

Safety Note #169

BUILD A KIT full of Emergency Supplies

Emergency Preparedness Safety Note Series: Step 3 – Build a Kit

Note: This series of Safety Notes provides tips for personal emergency preparedness. Each UC ANR workplace should also have site specific emergency plans. See the [EH&S website](#) or your location's Safety Coordinator for more information about your workplace emergency plans.



Photo source: cdc.gov

Expect the unexpected! To help prepare for life's unanticipated disasters, your family needs to build a survival kit full of emergency supplies. Now is the time to think about the basic needs you, your family and your pets will need during an emergency. A disaster supplies kit is simply a collection of basic items your household may need in the event of an emergency. Try to assemble your kit well in advance of an emergency. In addition to putting your supplies together, it is just as important to maintain them so they are safe and ready to use when needed.

After a major disaster the usual services we take for granted, such as running water, refrigeration, and telephones may be unavailable. Experts recommend that you should be prepared to be self-sufficient for *at least three days*. Store your household disaster kit in an easily accessible location. Put contents in a large, watertight container (e.g. a large plastic garbage can with a lid and wheels) that you can move easily. Emergency supply kits do not need to be put together all at once, but it is important to start preparing now. Start with materials you have at home now, and then add to it over time.

Build a Kit:

Some recommended categories and items to include are:

- Water – at least one gallon per person per day
- Radio – battery powered or hand crank (NOAA Weather Radio if possible)
- First Aid Kit and Instructions
- Large heavy duty plastic bags and a plastic bucket for waste and sanitation
- Hygiene Items
- Flashlights, Candles, Lanterns
- Can Opener, Multipurpose Tool, Wrench/Pliers
- Map(s) of the Area
- Disposable Camera
- Duct Tape
- Matches, Lighters in a waterproof container
- Extra Clothing and Sturdy Shoes
- Entertainment Items and activities for children
- Food – non-perishable, easy-to-prepare items
- Copies of personal documents (medical lists & information, proof of address, deed/lease to home, passports, birth certificates, insurance policies)
- Medications
- Unscented liquid household bleach and an eyedropper for water purification
- Emergency Blanket, Sleeping Bags
- Family and Emergency Contact Information
- Pet Supplies
- Extra Batteries for various items
- Extra Cash, Items to Barter
- Cell Phone with Chargers
- Whistle to signal for help
- Special needs items, such as eye glasses, contact lens solutions, and hearing aid batteries

Don't stop here! There's much more you need to add to your family's emergency kit. The websites [Ready.gov](#), [72hours.org](#), and [Redcross.org](#) all have full lists of the suggested items along with how you should store the kit in your home. Assembling the supplies you might need following a disaster is an important part of your family disaster plan.

Preparing for possible disasters and other emergencies is not an option. Natural and human caused disasters can strike suddenly, at anytime and anywhere. There are three actions everyone can take that can help make a difference. Be Informed. Make a Plan. Build a Kit.

For information on Office Preparedness for Emergencies, see Safety Note #166

For information on how to Be Informed about Emergencies and Preparedness, see Safety Note #167

For information on how to Make a Plan to Prepare for Emergencies, see Safety Note #168