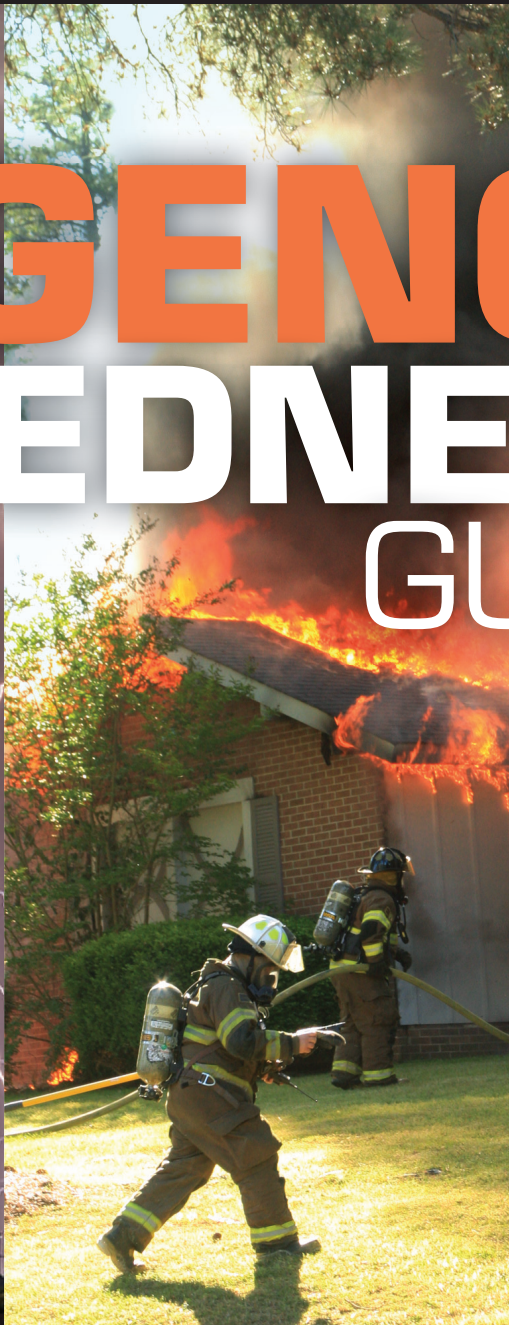


- 2019 -

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS GUIDE



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Get your family prepared in case of emergency with an action plan. **PAGE 3**

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Get your house, car and workplace prepped for disaster by getting everything you'd need when disaster strikes.

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BROUGHT TO YOU BY

Independent Record

Fire embers drift and can ignite quickly! Don't wait to get prepared for fire danger!

Ready, Set, Go!

Be prepared with these handy tips from your local fire preparedness organizations



MITIGATE

Give your home a chance!

The area between your home and an approaching fire where the vegetation has been modified through careful selection, maintenance and some replacement, improves the chances of your home surviving with little or no assistance from firefighters.

Make sure your home has used suitable construction materials.

- Roofs are the most vulnerable, so keep roof valleys, open ends of barrel tiles and rain gutters clean.
- Use soffited eaves to provide protection from embers.
- Vents should not have vertical orientation, as that is more susceptible to embers.
- Walls can catch fire easily so create an effective noncombustible zone close to your home.
- Create good seals with windows and doors, including garage doors, to avoid embers entering your home.
- Keep balconies and decks clean of combustible debris.



PLAN

Prepare for the threat!

Prepare your family with a wildland fire action plan. Get your family prepped well in advance and use checklists to help you prepare.

- Create a plan that includes meeting locations and communication plans. Rehearse it regularly.
- Have fire extinguishers on hand and train your family how to use them.
- Ensure your family is familiar with the location of your gas, electric and water main shut-off controls and how to use them.
- Plan and know several different evacuation routes.
- Designate an emergency meeting location outside the fire hazard area.
- Assemble an emergency supply kit.
- Appoint an out-of-area friend or relative as a point of contact so you can communicate with family members.
- Maintain a list of emergency contact numbers.
- Monitor fire weather conditions and fire statuses.
- Evacuate as soon as you are aware of a possible threat.
- Dress in appropriate clothing (ie: clothing made from natural fibers) and have work boots, goggles, gloves and a dry bandana or particle mask handy



EVACUATE

Leave early!

By leaving early, you give your family the best chance of surviving a fire. You also help firefighters by keeping roads clear of congestion, enabling them to move more freely and do their jobs in a safer environment.

- Know when to leave: Do not wait to be advised to leave if there is a possible threat to your home or evacuation route. Leave early enough to avoid being caught in a fire, smoke or road congestion. If you are advised to leave, don't hesitate!
- Know where to go: Evacuate to a predetermined location. It should be a low-risk area, such as a well-prepared neighbor or relative's house, a Red Cross shelter or evacuation center, motel, etc.
- Know how to get there: Have several travel routes in case one route is blocked by the fire or by emergency vehicles and equipment. Choose an escape route away from the fire.
- Know what to take: Take your emergency supply kit containing your family and pet's necessary items.

Register your phone for alerts! Visit helenamt.gov/hpd/support-services-division/911-dispatch-center



For a detailed guide on evacuating to safety, visit tcfswg.org
We can help!
Call for a home ignition zone assessment 406-422-2418

Action Plan Checklist

Creating an action plan to be prepared for an emergency could mean the difference between keeping yourself and family safe from disaster. Start by making a plan today. Ready.gov makes these recommendations and advises you to make these considerations when developing your plan: Your family may not be together if a disaster strikes, so it is important to know which types of disasters could affect your area. Know how you'll contact one another and reconnect if separated. Establish a family meeting place that's familiar and easy to find.

Step 1: Put together a plan by discussing these four questions with your family, friends, or household to start your emergency plan.

- How will I receive emergency alerts and warnings?
- What is my shelter plan?
- What is my evacuation route?
- What is my family/household communication plan?

Step 2: Consider specific needs in your household.

As you prepare your plan tailor your plans and supplies to your specific daily living needs and responsibilities. Discuss your needs and responsibilities and how people in the network can assist each other with communication, care of children, business, pets, or specific needs like the operation of durable medical equipment. Create your own personal network for specific areas where you need assistance. Keep in mind some these factors when developing your plan:

- Different ages of members within your household
- Responsibilities for assisting others

- Locations frequented
- Dietary needs
- Medical needs including prescriptions and equipment
- Disabilities or access and functional needs including devices and equipment
- Languages spoken
- Cultural and religious considerations
- Pets or service animals
- Households with school-aged children

Step 3: Fill out a Family Emergency Plan

Ready.gov has great templates to download for free to get your plan together

Step 4: Practice your plan with your family/household

12 ways to prepare

- Sign up for alerts and warnings
- Make a plan
- Save for a rainy day
- Practice emergency drills
- Test family communication plan
- Safeguard documents
- Plan with neighbors
- Make your home safer
- Know evacuation routes
- Assemble or update supplies
- Get involved in your community
- Document and insure property

Information provided by Ready.gov

Public Health: Emergency Responders without the Uniforms

When you think of emergency responders, public health might not immediately come to mind.

But history has shown that biological attacks on our population can be just as deadly and disruptive – perhaps even more so -- as natural disasters and mass shootings.

Emergency preparedness and response became an urgent national priority in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. We all gained new respect and appreciation for the risks that law enforcement, firefighters, and EMTs take to protect our safety.

Only a week later, a series of attacks involving anthrax germs sent through the mail killed five people and infected about 20 others. While this event, thankfully, had a limited impact, officials realized that contagious diseases could be used to carry out bioterrorism attacks on an unthinkable scale.

This initial focus on bioterrorism soon shifted to an “all-hazards” approach. Emergency responders recognized that nearly every disaster poses some threat to public health. For example, almost every year wildfire smoke blankets the Helena Valley, impacting our heart and lungs.

Since 2001, there have been many occasions worldwide when public health was called upon for emergency response: Zika in Latin America, Ebola in Africa, lead-contaminated drinking water in Michigan, and radiation leaks from a Japanese nuclear plant are just a few that come to mind.

In today's highly mobile and interconnected world, a disease outbreak or epidemic in any part of the world is only hours away from being an imminent threat somewhere else.

Lewis and Clark Public Health takes its role as emergency responders very seriously. Our staff have been involved in responding to local wildfires and floods. We train and exercise regularly, often with other local and state partners, to be ready to respond to all kinds of events.

We want to be as ready as possible for the public health challenges that loom on the horizon. These include:

- new infectious diseases;
- outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases, like measles and diphtheria;
- the growing resistance of some diseases to the antimicrobial drugs used to treat them;
- the accidental release of radiation or toxic chemicals;
- increasing air and water pollution;
- increasingly violent storms and flooding that contaminate food and drinking water;
- sanitation for emergency shelters (used in wildfire or earthquakes, for example);
- a multitude of potential health threats related to climate change, such as extreme heat, drought, famine, and the migration of disease-carrying animals into new habitats.

We also serve as a resource to our community, educating them about how they can personally prepare. Because ultimately it's the responsibility of each of us to be as ready as possible to cope during a disaster.

We encourage you to visit our website at LewisAndClarkHealth.org. For preparedness tips, including how you can create a family preparedness plan and go-kit, visit ready.gov (or see page 7 of this guide).

Provided by Gayle Shirley
Lewis and Clark Public Health

Wildfires

In 2019, six out of ten wildfires in Montana have been caused by humans. By being prepared and responsible while enjoying the outdoors this fall, we can all make a difference in reducing human-caused fires.

Be responsible with warming fires

As days become shorter and temperatures drop, the Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation encourages hunters and campers to be cautious with their warming or campfires. Despite the changing weather conditions, vegetation will dry back out this fall and a spark from a warming or campfire could ignite a destructive wildfire.

- Watch weather conditions and avoid building a fire during periods of high winds
- Clear away all leaves and other combustible material from the fire area
- Always keep a bucket of water, dirt, and shovel nearby
- Never leave a fire unattended
- Drown the fire with water and ensure it is cold to the touch before you leave
-

Provided by the DNRC

Protect Your Public Lands

- ✓ Make sure your campfire is DEAD OUT and cold to the touch before leaving.
- ✓ Never leave your campfire unattended.
- ✓ Keep vehicles off dry vegetation.
- ✓ Check area fire restrictions and closures.



ONE LESS SPARK
ONE LESS WILDFIRE

Safety skills to know

Learn First Aid & CPR

Take a first aid and CPR class. Local American Red Cross chapters can provide information about this type of training. Official certification by the American Red Cross provides, under the "good Samaritan" law, protection for those giving first aid.

Learn to Use a Fire Extinguisher

Make sure you have one or more up-to-date fire extinguisher and be sure everyone knows where they are kept and how to use them. You should have, at a minimum, an ABC type.

The U.S. Fire Administration recommends that only those trained in the proper use and maintenance of fire extinguishers consider using them when appropriate. Contact your local fire department for information on training in your area. Get more information about preparedness for a fire emergency.

Know how to shut off

Utilities

Natural Gas

Natural gas leaks and explosions are responsible for a significant number of fires following disasters. It is vital that all household members know how to shut off natural gas.

Because there are different gas shut-off procedures for different gas meter configurations, it is important to contact your local gas company for any guidance on preparations and response regarding gas appliances and gas service to your home.

When you learn the proper shut-off procedure for your meter, share the information with everyone in your household. Be sure not to actually turn off the gas when practicing the proper gas shut-off procedures.

- If you smell gas or hear a blowing or hissing noise, open a window and get everyone out quickly. Turn off the gas, using the outside main valve, if

you can, and call the gas company from a neighbor's home.

- Caution: If you turn off the gas for any reason, a qualified professional must turn it back on. NEVER attempt to turn the gas back on yourself.

Water

Water quickly becomes a precious resource following many disasters. It is vital that all household members learn how to shut off the water at the main house valve.

- Before an emergency happens, locate the shut-off valve for the water line that enters your house and label this valve with a tag for easy identification. Make sure all household members know where it is located.
- Make sure this valve can be completely shut off. Your valve may be rusted open or it may only partially close. If so, replace it.
- Cracked lines may pollute the water

supply to your house. It is wise to shut off your water until you hear from authorities that it is safe for drinking.

The effects of gravity may drain the water in your hot water heater and toilet tanks unless you trap it in your house by shutting off the main house valve. (This is not the street valve in the cement box at the curb – the street valve is extremely difficult to turn and requires a special tool.)

Electricity

Electrical sparks have the potential of igniting natural gas if it is leaking. It is wise to teach all responsible household members where and how to shut off the electricity.

- Locate your electrical circuit box. For your safety, always shut off all the individual circuits before shutting off the main circuit.

Information from Ready.gov

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Basic Disaster Supplies Kit

To assemble your kit, store items in airtight plastic bags and put your entire disaster supplies kit in one or two easy-to-carry containers such as plastic bins or a duffel bag.

A basic emergency supply kit could include the following recommended items:

- Water - one gallon of water 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 and 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



What will you do in case of an emergency?

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS



MAKE A PLAN



BUILD A KIT



BE INFORMED

What to include in your evacuation plan:

- Where am I going to go and is it accessible
- How will I get there
- List of medications
- Oxygen, if needed
- Emergency contacts
- Care for pets and service animals

Please call us at Montana Independent Living Project for assistance figuring out your emergency evacuation plan at our Helena office at (406) 442-5755 or call our Butte office at (406) 782-7300 and ask to speak with one of our Independent Living Specialists.



Included in matters that matter most

Additional Supplies

Make a plan today. Your family may not be together if a disaster strikes, so it is important to know which types of disasters could affect your area. Know how you'll contact one another and reconnect if separated. Establish a family meeting place that's familiar and easy to find.

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Step 3: Fill out a Family Emergency Plan

Step 4: Practice your plan with your family/household

Information from Ready.gov

Family Emergency Communication Plan

Make sure your emergency kit is stocked with the items on the checklist below. Most of the items are inexpensive and easy to find, and any one of them could save your life. Headed to the store? Download a printable version to take with you. Once you take a look at the basic items, consider what unique needs your family might have, such as supplies for pets, or seniors.

After an emergency, you may need to survive on your own for several days. Being prepared means having your own food, water and other supplies to last for at least 72 hours. A disaster supplies kit is a collection of basic items your household may need in the event of an emergency.

Additional emergency supplies

Consider adding the following items to your emergency supply kit based on your individual needs:

- Prescription medications
- Non-prescription medications such as pain relievers, anti-diarrhea medication, antacids or laxatives
- Glasses and contact lense solution
- Infant formula, bottles, diapers, wipes, 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
- Household chlorine bleach and medicine dropper to disinfect water

- 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

Maintaining Your Kit

- After assembling your kit remember to maintain it so it's ready when needed:
- Keep canned food in a cool, dry place
- Storeboxed food in tightly closed plastic or metal containers
- Replace expired items as needed
- Re-think your needs every year and update your kit as your family's needs change.

Kit Storage Locations

Since you do not know where you will be when an emergency occurs, prepare supplies for home, work and vehicles.

Home: Keep this kit in a designated place and have it ready in case you have to leave your home quickly. Make sure all family members know where the kit is kept.

Work: Be prepared to shelter at work for at least 24 hours. Your work kit should include food, water and other necessities like medicines, as well as comfortable walking shoes, stored in a "grab and go" case.

Vehicle: In case you are stranded, keep a kit of emergency supplies in your car.

Information from Ready.gov

**GET YOUR BATTERY CHECKED
BEFORE WINTER HITS**



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Safeguarding your valuables

Key is to take inventory, make a plan

You may have little or no time to protect your valuables in a flood, earthquake, or other disaster. By taking simple steps now, you can safeguard your treasured belongings and information from damage or loss.

The first step is to identify what you have. Go through your home to find your treasures. Use the list below to check off your valuables.

- Vital records (birth, marriage, divorce, adoption, child custody, death certificates)
- Passport, driver's license, or other identification documents
- Social Security cards
- Property leases, deeds, mortgages, and records
- Financial documents including copies of pay stubs, bank accounts, etc.
- Legal titles (auto, home)
- Insurance policies
- Wills, living wills, and powers of attorney
- Recent tax returns
- Medical records including lists of prescription medicines, medical conditions, medical provider contact information, copies of health insurance/Medicare/Medicaid cards, etc.
- Debit/credit card numbers
- Home/bank safe deposit information/keys
- Records of passwords and personal identification numbers (PINs)
- Family photos, keepsakes, jewelry, or other mementos
- Photographic or data inventory of valuables (photos, videos, CD/flash drive)
- Create a photographic record or inventory of your valuables and store it in a safe deposit box or other off-site location. Consider keeping a copy on a CD or flash drive in your disaster kit, so that you can provide it to your insurance company following a loss; this will allow you to start the insurance/recovery process more quickly.
- Scan important records such as vital records, medical records, and financial documents, and save the files on disk or flash drives. You may also want to password-protect the data you have stored in case of loss or theft. Store the backup records in a safe deposit box or other off-site location.
- If you have too many records or no way to scan/copy them, store them in a flood/fireproof home safe or a safe deposit box. Also consider giving backup copies of important documentation to family members to store for you.
- If you have valuable items stored in a basement, move them to a higher location to avoid water damage.
- Include any readily accessible records, such as medical records, medical contact information, etc., in your disaster kit.
- In some cases, you may be able to protect valuables such as keepsakes in waterproof containers available in sporting goods or hardware stores. For smaller items, a flood/fireproof home safe may provide temporary protection.
- Take precautions to protect yourself from identity theft when you create backup systems to store critical information.
- For more ideas on protecting valuables or cleaning them after a flood, consult the following information from FEMA: <http://www.fema.gov/news/newsrelease.fema?id=8495>

You can take simple no-cost or low-cost steps to protect your valuables.

Create a vehicle preparedness kit

Breaking down while driving can be unnerving, potentially delaying trips and stranding motorists and their passengers for lengthy periods of time.

However, for those with well-equipped emergency preparedness kits in their vehicles' trunks, breakdowns can be much easier to manage.

Even though new vehicles are loaded with advanced technology, drivers are no less likely to avoid breakdowns. In fact, roadside calls for stranded vehicles are on the rise. A study by the American Automobile

Association found that, in 2015, 32 million drivers required the organization's services, with issues regarding vehicle batteries, flat tires and vehicle keys reaching all-time highs. Despite early warning systems, more than half a million drivers in the United States ran out of gas last year, necessitating service calls. An emergency vehicle kit is something that no driver should leave home without. Just because a car appears to be in good shape or is well-maintained doesn't mean something can't happen.

What to pack in your car kit

In case you are stranded, keep an emergency supply kit in your car with the addition of these automobile extras:

- Jumper cables
- Flares or reflective triangle
- Ice scraper
- Car cell phone charger
- Cat litter or sand for better tire traction
- Prepare Your Vehicle for Emergencies

Have a mechanic check the following on your vehicle prior to an emergency:

- Antifreeze levels
- Battery and ignition system
- Brakes
- Exhaust system
- Fuel and air filters
- Heater and defroster
- Lights and flashing hazard lights
- Oil
- Thermostat
- Windshield wiper equipment
- Washer fluid level

Vehicle Safety Tips

- Keep your gas tank full in case

of evacuation or power outages. A full tank will also keep the fuel line from freezing

- Install good winter tires and ensure they have adequate tread or any jurisdiction-required chains or studs
- Do not drive through flooded areas. Six inches of water can cause a vehicle to lose control or possibly stall. A foot of water will float many cars.
- Be aware of areas where floodwaters have receded. Roads may have weakened and could collapse under the weight of a car.
- If a power line falls on your car you are at risk of electrical shock, stay inside until a trained person removes the wire.
- If there is an explosion or other factor that makes it difficult to control the vehicle, pull over, stop the car and set the parking brake.
- If the emergency could impact the physical stability of the roadway avoid overpasses, bridges, power lines, signs and other hazards.

Information from Ready.gov