

PREPAREDNESS INFORMATION

For most people, disasters and emergencies are not a part of everyday life, so when something happens, they are often taken by surprise. The reality is that disasters happen every day. Each disaster can have serious injuries, property damage, loss of essential services, and disruption of community and business activities to name a few.

Disaster response is a partnership between first responders: local, state, and federal governments; disaster-relief organizations; and you! Taking the time to understand how a disaster may affect you, and then taking steps now to protect yourself can help minimize the negative effects of a disaster and help you recover more quickly.

In a disaster situation, local responders may not be able to reach you immediately. You should be ready to be self-sufficient for at least three days (72 hours). Your preparedness may allow you to help others during a disaster and will most certainly allow the first responders in your area to take care of those in the most immediate life-threatening situations. Being prepared and knowing what to do will reduce fear and anxiety and may help you to avoid the danger altogether.

Having a pre-developed emergency plan, preparing an emergency kit, and understanding how to stay informed is essential to your survival and comfort.

BE INFORMED

Stay informed during an emergency and get weather and traffic updates through Alert Prince George's, the official emergency notification system of Prince George's County. Visit <http://alert.mypgc.us> to sign up.



Emergency Alerts: <http://alert.mypgc.us>



Twitter: @PGCountyOEM



Facebook: www.facebook.com/PGCountyOEM



Capital Region Updates: www.capitalert.gov

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MAKE AN EMERGENCY KIT

Depending on the size and complexity of the event, first responders may not be available immediately. Having supplies on hand for a minimum of three days (72 hours) will ensure your own safety and the safety of your family. It is recommended to have the following:

Home/Office Emergency Kit: This kit should provide enough supplies to help you survive for three days without any additional aid. It should include food, water (one gallon per person, per day), first aid supplies, a change of clothes, personal care supplies, walking shoes, flashlights, shelter-in-place equipment, local maps, a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather radio, a wrench or pliers for turning off utilities, and a whistle.

Car Kit: Essential car kit components include food, water, needed medical supplies, flashlights, jumper cables, shovel, ice scraper, warm clothes, and blankets.

An Emergency “Go Bag” in the Event of an Evacuation: Go bags include enough supplies for each member of the family to survive for three days on the road. This includes water, food, clothing, medication, evacuation routes, family records, and supplies for other specialized needs.

Family Records: Take time to ensure that all important family records are protected and readily available in the event of a disaster or evacuation. This will make the recovery process go more smoothly and quickly.

Medical Needs Lists: Compile a brief summary of known allergens, medications, and prior medical history. Keep a copy in your wallet, on the fridge, and at work and provide a copy to your emergency contact.

When assembling emergency supplies for your kits, remember to consider the needs of infants, children, seniors, and pets.

For a sample list of supplies for an emergency kit, see the last section of this guide.

MAKE A PLAN

Developing an emergency plan is an effective way to assure that everyone you care for knows how to respond in the event of an emergency. Learn about the hazards and risks in your area, and talk to members of your household about what to do in different scenarios. Consider the following:

- How will you contact one another?
- How will you reunite with your family?
- What will you do in different situations?

Communications Plan

It may be difficult to communicate with family and friends through traditional means during and after an emergency. Use these tips to help you connect with loved ones after an emergency.

- Establish an out-of-town emergency contact.
- Pick two meeting locations outside of the home (one nearby and one outside of the neighborhood.)
- Keep a hard copy of important phone numbers and addresses in your wallet.
- Consider texting instead of calling when phone lines are busy.

Evacuation Plan

When community evacuations are deemed necessary, local officials may notify you via Alert Prince George's. Local media may also provide valuable information regarding the evacuation process. The amount of time you have to evacuate will depend on the nature of the disaster, so be prepared to leave at a moment's notice. You should have enough supplies on hand should you have to leave with limited warning.

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- Assemble an emergency kit. (Ensure to plan for all members of your family, including pets.)
- Determine where you will go if you must evacuate and communicate the location with everyone in your household.
- Map multiple evacuation routes. During certain types of emergencies, some roads might be impassable.
- Make arrangements ahead of time with relatives and friends you may be able to stay with during an evacuation.
- In some instances, mass care shelters may be opened to provide sheltering to individuals who have been temporarily displaced from their homes. Pay attention to local authorities and news media to see if such a shelter is available. If you have other options for shelter available to you, make use of them instead of a mass care shelter.
- All shelters may not be pet friendly. Prepare a list of kennels, hotels, friends, and family members who may be able to care for your pet in an emergency. If you plan to place your pet in a kennel, make sure that the facility meets all requirements for long term care and has an adequate disaster plan itself.

Shelter-in-Place Plan

There may be times when you are instructed to “shelter-in-place.” The actions you take will differ depending on the situation. When making your family emergency plan, discuss which rooms in your home will be your “safe rooms” for each type of disaster. Different scenarios will require different locations to shelter-in-place. When instructed to shelter-in-place:

- Close all doors and windows.
- Turn off ventilation systems (heating and air conditioning) and close fireplace dampers.

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- Take your disaster supplies and a radio with you. Go to a room with the fewest doors and windows and seal the room. Cut plastic sheeting to fit over windows and vents ahead of time, then secure it with duct tape.
- Place a damp towel at the base of the door.
- Stay in the room and listen for news on the radio or television. Do not come out until you are told it is safe or you are told by authorities to evacuate.
- Consider keeping some basic disaster supplies (flashlight, radio, water, and food) in each of the safe rooms in your home. Or you might plan to take your “go” kit with you to your safe room.

Communications Plan	Shelter-in-Place Plan	Evacuation Plan
Have current phone numbers and email	Use in case of a tornado watch or warning	Identify alternate location(s)
Out-of-town contact	Located away from windows and outside doors	Plan your evacuation routes
Meeting places	Know where your main water and electric shut offs are located	Leave a note on the door or a pre-designated area
Inform family and friends about the plan	Include emergency phone numbers	Inform family and friends about the plan
Practice and update every 6 months	Practice the plan	Practice the plan

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GET INVOLVED

Many opportunities for training and preparedness are available to the public. Training and volunteer opportunities provide a valuable service to the community and an excellent foundation for knowledge of emergency preparedness. Some of those opportunities include:



**American
Red Cross**

American Red Cross: The American Red Cross in the National Capital Region offers training on CPR, first aid and numerous other skills. The Red Cross also provides volunteer opportunities to help respond to and recover from emergencies. Visit www.redcross.org/local/dc/Washington for more information.



Prince George's County Citizen Corps: The purpose of the Prince George's County Citizen Corps is to utilize the power of every individual through education, training and volunteer service to make communities safe, stronger and better prepared to respond to the threats of terrorism, crime, public health issues and disasters of all kinds. The Citizen Corps builds on community strengths and develops action plans to involve the whole community, including local businesses. Contact OEMStaff@co.pg.md.us for more information.

CORE PROGRAMS:



Community Emergency Response Team:

CERT trains people in neighborhoods, workplaces and schools in basic disaster response skills, such as fire suppression and search and rescue. It helps Prince George's County residents take a more active role in emergency preparedness.

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Volunteers in Police Service: The Prince George's County Police Department offers the opportunity to join Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS), which provides support for the police department by incorporating volunteers so that law enforcement professionals have more time for front line duty. VIPS includes auxiliary police officers, administrative volunteers and the Citizen's Police Academy.



Fire Corps: Fire Corps volunteers are trained to perform non-operational administrative duties at the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department.



Medical Reserve Corps: The Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) provides training and volunteer opportunities through the Prince George's County Health Department. It is composed of medical and non-medical volunteers trained to assist the community in dispensing medication and other services during public health emergencies.



Neighborhood Watch: Neighborhood Watch brings residents and law enforcement together to reduce crime and improve the quality of life in our neighborhoods. Volunteers may join an existing group or establish one in their neighborhood.