BucksCounty.org

The Official Site of Bucks County, Pennsylvania

# Emergency Preparedness Guide

**Created by the Bucks County Emergency Management Agency**

**Bucks County Commissioners**
Charles H. Martin, Chairman
Robert G. Loughery
Diane M. Ellis- Marseglia. L.C.S.W.

Brian Hessenthaler, COO

# GUIDE TO EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS IN BUCKS COUNTY

The following is a guide to help you better prepare for an emergency that may strike your area. Many people believe "it won't happen to me" or "I will have time to prepare." When we think of emergencies or disasters we commonly think of hurricanes, wildfires, floods or some type of natural disaster of large size or magnitude.

However, this is not generally the case. These emergencies can be as small as a fire at a neighboring manufacturing plant which can affect the air quality in the area; or a police action, which has an armed subject barricaded in a residence, restricting your ability to return home for an extended period of time.

This guide was created to explain commonly used terminology, give samples of checklists, help you create a family emergency plan and prepare an Emergency "To Go Kit". It also teaches the basics of what to do before, during, and after an emergency.

It is necessary for you to learn about the things you can do to be prepared before an emergency strikes. Two things that will help you do this are to develop an emergency plan and an Emergency "To Go Kit".

# County of Bucks

EMERGENCY SERVICES
911 Freedom Way, Ivyland, PA 18974
Phone (215) 340-8700 FAX - (215) 957-0765

*County Commissioners*

ROBERT G. LOUGHERY, *Chairman*
CHARLES H. MARTIN, *Vice-Chairman*
DIANE M. ELLIS-MARSEGLIA, LCSW

Scott T. Forster
*Director of Emergency Services*

Emergency Preparedness begins with every citizen. Individuals should be prepared at home, in their workplace, or even on the road when an emergency strikes.

This Preparedness Guide can help you, your family, friends, and co-workers better plan to take the necessary actions to be ready for an emergency and take the initial steps if an emergency occurs.

I am proud of the preparedness program that exists throughout the entire County of Bucks. I look forward to continue enhancements so we are all more prepared and resilient in the event of future emergencies.

Sincerely,

Scott T. Forster

# TABLE OF CONTENTS


| | |
|---|---|
| Important Phone Numbers and Websites | 4 |
| Protective Actions | 6 |
| Emergency Plan | 8 |
| Family Escape Plan Diagram | 10 |
| Family Communication Plan | 12 |
| ID Cards | 13 |
| Family Member Information Sheets | 16 |
| Disaster Preparedness Kit | 18 |
| Emergency "To Go Kit" | 19 |
| Pet Information Sheet | 21 |
| Pet Travel and Emergency Kit | 22 |
| Types of Emergencies | 23 |
| Extreme Weather Conditions | 25 |
| Hurricanes/Tornadoes | 26 |
| Technological Hazards/Emergencies | 27 |
| After the Storm | 28 |
| Additional Resources | 29 |

| POLICE DEPARTMENTS | BUSINESS NUMBER | TOWNSHIP WEBSITE |
|---|---|---|
| BEDMINSTER TOWNSHIP | 215-795-2972 | www.bedminsterpa.com |
| BENSALEM TOWNSHIP | 215-633-3700 | www.bensalemtwp.org |
| BRISTROL BOROUGH | 215-788-7813 | www.bristolborough.com |
| BRISTOL TOWNSHIP | 215-785-4052 | www.bristoltownship.org |
| BUCKINGHAM TOWNSHIP | 215-794-8812 | www.buckinghampa.org |
| CHALFONT BOROUGH | 215-822-2606 | www.chalfontborough.com |
| DOYLESTOWN BOROUGH | 215-345-4143 | www.doylestownborough.net |
| DOYLESTOWN TOWNSHIP | 215-348-4201 | www.doylestownpa.org |
| DUBLIN BOROUGH | 215-249-0272 | www.dublinborough.org |
| FALLS TOWNSHIP | 215-949-9100 | www.fallstwp.com |
| HILLTOWN TOWNSHIP | 215-453-6000 | www.hilltown.org |
| HULMEVILLE BOROUGH | 215-757-177 | www.hulmeville-pa.gov |
| IVYLAND BOROUGH | 215-672-3215 | www.ivylandborough.org |
| LANGHORNE BOROUGH | 215-757-5911 | www.langhorneborough.com |
| LANGHORNE MANOR BOROUGH | 215-752-5072 | www.langhornemanor.com |
| LOWER MAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP | 215-493-4055 | www.lmt.org |
| LOWER SOUTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP | 215-357-1235 | www.lowersouthamptontwp.org |
| MIDDLETOWN TOWNSHIP | 215-750-3845 | www.middletowntwpbucks.org |
| MORRISVILLE BOROUGH | 215-295-8112 | www.morrisvillepagov.com |
| NEW BRITAIN BOROUGH | 215-348-4586 | www.newbritainboro.com |
| NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP | 215-822-1910 | www.newbritaintownship.org |
| NEW HOPE BOROUGH | 215-862-3003 | www.newhopeborough.org |
| NEWTOWN BOROUGH | 215-860-7835 | www.boro.newtown.pa.us |
| NEWTOWN TOWNSHIP | 215-579-1000 | www.twp.newtown.pa.us |
| NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP | 215-322-6111 | www.northamptontownship.com |
| PENNDEL BOROUGH | 215-757-5152/5153 | www.penndelboro.com |
| PENNRIDGE REGIONAL | 215-257-5104 | www.eastrockhilltownship.org |
| PENNRIDGE REGIONAL | 215-257-5104 | www.westrockhilltownship.org |
| PERKASIE BOROUGH | 215-257-6876 | www.perkasieborough.org |
| PLUMSTEAD TOWNSHIP | 215-766-8741 | www.plumstead.org |
| QUAKERTOWN BOROUGH | 215-536-5002 | www.quakertownboro.com |
| RICHLAND TOWNSHIP | 215-536-4066 | www.richlandtownship.org |
| SILVERDALE BOROUGH | 215-453-6000 | www.silverdalepa.org |
| SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP | 215-297-8201 | www.soleburytwp.org |
| SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP | 610-346-7600 | www.springfieldbucks.org |
| TINICUM TOWNSHIP | 610-294-9158 | www.tinicumbucks.org |
| TULLYTOWN BOROUGH | 215-945-0999 | www.tullytownborough.com |
| UPPER MAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP | 215-968-3020 | www.uppermakefield.org |
| UPPER SOUTHAMTON TOWNSHIP | 215-364-5000 | www.southamptonpa.com |
| WARMINSTER TOWNSHIP | 215-443-5000 | www.warminstertownship.org |
| WARRINGTON TOWNSHIP | 215-343-3311 | www.warringtontownship.org |
| WARWICK TOWNSHIP | 215-343-6102 | www.warwick-bucks.org |
| WRIGHTSTOWN TOWNSHIP | 215-579-1000 | www.wrightstownpa.org |
| YARDLEY BOROUGH | 215-493-2782 | www.yardleyboro.com |

| Pennsylvania State Police Dublin Barracks- 215-249-9191 covers the following townships | | |
|---|---|---|
| BRIDGETON TOWNSHIP | | www.bridgetontwp.org |
| DURHAM TOWNSHIP | | www.durhamtownship.org |
| HAYCOCK TOWNSHIP | | www.haycocktwp.com |
| MILFORD TOWNSHIP | | www.milfordtownship.org |
| NOCKAMIXON TOWNSHIP | | www.nockamixontownship.org |
| RICHLANDTOWN BOROUGH | | www.richlandtownborough.org |
| RIEGELSVILLE BOROUGH | | www.riegelsville.org |
| TRUMBAUERSVILLE BOROUGH | | www.trumbauersville.org |
| Pennsylvania State Police Trevose Barracks - 215-942-3900 | | |
| HOSPITALS: GENERAL | | |
| ARIA BUCKS COUNTY | Business: 215-949-5000 | Emergency Room: 215-949-5261 |
| DOYLESTOWN HOSPITAL | Business: 215-345-2200 | Emergency Room: 215-345-2109 |
| GRANDVEIW HOSPITAL | Business: 215-453-4000 | Emergency Room: 215-453-4674 |
| LOWER BUCKS HOSPITAL | Business: 215-785-9200 | Emergency Room: 215-785-9400 |
| ST. LUKES QUAKERTOWN | Business: 215-538-1122 | Emergency Room: 215-538-4652 |
| HOSPITALS: TRAUMA | | |
| ST. MARY MEDICAL CENTER | Business: 215-710-2000 | Emergency Room: 215-710-2100 |
| * ABINGTON HOSPITAL | Business: 215-481-2000 | Emergency Room: 215-481-2450 |
| * LEHIGH VALLEY HOSPITAL | Business: 610-402-8000 | Emergency Room: 610-402-8027 |
| * ST. LUKES BETHLEHEM | Business: 610-954-1122 | Emergency Room: 610-954-4500 |
| * Located outside of Bucks County, but utilized as if in County | | |
| MEDIA OUTLETS: TELEVISION | | |
| KYW CH 3<br>215-977-5333 | WPVI CH 6<br>215-581-4573 | WCAU CH 10<br>610-668-8500 |
| WPHL CH 17<br>215-878-1700 | FOX CH 29<br>215-982-5500 | WFMZ CH 69<br>610-798-1111 |
| MEDIA OUTLETS: RADIO | | |
| KYW 1060 AM<br>215-238-4850 | SUNNY 104.5 FM<br>215-263-1045 | WMGK 102.9 FM<br>610-667-8500 |
| Bucks County Emergency Management Agency | 215-340-8700 | |

# PROTECTIVE ACTIONS

Protective actions are steps taken to protect our family members and ourselves from harm. The two most common protective actions are:

A) Shelter in place: This involves simply staying indoors. Whether it is your residence or any other location that you maybe at (i.e. mall, work place, church etc.). In the event of an emergency such as the release of a hazardous material, it is not always recommended to immediately evacuate the area. Leaving your location may expose yourself to harmful agents that have been dispersed into the air.

Evacuation: This is when you will need to leave the current location that you are at. In these situations it is important to listen to emergency personal or news media as to the evacuation route and possible shelter locations. When this is necessary you may not have time to prepare. There are two levels of evacuations.

1) Immediate Evacuation: This is due to an emergency that is present and you have very little time to react.

2) Pending Evacuation: This is when an emergency is pending and you are given a date and time that you need to evacuate by. You do have limited time to prepare and secure your property.

# CREATE AN EMERGENCY PLAN

In Bucks County, we use the Emergency Alert System (EAS) and Everbridge during emergencies. In order to stay up-to-date on disaster information, residents should sign up for Ready Notify PA. Residents can sign up for this free service by going to ReadyBucks and by clicking Bucks County. You can add your email, cell and home phones to receive text messages and email from authorities via the Everbridge system. When the decision is made to activate the EAS, original programming will be interrupted and an emergency message will be broadcasted. When disasters strike, it is important that you listen to the instructions given through the two systems listed above. Once you create an at home emergency plan it should be reviewed and practiced a t least every six months. At that time new information should be updated and plans can be enhanced. The more you practice, the more the plan becomes second nature. When an emergency happens people don't always think clearly. Emergencies may also strike when your family members are away from home; ask about, and stay current on, emergency plans at your workplace, school or anywhere you and your family spend time.

This document will address two types of emergency plans, one for businesses and one for your home. From these two plans you can create emergency plans for anything else you are involved in such as, church, country club, or community group.

**Business Emergency Plan:**

An emergency can happen at any time. Employers and their employees should be prepared and aware of what to do in a time of emergency. If you are a business owner developing a business disaster plan, consider how the disaster could affect your employees, customers and the workplace. Consider how you could continue doing business if the area around your facility is closed or streets are not accessible.

Employers:

- Ensure that an emergency plan is developed and practiced.
- Make specific plans for employees who are disabled.
- Make a phone chain with employee's contact numbers (home, cell, etc.).
- Identify a person/position to track and update important management phone numbers.
- Carry a hard copy of all phone numbers in case of computer or phone problems.
- Prepare backup files of all business records and store offsite weekly or monthly.
- Identify critical business functions that absolutely must continue, and how to rebuild the business at another location with short down time.

Employees:

- Learn and practice emergency plans.
- Know how to evacuate the business in the dark.
- Know the post – evacuation meeting place.
- Assign someone accountable for knowing the number of employees at work. A head count should be done to cross reference who is on vacation or offsite.
- Know ahead of time, who can carpool and who can work from home in the event of limited access to the business.

**Family Emergency Plan:**

Our everyday lives have become complex, from both parents working, to the kids baseball games and soccer matches. There never seems to be a spare moment to relax, let alone sit down and create a family emergency plan. However, if you do this as a family function and have each member handle or work on a section it will be completed in a timely manner. Being prepared helps you and your family minimize the impact of a disaster, whether it is something major, or as small as a broken leg. The younger members will have a sense of responsibility and when an emergency really strikes, they won't be afraid because they have practiced.

- Meet with household members and discuss the dangers of possible emergency events, including fire, severe weather, hazardous spills and terrorism.
- Discuss how you and your family will respond to each emergency.
- Discuss power outages and personal injuries.
- Draw a floor plan of your home. Mark two (2) escape routes from each room.
- Teach adults and teenagers where the shutoffs are for gas, water and electricity. **If you turn off the gas never turn it back on yourself, have the gas restored by the gas company.**
- Post emergency contact numbers near all phones.
- Teach children how to call 911. Post your house address, along with what township or borough your address is in (This is who you pay your taxes to and not necessarily the same as your mailing address), near the phone where a child, babysitter, or visiting relative can see it.
- Teach children how to make long distance phone calls.
- Pick a meeting place outside the residence, generally a safe distance from the house in case of a fire.
- Pick a meeting place outside the neighborhood in case you are unable to return to your residence and your family is separated.
- Pick a relative or a friend that all family members are familiar with that lives away from the area that everyone can contact if separated. It is generally easier to call out of state during an emergency than within the affected area
- Texting may be a better option during an emergency. People have found when phone calls are not going through, texting will.
- Keep family records in watertight and fireproof safe.
- Consider training family members in CPR and basic first aid.

**Important Documents:**

In a disaster where you may need to evacuate quickly, important documents may be left behind and ultimately destroyed. Before the emergency strikes, sit down and decide which documents are most essential to your family. Below is a list of just some things you may consider important:

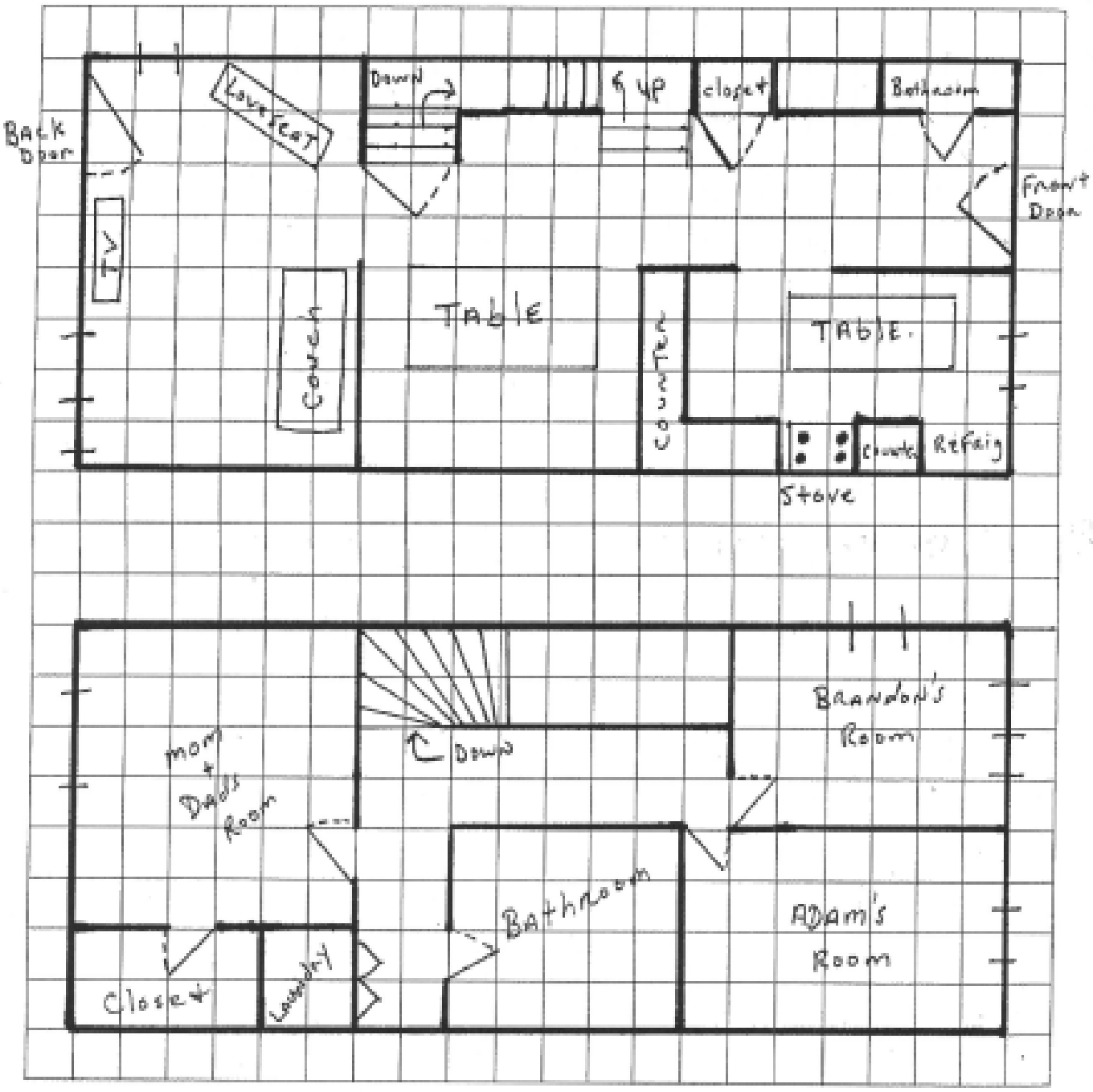
- Licenses or other I.Ds
- Social Security cards
- Passports
- Health Insurance Cards and Medical History
- Immunizations records
- Birth, marriage and death certificates
- Bank Accounts
- Credit card information
- Insurance polices
- Wills, contracts or deeds
- Stocks, bonds and retirement accounts
- Backup of important or key computer information, passwords
- List of valuables

Keep these documents or copies of these documents in a water or fire proof container with your disaster kit. Keep a copy of them in a safe place away from home, such as a safety deposit box, or leave copies with a trusted friend or relative. Let your trusted relative or friend know where these items can be found in case you are unable to get to them.

There are many ways to prepare your records for an emergency. Whatever way you choose, always remember to keep the records updated. Plan on one day each year to go through your records to make sure they are current.

*See the following pages for an example and a template to create emergency plans.

# Family Escape Plan




= Door

= window

= Folding Door

# Family Escape Plan

# FAMILY COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Meet with household members and create a Family Communication Plan. Choose an out of town contact that family members can reach to use as a central point if you get separated during an emergency. Make sure the contact is far enough away that they are not involved in the same emergency.

Make sure all family members have all contact numbers for each family member, to include home, work, cell, pager and emails.

During a disaster it maybe easier to email or text than to make a phone call.

Identify three (3) neighbors and agree to watch out for each other during the emergency.

(List all info below. Make copies for preparedness and "To Go Kits". Also, fill out the FEMA Family Emergency Plan wallet cards for each family to carry, in case they are unable to get back to the residence.)

Contact Name: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Other Phone: _____

Email Address:_____

Neighbor 1: _____

Phone:_____

Neighbor 2: _____

Phone:_____

Neighbor 3: _____

Phone: _____

# FAMILY EMERGENCY CARDS

**CUT AND FOLD**

EMERGENCY CONTACT NAME:

_____

PHONE #: (  ) _____-_____

OUT OF TOWN CONTACT:

_____

PHONE #: (  ) _____-_____

NEIGHBORHOOD CONTACT:

_____

PHONE #: (  ) _____-_____

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND PHONE #'S

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING PLACE:_____

_____

**CUT AND FOLD**

EMERGENCY CONTACT NAME:

_____

PHONE #: (  ) _____-_____

OUT OF TOWN CONTACT:

_____

PHONE #: (  ) _____-_____

NEIGHBORHOOD CONTACT:

_____

PHONE #: (  ) _____-_____

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND PHONE #'S

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING PLACE:_____

_____

**CUT AND FOLD**

# FAMILY MEMBER INFORMATION

Family Member Name:_____

Relationship:_____

Date of Birth: ____/____/_____ Blood Type: _____

Allergies:_____

_____

Advanced Directive: ____ YES ____ NO (if yes attach a copy)

Date of last: Tetanus: ____/____/_____

Pneumovax: ____/____/_____ Flu Shot:____/____/_____

Medical Conditions:

_____

_____

_____

_____

MEDICATIONS:

| Name | Dosage | Frequency | Reason |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

(use reverse side if more room is needed)

PLACE PHOTO HERE

(thumb print under photo)

Doctors Name and Phone #

1)_____

( ) _____-_____

2)_____

( ) _____-_____

3)_____

( ) _____-_____

4) _____

( ) _____-_____

# DISASTER PREPAREDNESS KIT

- ☐ WATER: 1 gallon per person, per day. Store water in sealed unbreakable containers. Identify the storage date and replace every 6 months.
- ☐ FOOD: A supply of non-perishable packaged or canned foods.
- ☐ BLANKETS: At least 1 per person. Can also use sleeping bags.
- ☐ ANTI-BACTERIAL HAND WIPES OR GEL
- ☐ FIRST AID KIT: A first aid book also, to help non trained family members.
- ☐ BATTERY POWERED RADIO
- ☐ FLASHLIGHTS
- ☐ SPARE BATTERIES: Various sizes for all battery operated equipment.
- ☐ MANUAL CAN OPENER
- ☐ EATING UTENSELS: Paper plates and plastic silverware.

- ☐ PRESCRIPTION MEDICINES: Keep refills up to date and don't wait till there are only a few pills left.
- ☐ ABC FIRE EXTINGUISHER
- ☐ CASH. CREDIT CARD AND CHANGE: Keep a couple rolls of change; Quarters, dimes and nickels. Keep cash on hand.
- ☐ EXTRA PAIR OF EYEGLASSES: Contact lens and solution
- ☐ TOILETRIES: Toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, toilet paper, deodorant, diaper wipes and feminine hygiene products.
- ☐ EXTRA SET KEYS: Both house and cars
- ☐ LIST OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS AND NUMBERS
- ☐ LIST OF IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS
- ☐ RECHARGING CORDS FOR ELECTRONIC DEVICES

- ☐ ANY ITEMS NEEDED FOR INFANTS, ELDERLY OR DISABLED FAMILY MEMBERS
- ☐ SANITATION SUPPLIES: Trash bags: both large and small, soap: bar and dish soap, household bleach and rubber gloves.
- ☐ TARPS: In case of an emergency repair.
- ☐ WORK GLOVES
- ☐ RAIN GEAR
- ☐ ENTERTAINMENT: Books, cards, or board games. Something to keep younger family members busy and lessen tension on the adults.

The above is a basic starting point to help you with your Preparedness Kit. You can add more items to personalize it to your family.

Stocking up on emergency supplies can be done from week to week to lessen the expense. Most of the items are already in your residence, it is just having a few extras on hand. If you add to the items now when the demand is not so great, the better prepared you are.

When stocking up you should prepare for a minimum of three (3) days and ideally seven (7) days

# EMERGENCY "TO GO KIT"

During an emergency, utilities may not be working, so finding needed items may be a problem. Also, as earlier stated you may not have time to pack things, so having a "TO GO KIT" already in place will make your life easier. A lot of the items that were listed in the Disaster Preparedness Kit are the same in this kit. However, before you were able to draw on the supplies from throughout your residence or place of business. This is designed for when you need to leave that area.

- At least 3-5 day supply of water (l gallon per person per day). Store in sealed and unbreakable containers. Replace every 6 months.
- A 3-5 day supply of non-perishable packaged or canned food.
- Manual can opener.
- Change of clothing: Remember to be seasonal minded. Fall thru spring layering is the best and also sturdy shoes for the weather.
- Blankets or sleeping bags.
- First Aid kit and basic first aid manual.
- Battery powered radio and flashlights. Add plenty of extra batteries for both.
- Important personal papers; to include insurance paperwork (home, auto and personal), will, personal identification (social security card, passport, birth certificates), important medical records (type, make, model and serial numbers for medical devices)
- Prescription medicines: All your medications are not in one place; be prepared to place all needed medications in your "To Go Kit". Store them in a basket or in a place so that they can be gathered quickly and placed in zip lock bags. Leave a large note on top of the "To Go Kit" to remind you to grab your medications.

- Extra pair of glasses or contacts. Remember contact solutions
- List of important phones numbers: Doctors, medical facilities, relatives and neighbors. Make sure there is a paper copy because you may not be able to use cell phone or computer due to dead batteries

- Extra keys: car, house (both primary and vacation) and safety deposit boxes
- Tool kit: Screwdrivers, cutters, hammer, scissors, electrical tape, duct tape, waterproof matches, flares, small roll clear plastic (painters or construction), plastic storage containers, compass, bleach, and fire extinguisher
- Individual Kit: Shampoo, toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, feminine hygiene products, garbage bags, needle and thread, pens and paper.
- Cash, in case of power outage.

Every 6 months change out the water and check expiration dates on medications as well as food. Plastic storage tubs work well and items with expiration dates can be stored in one.

---

## *IMPORTANT REMINDER*

This is an emergency "To Go Kit", not a packing list for vacation. There should be as few tubs as possible, for quick packing of your vehicle; however, do not overload the tubs or they will be too difficult to move.

# PETINFORMATION

**PET#1: (CIRCLE) DOG CAT FISH BIRD**

**HORSE OTHER:**

**APPROX AGE**

**HEALTH PROBLEMS:**

**MEDICATIONS/DOSE/FREQUENCY:**

**PET#2: (CIRCLE) DOG CAT FISH BIRD**

**HORSE OTHER:**

**APPROX AGE**

**HEALTH PROBLEMS:**

**MEDICATIONS/DOSE/FREQUENCY:**

**PET#3: (CIRCLE) DOG CAT FISH BIRD**

**HORSE OTHER:**

**APPROX AGE**

**HEALTH PROBLEMS:**

**MEDICATIONS/DOSE/FREQUENCY:**

**PET#4: (CIRCLE) DOG CAT FISH BIRD**

**HORSE OTHER:**

**APPROX AGE**

**HEALTH PROBLEMS:**

**MEDICATIONS/DOSE/FREQUENCY:**

# PET TRAVEL AND EMERGENCY KIT

Just as you made a "To Go Kit" for yourself, you can have one for your pet also. The following is a suggested list:

- ☐ Veterinarian name and phone number
- ☐ Collar and harness with current personal I.D. tag
- ☐ Short and long leashes
- ☐ Food dish
- ☐ Water dish
- ☐ Bottled water
- ☐ Food (can opener if needed)
- ☐ Medications and instructions
- ☐ Health and Rabies certificates
- ☐ Favorite toy and chew
- ☐ Carrier or Crate (sized for pet to stand up and turn around in)
- ☐ Blanket and/or bed
- ☐ Litter and litter pan
- ☐ Pooper Scooper and plastic bags
- ☐ All surface cleaner-deodorizer and paper towels
- ☐ Color pet photo and description (in case pet gets lost)
- ☐ Grooming comb, brush and towel
- ☐ Pet First Aid Kit: to include; gauze pads, roll, tape, bandages, hydrogen peroxide, antibiotic ointment, muzzle, tweezers, small blunt ended scissors, cold pack, pet thermometer (cats and dogs normal range is 100-102.5). Check with your local vet or SPCA, they may have a pet first aid kit already packaged and for sale
- ☐ Obtain individual crates large enough for safe confinement. The pet should be able to stand up and turn around in it. Smaller dog crates can hold a cat along with a small litter pan.

- Pre-pack and store the crate and a separate container with favorite type of toy, bedding, extra collar or harness with leashes, food and water bowls, food, water, cleaning supplies, cat litter and scoop, plastic bags and first aid kit.
- Watertight bag with photo, vaccination records, instant ID tag for temporary phone number, medications and medical records.
- Rotate food and water 4 times a year. Rule of thumb for water for dogs is one (1) gallon per day for a forty pound dog. One (1) quart of water per day for each cat.

# TYPES OF EMERGENCIES

## Winter Storms:

For our region this is one of the more common types of emergencies. This includes both snow and ice storms. The following are terms used during winter storms.

- **Winter Storm Watch:** Conditions are favorable for hazardous winter weather conditions to include heavy snow, blizzard conditions, freezing rain and wind chills. The watches are usually issued 12 to 36 hours in advance.
- **Winter Storm Warning:** Hazardous winter weather conditions that pose a threat to life and property are occurring or will occur shortly.
- **Blizzard Warning:** Sustained winds or frequent gusts 35 mile per hour or greater, along with considerable falling or blowing snow for a period or 3 hours or longer.
- **Snow Advisory:** There will be snow fall but not to extent of a storm warning.

During winter storms you should stay off the roads unless it is absolutely necessary to be out. If you do have to be out in the weather, make sure your vehicle is equipped for the weather. Stranded and abandoned vehicles make it harder for the local road crews to clear the roads. Keep non-perishable foods and a blanket in your car. Also, ensure you have a full tank of gas and cash. ATM and credit card machines will not work without power.

## Summer Storms:

During the summer months, heavy rain storms can cause flash flooding in low lying or poor drainage areas. When there are more frequent storms and the ground is saturated, areas that don't normally flood, will. **NEVER DRIVE THROUGH STANDING WATER!** Once your tail pipe is submerged in water your vehicle will stop running. It only takes a few inches of fast moving water to carry your vehicle into the current and downstream. Just as in the winter storms, summer storms also have storm watch (meaning severe weather may occur) or a storm warning (severe weather storm has developed). The following are a few things to do when heavy rains are forecasted.

- Make sure your rain gutters are clear.
- Make sure your rain spouts are at least a few feet out from the residence and they drain away from the foundation.
- Check that your sump pump is in working order.
- Check the street drains in the area of your residence. Make sure there is nothing blocking the drains and diverting water across your property
- Know the areas around your neighborhood that normally flood. In case of an evacuation you can avoid these locations.
- If you find yourself in the area of flash flooding, get to higher ground immediately. The force of swiftly moving water can knock a person off their feet.

Once the storm hits, the safest place to be is in a secure structure or well-built home. Lightning is produced in all thunderstorms. If you are close enough to the storm to hear the thunder, you are close enough to be struck by lightning. You should move inside as quickly as possible. Once inside you should do the following:

- Listen to weather updates and stay informed.
- Keep away from windows and doors.
- Be ready to evacuate if necessary.
- Have your "To Go Kit" ready

Should you be caught outside and unable to get inside a building your car is the next best place. Close the windows and locate the vehicle to an open area. Move away from trees and power lines. If a vehicle is not available and you are in an open field or area move to a low area such as a ravine or valley - as long as there is no flooding in the area.

Once the storm has passed use caution due to debris or electrical wires that may be down.

# EXTREME WEATHER CONDITIONS:

## ~ HEAT~

- Drink plenty of fluids such as water or low calorie sports drinks.
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol.
- Stay indoors in an air conditioned building. If you don't have air conditioning try visiting a friend or relative that does. Go to a public library or an indoor shopping center for a few hours.
- Wear lightweight, light colored, loose fitting clothes.
- If you need to be outdoors, try to do so during early morning hours or evening hours.
- Never leave children or pets in a vehicle even for a few minutes. Temperatures can rise quickly to dangerous levels.

## ~ COLD~

- Be prepared to stay in your home. Check your disaster supply kit for food and water.
- Travel only when absolutely necessary. Listen to road advisories. Make sure your car is winterized and you have an emergency kit in the vehicle. It should include water, food, blanket, flashlight, sand or kitty litter, shovel, ice scraper and flares. If you get stuck, stay with your vehicle. Make sure your tailpipe is not blocked and run your car for 15 minutes, every hour to conserve your fuel.
- Eat regularly and drink warm liquids such as warm broths or juices. Avoid caffeine and alcohol.
- Install carbon monoxide detectors. Do not use generators, propane heaters, gas grills or unvented heating appliances inside the home.
- Natural gas and liquid petroleum gas installations are at risk due to heavy and deep snow conditions. Keep the gas meters free of snowand ice buildup.
- Cold weather puts an extra strain on your heart so work slowly. Dress in layers if you have to be outdoors.

## HURRICANES

Hurricanes are a tropical cyclone with Winds of 74 mph or greater. They fall into 5 different categories based on wind speed (measured in MPH):

CATEGORY 1=74-95

CATEGORY 2=96-110

CATEGORY 3=111-129

CATEGORY 4=130-156

CATEGORY 5=157+

- Check your emergency kit and make sure things are in order.
- Secure the exterior of your property. Bring in outdoor furniture, decorations and anything else that is not tied down.
- Clear clogged rain gutters and downspouts.
- If you have an emergency generator, ensure it is operational and extra fuel is on hand.
- **Never run an emergency generator or any other gas powered appliance inside a structure.**
- When setting up a portable generator, make sure the exhaust is facing away from the structure and out to a well-ventilated area.

## T ORNADOE S

Tornadoes are a violent destructive whirling wind, accompanied by a funnel shaped cloud that progresses in a narrow path over the land. Tornadoes arrive with very little notice and can leave a very long path of destruction. However, they can also disappear as quickly as they appear.

If a tornado warning is in effect you should immediately move the family to the basement or storm shelter. If these are not available you should move to the center room of the residence. Stay away from the windows and draw drapes and shades to help deflect broken glass or flying debris

Should you encounter a tornado while driving, exit the vehicle and find the lowest area possible, such as a drainage ditch or culvert. Lay flat, face down and cover your head till it passes.

Tornadoes are dangerous because of their high winds and the ability to lift and move heavy objects.

# TECHNOLOGICAL HAZARDS EMERGENCIES

If you are notified or become aware of a technological hazards emergency such as a chemical, biological, radiological emergency, fire or explosion, **do not panic.** The best defense from any of these emergencies is education and awareness. If you need to get out of the surrounding area or are directed to evacuate, do so immediately. Emergency personnel are trained to respond to these situations. They will tell you what to do, either at the incident site or via TV or radio. Emergency broadcasts can be received via the Emergency Alert System (EAS).

*If you are told to evacuate:*

- Take your Emergency "To Go Kit."
- Lock your home. Close and lock windows, doors and close all vents and fireplace dampers. Turn off all fans, heat and air conditioning units.
- Shut off water, gas and electricity before leaving. Make arrangements or have a plan for your pets. Travel on routes specified by local authorities.
- Travel with car windows up and air vents, air conditioner and heater turned off.

*If you are instructed to stay inside:*

- Close and lock windows and doors.
- Turn off ventilation systems, water and gas.
- Seal gaps under doors, windows and window air conditioners with duct tape.
- If harmful vapors do enter the house, cover your nose and mouth with a damp or wet cloth.
- Stay inside until authorities notify you it is safe to exit.

For more information regarding the different types of chemical and biological agents, visit the Center for Disease Control website at http://www.cdc.gov and/or Pennsylvania Department of Health at www.health.state.pa.us.

# AFTER THESTORM

Once the storm has cleared there still may be dangers and issues that will need to be addressed. Things such as power outages, contaminated water supply, and blocked roadways from downed trees or parts of the road being washed away. It is important to stay calm and have patience.

**Power Outages:**

The power may be off for several days after a storm. As the power company is trying to restore power there may be power surges and periods where the power will come on and go off again.

- If using a portable generator make sure it is outside any structure. Have the exhaust facing away from the structure and maintain ample ventilation. Have a professional install the generator.
- Have flashlights with extra batteries. Avoid using candles due to the fire hazards. If candles have to be used, ***do not*** leave them unattended or burning overnight.
- Turn off sensitive electric equipment such as heater and air conditioning.
- Keep your refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to keep the cold in and heat out.
- Do not use the stove to heat the residence. Leaving an open flame burning may cause an accidental fire or a fatal gas leak.
- Keep your distance from any downed wire. They may look dead, however they can be energized at any time.
- Do not call 911 to ask about power outages. The communication center does not have time frames on when the power will be restored.
- Have cash on hand.

**Water Supply:**

Flooding can cause contamination of local water sources. Contaminated water can contain microorganisms that cause diseases such as dysentery, typhoid and hepatitis. If you think your water may be contaminated you should purify it before using it. This includes water used for drinking, cooking, cleaning dishes, and bathing. The best way to purify water is to boil it. Bring water to a rolling boil for 3- 5 minutes and then allow it to cool. Pouring water back and forth between two containers will improve the taste by putting oxygen back into the water.

**Emergency Food Supplies:**

It is possible for a healthy person to survive on half of their usual food intake for an extended period time. The following should be taken into account when putting together emergency kits.

- Use canned foods, dry mixes and other staples you use every day.
- Foods that require no refrigeration, preparation, or cooking are the best.
- Make sure you have a manual can opener and disposable utensils in your emergency food supply.
- When preparing, individuals with special diets and/or allergies will need to be considered as well as infants and the elderly**.**

---

**Additional Resources:**

Additional information about emergency preparedness can be obtained from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) by either calling 1-800-480-2520, or checking out www.fema.gov.

*Additional internet sources:*

www.pema.state.pa.us

www.redcross.org

www.dhs.gov

www.homelandsecurity.state.pa.us

# Bucks County Commissioners

**Robert G. Loughery,**
**Vice Chairman**

**Charles H. Martin,**
**Chairman**

**Diane M. Ellis-Marseglia,**
**L.C.S.W.**

BucksCounty.org

The Official Site of Bucks County, Pennsylvania