

FEBRUARY IS "MAKE A PLAN" MONTH

A family emergency plan does not have to be complicated. There are really only a few basic questions your plan should answer.

In an emergency, what will you want to do?

- ? Get safely out of harm's way.
- ? Reunite the family in a safe place.
- ? Communicate with loved ones outside the area using your out-of-town emergency contact.

What would you need to have with you?

- ? Food that won't spoil, water, sanitary supplies and other necessities to last for at least three days.
- ? A change of clothes and comfortable shoes for each person, including a jacket and hat suitable for the season.
- ? A first aid kit, extra prescription medications and eyeglasses.
- ? Special supplies and equipment for older family members, infants and children, or people with special needs.
- ? A battery powered radio, flashlight, whistle and extra batteries.

What needs to be done and who will do it?

- ? Making a family emergency plan also helps you think through what needs to be done, and who will be available to carry out each job.
- ? Build a team. Assign tasks to each family member, based on their individual age and skills, and on where they are most likely to be, since travel is sometimes difficult during emergencies.

Every family has special needs. Design your plan to make sure it matches up with your lifestyle. Does someone in the family work at night or commute long distances? Does your household include infants or toddlers, or someone else with special needs? Do you have pets or large animals like horses?

PLANNING UNDER THE CLOUD OF TERRORISM

Many people are experienced in protecting their families, homes, and businesses from the effects of earthquakes, fires and floods. We now find ourselves in another era, and we wonder what is different about preparing for a possible terrorist attack.

Remember that the purpose of the terrorist is to promote political or social objectives by creating fear and uncertainty. More people are actually hurt each year by common household accidents than by terrorists, but they use our fear to multiply the effect of their actions.

Take away some of their control by reducing your uncertainty. Make a plan. Know what you and your family would need to do if you find yourself in an emergency situation.

BE ALERT

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Always be aware of your surroundings, particularly in airports, large cities, crowds, or popular tourist areas.

? Report any suspicious activities to local authorities.

? When you travel, keep your belongings with you at all times. Don't accept packages from strangers.

LISTEN FOR INSTRUCTIONS

Government officials are on the alert to any possible actions by terrorists. At the first sign of an event, they will issue specific instructions for your safety.

Listen to emergency news broadcasts on the radio or television.

Listen to emergency responders like police and fire fighters who arrive to help.

? If family members or co-workers don't speak English, have problems hearing or seeing, explain to them what is happening and what officials are telling you to do.

? Follow instructions quickly and carefully.

USE YOUR FAMILY EMERGENCY PLAN

As soon as it is safe to do so, contact family members and your out-of-town contact to let them know where you are and that you are safe.

If you are told to evacuate, put on sturdy shoes and take your cash, car keys, and emergency kit with you. Take your pets with you to your pre-arranged family meeting place. (Pets may not be allowed in public shelters.)

If you are instructed to "shelter in place," stay indoors; close and seal windows and doors. Turn off air conditioning systems. Do not leave your sheltered location until authorities tell you it is safe to do so.

OUT-OF-TOWN CONTACT CARD

Make a contact card for each member of the family. Use the reverse side for other information family members might need such as:

? School address, phone number, and friend authorized to pick up children.

? Physician's name, address and phone.

? Vet's name, address and phone.

? Parent's work address and telephone.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Out-of-town contact: _____

Contact telephone number: _____

Family meeting place: _____

Special needs: _____

Cardholder's name: _____

Address: _____