

Preparedness

Are you prepared to keep you and your family safe during a disaster? Start now by becoming better informed with the following information provided by FEMA and the Harris County Office of Emergency Management. You will also find very valuable information regarding preparing your business.

BE INFORMED

Emergency preparedness is not the sole concern of Californians for earthquakes, those who live in "Tornado Alley"; or Gulf Coast residents because of hurricanes. Most communities may be impacted by several types of hazards during a lifetime. Americans also travel more than ever before; to areas impacted by hazards they may not be at risk of near their homes. Knowing what to do before, during and after an emergency is a critical part of being prepared and may make all the difference when seconds count.

Some of the basic protective actions are similar for multiple hazards. For example, safety is necessary when experiencing all hazards, whether this means sheltering or evacuating depends on the specific emergency. Developing a family communications plan or making an emergency supply kit are the same for **accidental emergencies, natural disasters and also terrorism**. However, there are important differences among potential emergencies that should impact the decisions you make and the actions you take.

Use the links on this page to learn about the potential emergencies that can happen where you live and the appropriate ways to respond to them. When you know what to do, you can plan with your household and prepare in advance to be ready. These links also provide information about how protect your household and begin recovery following the initial disaster.

Before a disaster, learn how you will know there is an impending hazardous event. Familiarize yourself with the signs of events that come without warning and know the **local advance alerts and warnings** and how you will receive them. Knowing about the local emergency plans for shelter and evacuation and local emergency contacts will help you develop your household plan and will also aid you during a crisis.

Learning what to do in different situations and developing and customizing your plans for your local hazards, the locations frequented by members of your household and the specific needs of household members including animals will help you reduce the impact of disasters and may save lives and prevent injuries.

MAKE A PLAN

Your family may not be together when a disaster strikes so it is important to plan in advance: how you will get to a safe place; how you will contact one another; how you will get back together; and what you will do in different situations. **Family Communication** during an emergency.

Ready.gov has made it simple for you to make a family emergency plan. Download the **Family Emergency Plan (FEP)** (PDF – 3 Mb) and fill out the sections before printing it or emailing it to your family and friends.

You should also inquire about emergency plans at places where your family spends time: work, daycare and school, faith organizations, sports events and commuting. If no plans exist, consider volunteering to help create one. Talk to community leaders, your colleagues, neighbors and members of faith or civic organizations about how you can work together in the event of an emergency. You will be better prepared to safely reunite your family and loved ones during an emergency if you think ahead and communicate with others in advance. Read more about **school** and **workplace plans**.

Prepare for an Emergency

<http://www.fema.gov/>

<http://www.hcoem.org/>

<http://www.ready.gov/>