



**United Way  
of Jackson County**

**[UnitedWayofJacksonCounty.org](http://UnitedWayofJacksonCounty.org)**

## **Preparedness Tips**

### **For September, Emergency Preparedness Month**

You may think that you have enough supplies in your pantry to make it through an emergency, but if you have to evacuate, do you have a to-go emergency kit that is easy to grab at a moment's notice? If an emergency occurs, you might assume you can simply call your spouse or children to see if they're okay, but what if the phone lines are jammed with others doing the exact same thing? When it comes to you and your loved ones, is having a plan that's "good enough" good enough? United Way of Jackson County, *Ready* Campaign and Citizen Corps encourage you to take a few extra minutes this month to plan for any emergency.

September is National Preparedness Month (NPM) and a good reminder that we all have a responsibility to protect ourselves, our families and our communities. Emergencies will happen, but taking action now can help us minimize the impact they will have on our lives.

This year, NPM focuses on changing perceptions about emergency preparedness and helping Americans understand what it truly means to be *Ready*. Preparedness goes beyond fire alarms, smoke detectors, dead-bolt locks and extra food in the pantry. Being *Ready* includes: getting an Emergency Supply Kit; making a Family Emergency Plan; being informed about emergencies and their appropriate responses; and getting involved in community efforts such as Citizen Corps. Throughout September, activities and events will take place across this country to highlight the importance of emergency preparedness and promote individual involvement, such as first aid trainings, town hall meetings and much more..

### **Tip #1**

Your emergency kit should include, but not be limited to:

- One gallon of water per person for a minimum of three days – two weeks
- Food for a minimum of three days (you're best off with a two week supply)
- Utensils
- Battery operated flashlight and extra batteries
- Battery or crank operated radio
- Cash, Travelers checks and spare change

- Whistle
- Dust Mask
- Garbage bags
- Personal hygiene items
- Tools to shut off utilities
- Medications and first aid kit
- Blanket
- Change of clothing, including sturdy shoes
- Important documents such as insurance policies, identification and bank records in a waterproof container
- Paper and pencils

## **Tip #2**

Following a disaster, always use bottled water for drinking and cooking if it is available. Unsanitary water can be very dangerous to your health. If you don't know the level of purity of the water, bring the water to a rolling boil for 3-5 minutes before consuming it.

## **Tip #3**

Know at least two emergency exits from your home and work. Practice evacuation every 6 months or when you change your batteries when the spring and fall time changes occur.

## **Tip #4**

Designate two places to meet your family in the event of an emergency. One place should be nearby – such as a neighbor's yard – and one should be outside of the neighborhood in case it is not safe to be in the area – such as the home of a friend or relative.

## **Tip # 5**

When returning to your home or office following an emergency evacuation, walk carefully around the outside and check for loose power lines, gas leaks, and structural damage. If you have any doubts about safety, have the structure inspected by a qualified building inspector or engineer before entering. Do not enter the home or facility if:

- You smell gas.
- Floodwaters remain around the building.
- The structure was damaged by fire and the authorities have not declared it safe.

## **Tip #6**

Know the emergency plans for your child's school or day care facility. Keep a copy of the plans at home and at work.

## **Tip #7**

Preparedness is a shared responsibility. Results from a recent national survey indicate that 30 percent of Americans have not prepared because they think emergency responders will help them. Over 60 percent expect to rely on emergency responders in the first 72 hours of a disaster. In fact we need to be prepared to take care of ourselves for a MINIMUM of 72 hours before we can expect emergency responders to begin to help.

## **Tip #8**

Check the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors when the time changes in the fall and in the spring.

## **Tip #9**

In some emergencies you may be required to turn off utilities. Do you know how to turn off the water, gas and electric? Do you have the correct tools on hand to do so? Prepare by locating the valves and taking inventory of your tool kit.

## **Tip #10**

Chose an emergency contact person outside of your region to call in an emergency. Sometimes calling long distance is possible when local lines are down or overwhelmed in a disaster. Provide the names and numbers to your loved ones and post a copy near your phone and put copies in your 72 hour kit.

## **Tip #11**

Immediately following a disaster take care of yourself and your loved ones. Protect your head (from falling objects), feet (from glass, torn metal, exposed metal fasteners) and hands from sharp objects.

Check the gas meter, if you have one. Shut it off if needed to prevent fire.

Shut off the water at the house main to trap clean water in your home and prevent contaminated water from entering your home water lines.

Make your fire extinguisher accessible to yourself and to neighbors if needed. Place it out on your sidewalk where it can be seen.

## **Tip #12**

Know your neighbors, especially people who are vulnerable due to age or disability. Check on them as soon as you and your loved ones are safe to see if they need help.

## **Tip #13**

Discuss the disasters most likely to happen in Southern Oregon and the impact each might have on your family's safety. The higher rated hazards according to the Jackson County Mitigation Plan: Appendix G (which factors in history/vulnerability/maximum threat/probability), are: Severe weather, earthquake, utility failure, drought, hazardous materials, floods and wildland fires. Not as highly risk rated, but considered possible here are: terrorism, epidemic, landslide, transportation failure, dam failure and volcano.

## **Tip #14**

If you become trapped under debris, do not light a match, move about or kick up dust. Cover your mouth with a handkerchief or piece of clothing. Tap on a pipe or wall so rescuers can locate you. Shout only as a last resort because yelling can cause you to inhale dangerous amounts of dust.

## **Tip #15**

Have your office inspected by the local fire department to ensure compliance with fire codes and regulations. Officials may also help you determine the feasibility of your evacuation plans.

## **Tip #16**

Did you remember to consider Fido in your preparedness plans? Pets need food and water too. Include supplies and copies of immunization records in your emergency plan and kits. Contact the Humane Society of the United States for additional disaster preparation tips for your pet.

## **Tip #17**

The H1N1 Flu is serious business. The best weapons in the battle to stay healthy are: 1) Soap and water - if those are not available - hand sanitizer (minimum of 62% alcohol) to wash your hands often. 2) Use Kleenex (or a sleeve if necessary) when you cough or sneeze. 3) Surface sanitizer to keep germs from spreading at home, school, or work. 4) Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth - entry points for virus. 5) Stay home if you are sick!

## **Tip #18**

Add a reminder to your Outlook calendar to review your emergency plans and update contact information every six months.

## Tip #19

Many foods need to be discarded if they have had contact with flood water:

Many foods need to be discarded if they have had contact with flood water (also use this list in considering what to store if you live in a flood zone):

- Foods in containers that were submerged or wetted by flood waters even if the closures had been replaced before flooding
- Unopened, sealed containers that have screw-on lids, pressed-on lids, adhesive seals, corks, snap-top seals, or other seals into which water can partially enter
- Containers of spices, seasonings, flavorings, extracts, etc., in containers described above
- Foods in bins or canisters
- Jams, jellies and preservatives in containers described above or with wax seals
- Fresh meats, fish poultry or prepared meats not in commercially sealed, cleanable cans
- Foods in containers made in part or wholly of paper, cardboard, waxed fiber, cloth or plastic film or plastic cartons
- All bottled beverages, alcoholic beverages, soft drinks, bottled water, milk in bottles or cartons, except for beverages and juices that are commercially canned in conventional metal cans that can be washed and sanitized.

## Tip #20

Sanitization after a flood can be done by using water and household cleaners to clean and a bleach solution of two teaspoons of household bleach to each gallon of water to disinfect surfaces, food cans, utensils, etc. The solution works best hot. Paper must be completely removed from food cans to ensure adequate sanitization.

## Tip #21

To be prepared for a drinking water emergency, you should store enough drinking water to supply each person 1 gallon a day for two weeks. This is the amount normally used by one person for drinking, cooking and teeth brushing.

## Tip #22

Contact with power lines, or anything touching a power line, can seriously injure or kill. Teach your family to beware of power lines. If you see a downed power line, leave the area and call 9-1-1.

## Tip #23

Food stockpiled for emergencies should have a long shelf-life, not require cooking and be easily stored.

## Tip #24

If your usual supply of water is not available, or if your usual supply becomes unsafe for drinking, you must treat the water before it can be used for drinking, cooking or brushing teeth. There are two ways of treating water: boiling or adding bleach. If the supply has been made unsafe because of untreated surface water (from floods, streams, or lakes), boiling is the better treatment.

Boil at a full boil for three minutes. If water looks cloudy filter it using uncontaminated coffee filters, towels, cotton, etc.

If boiling isn't possible, use unscented liquid household chlorine bleach ("not color-safe" bleach). Filter water first if cloudy. Mix 1 part bleach and 4 parts water. It is important to let it stand at least 30 minutes before using - 60 minutes if water is very cold, cloudy or comes from surface water sources.

## Tip #25

The coming winter months hold the possibility of icy roads, downed power lines and snow drifts. Prepare now. Add warm clothing and blankets to your emergency kit.

## Tip #26

Winter fire safety tips:

- Plug space heaters directly into wall sockets and keep them at least three feet from other objects. Do not leave them unattended
- Install smoke detectors in every bedroom and one on every level of your home.
- Clean out dryer vents.
- If you lose power for a long time, evacuate your home instead of trying to heat it by unconventional means, which can be hazardous.
- Never discard hot ashes inside or near the home. Place them in a metal container outside and well away from the house.

For detailed winter fire safety tips, visit: [usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/l-97.pdf](http://usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/l-97.pdf)

## Tip #27

What is known to kill flu viruses and expected to kill the H1N1? Alcohol at 62%, heat of (167 to 212 degrees), chlorine (2 teaspoons to a gallon of water), hydrogen peroxide, detergents, soap, and iodine based antiseptics. Find more information at : <http://cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>

## Tip #28

The out-of-area contact is one of the most important concepts in your disaster plan. When a disaster occurs, you will be concerned about the welfare of your loved ones. It is possible for local telephone service to be disrupted and long distance lines to be open. Consequently, you and your loved ones may be able to relay information through an out-of-area contact. (From the Jackson County Emergency Preparedness Guide.) Provide contact names and numbers to your loved ones and post a copy near your phone and put copies in your 72 hour kit.

## Tip #29

Encourage your friends to learn more about preparedness and make sure your workplace has an emergency plan in place. If you need assistance making that happen, you can contact local Community Organizations Active in Disaster members. Jan at United way can be reached either by phone at 541-773-5339 or email at [jan@unitedwayofjacksoncounty.org](mailto:jan@unitedwayofjacksoncounty.org).

## Tip #30

Make a plan for your workplace, school, home about what you will do if you or a child or person you would provide care for becomes ill. The CDC website has excellent information regarding caring for people sick with H1N1 you can find the information at: [http://cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance\\_homecare.htm](http://cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance_homecare.htm)

## Learn more about preparedness:

For Jackson County website preparedness page : <http://www.co.jackson.or.us/SectionIndex.asp?SectionID=137>

**1-800-BE-READY or visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov), [www.listo.gov](http://www.listo.gov) or [www.citizencorps.gov](http://www.citizencorps.gov), where you'll find free preparedness resources such as Family Emergency Plan templates, Emergency Supply Kit Checklists, and much more. The *Ready Web* site also has a special sections for kids, ages 8-12, (*Ready Kids*) and small- to medium-sized businesses (*Ready Business*). Emergencies can happen at anytime and to anyone. Are you ready or are you *Ready*?**

**Thanks to Ready.gov, Jackson County, Oregon DHS, United Way of America for information and tips.**