

The Collegeville Borough Family Disaster Plan

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The following information will take you only 10-15 minutes to read but it is important. It will tell you how to save your own life and the lives of those you love. At least, it will give you a fighting chance to survive disaster.

There are no pictures. There is no need. Forever imprinted in our minds' eye are the images of September 11th. Our federal, state and local agencies are doing all they can to protect us. This is what we can do to protect ourselves.

Section One: Prepare Your Home

Keep enough supplies in your home to meet your needs for a least 72 hours. Assemble a Disaster Supplies Kit with items you may need in an evacuation (items marked with an asterik (*). Store these supplies in sturdy, easy-to-carry containers such as backpacks, duffle bags, or covered trash containers. There are six basics you should stock in your home. They include:

WATER

Purchase bottled water or store water in plastic containers such as soft drink bottles. Do not use containers that will decompose or break. A normally active person needs to drink at least two (2) quarts of water each day. Children, nursing mothers and ill people may need more.

- Store one gallon of water per person per day (two quarts for drinking two quarts for food preparation/sanitation)*
- Keep at least a three (3) day supply of water for each person in your household.

FOOD

Store at least a three (3) day supply of non-perishable food. Select foods that require no refrigeration., preparation or cooking and little or no water. If you must heat food, pack a can of sterno. Select foods that are compact and lightweight.

*Include a selection of the following foods in your Disaster Supplies kit.

- Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits and vegetables.
- Canned juices, milk, soup (if powdered, store extra water)
- Staples – sugar, salt, pepper
- High energy foods – peanut butter, jelly, crackers, granola bars, trail mix
- Vitamins

Foods for infants, elderly persons, or persons on special diets

- Comfort/stress foods – cookies, hard candy, sweetened cereals, lollipops, instant coffee and tea bags

FIRST AID KIT

Assemble a first aid kit for your home and one for each car. A first aid kit* should include:

- Sterile adhesive bandages in assorted sizes
- 2 inch sterile gauze pads (4-6)
- 4-inch sterile gauze pads (4-6)
- Hypoallergenic adhesive tape
- Triangular bandages (3)
- 2-inch sterile roller bandages (3 rolls)
- 3-inch sterile roller bandages (3 rolls)
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Needle
- Moistened Towelettes
- Antiseptic
- Thermometer
- Tongue blades (2)
- Tube of petroleum jelly or other lubricant
- Assorted sizes of safety pins
- Cleansing agent/soap
- Latex gloves (2 pair)
- Sunscreen

NON-PRESCRIPTION DRUGS:

- Aspirin or non-aspirin pain reliever
- Anti-Diarrhea medication
- Antacid (for stomach upset)
- Syrup of Ipecac (use to induce vomiting if advised by the Poison Control Center)
- Laxative
- Activated charcoal (use if advised by the Poison Control Center)

TOOLS AND SUPPLIES

- Mess kits or paper cups, plates and plastic utensils*
- Battery operated radio and extra batteries* (Tape the # of the emergency radio station on top)
- Flashlight and extra batteries*
- Cash or traveler's checks, change*
- Non-electric can opener, utility knife*
- Fire extinguisher: small canister, ABC type
- Tent
- Pliers
- Tape
- Compass
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Aluminum foil
- Plastic storage containers
- Signal flare

- Paper, pencil
- Needles, thread
- Medicine dropper
- Shut-off-wrench to turn off household gas and water
- Whistle
- Plastic sheeting
- Map of the area (for locating shelters)

SANITATION:

- Toilet paper, towelettes*
- Soap, liquid detergent*
- Feminine supplies*
- Personal hygiene items*
- Plastic garbage bags, ties (for personal sanitation uses)
- Plastic bucket with tight lid
- Disinfectant
- Household chlorine bleach

CLOTHING AND BEDDING

*Include a least one (1) complete change of clothing and footwear per person.

- Sturdy shoes or work boots*
- Rain Gear*
- Blankets or sleeping bags*
- Hat and gloves
- Thermal underwear
- Sunglasses

SPECIAL ITEMS:

Remember family members with special needs, such as infants and elderly or disabled persons.

For Baby:*

- Formula
- Diapers
- Bottles
- Powdered milk
- Medications

For Adults*

- Heart and high blood pressure medication
- Insulin
- Prescription drugs
- Dental needs
- Contact lenses and supplies
- Extra eye glasses
- Entertainment-games and books

Important Family Documents – Keep these records in a waterproof, portable container

- Will, insurance policies, contracts, deeds, stocks and bonds
- Passport, social security cards, immunization records
- Bank account numbers
- Credit card account numbers and companies
- Inventory of valuable household goods, important telephone numbers

- Family records (birth, marriage, death certificates)

SUGGESTIONS AND REMINDERS

Store your kit in a convenient place known to all family members. Keep a smaller version of the Disaster Supplies Kit in the trunk of your car.

Keep items in air-tight bags.

Change your stored water supply every six months so it stays fresh.

Rotate your stored food every six months.

Re-think your kit and family needs at least once a year. Replace batteries, update clothes, etc.

Ask your physician or pharmacist about storing prescription medication.

Section Two: Create a Plan

Meet with your family and discuss your family protection plan

- Locate the main electric fuse box, water service main, and natural gas main and learn how to turn these off. Keep necessary tools near gas and water shut off valves. Turn off the utilities only if you suspect the lines are damaged or if you are instructed to do so. (If you turn the gas off, you will need a professional to turn it back on).
- Post emergency telephone numbers near telephones.
- Choose one out-of-state and one local friend or relative for family members to call if separated by disaster (it is often easier to call out-of-state than within the affected area). All family members should call this person and tell them where they are. Each family member must know the contact's telephone number.
- Choose two meeting places – a place near your home and a place outside your neighborhood in case you cannot return home after the disaster.

- Include pets in your plans, since pets are not permitted in shelters and some hotels will not accept them.
- Teach each family member how to use the fire extinguisher (ABC type) and show them where it is kept.
- Obtain a basic first aid manual.
Keep your gas tank at least half full at all times.
- Discuss what to do if instructed to evacuate (chapter Four)

Section Three: Recognize and Respond to Disaster Warnings

Your telephone book has a wealth of information. In addition to emergency numbers, you will find telephone numbers for your county emergency preparedness office and the American Red Cross chapter and offices closest to you. In addition you may find emergency information developed by each county emergency management organization. This information may include:

- identification of an alert signal
- radio station information for emergency alerts
- shelter information
- evacuation information

Copy this information from your telephone book or add an extra telephone book to your disaster supplies.

EXAMPLE:

If you are directed to take shelter or advised by local officials to “shelter in place” you should:

- remain indoors (home, office, school etc.)
- close and lock all windows and exterior doors
- turn off all fans, heating and air conditioning systems

-close the fireplace damper

-keep pets inside

-get you disaster supplies kit, and make sure the radio is working

-go to an interior room without windows that is above ground level (in the case of a chemical threat, an above ground location is preferable because some chemicals are heavier than air, and may seep into basements even if the windows are closed).

Using duct tape, seal all cracks around the door and any vents in the room.

-Keep listening to your radio or television until you are told all is safe or you are told to evacuate

Section Four: Implement Your Plan

If the worst happens:

-Remain calm and put your plan into action.

-Give first aid and get help for seriously injured people

-Listen to your radio or television for news and instructions

If the disaster occurs near your home while you are there, check for damage using a flashlight. Do not light matches or candles or turn on electrical switches. Check for fire, fire hazards and other household hazards. Sniff for gas leaks, starting at the water heater. If you smell gas or suspect a leak, open windows and get everyone outside quickly. If instructed to do so, turn off the main gas valve.

-Shut off any other damaged utilities

-Clean up spilled bleaches, gasoline or other flammable liquids immediately

-Confine or secure your pets

-Call your family contact – do not use the telephone again unless it is a life-threatening emergency.

-Check on neighbors, especially those living alone, elderly or disabled.

If you are directed to evacuate you should listen to your battery-powered radio and follow the instructions of local emergency officials. Keep the following tips in mind:

-If you have a cell phone, take it with you.

-Wear long sleeved shirts, long pants and sturdy shoes so you can be protected as much as possible.

-Take your Disaster Supplies Kit.

-Take your pets with you. Because pets are not permitted in public shelters, follow your plan to go to a relative's or friend's home, or find a pet-friendly hotel.

-Call your family contact to tell them where you are going and when you expect to arrive.

-Leave a note telling others when you left and where you are going.

-Lock your home

-Use travel routes specified by local authorities-don't use short cuts because certain areas may be impassable or dangerous.

-Stay away from downed power lines.

CONCLUSION

You are finished reading. Now it's time to take action. Everywhere you see a circle before a statement put a check in the circle when you have accomplished that task. Doing this will give you a visual account of your progress.

Please share this information with your family, friends and acquaintances. Consider organizing a Disaster Supplies Kit for someone in need. Why not buy a radio, flashlight or first aid kit as a birthday or holiday gift?

The information in this book was compiled from research on the internet with visits to the websites of the American Red Cross, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, USA Freedom Corps and others.

