

Adventurer's MK

Community Safety Awards

INTRODUCTION

Emergencies can happen at any time and occur anywhere, sometimes without much warning. An emergency can force you to evacuate your neighbourhood or confine you to your home or school. It can leave you without basic services such as water, gas, electricity or a working telephone. Are you prepared?

As every Adventurer knows, it is important to always 'Be Prepared' and there are actions that individuals and families can take to ensure that they are prepared before an emergency happens. Emergency preparedness begins at home and every Adventurer should learn about the hazards that exist in their community and prepare themselves accordingly.

Emergency Preparedness

Emergency preparedness refers to the actions taken prior to an emergency or disaster to ensure an effective response.

Definition of an Emergency

An emergency is a situation that poses an immediate threat to human life or serious damage to property.

Emergencies can be divided into three categories: natural emergencies (i.e., tornadoes, floods, forest fires etc.), technological emergencies (i.e., train derailments, chemical spills, power outages etc.) and human-caused emergencies (i.e., terrorism etc.). Sometimes a natural emergency can cause a secondary technological emergency such as when a severe storm damages hydro lines and causes a power outage.

Definition of a Natural Emergency

A natural emergency is a situation caused by nature that poses an immediate threat to human life or serious damage to property. Some of these include: earthquakes, floods, tornadoes, hail, landslides and snow avalanches, blizzards, storm surges, and forest fires.

By learning about the types of emergencies that could happen in your community, you can better prepare for them.

(The Emergency Preparedness Program requires that Adventurer's learn about natural emergencies that could happen in their community. There are several ways leaders can learn about the types of natural emergencies which have affected your community in the past: For the purpose of this Emergency Preparedness Program, we would suggest that you select natural emergencies from the Atmospheric (Weather), Forest Fire/Wildfire, Geologic and/or Hydrologic (Water) categories. These will be emergencies that children/young adults will be the most familiar with and for which there are more support materials available.)

Natural Emergencies in Your Community

Once you know what natural emergencies can happen in your community, you are ready to learn more about them.

Emergency Survival Kits

Emergencies can happen at anytime and occur anywhere, sometimes without much warning. An emergency can force you to evacuate your neighbourhood or confine you to your home or school. It can leave you without basic services such as water, gas, electricity or a working telephone. Are you prepared? Do you have what you need to remain comfortable and safe?

Being prepared for an emergency includes the preparation of an emergency survival kit. An emergency survival kit contains all of the basic items you need to remain comfortable for at least three days immediately after or during an emergency.

It is important the contents of your emergency survival kit are kept all together in an easy- to-carry container or bag in the event you have to leave your home as a result of an emergency. This will ensure you have all of your basic supplies with you. Your emergency survival kit should be kept in an easy-to-reach location and everyone in your family should know where it is stored.

The Personal Emergency Survival Checklist below outlines the basic items every individual should have:

- Flashlight and spare batteries
- First-aid kit
- Telephone that can work during a power disruption
- Firelighting kit
- Cash
- Non-perishable food (ready-to-eat items that do not require refrigeration)
- Manual can opener
- Bottled water (4 litres per person per day)
- Clothing and footwear
- Blankets or sleeping bag
- Toilet paper and other personal items
- Medication
- Backpack/duffle bag
- Whistle (to attract attention)

Emergency supply requirements may vary for individuals with special needs and different disabilities (e.g., manual wheelchair, extra pair of prescription glasses, extra batteries for assistive devices, insulin, cane, copies of all medication prescriptions etc.). Make sure that you include these additional items in your emergency survival kit. Remember that families with babies and toddlers will have additional needs. Remember to include things like diapers, baby food and formula, bottles/sippy cups, toys, crayons and paper etc.

Pets and Emergencies

Recent emergencies such as Hurricane Katrina have demonstrated the need for individuals to include their pet(s) in their family emergency plan. Individuals and families with pets need to plan how they will take care of them in an emergency situation.

With the exception of service animals, pets are generally not permitted in emergency evacuation centres. Before an emergency happens, plan where you would take your pets if you could not take them with you to a public emergency evacuation centre. The following are steps you should take to ensure your pet is safe during an emergency situation:

- Ask friends and relatives outside of your immediate area whether they would be willing to shelter your pet(s) should an emergency occur.
- Contact the hotels and motels outside of your immediate area to check on their policies regarding pets and whether they have restrictions on the number, size and type of pet. Also ask whether any “no pet” policies might be waived in an emergency.
- Prepare a list of boarding facilities and veterinarians who would be willing to shelter pets in the event of an emergency.
- Contact local animal shelters and ask if they provide shelter for pets in the event of an emergency. This should only be used as a last resort, as animal shelters have limited resources and will be very busy in an emergency.
- Keep a list of all “pet friendly” places and their telephone numbers so that you can call ahead for reservations should you have notice of an impending emergency.

Pet Emergency Survival Kits

Pets are dependent on their owners to provide food, water, shelter, and love. Just as you would prepare an emergency survival kit for yourself and your family, you should prepare an emergency survival kit for your pet(s) to keep them comfortable for at least three days. This kit should be stored in an easy to carry bag or container in the event you have to leave your home and stored next to your emergency survival kit.

You should never leave your pet behind in an emergency. At the same time, in an emergency situation (e.g., fire), a person should never risk their life for that of an animal, such as returning to a burning home to rescue an animal.

Below is a list of items that you should include in your pet emergency survival kit:

- Food, potable water, bowls, paper towel and a can opener
- Blanket and a small toy
- Sturdy leash/harness
- Cat litter/pan (if required) and plastic bags
- Carrier for transporting your pet
- Medications and medical records (including vaccinations)
- Current photo of your pet in case your pet gets lost
- Information on feeding schedules, medical or behavioural problems in case you must board your pet
- Up-to-date ID tag with your phone number and the name/phone number of your veterinarian
- Muzzle (if required).

Emergency supply requirements vary for different kinds of pets. Please contact your veterinarian, should you have questions about the care of your pet and the items that should be included in their emergency survival kit.

Some other things to remember...

- It is a good idea to put your pet’s ID and vaccination certificate in a plastic baggie to keep it dry and intact.
- If you have a pit bull (or similar breed), make sure that you have documentation that proves it is restricted and not prohibited.
- If you do not have a current vaccine certificate, your animal may be denied entrance to a shelter or evacuation station for the protection of others.
- You may not be at home when an emergency occurs and and/or an evacuation order is issued. Before an emergency happens, ask a trusted neighbour to evacuate your pet if need

be, and meet you in a pre-arranged location. This individual should have a key to your home, know where the pet emergency kit is located, be comfortable with your pet and, more importantly, know where your pet is likely to be.

(If you live in a rural area and have Adventurer's who raise livestock, you may want to also talk about how to be prepared to care for them in an Family Emergency Plans)

It is important to "be prepared" for emergencies and one way to do this is to create a Family Emergency Plan. The basic steps involved in creating a Family Emergency Plan are:

1. Identify the risks (what emergencies could happen in your community?)
2. Fill out a family emergency plan form (contains emergency numbers, contacts, family information)
3. Assemble an emergency survival kit
4. Check the emergency plan at your children's school or childcare centre
5. Practise as a family once every year.

In an emergency this plan will contain all the information you need to contact loved ones and will tell rescuers important information about your family (e.g., about any medications you are taking, names and ages of family members).

Step 1: Identifying the Hazards

By learning about the types of emergencies that could happen in your community, you can better prepare for them.

Learn about who is responsible for the development, maintenance and implementation of your community's emergency management program. This individual will be able to provide you with information about the types of emergencies that can happen in your community. In many communities, you can contact your local emergency management coordinator through your municipal government office.

Step 2: Completing A Family Emergency Plan

Once you know what types of emergencies can happen in your community, you need to develop a family emergency plan.

Arrange a meeting with your family to discuss why you need to prepare for an emergency. Talk about the types of emergencies that could happen and explain what to do in each case.

Below are some things to remember as you complete a family emergency plan:

- Everyone should know what to do in the event all family members are not together when an emergency happens. Discussing emergency situations ahead of time will help to reduce fear and anxiety and will help everyone know how to respond.
- Pick two places to meet:
- Right outside of your home in case of a sudden emergency like a fire
- Outside of your neighbourhood in case you can't return home or are asked to leave your neighbourhood.
- Make sure everyone knows the address and phone number of both of the meeting places. It is recommended that each family member have this information memorized or with them at all times.
- Family Meeting Place/Contact Card
- Develop an emergency communications plan in case family members are separated from one another during an emergency. This will help ensure you are able to find each other if separated. Separation is a real possibility during the day when adults are at work and children are at school/daycare.

Ask an out-of-town relative or friend to be your family contact. Your contact should live outside of your area. After an emergency it is often easier to make a long distance call than a local call. Family members should call the contact and tell him or her where they are. Everyone must know the contact's name, address and phone number. To ensure that you have this information when you need it, it can be recorded along with the family meeting place information on the Family Meeting Place/Contact Card.

- Discuss what to do if authorities ask you to evacuate. Before an emergency happens, make arrangements for a place to stay with a friend or relative who lives out of town. To learn more about evacuations, go to Learn What You Should Do If Asked to Evacuate.
- Make arrangements for the care of your pets in the event of an emergency. With the exception of service animals, pets are generally not permitted in emergency evacuation centres. Before an emergency happens, plan where you would take your pets if you could not take them with you to a public emergency evacuation centre. For more information about pets and emergencies, go to Remember Your Pets and Prepare a Pet Emergency Survival Kit.
- Teach all family members how to properly turn off the water, gas and electricity in your home. Keep any tools necessary to shut off these utilities near the shut-off valves. Do not turn off your utilities unless you suspect a leak or if you are instructed to do so by authorities. If you turn the gas off, you will need a professional to turn it back on.
- Make sure that once a copy of a family emergency plan is complete, it is reviewed regularly with all family members.

Step 3: Prepare an Emergency Survival Kit

Being prepared for an emergency includes the preparation of an emergency survival kit. An emergency survival kit contains all of the basic items you need to remain comfortable for at least three days immediately after or during an emergency. If you have a pet, it is important that you prepare an emergency survival kit for them.

Step 4: Check Emergency Plans At Your Child's School/Daycare

Learning about the emergency plan at your child's school/daycare is important. Contact your child's school/daycare to learn about how you will be notified of an emergency and what the procedure will be to pick up your child. Also find out if there is a specific location children will be evacuated to in the event they need to leave their school/daycare. Always make sure that your child's school/daycare has up-to-date contact information for you and anyone else authorized to pick up your child.

Step 5: Practise Your Plan

Practicing your family emergency plan will help make sure you take appropriate actions in a real emergency situation. You should review your plan regularly and update contact numbers and meeting locations, as needed.

Lifesaving Skills

First Aid

The Emergency Preparedness Program for Beavers includes an activity that will help Beavers learn how to properly apply a bandage to a cut or abrasion.

Contacting Emergency Services

The Emergency Preparedness Program includes an activity about when and how to use 9-9-9/local emergency number. The below information has been provided to assist leaders preparing to present this activity. Dialing 9-9-9 allows them to contact the local police, fire and ambulance.

Some facts and tips about 9-9-9

9-9-9 is an emergency reporting phone number provided and operated by communities, to contact local police, ambulance and fire services.

When to call 9-9-9

- In any emergency situation where there are people or property at risk
- Whenever police, fire or ambulance assistance is required immediately
- To save a life
- To stop a crime
- To report a fire
- If you are unsure if you have an emergency situation, the call taker will make the determination.

What happens when you call 9-9-9?

9-9-9 calls are routed to an emergency call taking centre and answered by trained emergency call takers.

Call takers will ask if you require police, ambulance or fire and to confirm the location of the emergency. Stay on the line if the call is transferred.

Try to remain calm, answer all the questions and listen to and follow directions from the call taker.

Unless your safety is at risk, don't hang up until the emergency call taker tells you to do so. If the call was accidental advise the call taker before hanging up.

Call takers will ask these basic questions:

- Where is the location of the emergency? (If you are calling on behalf of someone else, try to give the address and phone number where the person who has the emergency is located.)
- What is happening now?
- When did this happen?
- Who is involved?
- What is your name and where are you?

Depending on the type of emergency, call takers may also ask:

- Did you see any weapons or any mention of weapons?
- What did the person involved look like? (male, female, age, height, description of clothing)
- Was there a vehicle involved? If yes, try to provide the following descriptive information about the vehicle (licence plate, colour, type, last direction of travel, etc.).
- Does the person involved in the emergency have any special medications?

Things to know about 9-9-9

When a call is placed from a landline phone your name and address is displayed for the call taker.

This means that if the connection is lost or the caller cannot speak, help can still be dispatched.

Cellular/wireless 9-9-9 calls may display the phone number but DO NOT display the location. It is up to the caller to describe the exact location of the emergency and to know the cellular number they are calling from.

If you have a choice between a landline and cellular phone to place a 9-9-9 call, use the landline; it is more stable and provides an address to the emergency call taker.

All 9-9-9 calls are free including those placed from payphones and cellular phones.

Cellular 9-9-9 calls, placed from an area without 9-9-9 service, will be routed to a police agency.

Children should be taught the proper use of 9-9-9 and when calling 9-9-9 they should know:

- Their names, first and last
- Their home address and phone number
- Their parents'/guardians' names, employer and work phone number
- How to properly hold the phone, so that they can speak clearly to the call taker
- It is against the law to call 9-9-9 as a prank.

It is advisable for families to post the complete address of their residence on or near each phone in their home. Having this type of information handy can be a lifesaving tool, especially for a person visiting the home that needs to call for emergency help for someone in that home.

Most emergency call centres have access to language interpreters and a TTY/TDD (telecommunication device for the hearing impaired). For TTY access press the spacebar announcer key repeatedly until a response is received.

Don't make false 9-9-9 calls. It is unlawful and can cause a delay in responding to a real emergency. Remember, when call takers or responders are busy with prank calls, someone with a real emergency might not get the help that they need.

Make sure the numbers on the outside of your residence are clearly visible from the roadway, day or night, for emergency responders.

Fire Safety

It is important that everyone knows what to do to safely escape if a fire occurs in their home. Follow these important fire safety steps:

Simple Steps for Home Fire Escape Planning

- Assess the needs of everyone in your home
- Identify anyone who requires assistance to get out of the home safely, such as small children or older adults
- Make sure that you have working smoke alarms on every storey of the home and outside all sleeping areas
- Make sure everyone in the home knows the sound of the smoke alarms
- Identify all possible exits (doors and windows) and make sure they work
- Know two ways out of all areas, if possible
- Everyone must know what to do when the smoke alarms sound
- Assign someone to help those who need assistance
- Identify a safe meeting place outside
- Call the fire department from a neighbour's home
- Practise your home fire escape plan
- Have everyone participate
- Make changes to your plan if necessary.