

✓ **Make a Plan**

✓ **Get a Kit**

✓ **Stay Informed**

# **Citizen's Emergency Preparedness Guide**



# Preface

The Warren County Emergency Management Agency (WCEMA) published this guide as a resource for citizens to assist them with preparing for emergencies and disasters.

The Guide provides basic information on how to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies and disasters that may happen in Warren County. It is intended to serve as a quick-reference for citizens, engaging them in the emergency management process. We encourage citizens to expand on the preparedness efforts learned in this book to make their homes and communities more resilient against the effects of emergencies and disasters.

Additional information is available by visiting our website at: [www.co.warren.oh.us/emergencyservices](http://www.co.warren.oh.us/emergencyservices)



Warren County Communications Center

For emergencies: Call 911

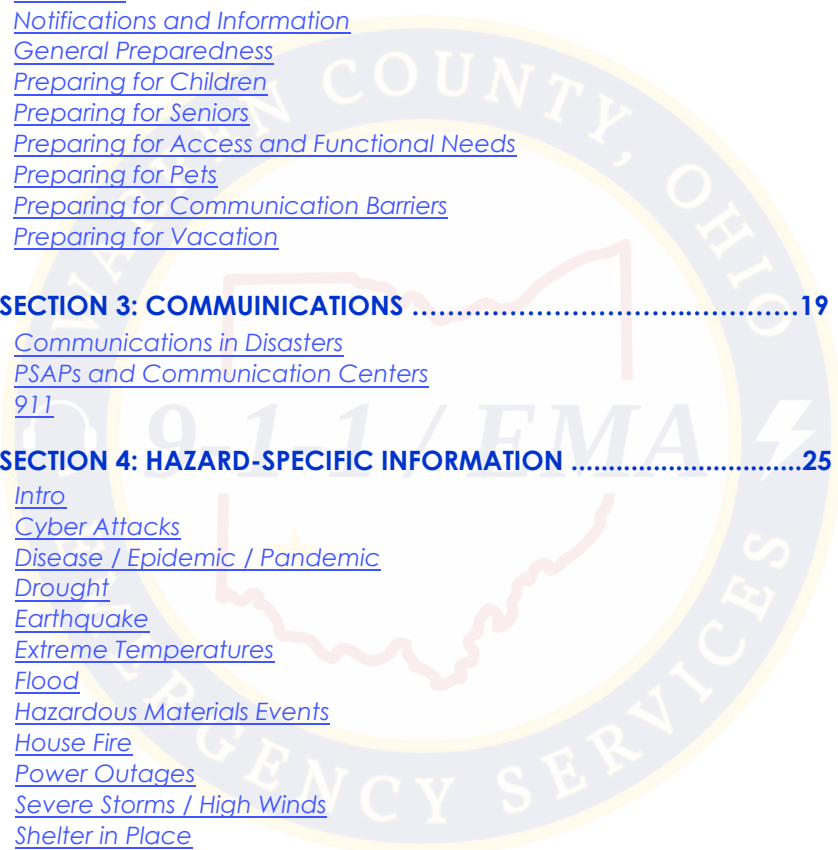
Non-Emergency: 513-695-2525

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Warren County EMA

513-695-1315

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The background of the page features a large, semi-transparent watermark of the Franklin County, Ohio Emergency Services seal. The seal is circular with a yellow border and contains the text "FRANKLIN COUNTY, OHIO" at the top and "EMERGENCY SERVICES" at the bottom. In the center, there is a red outline of the state of Ohio with a lightning bolt symbol to its right. The text "911/EMA" is also visible within the seal's design.

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# Section 1: Introduction

## Not if, but when...

Every state in the United States is at risk for disasters. Disasters disrupt lives, leaving lasting effects on people and property.

Everyone's needs and abilities are unique, but every individual can take important steps to better prepare and help mitigate the effects of disasters. In doing so, you can help reduce the impacts and recover more quickly. People and families who plan for emergencies and disasters:

- Limit property damage
- Know what to do during and after events
- Better manage their property and finances
- Help keep people safe
- Help their community get back up and running after

## Emergencies vs. Disasters

Emergencies are events which can be handled with the resources readily available. A stove fire that can be put out by a fire extinguisher is an example of an emergency.

Disasters are events which require outside resources to assist with response and recovery. Flooding of multiple structures could be considered a disaster.

## Warren County

Warren County is situated in Southwest Ohio and is at risk for many hazards. Some hazards may occur in the county directly, while others may occur in other counties but affect Warren County.

Citizens should be familiar with where Warren County is in the state and the counties that surround it. When receiving emergency notifications it is helpful to know where you are in relation to the hazard and where you can go to be safe.



## Emergency Management

Emergency Management is a role of state and local government to protect public health and safety. The Federal Government is able to assist state and local governments when local response and recovery capabilities are exceeded.

The goal of emergency management is to:

- Prepare the community for threats and hazards
- Reduce the loss of life
- Minimize property loss and damage to the environment

Within Warren County, the goal of the emergency management program is to protect communities from natural, man-made, and technological disasters and emergencies.

### Warren County EMA Functions

Warren County EMA performs many functions to assist the county with emergency management activities. Some of the essential functions include:

#### Alerting The Public

- To hazards occurring in their communities

#### Informing The Public

- About potential hazards to their lives and property

#### Public Education

- Teaching citizens to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies/ disasters



#### Coordinating Resources



#### Compiling Damage Assessments

- To quantify scope and magnitude of the event

#### Leading Recovery Operations

- Working with agencies and citizens to recover and rebuild

#### Supporting Mitigation

- To reduce impacts of disasters

# PREPAREDNESS



## Section 2: Preparedness

*It may take up to 72 hours following a disaster for outside assistance to reach your community.*

After a disaster, local officials, first responders, and relief workers will respond to the area, but they may not have the resources to assist everyone immediately. It is possible that help may reach you quickly, but depending on the size and severity of the problem it could take a few hours or perhaps much longer.

Citizens are encouraged to have 72 hours worth of supplies on hand to be self sufficient until help can arrive. The next page contains a checklist of supplies for home emergency kits.

Fires, hazardous material events, or other disasters could require quick evacuation. Emergency kits should also contain supplies to sustain your family for evacuation away from your home for at least three days.

### *Make A Plan*

Knowing what to do during an emergency is part of being prepared and will make a difference when seconds count. Planning ahead will ensure that you and your household will know what to do and have the supplies you need to be safe, wherever you are.

This guide will help you develop an at-home emergency plan and provide some information to help determine emergency plans for work, school, and other places you frequently visit.

Planning ahead also includes knowing how to handle emergencies and disasters when out of town. Visit pages 18-19 for more information on emergency planning while on vacation.

## Build A Kit

Home emergency kits should contain at least 72 hours worth of supplies and should sustain shelter-in-place and evacuation activities.

### **Basic Supplies**

- Water (one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation)
- Food (at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food)
- Battery Powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA weather radio with batteries for both
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Whistle to signal for help
- Dust mask, to help filter contaminants
- Plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags, and toilet tissue for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities



Make sure to update your kit at least annually!

### **Additional Items to Consider**

- Prescription medication and glasses
- Cash and change
- Important family documents
- Emergency reference materials (first aid book)
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person
- Complete change of clothing for a couple days
- Infant formula and diapers (where applicable)
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items
- Books, games, and activities
- Paper and pencil
- Food, water, and shot records for your pet

*Consider creating a binder with copies of important documents to keep in a secure area near your emergency kit. This could include: vital certificates and records, insurance policies, wills, living wills and powers of attorney, property leases, deeds or mortgages, financial documents such as copies of pay stubs, bank accounts, and investments, medical records, legal ownership titles, passwords and PINs, and photographic evidence or digital inventory of valuables.*



There are many ways to receive alerts and warnings about emergencies and disasters. Before a disaster occurs is the time to identify the sources of information that you are most comfortable with such as television, radio, internet, or smartphone.

### Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA)

The Wireless Emergency Alert System (WEA), is a national emergency alert system that sends short, free messages to a user's mobile device based on its location at the time.

The three types of alerts are:

- ✓ **Presidential Alerts**—issued by the U.S. President
- ✓ **Imminent Threat Alerts**—severe man-made or natural disasters where an imminent threat to life or property exists
- ✓ **AMBER Alerts**—help law enforcement search for and locate an abducted child



WEAs are no more than 360 characters and look similar to text messages, but are designed to get your attention with a unique sound and vibration. Most smartphones are equipped to receive WEA alerts. Consult your phone's manual for more information on how to opt-in to Wireless Emergency Alerts if you do not already receive them.

Warren County has the ability to send out WEA alerts for life-threatening or imminent events. Messages can be sent county-wide or be geographically targeted for people in the threat area.

### Emergency Alert System (EAS)

The Emergency Alert System (EAS) is a national public warning system that allows the president to address the nation within 10 minutes of a national emergency. State and local authorities can also use the system to deliver important information to protect lives and property.



EAS is sent through broadcasters, satellite digital audio services, direct broadcast satellite providers, cable television systems, and wireless cable systems. An EAS message can be sent in lieu of or in tandem with WEA messages.

## Outdoor Warning Sirens



Outdoor Warning Sirens are one way to alert you to hazards in Warren County. The sirens can be activated for tornado warnings or chemical incidents that require people to immediately seek shelter indoors. Outdoor Warning Sirens are meant to be heard outdoors and are not guaranteed to be heard from inside a building or a vehicle.

The cities of Franklin and Lebanon activate their own outdoor warning sirens. The Warren County Communications Center activates the remaining sirens in the county. These can either be activated county-wide, in quadrants, or individually depending on where the threat is occurring.

### Additional Emergency Notifications

Emergency alerts and warnings may also come from NOAA weather radios, news media, social media, weather apps, or other means. It is important to have multiple ways to receive emergency alerts and warnings.

### Know Where To Go For Information

The local news media, print media, and social media can all serve as sources of information during a disaster. Ensure you are getting information from reputable sources and follow Warren County EMA's website and Facebook and Twitter accounts for disaster related information and updates.



### Take Action!

If you receive an alert on your phone, tv, or radio, follow instructions from local officials and take the actions listed here:



**Advisory and Statement**

**Be Aware!** A hazard is expected to occur in your area or nearby, but its impact is not expected to be life threatening.



**Watch**

**Be Prepared!** A hazard may possibly occur in your area or nearby.



**Warning**

**Take Action!** A hazard is expected to occur or is already occurring in your area or nearby, and its impact may be serious.

## Plan Ahead

Emergencies and disasters are not the time to figure out what to do. People who plan ahead respond more quickly, recover more fully, and are generally more resilient.

General tips for emergency planning:

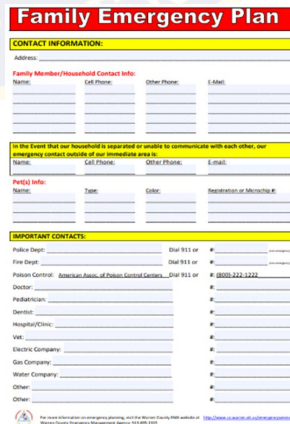
- Plan for the emergencies that are most likely to happen where you live. (See Section 4 for more information).
- Plan what to do in case you are separated during an emergency.
- Plan what to do if you have to evacuate.
- Plan for everyone in your home.
- Plan to let loved ones know you are safe.

## Prepare For Emergencies and Disasters

There are actions that you can take to protect your family and property before, during, and after a disaster. Some are hazard-specific, while others are general actions that can be taken to prepare for any hazard. Some general preparedness actions include (but are not limited to):

- Determine how to assess the situation quickly and take effective action to protect yourself. This includes:
  - √ *Knowing how to test electrical outlets*
  - √ *Knowing how to shut off the gas and water to your structure*
  - √ *Knowing how to flip or test breakers to check electrical outages*
  - √ *Knowing the warning signs of fire and gas leaks*
- Put together an emergency fund of cash and supplies
- Prepare a Family Emergency Plan
- Prepare a Fire Response Plan and practice the plan
- Review insurance policies

Remember to consider the needs of children, the elderly, and those with access and functional needs in your preparedness actions. More information is included on the next couple pages.



**Family Emergency Plan**

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Family Member/Household Contact Info:**

Name	Left Phone	Other Phone	E-Mail
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

**In the Event that our household is separated or unable to communicate with each other, our emergency contact outside of our immediate area is:**

Name	Left Phone	Other Phone	E-Mail
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

**Family Info:**

Name	Date	Color	Registration or Motorcycle #
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

**IMPORTANT CONTACTS:**

Police Dept. _____	Dist. 911 (or _____)	_____
Fire Dept. _____	Dist. 911 (or _____)	_____
Police Control _____	American Assoc. of Police Control Centers, Dist. 911 (or _____)	# (800) 222-1222
Doctor _____	_____	_____
Pharmacist _____	_____	_____
Dentist _____	_____	_____
Hospital/Clinic _____	_____	_____
Wet _____	_____	_____
Electric Company _____	_____	_____
Gas Company _____	_____	_____
Water Company _____	_____	_____
Other _____	_____	_____
Other _____	_____	_____

For more information on emergency planning, visit the Western County 911 website at <http://www.westerncounty911.com> or call 911. Western County Emergency Management System 10-000-000

Disasters can strike quickly and without warning. They are frightening for adults and can be traumatic for children, especially if they don't know what to do. In a disaster, children will look to adults for help. How you react gives them clues about how to act.

Include your children in preparing for emergencies and disasters. Not only will they learn what the family's plans are, but including them in your planning will reduce their fear, anxiety, and confusion during a disaster.



## *Family Planning*

Begin your family planning by teaching your children when and how to call 911 (See the 911 Section in this book). It is important for them to know their address so responders know where to go. Teach children to identify landmarks for other locations they frequent (such as grandparent's or friend's houses).

Develop a fire response plan for your family and practice that plan often with your children. Much like a fire drill at school, children who know how to evacuate multiple ways from their home, where to go once outside, and what to expect when the fire department arrives may respond more quickly in an actual event.

## *Helping With Preparedness*

Children can help prepare, review, and replace emergency kit items. They can also contribute items that would be helpful to them in disasters such as puzzles, books, and games or comfort items like stuffed animals and blankets.

## *Response and Recovery*

When the danger has passed, concentrate on your child's emotions. Limit TV time that contains media coverage, comfort them, and be aware of changes in sleeping, eating, or other behaviors. More information can be found at [ready.gov/kids](http://ready.gov/kids).

Senior citizens often have specific needs that must be considered in their process of preparing and planning. The information in this section is intended to provide tools and resources that will assist you in preparing for, and responding to, an emergency or disaster.

## Create A Support Network

Seniors who anticipate needing assistance during a disaster should identify their personal support network now and coordinate their plan. This includes:

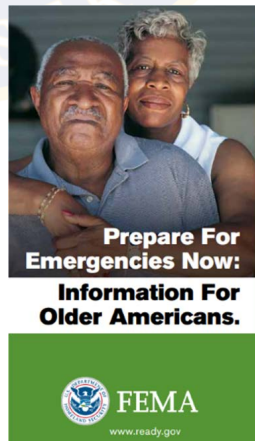
- Create a support network of family, friends, and others who can assist you during an emergency and share your disaster plans with them.
- Make sure they have an extra key to your home, know where you keep your emergency supplies and how to use lifesaving equipment or administer medicine.
- Make sure everyone in your support network knows how you plan to evacuate your home or workplace and where you will go.
- Consider a medical alert system so seniors with medical issues can quickly request assistance.

## Make A Plan

The reality of a disaster situation is that you will likely not have access to everyday conveniences. To plan in advance, think through the details of your everyday life.

- If there are people who assist you on a daily basis, list who they are, and how you will contact them in an emergency.
- If you require outside transportation, discuss their emergency plans to ensure they can assist you to medical appointments or for evacuations.
- If you require frequent medical appointments, talk with your medical provider about where to go if their services are unavailable or what to do if you are unable to access their services.

For more information visit <https://www.ready.gov/seniors>.



People with disabilities and other access and functional needs may need to consider additional preparations for emergencies and disasters. After a disaster you may not have quick access to a medical facility, transportation, or a drugstore. It is crucial to plan for your daily needs and know what to do if they become limited or unavailable. Additional preparedness steps include:

## *Create A Support Network*

- Create a support network of people who can help you in a disaster. Keep a contact list in your emergency kit or on your mobile devices.
- Inform your support network where you keep your emergency supplies. Consider giving a trusted member a key to your home or the codes to get in if you are unable to answer the door.
- Teach members of your support network to use lifesaving equipment or medicine.

## *Have A Back Up Plan*

- Plan ahead for accessible transportation that you may need for evacuating or getting around during or after a disaster. Check with local transit providers on their emergency plans.
- If you are on dialysis or other life-sustaining treatment know the location and availability of more than one facility that can help you.
- If you use medical equipment in your home that requires electricity, talk to your doctor or health care provider about what you may be able to do to keep it running during a power outage.

## *Help Responders Help You*

- Wear medical alert tags or bracelets. Add pertinent medical information to your electronic devices.
- Plan ahead for children and adults who may have difficulty in unfamiliar or chaotic environments.
- Consider support animals, their needs, and their reactions to chaotic environments.

## *Groups of People Who May Need Assistance In A Disaster*



Pets are important members of your family and should be included in your family's emergency plan.

## Make A Plan

- Have an evacuation plan for your pet. Many public shelters and hotels do not allow pets inside. Know a safe place where you can take your pets before an emergency happens.
- Develop a buddy system. Plan with neighbors, friends, or relatives to make sure that someone is available to care for or evacuate your pets if you are unable to do so.
- Have your pet microchipped. Make sure to keep your address and phone numbers updated and include information for an emergency contact outside of your immediate area.

## Build A Kit

Just as you do with your family's emergency kit, think about the basics needed for pets. Some items to include:

- Food (at least three days worth)
- Water and a bowl to pour it in
- Medicine
- Collar with ID Tag & harness/leash
- Copies of your pet's registration information and other documents
- Traveling bag or carrier
- Grooming items
- Sanitation needs (litter, box, waste bags)
- Picture of your pet (in case you get separated)
- Familiar items (toys, blankets, etc.)

## Plan Ahead

- Consider what to do when your family has to **evacuate and can't take your pets.**
- If evacuation of pets is not possible, consider what to provide them if they have to remain at home alone.
- Consider pet insurance to cover emergency injuries.



In emergency situations, communication breakdowns between citizens and responders can have dire consequences including misdiagnoses of injury or illness, lack of resource response for vital needs, and inability to assist with emergency issues. Below are some tips to help people with communication barriers prepare for emergencies and disasters. These barriers could include non-English speaking population, deaf citizens, and those with cognitive or developmental delays.

## *Plan Ahead*

- Plan for how to receive emergency notifications and warnings. Some notification systems cannot translate emergency messages into multiple languages. Know how to receive alerts and where to go for more information that you can understand.
- Keep handheld electronic devices charged and loaded with communication assistive applications.
- Prepare documents with your medical history, identified native language, and pertinent information that will help responders be able to assist you. Carry the document with you at all times.

## *Have A Back Up Plan*

- If you use an augmentative communication 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.
- Plan how you will communicate with others if your equipment is not working. This could include laminated cards with phrases, pen and paper, and/or pictograms.
- Create a buddy system with people who can translate messages between you and others.

## *Help Responders Help You*

- Wear medical alert tags or bracelets or carry a card to identify your communication barrier. Add pertinent medical and communication information to your electronic devices.





Disasters can happen anytime, even while you are on vacation. At home you will likely know what to do in an emergency, but in an unfamiliar setting you may be more vulnerable. Make preparations before your vacation to ensure you have a safe time.

## Know Details About Where You're Going

- Besides knowing the general location of your lodging and attractions, know the county you will be in. Weather watches and warnings typically contain the counties the warning areas cover.
- Know where to go to seek more information for emergencies and disasters. Learn the local news stations and radio stations that will provide **information about hazards for the area you're in.**
- Follow the county Emergency Management Agency's (EMA) **social media accounts.** These accounts will provide information and guidance during emergencies and disasters.

## Prepare For Vacation

- Create a vacation emergency kit. Include items like:
  - √ A simple first aid kit, with meds for common stomach bugs, headaches, allergies, and motion sickness.
  - √ A basic hygienic kit, with toothbrush, toothpaste, and other personal hygiene products.
  - √ Some food bars, which last a while and are good for nutrition on the go.
  - √ A small pouch or plastic bag for all your travel documents, including tickets and IDs.
  - √ An atlas or map(s) of the states you will be driving through or staying in or a GPS with maps loaded onto it. If a large-scale disaster occurs, cell service may be limited, hampering your ability to use navigation apps.
  - √ Emergency contact cards in case your phone is stolen or becomes inoperable.
- Make copies of your passport, your travel insurance paperwork, and your credit cards and remember to store them safely and not around your originals. In case of loss or theft you will be able to prove your identity and speed along police reports and other paperwork.
- Let your financial institutions know you will be traveling.

## When You Arrive

- Identify safe locations for severe weather and find out how emergency warnings are communicated in the area. If you have a newer smartphone, check to ensure that the “Emergency Alerts” option is enabled in your “settings” notification center. This will allow you to receive geographically-targeted, Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) messages about threats in your area.
- Lock valuables up in a safe (where available).

## Traveling Abroad?

- Learn about your destination, including visa requirements, local laws, customs, and medical care in the countries you will be visiting.
- Keep the contact details for the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate with you. Contact the U.S. Department of State for emergencies in other countries (888-407-4747). Also know the emergency number (like 911) for the countries you are visiting.
- Register with the U.S. Department of State through a free, online service called the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP). This allows the State Department to better assist U.S. travelers in an emergency.
- Make sure you have health insurance coverage for traveling abroad.
- Write down and learn basic phrases in the native language of areas you will be visiting. This may help emergency responders better assist you.
- Carry money wisely and in multiple forms.



# COMMUNICATIONS



## Section 3: **Communications**

Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so plan how you will contact one another.

Create a Family Communication Plan by collecting all contact information from your family and other important people or organizations such as medical facilities, doctors, schools, or service providers. You should have an in-area point of contact for every disaster and an out-of-state contact which enables everyone to share updates through that person if local communication is unavailable.

Families should carry a digital or wallet card copy of the Family Communication Plan at all times. Families can also sign up for social media apps to communicate in disasters.

In disasters, communication pathways may be disrupted. It's important to have many ways to communicate. Below are some tips on family communications in disasters:

- Limit non-emergency phone calls. This will minimize network congestion, free up “space” on the network for emergency communications and conserve battery power if you are using a wireless phone.
- Keep all phone calls brief.
- For non-emergency calls, try texting when using your wireless phone. In many cases text messages will go through when calls may not. The shorter the message, the more likely it is to go through to the intended receiver.
- If possible, try a variety of communications services. Use landlines, cellular phones, email, social media, and other means if your primary method does not work.

## **PSAP (Public Safety Answering Point)**

This is who answers when you call 911. Each have their own dispatch center.

- Warren County (PSAP)
- Franklin City (PSAP)
- Lebanon City (PSAP)



The Warren County Communications Center dispatches resources from the following agencies:

### **Warren County Police Agencies**

- Carlisle PD
- Morrow PD
- Mason PD
- Hamilton Twp PD
- Harveysburg PD
- Waynesville PD
- Springboro PD
- Clearcreek Twp PD
- Warren County Sheriff's Office



### **Warren County Fire / EMS Agencies**

- Carlisle FD
- JEMS (Joint Emergency Medical Services)
- Franklin Twp FD
- Clearcreek TWP Fire District
- Deerfield Twp FD
- Massie Twp FD
- Turtlecreek Twp FD
- Mason FD
- Harlan Twp FD
- Hamilton Twp FD
- Wayne Twp FD
- Salem Twp / Morrow FD
- Union Twp / South Lebanon FD



### **Also Dispatched by Warren County**

Dog Warden, Coroner's Office, Adult & Juvenile Probation, Mason Probation, Park Rangers, Technical Response Unit, Tech Rescue Team, Fire Investigation Team, Sinclair Police, and Lindner Center.

### **After Hours Contact For**

Road Depts, Water & Sewer, Health Dept, Children Services, Prosecutor's Office, EMA, and Human Services.

In an emergency, many people call 911. Below is some information about calling 911 in Warren County.

## What You Need to Know When Calling 911

- Address / Location of Emergency
- Nature of Emergency
- Phone Number



## When Do You Call 911?

When life or property is in danger and you need immediate police, fire, or medical response.

## Examples Of When To Call 911

- House is on fire or filling with smoke
- Someone is breaking into a house
- If you hear someone yelling for help
- If you see an accident
- Someone is very sick or injured



## Examples Of When NOT To Call 911

- To report a loud party or barking dog
- To ask about road / weather conditions
- To find out Trick or Treat Times



Instead, call the non-emergency number

513-695-2525

## If you accidentally call 911

- Stay on the line, do not hang up
- Explain the mistake
- Verify your information
- For kids, don't hesitate to get an adult when asked

*If you call 911 from a cell phone and hang up, you may receive a text stating officers have been dispatched to your location. If you receive that text and do not have an emergency, call the number listed.*



*If you call 911 from a landline and hang up, dispatchers will call you back to confirm if there is an emergency.*

911

## What to Expect When You Call 911

When you call 911 for an emergency, the Emergency Communications Operator (ECO) who answers is the vital link between you and first responders. The ECO needs to gather as much information as possible to relay to first responders.

While all of this information is being gathered, a radio dispatcher is routing emergency responders to your location. As you provide updates to the operator, they are providing updates to the dispatcher to give to responders.

*Some things to remember when you call 911:*

### Try To Stay Calm

It can be difficult for ECOs to understand you if you are yelling, talking fast, or crying. We understand that emergencies are stressful situations, and providing clear, concise information helps dispatchers send resources quickly.

Warren County Communications Center utilizes software that categorizes calls for the most appropriate response. The ECOs use this software to ask callers specific questions about each incident. Some questions may be repeated to confirm information, which can be frustrating to callers, but necessary for responders.

### While Waiting For Responders To Arrive

- Unlock the front door
- Place pets in an enclosed room
- Turn on outdoor lights to increase visibility
- If available, have someone flag down responders and guide them to the emergency

### Help Responders Help You

There are steps you can take to help responders find the location of your emergency. Some of those steps include:

- Display your address in an easy-to-see location with text large enough to clearly read
- Provide ECO with any codes to access your location (such as a garage code, alarm code, etc.)
- If you don't know the address of your location pull it up on a map on your phone, provide the nearest cross-streets, or provide a landmark to assist responders in finding you



# Teach Children About 911

Children need to know how, when and what information they will need to know when calling for help. Talk with your kids about the following:

- **Learn your address.** You will need to be able to tell dispatchers where to send help. Also know how to describe where you are if you have to call 911 from a friend's or family member's house.
- **NEVER call 911 as a joke.** When emergency operators take time to answer prank calls it may make someone with a real emergency wait for help.
- **Make sure you are safe before calling 911.** If your home is on fire, for instance, leave the house before calling for help.
- **Know how to call 911 from a locked cell phone.**
- **Don't practice calling 911 from an old cell phone.** Cell phones that do not currently have service but are powered on can still call 911.

## What If You Cannot Call 911?

All PSAPS in Warren County can receive texts to 911 from citizens who cannot call 911 for their emergency. To use this feature:

- Enter 911 in the "To" field
- Text your exact address and type of emergency (be concise)
- Send the message
- Use simple words and avoid abbreviations, emojis, photos, videos, or slang
- Promptly answer response questions if safe to do so

Keep in mind you may receive a bounce back message if you are roaming or in the area of a PSAP that does not have text-to-911. There is no language translation service for texts to 911, and delivery speed of texts are dependent on your cellular carrier.

If you are traveling while texting with a dispatcher and leave the coverage area you may lose contact with dispatch.



911



# **HAZARD-SPECIFIC INFORMATION**



# Section 4: Hazard-Specific Information

A first step in disaster preparedness is understanding the types of hazards you may experience in your area. Warren County has a Hazard Mitigation Plan which researches hazard occurrences and ranks them according to probability, impact, and county-level preparedness.

## Warren County Hazards

*(Ranked per Hazard Mitigation Plan criteria)*

- |                                |                                  |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Wind / Severe Storms        | 8. Dam Failure                   |
| 2. Floods                      | 9. Extreme Temperatures          |
| 3. Tornadoes                   | 10. Earthquake                   |
| 4. Hazmat Incidents            | 11. Landslides                   |
| 5. Winter Storms               | 12. Drought                      |
| 6. Man-Made / Terrorism Events | 13. Infectious Disease Outbreaks |
| 7. Invasive Species            | 14. Wildfires                    |

## Phases of Emergency Management

Emergency Management consists of four phases.

**Preparedness:** Activities that include developing plans, training, exercising, and obtaining necessary equipment or supplies to be ready to respond to emergencies and disasters.

**Response:** Actions taken in the immediate aftermath of a disaster or emergency. A well-planned response can save lives.

**Recovery:** Restoring normal community functions in the aftermath of a disaster or emergency. Depending on the nature and severity of the incident, recovery can be a short-term or long-term process.

**Mitigation:** Activities that prevent an emergency, reduce the likelihood of occurrence, or reduce the damaging effects of unavoidable hazards.

Each hazard in the following section of this guide contains information for each phase of emergency management to help citizens better prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate emergencies and disasters.



Cyberattacks occur when criminals try to gain illegal access to electronic data stored on a computer or a network. A data breach occurs when information is accessed without authorization. Developing strong cyber safety habits can help protect you from cyber attacks.

### Prepare

- Learn about phishing scams. Be suspicious of emails, phone calls, and flyers, especially if they are asking for personal information.
- Backup your data regularly. Use the 3-2-1 rule: Keep 3 copies of your data on 2 different types of media and 1 copy in an off-site location.

### Respond

- Confirm the breach & whether your information was compromised.
- Find out what type of data was stolen, monitor accounts, or contact agencies with the breached information to request they alert you to suspicious activity.
- Change and strengthen your login credentials and passwords.
- Immediately disconnect from the internet, remove remote access, and change firewall settings once aware of an attack.

### Recover

- Keep an eye out for weird behaviors on your devices. Some malware will remain even after a complete restore.
- File a complaint with the FBI. Report issues of identity theft.
- Replace the old with the new. Upgrade hardware & software with ones containing more sophisticated security features.
- After the network has been cleaned, restore data from a backup file.

### Mitigate

- Keep software up to date to mitigate ransomware attacks. Turn on automatic updates for your operating system.
- Use antivirus software and strong passwords. Do not use the same password twice. Best practice is a password containing letters, numbers, and symbols that is at least 14 characters long. Employ a secure password keeper to help manage passwords.
- Use two-factor or multi-factor authentication for additional layers of security when accessing sites with personal information.
- Check your online accounts and credit reports often for changes. Set up account alerts to help spot unusual activity.
- Never leave your devices unattended.
- Be careful what you click. Avoid visiting unknown websites or downloading software from untrusted sources. Check email addresses or domain name links before clicking.
- Secure your router with a strong password. Use strong encryption, like WPA2 or WPA3 encryption, to protect data sent over your network.
- Don't use public Wi-Fi without using a Virtual Private Network (VPN). Cybercriminals can easily access devices on public Wi-Fi networks.

An infectious disease outbreak (or pandemic) is caused by micro-organisms such as bacteria, viruses, and parasites. This could include localized, regional, national, or global outbreaks that put a strain on the healthcare system.

### Prepare

- Add hygiene items to your home emergency preparedness kit such as hand sanitizer, gloves, face masks, tissues, a thermometer, etc.
- Know where to go for reliable information.
- Prepare for the possibility of schools, workplaces, and community centers being closed.
- Gather supplies in case you need to stay home for several days or weeks.

### Respond

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and try not to touch your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Keep a distance of at least 6 feet between yourself and people who are not part of your household.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a mask in public.
- Stay at home as much as possible to prevent the spread of disease.
- Follow the guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and local public health.
- If you believe you have been exposed to the disease contact your doctor, follow quarantine instructions from medical providers, and monitor your symptoms.
- Seek medical treatment for serious medical symptoms.

### Recover

- Stay home when you are sick, follow guidance from healthcare providers, cover your coughs and sneezes, and continue practicing good hygiene.
- Seek assistance for medical, emotional, or mental stress.

### Mitigate

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick or exhibiting symptoms of the current
- Clean and disinfect high-touch objects and surfaces.
- For those susceptible to the effects of the current virus, determine whether it is safe to



# DROUGHT

A drought is defined as a shortage of water over an extended period. Drought is a natural hazard, with slow onset that evolves over months or years.

The National Drought Mitigation Center classifies droughts as such:

Drought Severity	Return Period (Years)	Description of Possible Impacts
Minor Drought	3 to 4	Entering drought—short-term dryness slowing the growth of crops or pastures, fire risk is above average. Coming out of drought—some lingering water deficits, pastures/ crops are not fully recovered.
Moderate Drought	5 to 9	Some damage to crops or pastures, fire risk high, streams, reservoirs, or wells are low, some water shortages are developing or imminent, voluntary water use restrictions requested.
Severe Drought	10 to 17	Crop or pasture losses are likely, fire risk very high, water shortages are common, water restrictions imposed.
Extreme Drought	18 to 43	Major crop and pasture losses, extreme fire danger, widespread water shortages or restrictions.
Exceptional Drought	44+	Exceptional and widespread crop and pasture losses, exceptional fire risk, shortages of water in reservoirs, streams, and wells creating water emergencies.

The longest period of drought occurs in years with El Niño weather patterns which affect jet streams and temperature conditions.

## Prepare

- Take steps to reduce water usage both inside and outside your home.
- Repair dripping faucets and check all plumbing for leaks.
- Check your well pump periodically. If the automatic pump turns on and off while water is not being used, you may have a leak.
- Cover pools and spas to reduce evaporation of water.
- Collect rainwater to use for secondary purposes like water for landscaping, washing cars, etc.
- Keep emergency water on hand, and consider keeping non-perishable food that doesn't require water to prepare.

## Respond

- Reduce use of sink disposals, which require a lot of water to operate. Instead, start a compost pile to dispose of food waste.
- Avoid flushing toilets unnecessarily. Dispose of tissues, insects, and other similar waste in the trash rather than the toilet.
- Avoid taking baths. Take short showers; turn on water only to get wet and lather and then again to rinse off.
- Avoid letting the water run while brushing your teeth, washing your face, or shaving.
- Place a bucket in the shower to catch excess water for plants.
- Operate automatic dishwashers only when they are fully loaded. Use the "light wash" feature, if available, to use less water.
- Avoid igniting a flame through bonfires, fireworks, and outdoor grilling. Dispose of cigarette butts responsibly.
- Water plants during the evening / night to reduce evaporation.
- Use collected rainwater for non-potable water needs.



## Recover

- Prune dead limbs and flowers to enhance new growth.
- Check your foundation and / or basement for cracks (since changes in soil can affect your home's structural integrity).
- Consider planting drought-tolerant landscaping that takes less water consumption for a few years following a drought.
- Aerify lawns to improve water retainment & oxygen concentration.

## Mitigate

- Choose appliances that are water and energy efficient.
- Install low volume toilets that use less water than older models.
- Replace your showerhead with an ultra-low-flow version.
- Plant native and/or drought-tolerant grasses, ground covers, shrubs, and trees or small plants that require less water .
- Use mulch to retain moisture in the soil. Mulch also helps control weeds that compete with landscape plants for water.
- Raise the lawn mower blade to at least three inches or to its highest level. A higher cut encourages grass roots to grow deeper, shades the root system, and holds soil moisture.
- Plant drought-resistant lawn seed.
- Avoid over-fertilizing your lawn. Applying fertilizer increases the need for water.

An earthquake is a sudden, rapid shaking of the ground caused by the shifting of rocks deep underneath the earth's surface.

Seismic magnitude scales are used to describe the overall strength or "size" of an earthquake.

Earthquake Magnitude and Intensity				
Magnitude (M <sub>w</sub> )	Intensity (Mercalli Scale)	Description	Perceived Shaking	Potential Damage
1.0 – 3.0	I	I. Not felt except by very few people under especially favorable conditions.	Not felt	None
3.0 – 3.9	II – III	II. Felt by a few people, especially those on upper floors. Suspended objects swing.	Weak	None
		III. Felt noticeably indoors. Many do not recognize it as an earthquake. Standing motorcars may rock.	Weak	None
4.0 – 4.9	IV – V	IV. Felt indoors; felt by a few outdoors. At night, some awakened. Dishes, windows, and doors rattle.	Light	None
	IV-V	V. Felt by multitudes; Some dishes and windows broken; some cracked plaster; unstable objects overturned.	Moderate	Very Light
5.0 – 5.9	VI – VII	VI. Felt by everyone; Some heavy furniture moved; some fallen plaster or damaged chimneys. Considerable damage in poorly constructed buildings.	Strong	Light
		VII. Damage negligible in well-constructed buildings; considerable damage in poorly constructed buildings.	Very Strong	Moderate
6.0 – 6.9	VII – IX	VIII. Damage slight in specially-designed structures; considerable in ordinary buildings; great in poorly built structures. Heavy furniture overturned. Chimneys, monuments, may topple.	Severe	Moderate to Heavy
		IX. Damage considerable in specially designed structures. Buildings shift from foundations and collapse. Ground cracked. Underground pipes broken.	Violent	Heavy
7.0 and Higher	VIII and Higher	X. Some well-built wooden structures destroyed. Most masonry structures destroyed. Ground badly cracked. Landslides on steep slopes.	Extreme	Very Heavy
		XI. Few, if any, masonry structures remain standing. Railroad rails bent; bridges destroyed. Broad fissure in the ground.	Extreme	Very Heavy
		XII. Virtually total destruction. Waves seen on ground. Objects thrown into the air.	Extreme	Very Heavy

## Prepare

- Know how to quickly shut off utilities in your home.
- Be prepared to evacuate quickly.
- Store heavy and breakable items on lower shelves.
- Consult your insurance agent about earthquake insurance.

## Respond

- If you are indoors take cover under a sturdy desk, table, or bench or against an inside wall and hold on. Do not use elevators.
- Be cautious when going outdoors after the shaking stops. Gas lines may have ruptured or utility lines may be on the ground.
- If you are in the car, avoid stopping near or under buildings, trees, overpasses, and utility wires. Do not attempt to drive across bridges or overpasses during or immediately after an earthquake.
- If you are outdoors, get into an open area. Stay clear of buildings, power lines, streetlights, and anything that can fall on you.
- Check on friends and neighbors when it is safe to do so.

## Recover

- Check the building for cracks and damage, particularly around chimneys and masonry walls.
- Be cautious when opening closets and cupboards.
- Check gas, electrical, and water lines and check appliances for damage. If you hear a hissing sound evacuate immediately and call for help.
- Expect aftershocks and be prepared to respond accordingly.
- Catalog your damages and contact your insurance agent.

## Mitigate

- Install flexible, corrugated pipe fittings to avoid gas and water leaks. Flexible fittings are more resistant to breakage.
- Conduct a thorough investigation of your home, checking for any defective wiring, leaky gas connections, and deep cracks in the ceiling or foundation that could pose a danger during a quake.
- Secure water heaters to wall studs with metal straps.
- Secure heavy objects such as bookcases, mirrors, shelves, etc. against the wall using bolts or straps.
- Check your chimney and roof and repair loose tiles and bricks.





Extreme temperatures are those outside the norm for a particular region that last for an extended period of time.

### Extreme Temperature Warnings

Extreme Heat	
Excessive Heat Outlooks	Issued when the potential exists for an excessive heat event in the next 3-7 days.
Heat Advisory	Issued within 12 hours of the onset of extremely dangerous heat conditions (typically when max heat index is expected to be 100°F or higher for at least 2 days and where nighttime temps are not below 75°F)
Excessive Heat Watch	Issued when conditions are favorable for an excessive heat event in the next 24-72 hours. A watch is used when risk of heat wave has increased but its occurrence and timing are uncertain.
Excessive Heat Warning	Issued within 12 hours of the onset of extremely dangerous heat conditions (typically when max heat index is expected to be 105°F or higher for at least 2 days with nighttime temps are not below 75°F)
Extreme Cold	
Wind Chill Advisory	Issued when seasonably cold wind chill values (but not extremely cold values) are expected or occurring.
Wind Chill Watch	Issued when dangerously cold wind chill values are possible.
Wind Chill Warning	Issued when dangerously cold wind chill values are expected or occurring.

#### Prepare

- Learn the signs and basic treatments of heat illness.
- Identify places in your community where you can get cool such as libraries and shopping malls.
- Learn the signs and basic treatments for frostbite and hypothermia.
- Know the location for emergency water shut-off in case pipes burst.
- Check that fireplaces, wood stoves, and electric heaters are working properly before cold temperatures hit.
- Be prepared for power outages due to increased demand for heating and cooling sources.

## Respond

- Cover windows with drapes or shade to keep heat out.
- Use a powered attic ventilator or attic fan to regulate the heat level of a building's attic by clearing out the air.
- Install window air conditioners to help provide cool air.
- NEVER leave pets or people in closed vehicles on warm days.
- Drink plenty of fluids to stay hydrated on warm days.
- Avoid high-energy activities or work outdoors during mid-day heat.
- During cold spells, keep your house heated to a minimum of 65°F.
- Keep your fireplace flue closed when you're not using it to keep heat from escaping.
- Open cabinet doors to allow more heat to get to un-insulated pipes under a sink or appliance near an outside wall.
- If you plan to be away have someone check on your house daily to make sure everything is working properly and there is no damage.
- Learn how to use space heaters safely.
- Check on family members and neighbors.

## Recover

- Properly dry and repair any water damage from burst pipes.
- Remove additional coverings from windows and doors.
- Service heating and air conditioning units that have been working overtime to keep up with extreme temperatures.

## Mitigate

- Install weather stripping on doors and windows to prevent air inside the home from escaping.
- Add insulation to keep the heat out during summer months.
- Disconnect garden hoses and shut off and drain water from pipes leading to outside faucets to reduce the chance of freezing.
- Close off rooms that are seldomly used to keep heat from escaping the room.
- Minimize direct exposure to the sun. Sunburn reduces your body's ability to dissipate heat.

Flooding is a temporary overflow of water onto land that is normally dry. Flooding can be gradual, from rains occurring over time, or sudden from downstream effects or heavy rains.

## Types of Flood Notifications

Flood advisory	<b>Be Aware:</b> A flood advisory is issued when flooding is not expected to be bad enough to issue a warning but it may cause significant inconvenience.
Flood Watch	<b>Be Prepared:</b> Issued when conditions are favorable for flooding. This doesn't necessarily mean that flooding is happening, but it is possible.
Flood Warning	<b>Take Action:</b> Issued when flooding is imminent or occurring.
Flash Flood Warning	<b>Take Action:</b> Issued when a sudden, violent flood can occur within minutes or hours. People in flood-prone areas should move to higher ground immediately.

### Prepare

- Know the types of flood risk in your area and monitor potential risks.
- Move valuables to a higher level when under a flood advisory or watch.
- Purchase or renew your flood insurance policy. Check to see if it covers external flooding, internal flooding (like water from burst pipes), and sewer backup flooding.
- Keep important documents in a water-proof container.
- Learn and practice evacuation routes, shelter plans, and flash flood plans.
- Make sure your home emergency kit is ready for quick evacuation for your family and pets.

### Respond

- Evacuate immediately if told to evacuate. **NEVER** drive around barricades back into flooded areas.
- Listen to the Emergency Alert System, NOAA Weather Radio, or local alerting systems for current emergency information and instructions.
- Go to the highest level if trapped in a building. Only get on the roof if necessary and once there signal for help. Do not climb into a closed attic to avoid getting trapped by rising floodwater.
- During heavy rain, avoid underpasses, underground parking garages, and basements.
- NEVER** play, swim, or wade through flood waters. Hazards can be present in the water such as downed electrical lines, hazardous materials, or wildlife such as snakes.

## Respond ctd.

- Turn off electricity and other utilities if flooding is imminent.
- NEVER** drive or walk through flooded streets! Turn Around, Don't Drown!
- Check on your family and neighbors.
- Don't walk in water above your ankles; you can be swept off your feet in as little as 6 inches of rushing water.



## Recover

- Return home only when authorities say it is safe.
- Immediately catalog damages to your property and turn them in to your insurance company.
- Follow local cleanup (and other) guidance after a flood.
- Throw away items that cannot be disinfected, like wall coverings, cloth, rugs, and drywall.
- Wear insect repellent in the weeks following a flood. Insects, especially mosquitos, thrive in wet environments.
- Immediately remove all items from your home with traces of mold.

## Mitigate

- Declutter drains and gutters to prevent backflow flooding.
- Check your sump pump often to ensure it works. Consider a sump pump with a battery backup and change batteries often.
- Install check valves and backflow preventers (where applicable).
- Elevate utilities to prevent flood damage.
- Install a water alarm in your basement to alert you when water has entered your structure. This will help with quick response.
- Help keep storm drains clear.
- If your property is prone to flooding, have sandbags, plastic sheeting, and other flood-fighting materials on hand.

# HAZARDOUS MATERIALS EVENTS

Hazardous materials can include explosives, flammable and combustible substances, poisons, and radioactive materials. Emergencies can happen during production, storage, transportation, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. You are at risk when chemicals are used unsafely or released in harmful amounts.

## Prepare

- Know how to operate your home's ventilation system.
- Be prepared to quickly evacuate or shelter in place (See shelter in place section in this guide).
- Identify an above-ground shelter room with as few openings as possible. The room should be above ground, large enough to accommodate all household members and pets, and have the fewest exterior windows and doors.
- Make sure your preparedness plan includes who will gather or care for your pets if evacuation is ordered for your neighborhood and you are not at home.
- Learn how to read hazmat placards and know the dangers involved. Look up the number on the placard on Google, the WISER Chemical site, or the Emergency Response Guidebook.



## Respond

### If you are **EXPOSED**

- Call 911 and report the incident immediately and report the chemical involved.
- Follow guidance immediately as outlined by Safety Data Sheets or first responders.
- Take measures to limit exposures to others.

### If you are asked to **EVACUATE**

- Evacuate immediately.
- Stay tuned to the radio or television for information on evacuation routes, temporary shelters, and procedures.
- If you have time, minimize contamination in the house by closing all windows, shutting all vents, and turning off attic fans.
- Take pre-assembled disaster supplies (in your emergency kit) with you. It is ideal to have at least 3 days worth of supplies.
- Remember to help your neighbors who may require special assistance to evacuate.

### If you are **CAUGHT OUTSIDE**

- Stay upstream, uphill, and upwind from the incident.
- Do not walk into or touch any spilled liquids, airborne mists, or solid chemical deposits. Try not to inhale gases, fumes, or smoke. If possible cover your mouth with a cloth or mask while leaving the area.
- Stay away from the area until local authorities have deemed it safe to return.

## Respond ctd.

### If you are **IN A CAR**

- Stop and seek shelter in a permanent building.
- If you must remain in your car, keep car windows and vents closed and shut off the air conditioner and heater.

### If you are asked to **STAY INDOORS**

- Bring pets inside.
- Close and lock all exterior doors and windows. Close vents, fireplace dampers and as many interior doors as possible.
- Turn off air conditioners and ventilation systems, or set ventilation systems to 100 percent recirculation so that no outside air is drawn into the building.
- Avoid eating or drinking food or water that may be contaminated.
- Go into your pre-selected shelter room.
- Seal gaps under and around the following areas with wet towels, plastic sheeting, duct tape, wax paper, or aluminum foil: Doorways and windows, air conditioning units, bathroom and kitchen exhaust fans, stove and dryer vents (with duct tape or plastic sheeting).

### **NO MATTER WHERE YOU ARE**

- Monitor media for emergency information.
- DO NOT** touch anyone who may be contaminated unless local authorities deem it safe to do so.

## Recover

- Follow decontamination instructions from local authorities.
- DO NOT** return home until local authorities say it is safe.
- Seek medical treatment if you were exposed and develop symptoms outlined by local public health or local authorities.
- Continue to monitor media for emergency information.
- Check on family, friends, and neighbors.

## Mitigate

- Know information about the chemicals you use at home, work, or other places you frequent including how to use them safely, what to do if a spill or release occurs, and decontamination procedures.
- Know how to read and understand Safety Data Sheets for chemicals.
- Have a written Hazmat Spill Response Plan for work.
- Never mix household chemicals. Some chemicals, when mixed, can react, ignite, or explode.

House fires are common threats that can affect lives and property. There are more than 350,000 house fires per year in the U.S. but there are steps you can take to prevent fires and prepare your family before a fire occurs.

## Prepare

- Design a home fire response plan and practice that plan with all members of your family at least twice per year. Refer to the Resources Section in this guide to help create your fire response plan.
- Make sure windows are not stuck, screens can be taken out quickly, and security bars can be properly opened.
- Teach children not to hide from firefighters.
- Pick a family meeting spot that is near your home but not in the way of the responding fire department. This can be a neighbors house, spot in the yard, or other landmark that children will remember.
- Make sure your house numbers are easily readable from the street, even at night.
- Perform regular fire drills with your family so they know what to do in an actual fire.
- Install fire escape ladders on all second story windows and teach your family how to use them.
- Install smoke alarms on every floor of your home and outside every sleeping area. Replace the batteries twice a year. Replace the total alarm after 10 years.
- Plan two ways out of every room. Secure or remove objects that could block egress paths.

## Respond

- Call 911 immediately to report fires.
- If you are in a fire, drop to the floor and crawl below the smoke to your exit.
- Before opening any door feel the door with the back of your hand. Heat on the door may indicate fire is on the other side.
- If you can't exit the room, close the door and cover vents and cracks around doors to keep the smoke out. Stay where you are and signal for help at the window with a flashlight, by waving a cloth, or throwing things out the window to get someone's attention.
- If you catch on fire, **stop, drop, and roll** while covering your face.
- If pets are trapped in your home tell firefighters right away. Do not go back inside to retrieve them.
- If you are cooking and a fire starts in the pan, slide a lid over the burning pan and turn off the burner. Leave the lid in place until the pan is completely cool. Never pour water over grease fires.
- If you can extinguish the fire safely, do so but call the fire department to ensure it will not rekindle.



## Recover

- Contact your local disaster relief service, such as the Red Cross, if you need temporary housing, food, and medicines.
- Check with the fire department to make sure your residence is safe to enter.
- DO NOT attempt to reconnect utilities yourself. The fire department should make sure that utilities are either safe to use or are disconnected before they leave the site.
- Conduct an inventory of damaged property and items. Do not throw away any damaged goods until after you make an inventory of your items.
- Begin saving receipts for any money you spend related to fire loss. The receipts may be needed later by the insurance company and for verifying losses claimed on your income tax.
- Notify your mortgage company of the fire.

## Mitigate

- Keep items that can catch fire at least three feet away from anything that gets hot such as space heaters and fireplaces.
- If you smoke, smoke outside and don't ever smoke in bed, while drowsy or medicated, or if anyone in the home uses oxygen. Don't toss hot cigarette butts into landscaping.
- Turn portable heaters off when leaving the room or going to sleep. Keep portable space heaters at least three feet away from other items.
- Don't leave burning candles unattended.
- Maintain your home's heating sources regularly.
- Have electrical wiring inspected in your home, especially if it is older.
- Store combustible materials in open areas away from heat sources. Place rags used to apply flammable household chemicals in metal containers with tight-fitting lids.
- Stay in the kitchen when frying, grilling, or broiling food. Stay in the home while simmering, baking, roasting, or boiling food.
- Keep pets off cooking surfaces and countertops. Keep the stove area clean and clear of things that can catch fire, such as pot holders, towels, curtains, bags, and other appliances.
- Replace worn, old, or damaged electrical cords. Never run electrical cords under rugs or furniture.
- Store matches and lighters out of children's reach and sight, preferably in a locked cabinet.
- Place barbeque grills at least 10 feet away from siding and deck railings, and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.



# POWER OUTAGES

Power outages occur when the electrical power goes out unexpectedly. Extended outages may impact the whole community and the economy. These outages may occur on their own or as a cascading effect of storms, extreme temperatures, or other hazards.

## Prepare

- Have a supply of cash on hand. Stores may not be able to process credit card transactions but may be able to accept cash.
- Have alternate plans for refrigerating medication or using power-dependent medical devices.
- Ensure you have enough batteries to power flashlights, radios, etc. Charge battery packs for phones or other equipment.
- Install carbon monoxide detectors with battery backup in central locations on every level of your home.
- If severe weather or power outages are expected, fill your vehicles with fuel. Many fuel stations do not have generator backup.
- Maintain a supply of non-perishable food on hand and a manual can opener for food.
- Ensure electronic security device batteries are in working order. This includes electronic locks, security alarms/doorbells, camera systems, and garage door opening devices (where applicable). Know how to enter your home and secure it during long-term power outages.
- Have multiple ways to receive updates that don't include televisions or computers that rely on electricity.

## Respond

- Check the outages maps for your electric provider to determine if the issue is widespread. Report local outages to your provider.
- Unplug any appliances or electronics to avoid power surge damage once the power is restored.
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed. The refrigerator will keep food cold for about four hours and a full freezer for about 48 hours if kept closed. Monitor temperatures with a thermometer.
- Utilize generators for household needs, but **ONLY** use them outdoors and away from windows.
- DO NOT** use a gas oven to heat your home.
- Check with local authorities to see if your community offers a warming or cooling shelter during power outages when extreme temperatures are present.
- Generators, camp stoves, and grills should be used outdoors and at least 20 feet away from your home.
- During winter storm power outages, dress in layers to keep warm. In warm weather drink lots of water to stay hydrated.
- Treat blacked out or flashing stoplights as four-way stops and proceed through intersections with caution.
- Check on your family, friends, and neighbors.

## Recover

- Throw out any food that has been exposed to temperatures 40 degrees or higher for two hours or more, or that have an unusual odor, color, or texture.
- When the power comes back on, wait a few minutes before plugging items back in as power surges could still occur. Turn on essential appliances first and then gradually turn on other electronics.
- Reset digital clocks, timers, alarms, network routers, and other essential items.
- If you operated your garage door opener manually using the emergency release cord, you'll need to reconnect the door to the opener. See manufacturer's instructions for details.
- Consult professionals if utility systems are not functioning properly after a power outage.
- Check your outlets to ensure they are all in working order. You can take a small device such as a cell phone and charger, can opener, etc. around the house to check outlets.
- Make sure to turn off and disconnect portable generators. Resupply fuel and perform general maintenance on the unit.
- Check your sump pump to ensure it is working on normal power. Replace the batteries so they are ready for the next potential outage.

## Mitigate

- Install sump pumps with battery backups to mitigate flooding in your home.
- Consider buying surge protectors to protect your appliances, and electronic devices.
- Consider purchasing a portable generator or whole house generator to minimize power outage disruptions to your home. Ensure you know how to use the generator safely, have sufficient fuel, and you test the generator's function occasionally.
- Contact your local electric provider to report tree limbs that may impact power lines during high winds and storms.



BE PREPARED FOR A  
**POWER  
OUTAGE**

Severe thunderstorms are defined as storms that are capable of producing hail that is an inch or larger or wind gusts over 58 mph. Hail this size can damage property such as plants, roofs and vehicles. Wind this strong is able to break off large branches, knock over trees or cause structural damage to trees. Thunderstorms also produce tornadoes and dangerous lightning; heavy rain from storms can cause flash flooding.

<u>Severe Thunderstorm Watch</u>	<u>Severe Thunderstorm Warning</u>
<p><b>Tune In:</b> to NOAA weather radio  <b>Review</b> where you will go for protection  <b>Alert</b> anyone you know who may not be tuned-in or may need assistance to reach a protective location  <b>Charge</b> your cell phone in case the power goes out</p>	<p><b>Take Action Immediately!</b>  <b>Seek Shelter:</b> in a safe room, basement, or interior room. If outdoors find shelter or shelter in a vehicle or lie flat in a ditch lower than the roadway.  <b>Take Cover</b></p>

## Prepare

- Pick a safe room in your home where household members and pets may gather during a severe thunderstorm. This should be a basement, cellar, or an interior room on the lowest floor with no windows.
- Review the contents in your emergency kit and prepare to pre-stage it in your shelter location.
- Make a plan for sheltering, evacuating, and communicating for places you visit often (work, school, church, etc.).
- Purchase a NOAA Weather Radio or have multiple ways to receive weather alerts.
- Charge all electronic devices and check your flashlight and batteries to prepare for power outages.
- Reconsider outdoor plans if severe weather is forecasted.
- When severe weather is anticipated, secure loose outdoor items such as lawn furniture, trash cans, hanging plants, etc.

## Respond

- Stay weather aware by monitoring weather conditions and local media or radio to receive weather updates.
- When thunder roars, go indoors & stay there for at least 30 minutes.
- Get out of boats and stay away from bodies of water.
- Avoid running water or using electronic devices connected to an electrical outlet during the storm. Electricity from lightning can travel through plumbing and electrical lines.

*Respond ctd.*

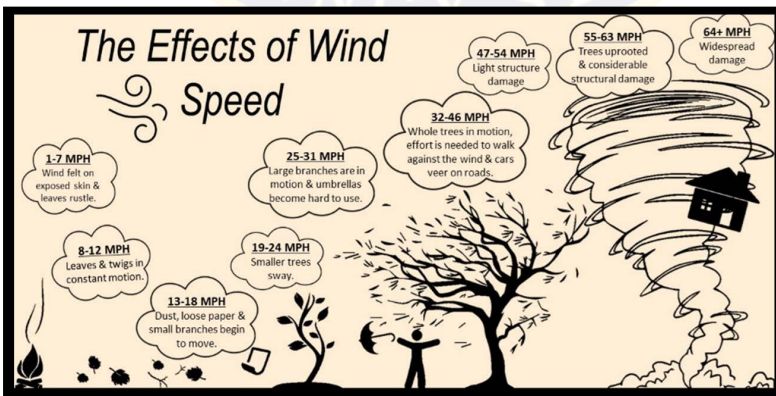
- If you are outside during the storm get to a well-built building or a hard topped car.
- Stay indoors, away from windows and doors during the storm.
- Put on sturdy shoes (to protect your feet if you have to evacuate).
- Grab your emergency kit and take it to your safe location.

*Recover*

- Don't come out of shelter until storm is over. Watch for signs of hazards such as downed limbs or power lines.
- Help injured or trapped persons. Provide first aid where appropriate.
- Check your home and appliances for damage. Evacuate immediately if you smell gas or hear hissing.
- Photograph your damages and inventory your losses. Contact your insurance agent as soon as possible to report damages.
- If outdoors, stay clear of fallen power lines / other damaged utilities.
- Don't enter damaged buildings until you are informed they are safe.
- Follow local cleanup (and other) guidance after a storm.
- Follow your county EMA on social media for more information.

*Mitigate*

- Trim dead or loose tree limbs.
- Secure loose outdoor items and anchor or secure outdoor buildings.
- Reinforce vulnerable areas of your structure.
- Construct a safe / shelter room.
- Consider buying surge protectors or a lightning protection system to protect your home, appliances, and electronic devices.



Shelter in place means finding a safe location indoors and staying there until you are given an “all clear” or told to evacuate. You may be asked to shelter in place due to an active aggressor, tornado, or chemical, radiological, or other hazard.



### Prepare

- Consider what you might need if you have to shelter in place for several hours. Make sure your emergency kit contains enough supplies for everyone who will shelter with you in your household.
- Identify a safe room in your home.
- Know the shelter in place plans for areas you frequent and how you respond if you are outside the shelter in place zone. This includes how and where you can pick up your children, how to help people with access and functional needs, etc.
- Develop your Family Communication Plan and know how to check in with one another when ordered to shelter in place.

### Respond

- When alerted to shelter in place follow guidelines, check media and local authorities' social media often to get the latest updates. Only follow information from trusted sources.
- DO NOT** call 911 to find out why the shelter in place was ordered. Only call 911 if you have a real emergency that requires first responder intervention.
- In an active aggressor situation, determine whether you need to barricade yourself. Know if the door opens outward or inward. Test the lock. Find items to help barricade.
- For severe weather requiring shelter put as many walls between you and the outside as possible and head to the lowest floor possible.
- If told to shelter for hazmat incident, close and lock all exterior doors and windows. Follow Hazmat Section in this guide and directions from local authorities.
- If outside, seek shelter in the nearest building.
- DON'T** leave the shelter location unless told it is safe to do so.

### Recover

- Seek medical attention if you suspect you were exposed when shelter in place order is lifted.
- Follow guidance from local authorities before leaving your shelter location. Depending on the situation, perform a damage assessment and report home damages to your insurance company.
- Check on family, friends, and neighbors.

A tornado is a violently rotating column of air extending from the base of a thunderstorm down to the ground.

<b><u>Tornado Watch</u></b>	<b><u>Tornado Warning</u></b>
<p><b>Tune in:</b> to NOAA weather radio</p> <p><b>Prepare</b> pre-place your home emergency kit &amp; put on shoes</p> <p><b>Alert</b> anyone you know who may not be tuned-in or may need assistance to reach a protective location</p> <p><b>Charge</b> your cell phone in case the power goes out</p>	<p><b>Take Action Immediately!</b></p> <p><b>Seek Shelter:</b> in a safe room, basement, or interior room. If outdoors find shelter or shelter in a vehicle or lie flat in a ditch lower than the roadway.</p> <p><b>Take Cover</b></p>

### Prepare

- Pick a safe room in your home where family members and pets go for tornado warnings. This should be an interior room with no windows, on the lowest floor possible.
- Practice your tornado response plan regularly.
- Follow the preparation steps in the Severe Storm section in this guide.

### Respond

- Grab your emergency kit and seek shelter. Mobile homes are not safe shelter locations, find alternate shelter if possible. Avoid large rooms such as gyms, auditoriums, and large open-ceiling businesses.
- If outdoors, find the nearest shelter. If in a car, get out of the car and find a shelter or lie flat in a ditch or low-lying area away from the vehicle. Be aware for potential flooding. Use your arms to protect your head and neck.
- DO NOT** come out of the shelter until storm is over.
- Listen to NOAA weather radio or to commercial radio or television for information.
- Put on sturdy shoes (You may need to protect your feet if you have to evacuate).

### Recover

- Help injured or trapped persons. Give first aid when appropriate. Don't try to move the seriously injured unless they are in immediate danger of further injury.
- Stay out of damaged buildings. Only return home when authorities say it is safe.

### Mitigate

- Consider purchasing a tornado safe room or storm shelter.

Secure outdoor items ahead of the storm. Patio furniture, tree branches, and grills can become projectiles in high velocity winds.

WEAK	MODERATE	INTENSE	SEVERE	DEVASTATING	CATASTROPHIC
					
65 - 85 MPH	86 - 110 MPH	111 - 135 MPH	136 - 165 MPH	166 - 200 MPH	200+ MPH
MINOR DAMAGE	ROOF DAMAGE	HOUSES DAMAGED	BUILDINGS LOST	TRAINS TOPPLED	TOWNS DESTROYED
<b>EF-0</b>	<b>EF-1</b>	<b>EF-2</b>	<b>EF-3</b>	<b>EF-4</b>	<b>EF-5</b>

Winter storms create a higher risk of car accidents, hypothermia, frostbite, carbon monoxide poisoning, and heart attacks from overexertion.

## Know The Terms

Winter Weather Advisory	Issued when snow, blowing snow, ice, sleet, or a combination is expected but conditions should not be hazardous enough to meet warning criteria.
Freezing Rain Advisory	Issued when light ice accumulation (Freezing rain and/or freezing drizzle) is expected but will not reach warning criteria. Expect a glaze on roads.
Blizzard Watch	Issued when there is a potential for falling and/or blowing snow with strong winds and extremely poor visibilities which can lead to whiteout conditions.
Winter Storm Watch	Issued when conditions are favorable for a significant winter storm event (heavy sleet, heavy snow, ice storm, and blowing snow or combination). Tune into NOAA weather radio, commercial radio, or television for more information.
Winter Storm Warning	A winter storm is occurring or will soon occur in your area.
Blizzard Warning	Sustained winds or frequent gusts up to 35mph or greater and considerable amounts of falling or blowing snow lasting three hours or longer is expected or occurring.
Frost / Freeze Warning	Below freezing temperatures are expected.

## Prepare

- Purchase rock salt, sand for traction, and snow shovels / snow removal equipment.
- Have your heating system serviced and your fireplace cleaned and inspected before winter arrives. Purchase heating fuel before winter arrives (where needed).
- Winterize your vehicles. Replace wiper blades, consider switching to winter tires, check your battery, add a snow brush and ice scraper to your car, add a snow shovel, blanket, extra clothing, and sand / kitty litter in your car emergency kit.
- Prepare your home to keep out the cold with insulation, caulking, and weather stripping. Learn how to keep pipes from freezing. Install and test carbon monoxide detectors.
- Learn the signs of, and basic treatments for, hypothermia & frostbite.
- Fill vehicles with fuel when winter weather is forecasted.
- Prepare ahead for school closures and hazardous road conditions.

## Respond

- If there is a winter storm warning stay off roads, stay indoors and dress warmly, prepare for power outages, and check on family, friends, and neighbors.
- Limit your time outside. If you need to go outside, wear layers of warm clothing. Watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia.
- Avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. Only use generators and grills outdoors and away from windows. Never heat your home with a gas stovetop or oven.
- Reduce the risk of a heart attack. Avoid overexertion when shoveling snow. Stretch before shoveling and rest frequently to reduce muscle strain.
- If you get stranded in your vehicle, stay in the vehicle, run the heat 10 minutes per hour to save battery power, and keep snow clear from the exhaust pipe to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Give yourself extra time for your commutes when weather is bad.
- Dress in layers to keep your body warm. Insulate your head, hands, and feet with warm layers, cover as much exposed skin as possible, and limit your time outdoors.
- Shovel snow before it is walked on or driven on. To melt ice, sprinkle a layer of rock salt. Once the ice starts to melt, scrape the surface clean to prevent the deicer from damaging the concrete.
- Check on friends, family, and neighbors who may need assistance.
- Ensure outdoor animals have a safe, clean supply of fresh water that is not frozen. Provide shelter from winter weather for animals who are kept outside.

## Recover

- Check your foundation and roof for leaks or damage.
- Remove any ice dams that form on your home and perform mitigation measures to prevent further ice dams.
- Replace non-perishable foods and other items that were used while sheltering in your home during winter storms.

## Mitigate

- Prevent ice dams on your roof by closing up air leaks in your attic, adding roof or soffit vents, increase insulation in the attic, and removing snow from your roof quickly after a snowstorm.
- Clear snow around fire hydrants to help the fire department access them for house fires.
- Trim dead branches from trees. Heavy snow can make them break and cause damage to your home or vehicles.
- Insulate water pipes and know how to turn off the water valves if pipes burst.



# Resources



# FAMILY EMERGENCY PLAN

## CONTACT INFORMATION / COMMUNICATION PLAN:

Our Address is:

### Family Member/Household Contact Info:

Name:	Cell Phone:	Other Phone:	E-Mail:

### In the event that our household is separated or unable to communicate with each other, our emergency contact outside of our immediate area is:

Name:	Cell Phone:	Other Phone:	E-mail:

## IMPORTANT CONTACTS:

Local Police Department:	#: 911 or <small>(non-emergency)</small>
Local Fire Department:	#: 911 or <small>(non-emergency)</small>
Poison Control Center	#: 911 or (800) 222-1222
Doctor:	
Pediatrician:	
Dentist:	
Orthodontist:	
Hospital / Clinic:	
Vet:	
Gas Company:	
Electric Company:	
Water Company:	
Other:	

# FAMILY EMERGENCY PLAN

## PET(S) INFO:

Pet's Name:	Type:	Color:	Registration or Microchip #:

## EMERGENCY PLANNING:

The disasters most likely to affect our home are:

If separated during an emergency (like a fire), where is our meeting place near our home?

If we cannot return home, are separated at the time of disaster, or are asked to evacuate, where is our meeting place outside of our neighborhood?

In-Town meeting place:

Out-of-Town meeting place:

## IN CASE OF EMERGENCY, WHERE ARE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS LOCATED?

Fire Extinguisher:	
Water Shut-Off:	
Electrical Panel:	
Gas Shut-Off:	
Family Emergency Kit:	

- Mark all utility shut-off valves in the house.
- Keep copies of bank statements and a supply of cash on hand in the event ATM's and credit cards do not work due to power outages.
- Bring copies of utility bills as proof of residence when applying for assistance.
- Check your emergency kit supplies at least annually. Check expiration dates on foods, inspect batteries for leakage, & check condition of supplies.
- Keep a list of pet-friendly hotels and animal shelters and assemble a pet disaster kit.

In an emergency, you may need to turn off the utilities to your home.

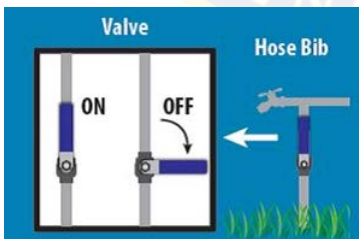
## Learn How and When To Turn Off Utilities

- Contact your utility service providers now to learn how to respond during an emergency. Write this information in your Family Emergency Plan.
- If you live in an apartment or condo, contact your landlord or building manager and ask what you should do to prepare for an emergency.
- If you are a property-owner, locate your property's gas, electric, and water shut-off valves or panels, and label them for easy identification.
- Teach family members how to turn off utilities.
- Keep necessary tools near gas and water shut-off valves.
- If you turn the gas off, a professional should turn it back on. **DO NOT** attempt to restore gas service yourself.

Pages 54-59 contain signs that can help identify emergency shut-off valves in your home.

### Learn How To Turn Off Water

The water shutoff is usually located in the front yard, garage, or where the water line enters the home. The water shutoff is located on a riser pipe and is usually a handle or wheel. Turn handle or wheel clockwise to shut off.

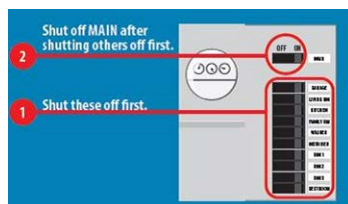
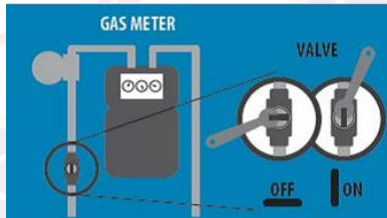


### Learn How To Turn Off Electricity

Locate your main electric panel, which is normally in the garage, outdoors, or in a utility closet. The panel may have a flip switch or pull handle. Turn off all isolated breakers first, then the main breaker.

### Learn How To Turn Off Gas

To turn gas off, turn the valve a quarter turn in either direction. When the lever crosses the pipe the gas is off.



# MAIN ELECTRICAL POWER SHUT-OFF

Write specific directions here



# MAIN GAS SHUT-OFF VALVE

Write specific directions here



# WATER MAIN SHUT-OFF

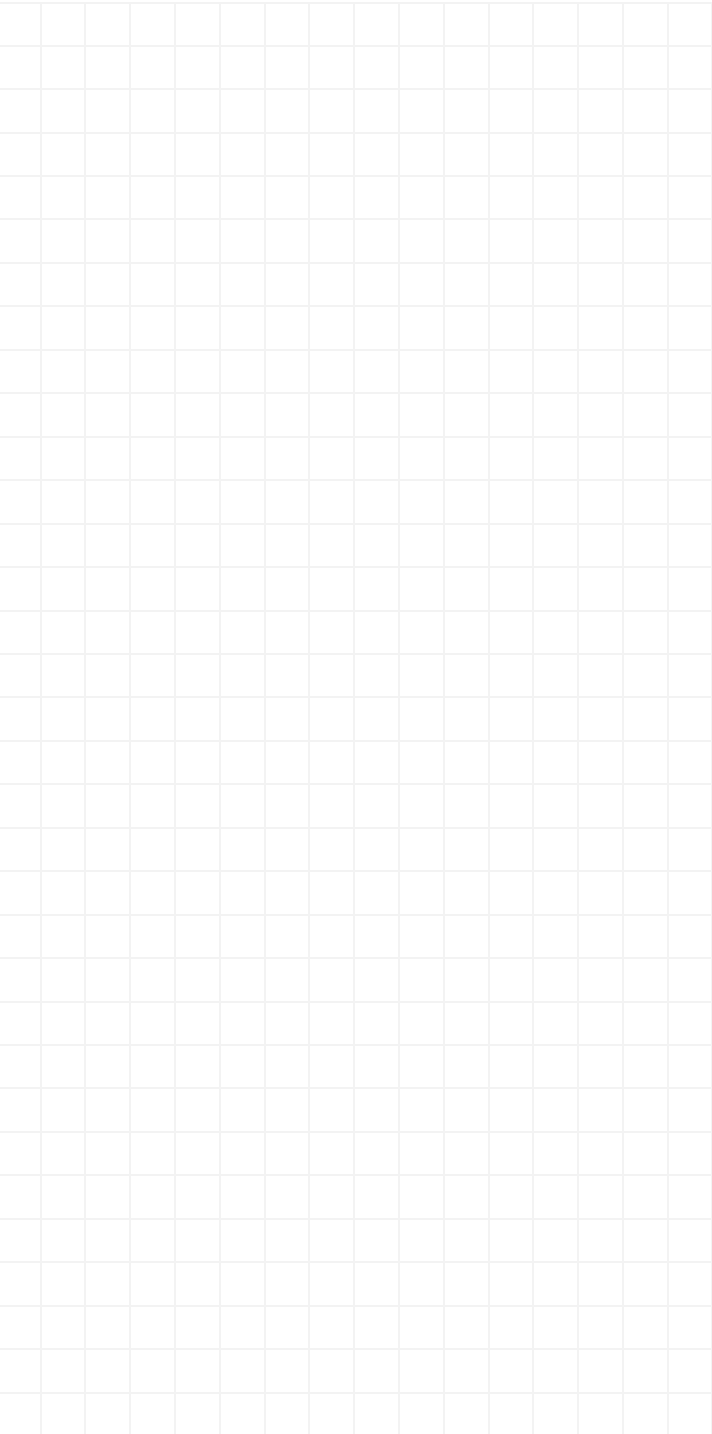
Write specific directions here







# HOME FIRE ESCAPE PLAN



Use this page if you have more than one level to your home.

# Section 5: Resources

There are several resources to help your family prepare for emergencies and disasters. Below is a list of some resources available:

**Warren County EMA**— County website with emergency preparedness information, localized alerts and warnings, and additional information to help citizens in Warren County prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate disasters.

<https://www.co.warren.oh.us/emergencyservices/emergencymanagement/default.aspx>

**Ready.gov**—National public service campaign designed to educate and empower American people to prepare for, respond to, and mitigate emergencies.

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

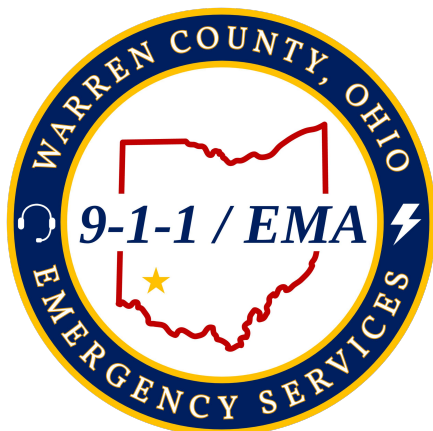
**National Weather Service Safety Tips**— Page containing information with safety tips for weather-related emergencies.

<https://www.weather.gov/safety/>

**American Red Cross—How to Prepare for Emergencies**

Website containing additional information on how families can prepare for emergencies and disasters.

<https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies.html>



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@WCEMAOhio



Warren County EMA  
in Ohio

[www.co.warren.oh.us/emergencyservices/emergencymanagement](http://www.co.warren.oh.us/emergencyservices/emergencymanagement)