Personal Emergency Preparedness

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BERKSHIRE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
Agenda

- Review recent/notable disasters
- Receiving emergency information
- Personal preparedness and response
- Building a kit
- Special considerations for seniors
- Volunteering in disasters
Climate change and world travel are resulting in more weather emergencies and disease outbreaks.

Recent Emergencies:

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<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>October 16 Nor’easter</td>
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<td>Tropical Storm Irene</td>
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<td>March 2018 back to back blizzards and nor’easters</td>
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<td>H1N1 Pandemic Flu 2009</td>
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<td>Springfield Tornado 2011, Great Barrington Tornado 1995</td>
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People most at risk for negative effects of disasters

- Seniors
- Homeless and transient
- Citizens struggling with addiction
- People with chronic health issues
- People living in poverty
Preparing You and Your Family For Disasters

- Be Informed
- Make a Plan
- Build an Emergency Kit
- Get Involved – Volunteer!
Be Informed

- Pay attention to severe weather watches and warnings. What’s the difference?
- Sign up for emergency alerts – reverse 911
- Follow City and Town official accounts on Twitter and Facebook, tune into local news stations and radio stations. Update and check your town website.

Weather WATCH: Issued when there is the potential for significant weather.

Weather WARNING: Issued when a significant weather event is imminent.
Make a Plan

Research shows that people with a plan are more likely to survive and thrive.

A plan gets you moving in those first critical moments after a disaster.
Are you ready for the next 72 hours?

You should be able to take care of yourself and your family for 72 hours. Here are some of the basics:

- Food, water, housing, warmth
- Safety, communications, evacuation, transportation
- Health, medicine, medical equipment
Make a Plan

Whether you decide to stay at home or leave, have a family

- Communication plan
- Shelter-in-place plan
- Evacuation Plan

Tips for your personal emergency plan:
- Keep a copy in your kit, your car, and with your support network (family, friends, neighbors)
- Update annually
- Rotate supplies
- Practice fire and communication drills
Build a Support Network

- Create a 3-deep personal care network for children, elders, functional needs support services, pets
- Get to know your neighbors
- Identify a 100-mile emergency contact
- Share your plan
Consider your Functional Needs

- **Mobility Issues**: gloves for wheelchair; patch kit; canes
- **Health Issues**: medications; allergies; oxygen
- **Sensory Issues**: extra glasses; hearing aids
- **Communication Issues**: smart phones; translation app.
- **Developmental/Cognitive Issues**: carry card explaining; carry favorite support items; look for quiet spaces
Basic Disaster Response

- Stay calm/get moving (this is why you have a plan)
- Use a flashlight (not candles)
- Sniff for fumes
- Clean up spilled hazardous materials
- Stay informed by your local authorities
- Check on neighbors, stay away from downed power lines, maintain proper ventilation
- 911 will be overwhelmed – call for emergencies only
  - Be calm, be brief, be clear, do everything you can to help yourself first and call 211 for information. Only call 9-1-1 or go to the emergency room if you can’t stop bleeding, have extreme pain, can’t breathe or think you are having a stroke or heart attack.
Shelter Tips

- Only go if you don’t have other options
- Take own pillow and blanket
- Take along special foods, prescriptions, medical equipment
- Put ID tags on kit and don’t take valuables
- At Shelter Registration let them know any specific things you need to take care of yourself
**Build A Kit**

A simple guide to the nine essential items to help you shelter-in-place, and what to bring to a shelter in the event of an emergency.

**Water**
- Bottled water. One gallon, per person, per day, for drinking and sanitation.
  - Keep the water in a cool, dark place and change to a fresh supply every six months.

**Food**
- Nonperishable food. A supply of 3-5 days of food per person.
  - Ready to eat canned meat, fruit and vegetables
  - Canned or boxed juices
  - Powdered milk and soup
  - Crackers, granola, trail mix

**Medications** *
- Collect three days worth of any prescription medicines you’re taking.
  - Be sure to note the expiration date so you don’t keep them past their date.

**First Aid**
- Basics such as antiseptic, gloves, bandages and non-prescription medicines.
  - You can buy a pre-made kit at most pharmacies or grocery stores.

**Radio**
- A battery-powered radio for listening to news and weather.
  - Consider buying a crank-operated or solar-powered radio.
  - Don’t forget extra batteries! Buy them in advance in case they’re in short supply.

**Flashlight**
- Keep a bright flashlight in case there’s no electric power.
  - Consider getting a lantern-style light for hands-free use.
  - Don’t use candles! They’re a fire hazard and are easy to lose track of when the lights come back on.

**Can Opener**
- Make sure it’s a manual can opener in case there’s no electric power.
  - Consider buying items with a pull-top opening. You won’t need a can opener at all.

**Clothes** *
- Collect one change of clothes and footwear per person.
  - Consider packing blankets, rain gear and outerwear in case of inclement weather.

**Hygiene Items** *
- Just the basics like soap, toilet paper and a toothbrush.
  - Moist towelettes can be useful for quick sanitation.

* Take these if you have to leave home and go to a shelter

**Important Contacts:**
- Emergency .................. 911
- Police, non-emergency ... 229-8522
- Ambulance .................. 528-3900
- Senior Center ............. 229-7037
- Highway Department ...... 229-7030

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
Gather Information

**ID:** government issued photo ID is best

**Medical:** prescriptions, doctors’ orders, medical records, durable medical equipment information

**Contact List:** out-of-state, neighbors, caretakers, funeral home, pharmacist, vet, doctor, etc.

**Important Documents:** copies of all important papers including birth certificates, deeds, will, etc.

**Photographs:** to identify your kids, your pets, your house, your car, your goods
Build a Pet Kit

What is in your Pet Preparedness Kit
A significant number of families have pets and they need to be ready for a disaster too. Below are items to have ready to go in your pet emergency kit.

What Goes in Your Pet Emergency Kit:
- Food and water (3 days) bowls, manual can opener
- Medicines, medical records, and first aid kit
- Collar with ID tag, harness, or leash (include backups)
- Crate or pet carrier
- A picture of you and your pet together
- Important documents: registration & vaccination
- Familiar items: favorite toys, treats, and bedding
- Plastic bags/litter for cleaning up after your pet

Important: You CAN bring your pet to a shelter! It’s the law.
Disaster Preparedness for Seniors

Things to Include in your kit:

- Sleep aids such as ear plugs, face masks
- Special foods and snacks
- Personal care items and sanitary products
- Medications and prescriptions (always keep a written list of your prescriptions and dosage in your wallet or purse, in case you lose them or can’t get to them)
- Hearing aids and glasses
Disaster Preparedness for Seniors

Keep support items in your home like wheelchairs and walkers in a designated place so they can be found quickly.

If you use hearing aids or assistive devices, consider storing them in a container attached to your nightstand using Velcro. Some disaster may shift items that are not secure, making it difficult to find them.

If you live in a senior living or assisted living community, learn about their disaster notification plans and preparedness plans.
Get Involved

- Disaster recovery takes a whole community
- Sign up with an affiliated group BEFORE a disaster happens—Berkshire Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), Red Cross, Salvation Army, and more.
- Volunteer only when you and your family are safe and secure.
- Opportunity: Volunteer with the MRC!