

## Emergency Preparedness

The HQ Emergency Management (EM) Program assists all assigned/employed personnel and their families, regardless of employment status (Military, Coalition, Civilian, Contractor) plan and prepare for natural disasters, technological accidents (hazardous materials, major traffic incidents, etc.), and hostile attacks (active shooter, bomb threat, etc.).

This site offers basic information about personal and family preparedness. The intent is to answer some questions you have and some you haven't considered yet. Ask questions and for assistance, as you see fit, from your realtor/property manager, local Sheriff's Office, Emergency Mgmt. office, fire station, your medical provider(s) and veterinarian, etc. For instance,

- What hazards are there around the home (severe weather, flooding, wildfires, crime, traffic, hazardous materials, industrial areas, wildlife)?
- Do I live or work in an Evacuation Zone or a Flood Zone (they're not the same!)? Will I commute through these zones?
- How likely are power outages in my community? How long can I live without power (air conditioning, cooking indoors, etc.)?
- Where will I go if an evacuation is ordered for the neighborhood, county, or region? How will I get there, and what should I take?

Emergency/Disaster Preparedness is most easily thought of in three basic steps for year-round application – not just for Hurricane Season (1 June to 30 November).

**1. Get / Stay Informed** (a continuous process)

**2. Have a Plan**

**3. Build a Kit**

### Step 1. GET & STAY INFORMED

a. Know what information sources are available and reliable to you/your family.

b. Learn how you can get important information, alerts, and warnings sent to you (by phone, text, E-mail). Knowing what the warnings mean is also important, whether weather or hostile threats.

#### How Can I Receive Warnings and Alerts?

On the USSOCOM Campus and in facilities, the *AtHoc* Mass Notification System and Public Address System are used to alert you to command instructions and emergencies on and around the base.



- During in-processing to HQ USSOCOM, all personnel must ensure that their contact information is kept up-to-date in *AtHoc*. This is critical to ensure timely alerting and contact (DoD standard) to notify personnel both on- and off-duty of emergencies, evacuations, disaster

## UNCLASSIFIED

instructions, and special command directions – used sparingly. Depending on the situation, alerts may be sent by one or more of the system’s capabilities:

- Unclassified E-mail and/or computer pop-up at work
  - Phone messages to work, cell, and home phones
  - Personal E-mail
  - Text message to mobile phones
  - AtHoc App for mobile phones
  - E-mail, text, and voice messaging can be sent to a family member’s, if desired
- 
- Campus announcements are made weekly by the Command Group to test the system and during an emergency on or around the base. Announcements are verbal only (no sirens or tones).
  - “Giant Voice” is the outdoor base-wide Public Address and Warning System. Broadcasts warn of severe weather threats (lightning, tornado, etc.) and hostile actions (e.g. active shooter). The below graphic explains the warning signals and meanings.
  - ‘SOCOM All’ E-mails (aka all-hands messages) can be sent to all personnel at work on multiple networks, as needed, to advise of crises and Command Group direction.

**What do the Warnings Mean?** On-base, ‘Giant Voice’ warnings are as shown in the graphic, and may be verbal to state what the emergency is and provide instructions.

U.S. AIR FORCE EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SIGNALS			
CONDITION	IF YOU HEAR	THIS INDICATES	INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS
DISASTER WARNING <sup>1,3</sup>	3-5 MINUTE STEADY TONE ON SIREN OR SIMILAR WARNING DEVICE  OR VOICE ANNOUNCEMENT	A DISASTER/INCIDENT AFFECTING THE BASE IS IMMINENT OR IN PROGRESS  <b>EXAMPLES:</b> TORNADOES, FLASH FLOODS, HAZARDOUS MATERIAL RELEASES, WILDFIRES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BE AWARE, ENSURE ALL PERSONNEL ARE WARNED</li> <li>• FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS TO TAKE COVER EVACUATE TO A SAFE LOCATION, OR SHELTER</li> <li>• CONDUCT PERSONNEL ACCOUNTABILITY<sup>4</sup></li> </ul>
ATTACK WARNING <sup>1,2,3</sup>	3-5 MINUTE WAVERING TONE ON SIREN OR SIMILAR WARNING DEVICE  OR VOICE ANNOUNCEMENT	AN ATTACK/HOSTILE ACT IS IMMINENT OR IN PROGRESS  <b>EXAMPLES:</b> VEHICLE BOMB, TERRORIST RELEASE OF CHEMICAL, BIOLOGICAL, RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BE AWARE, ENSURE ALL PERSONNEL ARE WARNED</li> <li>• IMPLEMENT SECURITY MEASURES, AS APPROPRIATE</li> <li>• FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS TO TAKE COVER EVACUATE TO A SAFE LOCATION, OR SHELTER</li> <li>• CONDUCT PERSONNEL ACCOUNTABILITY<sup>4</sup></li> </ul>
ALL CLEAR <sup>3</sup>	VOICE ANNOUNCEMENT	THE IMMEDIATE DISASTER OR THREAT HAS ENDED OR THE ATTACK IS OVER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• REMAIN ALERT FOR SECONDARY HAZARDS</li> <li>• ACCOUNT FOR ALL PERSONNEL</li> <li>• REPORT FIRES, INJURIES, HAZARDS, AND DAMAGE</li> </ul>

Warnings and emergency broadcasts by radio, TV, and other means should be understood, also. Check to Most frequently,

### SEVERE WEATHER ADVISORIES, WATCHES, WARNINGS

The National Weather Service (NWS) may declare ‘WATCHES’ and ‘WARNINGS’ as severe weather threatens the Tampa Bay area. Learn the meanings and ensure you monitor news/weather stations to stay informed.

- Tropical Weather Watches / Warnings are issued by the Nat’l Weather Service (NWS), such as:
  - Tropical Storm Watch – issued when Tropical Storm conditions (winds 39-73 mph) are POSSIBLE in a specified coastal area within 48 hours.
  - Tropical Storm Warning – issued when Tropical Storm conditions (39-73 mph winds) are EXPECTED in a specified coastal area within 36 hours or less.
  - Hurricane Watch – issued when sustained 74+ mph winds are POSSIBLE within the specified area within 48 hours.
  - Hurricane Warning – issued when sustained 74+ mph winds are EXPECTED in the specified area within 36 hours

The base weather unit will declare Warnings for tornado, lightning, and severe thunderstorms that threaten MacDill AFB [only].

## UNCLASSIFIED

- Hurricane Conditions of Readiness (HURCON) are declared by the MacDill AFB Commander to provide an incremental countdown to the possible arrival of Destructive Winds (58 mph sustained) on the base – “Destructive” and “Storm Force” are the same. Refer to the “Make A Plan” section, below, to find HURCONs and their meanings.

It is strongly recommended that you sign up to get alerts and notifications available from your city and county alerting services.

- ◆ AlertTampa: < [www.tampa.gov/alert-tampa](http://www.tampa.gov/alert-tampa) >
- ◆ Hillsborough County Alerts: < [www.hillsboroughcounty.org/residents/public-safety/emergency-management/hcfl-alert](http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/residents/public-safety/emergency-management/hcfl-alert) >
- ◆ Pinellas County Alerts: < [www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas](http://www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas) >
- ◆ Pasco County Alerts: < [www.pascocountyfl.net/alertcenter.aspx](http://www.pascocountyfl.net/alertcenter.aspx) >
- ◆ Polk County Alerts: < <https://member.everbridge.net/index/892807736724723#/overview> >
- ◆ FEMA (Federal Emergency Mgmt. Agency) Text Messages: < [www.fema.gov/text-messages](http://www.fema.gov/text-messages) >
- ◆ NOAA Weather Radios will provide you warnings from the National Weather Service (NWS) when severe weather watches and warnings are declared. These are important to have in your home, and portable models can be taken to the beach, hiking, etc. Learn more at < [www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr](http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr) >

c. Learn what ‘Evacuation Zone’ and ‘Flood Zone’ you live in, if at all. The zones mean different things, and can impact your family and emergency planning. Find out if you will have to commute through any areas known to flood between home and work, school, and elsewhere. You can look at county websites below to explore zone maps.

- Florida Evacuation Zone Maps: < [www.floridadisaster.org/knowyourzone](http://www.floridadisaster.org/knowyourzone) >.
- FEMA Flood Map Service: < <https://msc.fema.gov/portal/home> >.
- Florida Floodplain Mgmt. Program: < [www.floridadisaster.org/dem/mitigation/floodplain](http://www.floridadisaster.org/dem/mitigation/floodplain) >

d. Find out what hazards that can impact you, your family, and home ... and prepare for them. Ask questions of realtors, neighbors, coworkers, and local government offices to find out what hazards might affect you where you live and work.

e. Attend HQ Emergency Mgmt. Office or organizations’ Emergency Management Representatives (‘EMRs’) informational/educational briefings about preparing for emergencies. County and community expos and seminars are generally free and host many organizations that can help in your effort to prepare yourself, family, and home.

f. Call the command’s toll-free Emergency Mgmt. Information Line when the HQs is impacted by a disaster such as a hurricane. The recorded message will provide unclassified messages with status and special instructions for HQ USSOCOM personnel.

**HQ USSOCOM Emergency Mgmt. InfoLine:** 800 585-9648

g. For information regarding MacDill AFB (6<sup>th</sup> Air Refueling Wing), call the Straight Talk Line. Their recorded message will also provide command instructions to 6<sup>th</sup> ARW. The base’s public website will also be updated with base status and other information.

**MacDill AFB Straight Talk Line:** 833-787-8855

**MacDill AFB Website:** < [www.macdill.af.mil](http://www.macdill.af.mil) >

h. Contact Local, Regional, and National resources for additional information to help you with all three steps of preparedness to suit your needs:

City of Tampa EM Office	(813) 274-7011	< <a href="http://www.tampagov.net/emergency-management">www.tampagov.net/emergency-management</a>
Citrus County	(352) 726-1121	< <a href="http://www.sheriffcitrus.org/emergency-management.php">www.sheriffcitrus.org/emergency-management.php</a> >
Desoto County	(863) 993-4831	< <a href="http://www.desotobocc.com/departments/emergency_management">www.desotobocc.com/departments/emergency_management</a> >
Hardee County	(863) 773-6373	< <a href="http://www.hardeecounty.net/eoc.htm">www.hardeecounty.net/eoc.htm</a> >
Hernando County	(652) 352-6830	< <a href="http://www.hernandosheriff.org/em">www.hernandosheriff.org/em</a> >
Hillsborough County	(813) 236-3800	< <a href="http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/index.aspx?NID=115">www.hillsboroughcounty.org/index.aspx?NID=115</a> >
Manatee County	(941) 749-3507	< <a href="http://www.mymanatee.org/home/government/departments/public-safety/emergency-management.html">www.mymanatee.org/home/government/departments/public-safety/emergency-management.html</a> >
Pasco County	(727) 847-8137	< <a href="http://www.pascocountyfl.net/Index.aspx?NID=365">www.pascocountyfl.net/Index.aspx?NID=365</a> >
Pinellas County	(727) 464-3800	< <a href="http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency">www.pinellascounty.org/emergency</a> >
Polk County	(863) 519-7350	< <a href="http://www.polk-county.net/emergency-management">www.polk-county.net/emergency-management</a> >
Sarasota County	(941) 861-5000	< <a href="http://www.scgov.net/government/departments/emergency-services">www.scgov.net/government/departments/emergency-services</a> >
FL Division of EM	(850) 413-9969	< <a href="http://www.floridadisaster.org">www.floridadisaster.org</a> >

i. Find your preferred media to monitor weather and current events around the region and state – reliable sources. Remember that commercial sources are competing for ratings, so drama and skewed details may be a risk.

- The Weather Channel < [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com) >
- TV – WTVT (FOX) < [www.fox13news.com](http://www.fox13news.com) >
- TV – WFLA (NBC) < [www.wfla.com](http://www.wfla.com) >
- TV – WFTS (ABC) < [www.abcactionnews.com](http://www.abcactionnews.com) >
- TV – WTSP (CBS) < [www.wtsp.com](http://www.wtsp.com) >
- TV – WEDU (PBS) < [www.wedu.org](http://www.wedu.org) >
- Radio – AM 970 (WFLA) < [www.970wfla.com](http://www.970wfla.com) >
- Radio – AM 820 (WWBA) < [www.newstalkflorida.com](http://www.newstalkflorida.com) >
- Radio – AM 1250: (WHNZ) < [www.whnz.com](http://www.whnz.com) >
- Radio – FM 89.7: (WUSF, NPR) < [www.wusf.usf.edu](http://www.wusf.usf.edu) >
- Radio – AM 680: (WRMD), Spanish < <https://genesis680.com> >

### NATIONAL WEATHER INFORMATION

National Hurricane Center (NHC) < [www.hurricanes.gov](http://www.hurricanes.gov) > or < [www.nhc.noaa.gov](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov) >

National Weather Service (NWS) – National and the Tampa Bay area < [www.weather.gov/tbw](http://www.weather.gov/tbw) >

**UNCLASSIFIED**

NOAA Extreme Weather Information Sheets are available online and are easily printed. These are a GREAT addition to your Communications Plan. Go to NOAA’s website to view and download the sheets at < [www.ncddc.noaa.gov/activities/weatherready-nation/newis](http://www.ncddc.noaa.gov/activities/weatherready-nation/newis) >.

Below are topical information resources to learn about hazards, precautions/preparedness, response, and recovery.

**COLD WEATHER**

National Weather Service (NWS) < [www.weather.gov/safety/cold](http://www.weather.gov/safety/cold) >

**COMMUNICATIONS.** In your plan, make sure to include information about to contact to let them know where and how you are. Also remember to include who will need to contact you. Start with your organization’s recall roster(s).

US READY Program < [www.ready.gov/crisis-communications-plan](http://www.ready.gov/crisis-communications-plan) >

**FLOODING**

FEMA (Federal Emergency Mgmt. Agency) < [www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program-flood-hazard-mapping](http://www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program-flood-hazard-mapping) >

Ready.GOV < [www.ready.gov/floods](http://www.ready.gov/floods) >

American Red Cross (ARC) < [www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/flood](http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/flood) >

FloodSmart < [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov) >

Nat’l Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) < [www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program](http://www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program) >

**HAZARDOUS MATERIALS (HAZMAT)**

Ready.GOV < [www.ready.gov/hazardous-materials-incidents](http://www.ready.gov/hazardous-materials-incidents) >

**HEAT STRESS and HEALTH CONCERNS**

FEMA (Federal Emergency Mgmt. Agency) < <https://www.ready.gov/heat> >

National Weather Service (NWS) < [www.nws.noaa.gov/om/heat/index.shtml](http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/heat/index.shtml) >

**HURRICANES, Tropical Storms.** Tropical cyclones are rated according to wind speed, as it develops.

<b>Storm Type</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<b>Tropical Disturbance</b> (or Tropical Wave)	Low pressure system with thunderstorms that may develop/organize into a cyclone (spinning counter-clockwise).
<b>Tropical Depression</b>	Storms group, spinning begins. Sustained winds up to 38 mph.
<b>Tropical Storm</b>	Cyclone with sustained 39 - 73 mph winds. The storm will be named.
<b>Hurricane</b>	Tropical cyclone winds 74 mph or stronger – strength categories below
<b>Major Hurricane</b>	Hurricanes with sustained winds 111 mph or greater

Storm Surges ARE NOT typical or determined by the storm strength. Every storm is different – storm surge varies with each storm.

**UNCLASSIFIED**

Category	Sustained winds are
<b>1</b>	<b>74 – 95 mph</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>96 – 110 mph</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>111 – 129 mph</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>130 – 156 mph</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>157+ mph</b>

**NOTE:** Don't confuse Hurricane Categories (storm strength) with Hurricane Conditions of Readiness (HURCON). HURCONs are declared by the MacDill AFB Commander and are specific to MacDill only.

HURCON	Destructive Winds expected within
<b>5</b>	96 Hours (4 days)
<b>4</b>	72 Hours (3 days)
<b>3</b>	48 Hours (2 days)
<b>2</b>	24 Hours (1 day)
<b>1</b>	12 Hours
<b>1C</b>	Caution - Dangerous conditions on-base.
<b>1E</b>	Emergency - Destructive Winds on-base.
<b>1R</b>	Recovery Period - Special Team operations ongoing. <u>Do Not Return</u> until directed by command authority.

American Red Cross (ARC): [www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/hurricane](http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/hurricane) >

Ready.GOV < [www.ready.gov/hurricanes](http://www.ready.gov/hurricanes) >

NWS < [www.weather.gov/safety/hurricane](http://www.weather.gov/safety/hurricane) >

**INSURANCE and DISASTER ASSISTANCE** (refer to your insurance provider to confirm coverages)

Nat'l Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) < [www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program](http://www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program) >

DisasterAssistance.Gov < [www.disasterassistance.gov/help/faqs](http://www.disasterassistance.gov/help/faqs) >

**MOLD**

EPA Mold Guide < [www.epa.gov/mold/moldguide.html](http://www.epa.gov/mold/moldguide.html) >

OSHA < [www.osha.gov/mold](http://www.osha.gov/mold) >

FL Dept. of Health < [www.floridahealth.gov/environmental-health/mold/index.html](http://www.floridahealth.gov/environmental-health/mold/index.html) >

## **PETS / ANIMALS**

FL Division of EM (FDEM) < [www.floridadisaster.org/planprepare/pet-plan](http://www.floridadisaster.org/planprepare/pet-plan) >  
The Humane Society < [www.humanesociety.org/resources/make-disaster-plan-your-pets](http://www.humanesociety.org/resources/make-disaster-plan-your-pets) >  
READY Program < [www.ready.gov/pets](http://www.ready.gov/pets) >  
American Red Cross (ARC) < [www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/pet-disaster-preparedness.html](http://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/pet-disaster-preparedness.html) >

## **POWER OUTAGES, GENERATORS**

READY Program < [www.ready.gov/power-outages](http://www.ready.gov/power-outages) >  
American Red Cross (ARC) < [www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/power-outage.html](http://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/power-outage.html) > and  
< [www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/power-outage/safe-generator-use.html](http://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/power-outage/safe-generator-use.html) >  
Ready Army < [www.ready.gov/america/beinformed/tornadoes.html](http://www.ready.gov/america/beinformed/tornadoes.html) >  
Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) < [www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/OSHA3286.pdf](http://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/OSHA3286.pdf) >

## **SPECIAL NEEDS**

Disability.Gov < [www.disability.gov](http://www.disability.gov) >  
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) < [www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov) >  
Center for Children with Special Needs < <http://cshcn.org/planning-record-keeping/emergency-preparedness-children-special-needs> >

## **THUNDERSTORMS / LIGHTNING**

NWS < [www.weather.gov/safety/lightning](http://www.weather.gov/safety/lightning) >  
US READY Program < [www.ready.gov/thunderstorms-lightning](http://www.ready.gov/thunderstorms-lightning) >  
American Red Cross (ARC) < [www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/thunderstorm](http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/thunderstorm) >

## **TORNADOES**

US READY Program < [www.ready.gov/tornadoes](http://www.ready.gov/tornadoes) >  
NWS < [www.weather.gov/safety/tornado](http://www.weather.gov/safety/tornado) >  
US READY Program < [www.ready.gov/tornadoes](http://www.ready.gov/tornadoes) >

## **WILDLAND FIRES**

US READY Program < [www.ready.gov/wildfires](http://www.ready.gov/wildfires) >  
Fish & Wildlife Service < [www.fws.gov/fire/outreach](http://www.fws.gov/fire/outreach) >

## **Dangerous WINDS**

NWS < [www.weather.gov/safety/wind](http://www.weather.gov/safety/wind) > and < [www.weather.gov/pqr/wind](http://www.weather.gov/pqr/wind) >

## **Florida WILDLIFE**

Fish and Wildlife Commission < [www.myfwc.com/wildlifehabitats/profiles](http://www.myfwc.com/wildlifehabitats/profiles) >



## UNCLASSIFIED

Your Florida Backyard (info only) < [www.nsis.org/wildlife](http://www.nsis.org/wildlife) >

US Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) < [www.fs.usda.gov/detail/florida/learning/safety-ethics/?cid=FSBDEV3\\_008606](http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/florida/learning/safety-ethics/?cid=FSBDEV3_008606) >

Orange County, FL < <https://healthywestorange.org/coexist-florida-wildlife/> >

Collier County, FL < [www.colliersheriff.org/community-resources/stay-safe/wildlife-safety](http://www.colliersheriff.org/community-resources/stay-safe/wildlife-safety) >

NOTE: Although not big concerns for the Tampa Bay area, the following should be considered when traveling or moving to prone areas.

### EARTHQUAKES

US Geological Survey (USGS) < <https://usgs.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=5a6038b3a1684561a9b0aadf88412fcf> >

FEMA < [www.fema.gov/earthquake](http://www.fema.gov/earthquake) >

US READY.gov < [www.ready.gov/earthquakes](http://www.ready.gov/earthquakes) >

American Red Cross (ARC) < [www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/earthquake](http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/earthquake) >

### TSUNAMIS

US READY Program < [www.ready.gov/tsunamis#](http://www.ready.gov/tsunamis#) >

ARC < [www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/tsunami.html](http://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/tsunami.html) >

National Weather Service (NWS) < [www.weather.gov/safety/tsunami](http://www.weather.gov/safety/tsunami) >

### WINTER STORMS

US READY Program < [www.ready.gov/winter-weather](http://www.ready.gov/winter-weather) >

NWS < [www.weather.gov/safety/winter](http://www.weather.gov/safety/winter) >

## STEP 2. MAKE A PLAN

When making personal and family preparedness plans, there are many resources available to you. Some of them are listed below, and there are many more found online. Make your own decisions that are best for you, your family, and home.

A great starting point is the US “Ready Program” (< [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) >). This free portal provides some great educational information and guides getting started (making a plan, and building a kit). Also look at your city’s or county’s website for their procedures that may affect you and your home.

Above all else, make sure that you talk about the plan with those it serves. If someone is expected to help or needs help in your plan, occasionally check to see if the plan still works for you and them. Don’t over-complicate your plan or make it hard to use. County websites and those below offer suggestions and examples to help you *make your plan*:

## UNCLASSIFIED

FEMA	(202) 646-2500	< <a href="http://www.fema.gov">www.fema.gov</a> >
Disability.GOV		< <a href="http://www.disability.gov">www.disability.gov</a> >
OSHA		< <a href="http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/emergencypreparedness">www.osha.gov/SLTC/emergencypreparedness</a> >
American Red Cross	(800) 733-2767	< <a href="http://www.redcross.org">www.redcross.org</a> >
The Humane Society (pets, animals)		< <a href="http://www.humanesociety.org/resources/make-disaster-plan-your-pets">www.humanesociety.org/resources/make-disaster-plan-your-pets</a> >

### STEP 3. BUILD A KIT

Building your ‘Go-Bag’, ‘Emergency Kit’, and/or ‘Disaster Kit’ is also a matter of questions and choices. These kits are intended to have you be self-sufficient with little or no support for 1, 3, and 14 days. Your comfort and survival will be directly linked to the thought and effort you put into it.

Ask yourself and your family a few of questions. For instance,

- What does your plan require – what do you need for what crisis or disaster\*? What will you need to execute the plan (tarps, generator, cash & coins, etc.)?
- Who – what people/pets – need to be considered? What special needs have to be factored in (dietary needs, medical equipment, etc.)?
- Where will [and can] the kit(s) be stored? Can any member of family get to the kit and get it ready?
- What will need to be found, bought, and packed when the kit is needed (aka ‘Last-Pack’ items).

NOTE: A Last-Pack item is something that you don’t have a duplicate for, has a short shelf life (foods, drinks, medicines), etc. Also included are things that are too bulky, combustible, or heavy (fire extinguishers, a generator, fuels, hand tools).

\* Buying a full kit or hiring someone to build your kit may not be your *best* choice. Those options are often more expensive, and less likely to serve your specific needs. Your kit(s) can be in weather-proof boxes, plastic totes/boxes, plastic bags, or a combination of those.

A **‘Go-Bag’ kit** is small and easily found to get you through 24 hours without support. Example: A backpack with a spare cell phone charger, family Communications Plan (contact info), a list of family rally point locations, stable food for a day (an MRE, granola bar, etc.), bottle of water, 1st aid kit, flashlight, and whatever may be needed for comfort and safety.

An **Emergency Kit** contains what you/your family will need for 3 or more days. Consider what you would need if the power went out for several days and emergency crews might be overwhelmed. Being self-sufficient means that you may need to perform 1<sup>st</sup> aid rather than going to your doctor, cook outdoors, and so on.

A **Disaster Kit** is more comprehensive and meant to help you survive without help for 7 to 14 days.

Safe water is one of the biggest concerns. Plan to have a gallon of water per day, per person (ex: 3-day kit for 3 people = 9 gallons of water).

## UNCLASSIFIED

- Water will be needed for drink, but critical to stay hydrated in stressful times.
- It is also important for cooking, cleaning, and good hygiene.
- Flushing toilets can become a priority if water pressure is lost. A filled bathtub or pool and a bucket will ensure that you have the ability to flush.

**CAUTION:** Sterilizing questionable water takes some time and thought. Boiling, sterilizing tablet, or using [unscented] household bleach are options when you aren't sure if water is safe to drink. Learn more at < [www.fema.gov/press-release/20210318/fact-sheet-how-make-your-water-safe-drink](http://www.fema.gov/press-release/20210318/fact-sheet-how-make-your-water-safe-drink) > and < [www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/emergency-disinfection-drinking-water](http://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/emergency-disinfection-drinking-water) >.

Don't forget your pets when building your kit(s)!

- Don't forget their medical / shot records, food and water, leash, kennel, medications, etc.
- Make sure your animals will be welcome where you are evacuating to, or there is someplace to provide them shelter and care.

**DISASTER / EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS TRAINING / EDUCATION.** Many [free] training courses are available to commander personnel and their families that address emergency preparedness and planning. For instance, FEMA provides no-cost training courses with certificates when successfully completed (< <http://training.fema.gov/IS> >).

There are other opportunities to take free training courses in-person or online. Your county Emergency Mgmt. Offices can tell you what is available locally, and the Emergency Manager or your organizational EM Reps can recommend additional resources.

The National Weather Service can train you to become an official "Weather Spotter". Weather Spotters are the trusted sources that expedite reporting of severe weather (ex: tornado spotting) that save lives every year. Learn more at < <http://skywarn.org> >.

Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) are volunteer groups of your neighbors that help when the fire trucks and ambulances can't get to your community. Most counties and cities provide free training and equipment to get you started. This is a good family activity that might save a life one day! Learn more at < [www.ready.gov/cert](http://www.ready.gov/cert) >.

The American Red Cross offers different types of training at no cost, material/books costs only, and for small fees. Depending on the training and purpose, you can be certified for Basic or Advanced Life-Saving, Disaster Recovery, and many other roles. If you volunteer, you may be Get started at < [www.redcross.org/take-a-class](http://www.redcross.org/take-a-class) >.