

Sheltering during a Disaster

Build a Kit

In addition to having your basic survival supplies, an [emergency kit](#) should have items to meet your individual needs in various emergencies. Consider the items you use every day and which ones you may need to add to your kit.

Tips for Medications

- Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about how you can create an emergency supply of medicines.
- Keep a list of your prescription medicines. Include information about your diagnosis, dosage, frequency, medical supply needs and allergies.
- Store extra nonprescription drugs, like pain and fever relievers, antihistamines and antidiarrheal medicines.
- Have a cooler and chemical ice packs available to chill medicines that need to be refrigerated.

Tips for People Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

- Weather radio (with text display and a flashing alert)
- Extra hearing-aid batteries
- Pen and paper (in case you have to communicate with someone who does not know sign language)
- Battery operated lantern to enable communication by sign language or lip reading, especially when the electricity is out and it's dark.

Tips for People Who are Blind or Have Low Vision

- Mark emergency supplies with Braille labels or large print. Keep a list of your emergency supplies and where you bought them on a portable flash drive or make an audio file that is kept in a safe place where you can access it.
- Keep communication devices for your particular needs, such as a Braille or deaf-blind communications device as part of your emergency supply kit.

Tips for People with Speech Disability

- If you use an augmentative communications device or other assistive technologies plan how you will evacuate with the devices or how you will replace equipment if it is lost or

destroyed. Keep model information and note where the equipment came from (Medicaid, Medicare, private insurance, etc.).

- Plan how you will communicate with others if your equipment is not working, including laminated cards with phrases and/or pictogram.

Individuals with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities

- Keep handheld electronic devices charged and loaded with videos and activities.
- Purchase spare chargers for electronic devices and keep them charged.
- Include sheets and twine or a small pop-up tent (to decrease visual stimulation in a busy room or to provide instant privacy).
- Consider a pair of noise-canceling headphones to decrease auditory stimuli.
- Have comfort snacks available.

Tips for People with a Mobility Disability

- If you use a power wheelchair have a lightweight manual chair available as a backup if possible.
- Show others how to assemble, disassemble and operate your wheelchair.
- Purchase an extra battery for a power wheelchair or other battery-operated medical or assistive technology devices. If you can't purchase an extra battery, find out what agencies, organizations or local charitable groups can help you buy one. Keep extra batteries charged at all times.
- Consider keeping a patch kit or can of sealant for flat tires and/or extra inner tube if wheelchair or scooter is not puncture proof.
- Keep an extra mobility device such as a cane or walker if you use one.
- Keep a portable air pump for wheelchair tires.
- If you use a seat cushion to protect your skin or maintain your balance and you must evacuate, consider keeping an extra cushion on hand.
- Communicate with neighbors who can assist you if you need to evacuate the building.

Tips for Individuals with Alzheimer's and Related Dementia

- Do not leave the person alone. Even those who aren't prone to wandering away may do so in unfamiliar environments or situations.
- If evacuating, help manage the change in environment by bringing a pillow and blanket or other comforting items they can hold onto.

- When at a shelter, try to stay away from exits and choose a quiet corner.
- If there is an episode of agitation, respond to the emotions being expressed. For example, say “You’re frightened and want to go home. It’s ok. I’m right here with you.”

Additional Items

- Several days supply of prescription medicines
- A list of all medications, dosage and any allergies
- Extra eyeglasses, contacts, hearing aids and batteries
- A backup supply of oxygen
- A list of the style and serial number of medical devices (include special instructions for operating your equipment if needed)
- Copies of insurance and Medicare cards
- Contact information for doctors, relatives or friends who should be notified if you are hurt
- Pet food, extra water, collar with ID tag, medical records and other supplies for your [service or support animal](#)

Last Updated: 06/16/2023

Build a Kit for Your Pet

Just as you do with your family's emergency supply kit, think first about the basics for survival, such as food and water. Have two kits, one larger kit if you are sheltering in place and one lightweight version for if you need to evacuate. Review your kits regularly to ensure that their contents, especially foods and medicines, are fresh.

Here are some items you may want to include in an emergency kit for your pet:

Image



- **Food.** Keep several days' supply of food in an airtight, waterproof container.
- **Water.** Store a water bowl and several days' supply of water.
- **Medicine.** Keep an extra supply of the medicine your pet takes on a regular basis in a waterproof container.
- **First aid kit.** Talk to your veterinarian about what is most appropriate for your pet's emergency medical needs.
- **Collar with ID tag and a harness or leash.** Include a backup leash, collar and ID tag. Have copies of your pet's registration information and other relevant documents in a waterproof container and available electronically.
- **Traveling bag, crate or sturdy carrier,** ideally one for each pet.
- **Grooming items.** Pet shampoo, conditioner and other items, in case your pet needs some cleaning up.
- **Sanitation needs.** Include pet litter and litter box (if appropriate), newspapers, paper towels, plastic trash bags and household chlorine bleach to provide for your pet's sanitation needs.

- **A picture of you and your pet together.** If you become separated from your pet during an emergency, a picture of you and your pet together will help you document ownership and allow others to assist you in identifying your pet.
- **Familiar items.** Put favorite toys, treats or bedding in your kit. Familiar items can help reduce stress for your pet.

Tips for Large Animals

If you have pets such as horses, goats or pigs on your property, be sure to prepare before a disaster.

In addition to the tips above:

- Ensure all animals have some form of identification.
- Evacuate animals earlier, whenever possible. Map out primary and secondary routes in advance.
- Make available vehicles and trailers needed for transporting and supporting each type of animal. Also make available experienced handlers and drivers.
- Ensure destinations have food, water, veterinary care and handling equipment.
- If evacuation is not possible, animal owners must decide whether to move large animals to a barn or turn them loose outside.

Stay Informed

Being prepared and staying informed of current conditions. Here are some ways you can stay informed:

- **Pay attention** to [wireless emergency alerts](#) for local alerts and warnings sent by state and local public safety officials.
- **Listen to local officials** when told to evacuate or shelter in place.
- [Download the FEMA app](#) and get weather alerts from the National Weather Service, for up to five different locations anywhere in the United States.
- **Always bring pets indoors** at the first sign or warning of a storm or disaster.

Last Updated: 06/16/2023