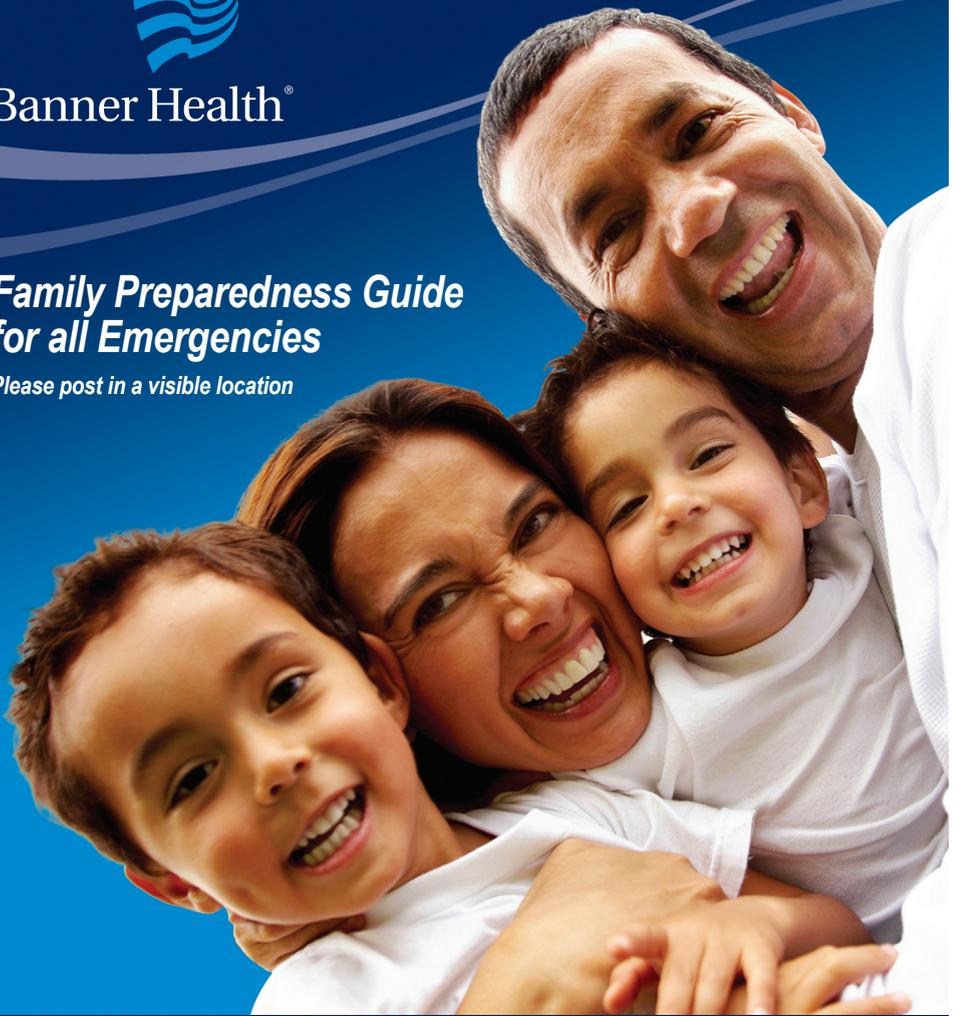




Banner Health®

**Family Preparedness Guide  
for all Emergencies**

*Please post in a visible location*



*Our Nonprofit Mission: We exist to make a difference in people's lives through excellent patient care.*

Nonprofit Banner Health is privileged to offer expert and compassionate care to people in their times of need. In 22 hospitals across seven states, we provide around-the-clock emergency services care for unexpected medical problems.

As a leading health care provider, we know that preparation can save lives and we want to make sure you and your family are ready for any type of emergency or disaster. We are offering this Family Preparedness Guide to help you learn what to do when a disaster strikes, as well as how to prepare BEFORE it strikes.

Our Family Preparedness Guide will help you answer some of the following questions:

- What would you do if basic services (water, gas, electricity or telephones) were not available?
- What types of supplies should go into a 72-hour emergency kit?
- If you were stranded at a location away from home, who would care for your children and/or pets?
- If you were required to evacuate, does your family have a designated meeting place?
- What are the best actions to take during a dust storm?

Please take a few minutes to read this guide and speak with your family members about what to do in case of an emergency. That discussion may be one of the most important conversations you ever have.

Keep the guide for future reference. Place it in a designated spot that everyone is aware of so that it is readily available in case of an emergency.

At Banner Health, we are prepared to take care of you and your loved ones during a disaster or emergency. We hope you'll take the necessary steps to be prepared as well.

For more information, please go to [www.bannerhealth.com](http://www.bannerhealth.com) Keyword: **emergency**

Stay safe!

## INTRODUCTION TO FAMILY PREPAREDNESS GUIDE

- The September 11th terrorist attacks of 2001 and the continued threat of future attacks made everyone aware of the vital role played by police, fire, and emergency personnel during a disaster. The incidents also reinforced the message that public safety professionals stress everyday: **Be prepared.**
- No one will ever be immune to disasters. Police officers; fire department personnel; paramedics; and other city; county; and state personnel are ready to assist you in the event of an emergency, but you can help them and your family by taking a few simple steps and doing a little bit of pre-planning.
- Please take a few minutes to review this Family Preparedness Guide. Keep it for future reference, since you never know when you might need it. Put this guide in a prominent place, make sure ALL family members are familiar with it, and practice fire and evacuation drills. Update this guide immediately when information changes. And take it with you if you need to evacuate!

**If you call 911**, remember that operators rely on good information to save lives. Please be prepared to give the operator the following information:

- Location of emergency, including the complete address, apartment number, and gate code, if necessary
- Your name and phone number
- As much detail as possible about the nature of the emergency
- **Having information ready will enable emergency personnel to respond quickly and effectively.**
- You should also teach your children how and when to dial 911 for help and what information they will need to provide.

### **How to obtain important information in the event of an emergency:**

- Tune in to your local television station, or local radio station for announcements. It is important to keep a battery operated and/or crank radio in case an emergency knocks out electrical power.
- In smaller-scale emergencies that affect specific neighborhoods, police, fire, and other personnel typically notify residents door-to-door.
- Emergency shelter locations are identified and set up as needed based on each individual emergency situation. In the event of an evacuation, emergency personnel will communicate shelter location information to affected evacuees.

## INTRO TO FAMILY PREPAREDNESS GUIDE

## FAMILY EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION:

**Please fill in the names and contact information for the following:**

Call in case of emergency (ICE): \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate ICE: \_\_\_\_\_

Local Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Nearest Relative: \_\_\_\_\_

Out of State Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Contact(s): \_\_\_\_\_

School Contact(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Family Physicians: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Reunion Locations**

• Right outside the home: \_\_\_\_\_

• Outside the neighborhood: \_\_\_\_\_

Child caretakers: \_\_\_\_\_

Adult caretakers: \_\_\_\_\_

Pet caretakers: \_\_\_\_\_

Veterinarian: \_\_\_\_\_

Insurance Agent: \_\_\_\_\_

## FAMILY EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

## HOW TO CREATE A FAMILY SAFETY PLAN:

### **Develop a family emergency meeting plan**

- In addition to your house, choose two or three alternate meeting locations in the event you are unable to return to your home (e.g., the home of a neighbor or relative, a church, a local school, or other public locations are good choices).

### **Designate an out-of-area contact**

- During a disaster, you may not be able to make local phone calls, but you usually CAN call someone outside the affected area. Pick a family member or friend to serve as your family's out-of-area contact. In the event of an emergency or disaster, you can call your out-of-area contact and tell them you are safe, where you are, and where you are going. Your out-of-area contact can then share this information with any other family members who call. All family members should have the phone number of your out-of-area contact with them at all times.

### **Stock and maintain emergency preparedness and first aid kits**

- Plan to be self-sufficient for a minimum of 3-5 days.
- Always keep flashlights, portable radios, and fresh batteries.

### **Establish a personal support network to check on each other in case of an emergency**

### **Establish a plan for special needs family members and for pet care**

### **Store important family documents in a safety deposit box or watertight/fire proof container**

- Keep copies of documents like your driver's license, passport, social security card, and children's birth certificates in your disaster supplies.

### **Know the location and how to turn off the shut-off valves for your household gas and water services**

- Store any tools needed to turn off the valves in a secure place. Do NOT turn gas off unless instructed to do so by the gas company. And remember that the gas can only be turned back on by a professional.

**Practice, practice, practice!** The more you practice your plan, the more likely you are to remember it in times of disaster.

## FAMILY SAFETY PLAN

## PLANNING AHEAD:

### Property Readiness

- Inspect your property for any potential problems that may be amplified during an emergency, such as missing roof tiles, broken doors, or window leaks.

### Financial Readiness

- Inventory valuables in your home, recording model numbers of major items.
- Photograph and document all valuables in your home.
- Put original insurance policies in a safe place.
- Have copies of policies available to take with you.
- Review policies to assure coverage is adequate.
- Make a list of bank account and credit card numbers – put in a secure place.
- Make copies of Social Security cards and keep in a secure place.

### Family Readiness

- Make arrangements with family members to have a long distance phone number, such as a relative in another area or state, that family members can call to relay messages.
- Establish evacuation routes.
- Make copies of important documents, such as vehicle registrations, insurance paperwork, birth certificates, marriage licenses, death certificates, passports and keep them readily available in one location or folder, in case you have to leave quickly.
- Keep some extra cash on hand and an extra book of bank account checks. Keep in mind that banks and ATMs may not be available in an emergency.
- Proof of residency (e.g., electric bill, property tax bill) is also important, especially if an area is evacuated and you need to return to your home to retrieve anything.
- Be familiar with community warning signals and what to do when you hear or see them. Work with your neighbors to plan on how to survive in case of disaster until help arrives. Know your neighbor's special skills (doctor, nurse) and special needs (disabled, elderly) and consider how to help them.
- Program "In Case of Emergency" (ICE) contact names and numbers into your phones, cell phones, or other communication devices and place an ICE sticker on phones and/or devices so first responders know your emergency contact information is stored there.
- If you are assigned to work during weather or other related emergencies, consider bringing the following items to work: personal preparedness kit, air mattress, medications or other items to improve your comfort and several changes of clothing for the jobs that you may be asked to cover.
- Register your family with the American Red Cross Next of Kin Registry located online at <http://nokr.org>

### Pet Readiness

- Keep copies of pet licenses, pet vaccination records and list of pet medications available to take with you.
- Make plans for pet care in the event of evacuation; animals may not be allowed inside emergency shelters.

## PLANNING AHEAD

## 72 HOUR EMERGENCY KIT

### Food and Water

(A three day supply of food and water, per person, when no refrigeration or electricity is available)

- Protein/Granola Bars
- Trail Mix/Dried Fruit
- Crackers/Cereals
- Canned Tuna, Beans, Turkey, Beef, Vienna Sausages, etc
- Canned Juice
- Candy/Gum
- Water (1 Gallon/per person/per day)
- Special dietary needs; formula, powdered milk

### Bedding and Clothing

- Change of Clothing (short and long sleeved shirts, pants, jackets, heavy socks, handwarmers)
- Undergarments
- Rain Coat/Poncho
- Blankets and Emergency Heat Blankets
- Cloth Sheet
- Plastic Sheet
- Diapers

### Fuel and Light

- Battery Powered Lighting
- Extra Batteries
- Flares
- Candles
- Lighter
- Water-Proof Matches

### Equipment

- Manual Can Opener
- Dishes/Utensils, Baby Bottles
- Shovel, Axe
- Radio
- Laptop/PDA
- Pen and Paper
- Pocket Knife, Compass, Rope
- Personal Medical Equipment
- Extra car keys, Extra eyeglasses

### First Aid Supplies

- Toiletries (roll of toilet paper- remove the center tube to easily flatten into a zip-lock bag, feminine hygiene, folding brush, etc.)
- Cleaning Supplies (mini hand sanitizer, soap, shampoo, dish soap, etc.)
- Medication (Acetaminophen, Ibuprofen, children's medication, anti-diarrhea medicine)
- Prescription Medication (for 3 days)
- Bandages and Antiseptic

### Personal Documents and Money

(Place these items in a water-proof container!)

- Legal Documents (Birth/Marriage Certificates, Wills, Passports, Contracts, etc.)
- Vaccination Papers
- Insurance Policies
- Cash
- Credit Card, ATM Card, Checkbook
- Pre-Paid Phone Cards
- Family History Records
- Religious/Spiritual Books

### Miscellaneous

- Bag(s) to put 72 Hour Kit items in, such as duffel bags or back packs.
- Infant Needs (if applicable)

### Notes:

- Update your 72 Hour Kit every six months (add recurring note in your calendar/planner) to make sure that all food, water, and medication is fresh and has not expired; clothing fits; personal documents and credit cards are up to date; and batteries are charged.
- Small toys/games are important too, as they can provide some comfort and entertainment during times of stress.
- Older children can be responsible for their own pack of items/clothes, too.
- You can include any other items in your 72 Hour Kit that you feel are necessary for your family's survival and comfort.

## 72 HOUR EMERGENCY KIT

## UTILITY OUTAGE PREPAREDNESS

- Install surge protectors and/or battery backup systems for computers.
- Locate main fuse box, water and gas mains; learn how and when to turn off and teach family members; keep necessary tools near shut-off valves.
- If you have an electric garage door opener, find out where the manual release lever is located and learn how to operate it.
- If you have a telephone system that relies on electricity to work, plan for alternate communication (i.e., standard telephone handset or cell phone).
- Make sure you have plenty of flashlights and extra batteries available.
- Consider purchasing a generator.
- Register life-sustaining and medical equipment with your utility company.

### UTILITY OUTAGE RESPONSE:

- Only turn off the gas if instructed to do so by the gas company. Remember that only a professional should turn the gas back on.
- Use a battery-operated light source, such as a flashlights or light sticks. Due to the extreme risk of fire, DO NOT use candles during a power outage.
- Never use gas ovens, gas ranges, barbecues or propane heaters for indoor heating.
- Limit the number of times you open the refrigerator and freezer.
- Turn off as many lights and other electrical items as possible
- Unplug computers and other sensitive equipment to protect them from power surges when service is restored.
- Listen to your radio or TV for current information.
- If driving, proceed with caution and be alert to traffic lights that are not working. If a traffic light is out, remember to treat it as an all-way stop.
- Stay away from downed power lines and sagging trees with broken limbs.

## FIRE

### IF YOU DISCOVER FIRE OR SMOKE OR HEAR AUDIBLE FIRE ALARMS: REMEMBER: R.A.C.E.

- **R**escue: Remove everyone from immediate danger.
- **A**larm: Notify 911 of the fire situation and activate the nearest emergency pull station.
- **C**ontain: Close all doors to confine smoke and fire.
- **E**vacuate: Unless otherwise directed, follow the evacuation plan and proceed to the designated safe area outside the building.

### IF YOU CATCH ON FIRE:

DO NOT RUN!!!

- **S**TOP where you are,
- **D**ROP to the ground, and
- **R**OLL over and over to smother flames.

### IF YOU ARE TRAPPED IN YOUR HOME /OFFICE:

- Wedge wet towels along the bottom of the door to keep out the smoke.
- Close as many doors as possible between you and the fire.
- Use the telephone to notify 911 of your problem and location.
- If you are trapped in an area and need fresh air, only break a window as a last resort, and use caution when breaking the window.

## UTILITY OUTAGE / FIRE

## CHEMICAL / RADIATION EXPOSURE:

### **If exposed to or witnessing an exposure:**

- Cover your mouth and nose with a damp cloth.
- Bring household members and pets inside your home. Call 911.
- Turn off heating, air conditioning and fans.
- Stay as far from the emergency site as possible.
- Keep your body fully covered. Avoid eating or drinking anything uncovered.
- Prepare for possible evacuation.
- Close all exterior and interior doors and windows.

### **How to minimize exposure to radiation:**

- Limit the time spent near sources of radiation. Following an accident, local authorities will monitor any release of radiation, determine the level of protective actions needed, and notify you when the threat has passed.
- Try to put as much distance and dense material between you and the source of radiation.

### **Safety, Isolation & Notification (SIN):**

- **Safety:** Your safety and the safety of those around you is the primary concern.
- **Isolation:** If possible, isolate the area to prevent others from entering.
- **Notification:** Notify the authorities.

### **SHELTERING-IN-PLACE:**

- Bring household members and pets inside.
- Close all exterior and interior doors and windows and seal outside openings.
- Turn off heating, air conditioning, and fans.
- Keep your body fully covered.
- Avoid eating or drinking anything uncovered.
- Prepare for possible evacuation.

### **SUSPICIOUS PACKAGES/BIOLOGICAL THREATS:**

- Do not shake or empty the contents of any suspicious envelope or package.
- Place the envelope or package in a plastic bag or some other type of container to prevent leakage of contents.
- If you do not have an appropriate container, then cover the envelope or package with anything you do have available (e.g., clothing, paper, trash can, etc.) and do not remove this cover.
- Leave the room and close the door, or section off the area to prevent others from entering.
- Wash your hands with soap and water to prevent spreading any powder or liquid to your face.
- Call 911.
- List all people in room/area when the letter or package was recognized, and provide list to law enforcement agencies.

## CHEMICAL, BIOLOGICAL, RADIOLOGICAL & NUCLEAR EVENTS

## SEVERE WEATHER WATCH OR WARNING:

- Listen to the National Weather Service alerts.
- **Weather Watch** - Issued by the National Weather Service when severe weather conditions are possible in the area.
- Be prepared to respond if weather conditions worsen.
- **Weather Warning** - Issued when severe weather has been sighted or indicated by weather radar. If severe weather warning is issued for your area, move to your designated area.

## FLOODING:

### Flood Preparedness:

- Check nearby storm drains to ensure they are clear of debris.
- Move furniture, valuables to higher ground.
- Secure outdoor furniture or bring indoors.
- Unplug appliances - do not touch wet electrical equipment.
- Fill jugs with clean water in case water supplies become contaminated.
- Place sandbags in and around all outside doors and thresholds. Sandbags can be obtained from your local county government.

### Flood Response:

- If told to evacuate, do so quickly.
- Avoid downed power lines.
- Do not drink tap water.
- Leave low-lying areas immediately.
- If driving in low-lying areas or if your car stalls in rapidly rising water, get out of the car and seek higher ground immediately. Flood water has more force than you think.
- Stay away from storm drains and irrigation ditches.
- Police/construction barricades are for your protection. Do not drive through or around them.
- Walking or driving through flood water is very dangerous.

## LIGHTNING/THUNDERSTORMS/MONSOONS:

- Go inside immediately and stay away from windows, water, faucets, sinks, bathtubs, and telephones. Remember, if you can hear thunder, you are close enough to be struck by lightning.
- If you are in your car, stay there.
- Turn off and unplug TV's, computers, and other appliances.
- If outside, stay away from tall trees, open fields, water, or metal objects. If you are caught in an open space or field, crouch low to the ground, but do not lie flat.

## HEAVY WINDS, MICROBURSTS:

- Go to a safe place immediately and protect yourself under a sturdy object.
- Go to a bathroom, closet, or interior hallway in the center of a building on the lowest floor.
- If outside, lay flat in a ditch or low-lying area with your hands protecting your head.
- If you are in a car or mobile home, get out and find shelter in a ditch or other low-lying area.

# SEVERE WEATHER

## DUST STORMS:

- If dense dust is observed blowing across the road or approaching, pull your vehicle off the roadway as far as possible, stop, turn off lights, set the emergency brake, and take your foot off of the brake pedal to be sure the tail lights are not illuminated.
- Do not enter the dust storm area if you can avoid it.
- If you cannot pull off the roadway, proceed at a speed suitable for visibility, turn on lights and sound horn occasionally. Use the painted center line to help guide you. Look for a safe place to pull off the roadway.
- Never stop on the traveled portion of the roadway.

**If Stranded in Your Vehicle, Stay with the Vehicle.** Put up windshield sun shade, if available. Beware of carbon monoxide and oxygen starvation; keep fresh air in the car by keeping a down-wind side window slightly open for ventilation. Tying a bright colored cloth to your radio antennae can help alert rescue personnel to your presence.

As a general rule of thumb, anytime between April and October, make a special point of keeping vehicles in good operating condition and do not let your fuel drop below the 50% mark on your gas gauge. If you have a cell phone, carry it with you. An adapter to plug it into the car cigarette lighter for additional power is also highly recommended. Keep a survival kit in the vehicle, even during mild weather.

## EXTREME HEAT:

- Avoid strenuous activities on hot days and rest often in shade.
- Limit activities to the coolest parts of the day (4:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m.).
- If active between 11:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., drink at least one quart of water every hour.
- Stay in air conditioned areas, whenever possible.
- If air conditioning is not available, stay on the lowest floor, away from sunshine, and try to go to a publicly air conditioned area during the hottest part of the day.
- Have a buddy system where relatives, neighbors, and friends check on each other.
- Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing.
- Drink plenty of water often to help keep your body cool.
- Drink plenty of water even if you do not feel thirsty.
- Avoid drinks with alcohol or caffeine, which worsen the effects that heat has on your body.
- Never leave an infant, child, or pet unattended in parked vehicles.
- Eat small meals often.
- Avoid foods that are high in protein or salt.
- Avoid using illicit drugs (such as cocaine, amphetamines, and methamphetamines).
- If your heart begins to pound, or if you become light-headed, confused, weak or faint, STOP ALL ACTIVITY!! GET ASSISTANCE IMMEDIATELY!!

### Heat-related illness signs and symptoms:

- **Thirst:** by the time your body tells you that you are thirsty, you are already mildly dehydrated.
- **Heat Cramps:** are muscular pains and spasms due to heavy exertion. They usually involve the abdominal muscles or the legs. The loss of water and salt from heavy sweating causes the cramps.
- **Heat Exhaustion:** is less dangerous than heat stroke. It typically occurs when people exercise heavily or work in a warm, humid place where body fluids are lost through heavy sweating. With heat exhaustion, sweat does not evaporate as it should, possibly because of high humidity or too many layers of clothing. As a result, the body is not cooled properly. Signals include cool, moist, pale, flushed or red skin; heavy sweating; headache; nausea or vomiting; dizziness; and exhaustion. Body temperature will be near normal.
- **Heat Stroke:** or sunstroke, is life threatening. The victim's temperature control system, which produces sweating to cool the body, stops working. The body temperature can rise so high that brain damage and death may result if the body is not cooled quickly. Signals include hot, red, dry skin; changes in consciousness; rapid weak pulse; and rapid, shallow breathing.

## SEVERE WEATHER CONTINUED

## WINTER STORM AND BLIZZARD EMERGENCY PREPARATION:

Follow these tips to survive a snow blizzard or storm whether you are outside, at home, or in a car.

### **If you are caught outside:**

- Find or make a shelter.
- Stay dry and cover all exposed body parts.
- Wear a warm hat to conserve body heat and keep your mouth covered with a scarf to protect lungs from bitter cold air.
- Limit your physical exertion to prevent sweating and chills and breathing cold air too deeply.
- Build a fire and keep it burning.
- Do NOT eat snow. Melt it first to warm it up.

### **If you are at home:**

- Keep water faucets running a tiny amount to help prevent pipes from freezing.
- Wear many layers of loose, lightweight clothes.
- Use caution when using an alternate heat source such as candles or kerosene heater.
- To conserve heat:
  - Lower thermostat to 60-65 degrees.
  - Close all unneeded rooms.
  - Keep shades drawn and hang plastic, sheets, or blankets over windows and doors to slow heat loss.
  - Have everyone stay together in a couple rooms for shared warmth.
  - Have everyone wear warm hats to conserve body heat.
- Know where the main water valve shut-off is in case your pipes do freeze and crack.

### **If you are in your car:**

- Tie a bright cloth to the antennae
- Stay with your car - do not venture out unless tied by rope to your car.
- Run the motor for ten minutes every hour for heat.
- Move your arms, legs, fingers, and toes to keep blood circulating and to help keep them warm.
- Eat a handful of some high energy food every hour to help your body continue generating heat.
- Drink 1/2 cup of water every hour to stay hydrated.
- Do not use lights or radio when engine is off to prevent the battery from draining.
- When the storm passes, raise the hood to indicate help is needed.

### **Winter Driving Tips:**

- Have your battery checked before freezing weather hits.
- Check your heater before you need it.
- Change your oil and filter so you have appropriate cold weather oil.
- Fill up the gas when it gets below 1/2 full. Never get stuck without gas.
- Assume overpasses are frozen even if the road is not.
- Make gradual changes in speed and direction - avoid sharp turns and rapid acceleration.
- Take time to clear your windows before driving.
- Maintain a safe distance between you and the car ahead.
- Store these in your car, especially in winter:
  - Folding shovel
  - Windshield scraper
  - Tow rope
  - Sandbags
  - Spare gas container
  - Spare blanket
  - 2 large garbage bags
  - Water and high energy food such as trail mix

**SNOW / BLIZZARD**

## TORNADO PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE:

### **Tornado-specific planning should include the following actions:**

- Learn about your tornado risk.
- Pick a safe place in your home where family members could gather during a tornado.
- Learn about your community's warning system.
- Conduct periodic tornado drills, so everyone remembers what to do when a tornado is approaching.
- Check with your work and your children's schools and day care centers to learn tornado emergency plans.
- Discuss tornadoes with your family.
- Keep trees and shrubbery trimmed.
- Remove any debris or loose items in your yard.

### **What to do during a tornado WATCH:**

- Listen to a NOAA weather radio, local radio or television stations for updated information.
- Watch for tornado danger signs:
  - Dark, often greenish sky
  - Wall cloud
  - Large hail
  - Cloud of debris
  - Funnel cloud
  - Roaring noise

### **What to do if you see a tornado or during a tornado WARNING:**

- Wherever you are, if you hear or see a tornado coming, take cover immediately and stay away from windows.
- If you are in a house or apartment, go to the lowest level of the nearest building – a basement or storm cellar, if possible.
- If you are in a mobile home or car, go immediately to the basement of a nearby sturdy, fixed structure.
- If you are in a high-rise building, move to a location in a hallway in the center of the building.
- Once on the lowest level, go to the middle of the building away from windows, into a bathroom or closet if possible.
- Get under something sturdy, such as a heavy table, and hold on and stay there until the danger has passed. Use your arms and hands to protect your head.
- If you are outside and there is no building nearby, lie flat in a low spot.

### **What to Do After a Tornado:**

- Continue listening to local radio / television stations / NOAA weather radio for updated information and instructions.
- Watch out for fallen power lines or broken gas lines and report them to the utility company immediately.
- Avoid disaster areas.
- Stay out of damaged buildings.
- Wear sturdy shoes.
- Look for fire hazards. Fire is the most frequent hazard following other disasters.
- Check for gas leaks.
- Look for electrical system damage.
- Watch for loose plaster, drywall, and ceilings that could fall.
- Take pictures of the damage, both of the building and its contents, for insurance claims.

# TORNADO

## EVACUATION:

Local government officials issue evacuation orders when a disaster threatens your community. Listen to local radio and television reports for the latest updates. If local officials ask you to evacuate, do so immediately!

### **If you have only moments before leaving, grab these things and go!:**

- Medical supplies: prescription medications and dentures.
- Disaster supplies: flashlight, batteries, radio, first aid kit, bottled water.
- Clothing and bedding: a change of clothes, a sleeping bag or bedroll, pillow for each household member.
- Car keys and keys to the place you may be going (friend's or relative's home).

### **If local officials haven't advised an immediate evacuation:**

If there's a chance officials may ask you to evacuate, take steps now to protect your home and belongings. Do this only if local officials have not asked you to leave.

### **Protect your home:**

- Bring things indoors. Objects that may fly around and damage property should be brought indoors.
- Leave trees and shrubs alone. If you have not already cut away dead or diseased branches or limbs from trees and shrubs, leave them alone. Local rubbish collection services will not have time before the storm to pick up yard debris and clippings.
- Look for potential hazards. Look for unripened fruit and other objects in trees around your property that could blow or break off and fly around in high winds. Cut them off and store them indoors until the storm is over.
- Turn off electricity and water. Turn off electricity at the main fuse or breaker, and turn off water at the main valve.
- Leave natural gas on. Unless local officials advise otherwise, leave natural gas on because you will need it for heating and cooking when you return home. If you turn gas off, a licensed professional is required to turn it back on, and it may take weeks for a professional to respond.
- Turn off propane gas service. Propane tanks often become dislodged in disasters.
- If high winds are expected, cover the outside of all windows of your home. Use shutters that are rated to provide significant protection from windblown debris, or fit plywood coverings over all windows.
- If flooding is expected, consider using sand bags to keep water away from your home.
- Cover the outside of windows with shutters or plywood.

### **Protect your valuables:**

- Move objects that may be damaged by wind or water to safer areas of your home. Move electronic equipment and easily moveable appliances to higher levels of your home and away from windows. Wrap them in sheets, blankets, or burlap for added protection.
- Create a visual or written record of all of your household possessions. Record model and serial numbers. This list could help you prove the value of what you owned if those possessions are damaged or destroyed and can assist you to claim deductions on taxes.
- Do this for all items in your home, including expensive items such as sofas, chairs, tables, beds, chests, wall units, and any other furniture too heavy to move. Store a copy of the record somewhere away from home, such as in a safe deposit box.
- If it is possible that your home may be significantly damaged by impending disaster, consider storing your household furnishings temporarily elsewhere.