stay tuned to local radio/TV and follow instructions.