

Your personal guide to disaster preparedness

Congratulations!

By reading this guide, you have made the first step in protecting yourself and your family from the threat of terrorism and natural disasters.

Terrorism can strike anyone, anywhere, at anytime. You can plan for some natural disasters such as hurricanes, because you have a warning well in advance, while others such as tornados happen in an instant.

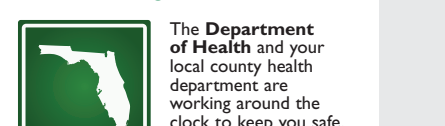
The Florida Department of Health (FLDOH) and your local county health department are here to help you and your family prepare for disasters that could affect your Florida community.

We can be afraid. Or, we can be prepared!

Florida Department of Health

This handy guide walks you through the 3 steps of being prepared and shows how you can get involved.

- 1 Get a Kit
- 2 Make a Plan
- 3 Be Informed



The **Department of Health** and your local county health department are working around the clock to keep you safe. But we need your active participation. Being prepared means starting now and not waiting until the disaster is here.

Contact Information

Important phone numbers and web sites to have available.

- FLDOH**
850-245-4440
www.doh.state.fl.us
- FL Government**
850-488-1234
www.myflorida.com
- American Red Cross**
800-RED CROSS
www.redcross.tallytown.com/chapters.html
- Poison Control Center**
800-222-1222
www.fpicn.org
- Homeland Security**
888-86.BE READY
www.ready.gov
- FEMA**
202-566-1600
www.fema.org
- National Flood Insurance**
800-720-1090
www.fema.gov/business/nfip

Disaster Response Team

Citizen responders helping neighbors in times of need. Get involved in your local CERT or MRC.

Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT)

CERTs are designed to prepare citizen volunteers to help themselves, their families, and their neighborhoods following a disaster. Free training is provided. Contact your local county emergency management agency for further information or go to: www.floridacert.com

Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)

MRC units are found in local communities to assist emergency management agencies respond to disaster. Free training is provided in disaster preparedness and response. To join your local MRC, contact your county health department or go to: www.servfl.com

Disasters We May Face

Awareness of the various types of disasters assists us in preparedness.

Natural Disasters

- Hurricanes
- Tornados
- Floods
- Wildfires

Man-made Disasters/Terrorism

- Chemical
- Biological
- Radiological such as a "Dirty Bomb"
- Nuclear Explosion
- Explosion/Fire

Disease Outbreaks

- Widespread illnesses such as the pandemic flu

3 Steps To Get Prepared

Be prepared to go 72 hours without any outside help!

- 1 Get a Kit
- 2 Make a Plan
- 3 Be Informed

1. Get a Kit
Assemble the items you and your family will need in case of emergency. Some items are obvious--but some aren't.

2. Make a Plan
You need to make a Family Communication Plan and decide if you should Stay (shelter-in-place) or Go (evacuate).

3. Be Informed
Be aware of the different threats. Know what to do in each case. Follow the guidance developed by local authorities.

Get A Kit

By having a well-stocked Emergency Kit, you can better face any threat.

1 Get a Kit

- Key Items:**
- Water
 - Food
 - Clean air
 - First aid items
 - Items for special needs
 - Tool kit
 - Extra clothing

- Two most important items:**
- Portable TV and/or radio with extra batteries.
 - Flashlight and extra batteries.
- * Have a kit at home and a portable one to take with you.

Water/Food

You can survive weeks without food but only a few days without water.

Have at least a **three-day supply** per person:

- One gallon per person per day for drinking and sanitation.
- Children, nursing mothers and sick people may need more.
- Store water tightly in clean plastic containers.
- Change every six months.
- Choose foods that your family will eat.
- Select foods that require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking; and that require little or no water.
- Pack a manual can opener and eating utensils.



Many disaster situations could send tiny particles into the air. You need to snugly cover your nose and mouth.

Breathing protection such as surgical masks or N95 masks are available in pharmacies or hardware stores. You can improvise, if needed, using several layers of cloth. Anything over your nose and mouth in an emergency is better than nothing.

Clean Air

You want to create a barrier between yourself and potential contaminants.

Take a first aid or CPR class. Discuss with your physician specific personal and family needs.

Things to have in your kit:

- Exam gloves
- Sterile dressings
- Cleansing agent
- Antibiotic ointment
- Pain medication
- Anti-histamine
- Anti-diarrhea medication
- Anti-nausea medication
- Adhesive bandages
- Paper tape
- Digital thermometer
- Prescription medications
- Scissors
- Baby wipes
- Miscellaneous items

First Aid

Knowing how to treat minor conditions in an emergency can make a major difference.

Remember the special needs of infants, the elderly, persons with disabilities and pets.

Babies will need formula, diapers, bottles, medications, etc.

Adults will need prescription medications, extra contact lenses, solution, etc.

Seniors will need canes, wheelchairs, etc.

People with disabilities will need alert tags, medications, contact information for doctors, etc.

Pets will need food, medications and first aid items.

Special Needs

The steps to Make a Plan include developing a Family Communications Plan and deciding whether to Shelter-in-Place or Evacuate.

- Get a Kit
- 2 Make a Plan
- Be Informed

The following pages will give information on how to make these decisions.

Shelter-in-Place or Evacuate?

You will have to decide whether to Shelter-in-Place where you are or Evacuate based on the situation, so listen to television and radio news reports.

Follow directions from local authorities.

Make A Plan

Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so plan how you will contact each other in different situations.

Local calls may be difficult, so arrange an out-of-state contact for everyone to call. Make sure everyone knows the phone number. You may have trouble getting through but keep trying.

Keep at least one phone (analog) that does not need power available in case you lose electricity.

Learn what kinds of emergencies are most likely in your area.

You can call your local county health department or emergency operations center for information.

Also, learn about plans at your workplace, your children's schools, etc.

Family Plan

When notified by authorities of contaminated air, or when you see large amounts of debris in the air, create as much of a barrier between yourself and potentially contaminated air outside.

The contamination could be of biological, chemical, or radioactive (fallout) origin.

- Bring family and pets inside where you are or the sturdiest nearby building.
- Lock doors and close windows, air vents, and fireplace dampers.
- Turn off fans, AC, and forced heat.
- Get Emergency Kit.
- Go to an interior room farthest from the outside.
- Seal all windows, doors, vents, and gaps with duct tape.
- If contaminated, remove outer layer of clothes and shower/wash.
- Monitor TV, radio, and Internet.

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Evacuation

If you need to leave wherever you are to go to a shelter or to leave your area.

Evacuation Plan

- Set places where your family will meet, near and far from your house.
- Keep a half tank of gas in your car at all times.
- Learn alternate routes in your area.
- If you don't have a car, have a transportation plan.
- Take your Emergency Kit.
- Take pets.
- Lock door behind you.

If Time Allows

- Call or e-mail your out-of-state contact. Tell them where you are going.
- Shut off gas, water, and electricity.
- Leave a note saying where you are going.
- Notify your neighbors.
- Monitor TV, radio, or Internet.

Work/School/Neighbors

Work

- Train on disaster preparedness.
- Is your heating and AC system adequate to filter out particles?
- What if employees can't go home?
- Do you have adequate supplies?

Schools and Child Care

- Educate children on disaster preparedness.
- Ask about their plan and how they communicate with families.
- Ask if they store food, water, and other basic supplies.
- Do they have plans to Shelter-in-Place?

Neighbors

- Work out a community plan.
- Who has special equipment needs?
- Who will check on the elderly and the disabled?

All should monitor TV, radio, and Internet.


Vehicle/High Rise

Vehicle

- Pull over and stop if it becomes difficult to control the car.
- Avoid bridges, power lines, etc.
- Monitor the radio.

High Rise Buildings

- Decide to Shelter-in-Place or Evacuate.
- Move away from exterior walls to center of building.
- If no basement, go to interior of middle floors.
- Do not use elevators.
- Note closest emergency exit.
- Plan alternative escape route.
- Be careful of heavy items that may fall on you.
- Keep Emergency Kit nearby.
- Monitor TV, radio, and Internet.



Be Informed

1 Get a Kit
2 Make a Plan
3 Be Informed

Assembling a kit and making a plan apply to all emergencies.

However, different emergencies require different actions, so it's important to know what to do.

A person who knows the proper actions to take in an emergency will not panic and can help themselves, their family, and their community.

Your ability to communicate with the outside world is essential.

Always have a TV and/or radio available with plenty of batteries.

The Internet is also a source for information during a disaster.

Natural Disaster

What:

The key for natural disasters is to know what is likely in your area, and to plan in advance by following steps Get A Kit and Make A Plan.

In Florida, hurricanes, floods, fires, and tornados are the most common natural disasters. Widespread illnesses such as the flu are also possible (see the Biological panel for What to Do).

What to Do:

- Prepare your home, if possible.
- Evacuate, if ordered by local authorities. Identify evacuation routes in advance. Do not underestimate the danger of these disasters, including how dangerous moving water can be.
- Monitor TV, radio, and Internet.


Key Points:

- Hide from wind, run from water.

Chemical

What:

A chemical incident is the accidental or deliberate release of a toxic gas, liquid, or other substance that can poison people and the environment.



How You Know:

- See people choking, vomiting, twitching, or dead.
- Many sick or dead animals.


What to Do:

- If in a tall building, go to the center of a middle floor.
- If you think you've been exposed, disrobe and wash immediately.
- Do not scrub the chemical into your skin.
- If symptomatic, seek emergency medical care.
- Monitor TV, radio, and the Internet.

Biological

What:

A biological incident is the deliberate release of germs or other substances that can make you sick. Disease epidemics can also occur naturally, such as the potential for a flu pandemic.



How You Know:

- Not always obvious. Stay informed of local health conditions.
- Authorities may report patterns of unusual illness.

What to Do:

- Be suspicious if many are sick around you.
- Avoid spreading germs.
- If you have symptoms, call your physician or go to emergency department immediately.
- If you see a suspicious substance, cover your mouth and nose, get away, and wash with soap and water.
- Monitor TV, radio, and the Internet.

Radiation as a Weapon

• Radiation cannot be detected by our senses and affects humans by damaging cells in the body. The amount of radiation absorbed by the body is known as the dose.

• Radiation doses in short periods of time can cause observable health effects including: nausea, vomiting, fatigue, and in very large doses, can be fatal.

• Low radiation doses may increase the risk of cancer many years in the future.

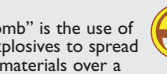
• Radioactive material can be released from a nuclear explosion or from a dirty bomb. External contamination is radioactive material (Think: dust) on the outside of the body and is rarely life-threatening. Most external contamination can be easily removed by taking off your outer layer of clothing and wiping exposed skin areas or by taking a shower.

• Internal contamination is radioactive material inside the body due to ingestion, inhalation or absorption through the skin.

Radiological/Dirty Bomb

What:

A "Dirty Bomb" is the use of common explosives to spread radioactive materials over a targeted area. However, the terrorist may disperse the radioactive material without using an explosion or may leave the radioactive material covertly in place at a public location.



How You Know:

- Hearing a loud explosion and seeing smoke in the air.
- Notification by authorities.

What to Do:

- Go inside and Shelter-in-Place.
- Minimize time spent exposed to radiation.
- Go under ground or to the center of the middle floor of a large building.
- Monitor TV, radio and the Internet.

Key Points:

- Go in, Stay in, Tune in.

Nuclear Explosion

What:

A nuclear explosion occurs with intense light and heat, a damaging pressure wave, and the widespread dispersal of radioactive materials that can contaminate air, water, and ground for many miles.

How You Know:

- Observing a mushroom-like cloud (in daylight) and a blinding white light.
- Hearing a tremendous explosion and feeling great heat and pressure on your body.

What to Do:

- Go inside and Shelter-in-Place.
- Go underground or to the center middle floors of a large building.
- Minimize time spent exposed to radiation.
- Prepare for fallout.
- Monitor TV, radio and the Internet.

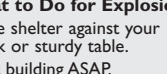
Key Points:

- Go in, Stay in, Tune in.

Explosion/Fire

What to Do for Explosions:

- Take shelter against your desk or sturdy table.
- Exit building ASAP.
- Do not use elevators.
- Check for fire and other hazards.
- Take Emergency Kit.
- Contact family members.



In Case of Fire:

- Practice E.D.I.T.H. (Exit Drills In The Home) twice per year.
- Exit building ASAP.
- Crawl low, if there is smoke.
- Cover mouth and nose with a wet cloth, if possible.
- Only use a door if it is not hot; brace yourself against it and open slowly.
- If you catch fire: STOP / DROP / ROLL.

Contact Information

**Florida Department of Health
 Division of Emergency Medical Operations**

4025 Esplanade Way
 Tallahassee, FL 32399-1738
Phone: (850) 245-4440
Fax: (850) 921-8162

<http://www.doh.state.fl.us/demo>

For further information, also visit:
**Florida Division of
 Emergency Management**
<http://www.floridadisaster.org/>

Adapted from New Jersey Office of Emergency Management booklet