

An earthquake is a sudden, rapid shaking of the earth caused by the breaking and shifting of rock beneath the earth's surface. Earthquakes strike suddenly, without warning, and they can occur at any time of the year, day or night. Forty-five states and territories in the United States are at moderate to very high risk of earthquakes, and they are located in every region of the country.

Are you at increased risk from earthquakes?

- Contact your local emergency management office, local American Red Cross chapter, state geological survey or department of natural resources.
- Mobile homes and homes not attached to their foundations are at particular risk during an earthquake.
- Buildings with foundations resting on landfill and other unstable soils are at increased risk of damage.

Did you know?

Doorways are no stronger than any other part of the structure. During an earthquake, get under a sturdy piece of furniture and hold on. This will provide some protection from falling objects that can injure you during an earthquake.

How can I prepare?



- Become aware of fire evacuation and earthquake plans for all of the buildings you occupy regularly.
- Pick safe places in each room of your home, workplace and/or school. A safe place could be under a piece of furniture or against an interior wall away from windows, bookcases or tall furniture that could fall on you.
- Practice drop, cover and hold on in each safe place. If you do not have sturdy furniture to hold on to, sit on the floor next to an interior wall and cover your head and neck with your arms.
- Keep a flashlight and sturdy shoes by each person's bed.
- Make sure your home is securely anchored to its foundation.
- Bolt and brace water heaters and gas appliances to wall studs.
- Bolt bookcases, china cabinets and other tall furniture to wall studs.
- Hang heavy items, such as pictures and mirrors, away from beds, couches and anywhere people sleep or sit.
- Brace overhead light fixtures.
- Install strong latches or bolts on cabinets. Large or heavy items should be closest to the floor.
- Learn how to shut off the gas valves in your home and keep a wrench handy for that purpose.
- Learn about your area's seismic building standards and land use codes before you begin new construction.
- Keep and maintain an emergency supplies kit in an easy-to-access location.

What should I do during an earthquake?



If you are inside when the shaking starts ...

- Drop, cover and hold on. Move as little as possible.
- If you are in bed, stay there, curl up and hold on. Protect your head with a pillow.
- Stay away from windows to avoid being injured by shattered glass.
- Stay indoors until the shaking stops and you are sure it is safe to exit. If you must leave the building after the shaking stops, use stairs rather than an elevator in case there are aftershocks, power outages or other damage.
- Be aware that fire alarms and sprinkler systems frequently go off in buildings during an earthquake, even if there is no fire.

If you are outside when the shaking starts ...

- Find a clear spot and drop to the ground. Stay there until the shaking stops (away from buildings, power lines, trees, streetlights).
- If you are in a vehicle, pull over to a clear location and stop. Avoid bridges, overpasses and power lines if possible. Stay inside with your seatbelt fastened until the shaking stops. Then, drive carefully, avoiding bridges and ramps that may have been damaged.
- If a power line falls on your vehicle, do not get out. Wait for assistance.
- If you are in a mountainous area or near unstable slopes or cliffs, be alert for falling rocks and other debris. Landslides are often triggered by earthquakes.

What do I do after an earthquake?



- After an earthquake, the disaster may continue. Expect and prepare for potential aftershocks, landslides or even a tsunami. Tsunamis are often generated by earthquakes.
- Each time you feel an aftershock, drop, cover and hold on. Aftershocks frequently occur minutes, days, weeks and even months following an earthquake.
- Check yourself for injuries and get first aid, if necessary, before helping injured or trapped persons.
- Put on long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, sturdy shoes and work gloves to protect against injury from broken objects.
- Look quickly for damage in and around your home and get everyone out if your home is unsafe.
- Listen to a portable, battery-operated or hand-crank radio for updated emergency information and instructions.
- Check the telephones in your home or workplace to see if you can get a dial tone. Make brief calls to report life-threatening emergencies.
- Look for and extinguish small fires. Fire is the most common hazard after an earthquake.
- Clean up spilled medications, bleach, gasoline or other flammable liquids immediately.
- Open closet and cabinet doors carefully as contents may have shifted.
- Help people who require special assistance, such as infants, children and the elderly or disabled.
- Watch out for fallen power lines or broken gas lines and stay out of damaged areas.
- Keep animals under your direct control.
- Stay out of damaged buildings.
- If you were away from home, return only when authorities say it is safe to do so. Use extreme caution and examine walls, floors, doors, staircases and windows to check for damage.
- Be careful when driving after an earthquake and anticipate traffic light outages.

Let Your Family Know You're Safe

If your community experiences an earthquake, or any disaster, register on the American Red Cross Safe and Well Web site available through RedCross.org to let your family and friends know about your welfare. If you don't have Internet access, call **1-866-GET-INFO** to register yourself and your family.

Be Red Cross Ready

Fire Prevention & Safety Checklist

The most effective way to protect yourself and your home from fire is to identify and remove fire hazards. Sixty-five percent of home fire deaths occur in homes with no working smoke alarms. During a home fire, working smoke alarms and a fire escape plan that has been practiced regularly can save lives.

- If a fire occurs in your home, **GET OUT, STAY OUT** and **CALL** for help.
- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, inside bedrooms and outside sleeping areas. Test them every month and replace the batteries at least once a year.
- Talk with all household members about a fire escape plan and practice the plan twice a year.

Prevent home fires



Practice fire safety at home



In case of fire ...



Steps You Can Take Now

- Keep items that can catch on fire at least three feet away from anything that gets hot, such as space heaters.
- Never smoke in bed.
- Talk to children regularly about the dangers of fire, matches and lighters and keep them out of reach.
- Turn portable heaters off when you leave the room or go to sleep.

Cooking Safely

- Stay in the kitchen when frying, grilling or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen for even a short period of time, turn off the stove.
- Stay in the home while simmering, baking, roasting or boiling food. Check it regularly and use a timer to remind you that food is cooking.
- Keep anything that can catch fire—like pot holders, towels, plastic and clothing—away from the stove.
- Keep pets off cooking surfaces and countertops to prevent them from knocking things onto the burner.

Caution: Carbon Monoxide Kills

- Install carbon monoxide alarms in central locations on every level of your home and outside sleeping areas.
- If the carbon monoxide alarm sounds, move quickly to a fresh air location outdoors or by an open window or door.
- Never use a generator, grill, camp stove or other gasoline, propane, natural gas or charcoal-burning devices inside a home, garage, basement, crawlspace or any partially enclosed area.

Smoke Alarms

- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, inside bedrooms and outside sleeping areas.
- Teach children what smoke alarms sound like and what to do when they hear one.
- Once a month check whether each alarm in the home is working properly by pushing the test button.
- Replace batteries in smoke alarms at least once a year. Immediately install a new battery if an alarm chirps, warning the battery is low.
- Smoke alarms should be replaced every 10 years. Never disable smoke or carbon monoxide alarms.
- Carbon monoxide alarms are not substitutes for smoke alarms. Know the difference between the sound of smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms.

Fire Escape Planning

- Ensure that all household members know two ways to escape from every room of your home.
- Make sure everyone knows where to meet outside in case of fire.
- Practice escaping from your home at least twice a year and at different times of the day. Practice waking up to smoke alarms, low crawling and meeting outside. Make sure everyone knows how to call 9-1-1.
- Teach household members to **STOP, DROP** and **ROLL** if their clothes should catch on fire.

Follow Your Escape Plan!

Remember to **GET OUT, STAY OUT** and **CALL 9-1-1** or your local emergency phone number.

- If closed doors or handles are warm, use your second way out. Never open doors that are warm to the touch.
- Crawl low under smoke.
- Go to your outside meeting place and then call for help.
- If smoke, heat or flames block your exit routes, stay in the room with doors closed. Place a wet towel under the door and call the fire department or 9-1-1. Open a window and wave a brightly colored cloth or flashlight to signal for help.

Use Caution with Fire Extinguishers

- Use a portable fire extinguisher **ONLY** if you have been trained by the fire department and in the following conditions:
 - The fire is confined to a small area, and is not growing.
 - The room is not filled with smoke.
 - Everyone has exited the building.
 - The fire department has been called.
- Remember the word **PASS** when using a fire extinguisher.
 - **P**ull the pin and hold the extinguisher with the nozzle pointing away from you.
 - **A**im low. Point the extinguisher at the base of the fire.
 - **S**queeze the lever slowly and evenly.
 - **S**weep the nozzle from side to side.

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For more information on disaster and emergency preparedness, visit RedCross.org.

Flood Safety Checklist

Floods are among the most frequent and costly natural disasters. Conditions that cause floods include heavy or steady rain for several hours or days that saturates the ground. Flash floods occur suddenly due to rapidly rising water along a stream or low-lying area.

Know the Difference

Flood/Flash Flood Watch—Flooding or flash flooding is possible in your area.

Flood/Flash Flood Warning—Flooding or flash flooding is already occurring or will occur soon in your area.

What should I do?



- Listen to area radio and television stations and a NOAA Weather Radio for possible flood warnings and reports of flooding in progress or other critical information from the National Weather Service (NWS).
- Be prepared to evacuate at a moment's notice.
- When a flood or flash flood warning is issued for your area, head for higher ground and stay there.
- Stay away from floodwaters. If you come upon a flowing stream where water is above your ankles, stop, turn around and go another way. Six inches of swiftly moving water can sweep you off of your feet.
- If you come upon a flooded road while driving, turn around and go another way. If you are caught on a flooded road and waters are rising rapidly around you, get out of the car quickly and move to higher ground. Most cars can be swept away by less than two feet of moving water.
- Keep children out of the water. They are curious and often lack judgment about running water or contaminated water.
- Be especially cautious at night when it is harder to recognize flood danger.
- Because standard homeowners insurance doesn't cover flooding, it's important to have protection from the floods associated with hurricanes, tropical storms, heavy rains and other conditions that impact the U.S. For more information on flood insurance, please visit the National Flood Insurance Program Web site at www.FloodSmart.gov.

What supplies do I need?



- Water—at least a 3-day supply; one gallon per person per day
- Food—at least a 3-day supply of non-perishable, easy-to-prepare food
- Flashlight
- Battery-powered or hand-crank radio (NOAA Weather Radio, if possible)
- Extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Medications (7-day supply) and medical items (hearing aids with extra batteries, glasses, contact lenses, syringes, cane)
- Multi-purpose tool
- Sanitation and personal hygiene items
- Copies of personal documents (medication list and pertinent medical information, deed/lease to home, birth certificates, insurance policies)
- Cell phone with chargers
- Family and emergency contact information
- Extra cash
- Emergency blanket
- Map(s) of the area
- Baby supplies (bottles, formula, baby food, diapers)
- Pet supplies (collar, leash, ID, food, carrier, bowl)
- Tools/supplies for securing your home
- Extra set of car keys and house keys
- Extra clothing, hat and sturdy shoes
- Rain gear
- Insect repellent and sunscreen
- Camera for photos of damage

What do I do after a flood?



- Return home only when officials have declared the area safe.
- Before entering your home, look outside for loose power lines, damaged gas lines, foundation cracks or other damage.
- Parts of your home may be collapsed or damaged. Approach entrances carefully. See if porch roofs and overhangs have all their supports.
- Watch out for wild animals, especially poisonous snakes that may have come into your home with the floodwater.
- If you smell natural or propane gas or hear a hissing noise, leave immediately and call the fire department.
- If power lines are down outside your home, do not step in puddles or standing water.
- Keep children and pets away from hazardous sites and floodwater.
- Materials such as cleaning products, paint, batteries, contaminated fuel and damaged fuel containers are hazardous. Check with local authorities for assistance with disposal to avoid risk.
- During cleanup, wear protective clothing, including rubber gloves and rubber boots.
- Make sure your food and water are safe. Discard items that have come in contact with floodwater, including canned goods, water bottles, plastic utensils and baby bottle nipples. When in doubt, throw it out!
- Do not use water that could be contaminated to wash dishes, brush teeth, prepare food, wash hands, make ice or make baby formula.
- Contact your local or state public health department for specific recommendations for boiling or treating water in your area after a disaster as water may be contaminated.

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Be Red Cross Ready

Heat Wave Safety Checklist

In recent years, excessive heat has caused more deaths than all other weather events, including floods. A heat wave is a prolonged period of excessive heat, often combined with excessive humidity. Generally temperatures are 10 degrees or more above the average high temperature for the region during summer months, last for a long period of time and occur with high humidity as well.

Know the Difference

Excessive Heat Watch—Conditions are favorable for an excessive heat event to meet or exceed local Excessive Heat Warning criteria in the next 24 to 72 hours.

Excessive Heat Warning—Heat Index values are forecast to meet or exceed locally defined warning criteria for at least 2 days (daytime highs=105-110° Fahrenheit).

Heat Advisory—Heat Index values are forecast to meet locally defined advisory criteria for 1 to 2 days (daytime highs=100-105° Fahrenheit).

How can I prepare?



- Listen to local weather forecasts and stay aware of upcoming temperature changes.
- The heat index is the temperature the body feels when the effects of heat and humidity are combined. Exposure to direct sunlight can increase the heat index by as much as 15° F.
- Discuss heat safety precautions with members of your household. Have a plan for wherever you spend time—home, work and school—and prepare for the possibility of power outages.
- Check the contents of your emergency preparedness kit in case a power outage occurs.
- Know those in your neighborhood who are elderly, young, sick or overweight. They are more likely to become victims of excessive heat and may need help.
- If you do not have air conditioning, choose places you could go to for relief from the heat during the warmest part of the day (schools, libraries, theaters, malls).
- Be aware that people living in urban areas may be at greater risk from the effects of a prolonged heat wave than are people living in rural areas.
- Get trained in first aid to learn how to treat heat-related emergencies.
- Ensure that your animals' needs for water and shade are met.

What should I do during a heat wave?



- Listen to a NOAA Weather Radio for critical updates from the National Weather Service (NWS).
- Never leave children or pets alone in enclosed vehicles.
- Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of fluids even if you do not feel thirsty. Avoid drinks with caffeine or alcohol.
- Eat small meals and eat more often.
- Avoid extreme temperature changes.
- Wear loose-fitting, lightweight, light-colored clothing. Avoid dark colors because they absorb the sun's rays.
- Slow down, stay indoors and avoid strenuous exercise during the hottest part of the day.
- Postpone outdoor games and activities.
- Use a buddy system when working in excessive heat.
- Take frequent breaks if you must work outdoors.
- Check on family, friends and neighbors who do not have air conditioning, who spend much of their time alone or who are more likely to be affected by the heat.
- Check on your animals frequently to ensure that they are not suffering from the heat.

Recognize and care for heat-related emergencies ...



Heat cramps are muscular pains and spasms that usually occur in the legs or abdomen caused by exposure to high heat and humidity and loss of fluids and electrolytes. Heat cramps are often an early sign that the body is having trouble with the heat.

Heat exhaustion typically involves the loss of body fluids through heavy sweating during strenuous exercise or physical labor in high heat and humidity.

- Signs of heat exhaustion include cool, moist, pale or flushed skin; heavy sweating; headache; nausea; dizziness; weakness; and exhaustion.
- Move the person to a cooler place. Remove or loosen tight clothing and apply cool, wet cloths or towels to the skin. Fan the person. If the person is conscious, give small amounts of cool water to drink. Make sure the person drinks slowly. Watch for changes in condition.
- If the person refuses water, vomits or begins to lose consciousness, **call 9-1-1** or the local emergency number.

Heat stroke (also known as sunstroke) is a life-threatening condition in which a person's temperature control system stops working and the body is unable to cool itself.

- Signs of heat stroke include hot, red skin which may be dry or moist; changes in consciousness; vomiting; and high body temperature.
- Heat stroke is life-threatening. **Call 9-1-1** or the local emergency number immediately.
- Move the person to a cooler place. Quickly cool the person's body by giving care as you would for heat exhaustion. If needed, continue rapid cooling by applying ice or cold packs wrapped in a cloth to the wrists, ankles, groin, neck and armpits.

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Power Outage Checklist

Sudden power outages can be frustrating and troublesome, especially when they last a long time. If a power outage is 2 hours or less, you need not be concerned about losing your perishable foods. For prolonged power outages, though, there are steps you can take to minimize food loss and to keep all members of your household as comfortable as possible.

Energy Conservation Recommendations

- Turn off lights and computers when not in use.
- Wash clothes in cold water if possible; wash only full loads and clean the dryer's lint trap after each use.
- When using a dishwasher, wash full loads and use the light cycle. If possible, use the rinse only cycle and turn off the high temperature rinse option. When the regular wash cycle is done, just open the dishwasher door to allow the dishes to air dry.
- Replace incandescent light bulbs with energy-efficient compact fluorescent lights.

How do I prepare for a power outage?



To help preserve your food, keep the following supplies in your home:

- One or more coolers—Inexpensive Styrofoam coolers work well.
- Ice—Surrounding your food with ice in a cooler or in the refrigerator will keep food colder for a longer period of time during a prolonged power outage.
- A digital quick-response thermometer—With these thermometers you can quickly check the internal temperatures of food to ensure they are cold enough to use safely.

Put together an emergency preparedness kit with these supplies in case of a prolonged or widespread power outage:

- Water—one gallon per person, per day (3-day supply for evacuation, 2-week supply for home)
 - Food—non-perishable, easy-to-prepare items (3-day supply for evacuation, 2-week supply for home)
 - Flashlight (NOTE: Do not use candles during a power outage due to the extreme risk of fire.)
 - Battery-powered or hand-crank radio (NOAA Weather Radio, if possible)
 - Extra batteries
 - First aid kit
 - Medications (7-day supply) and medical items
 - Multi-purpose tool
 - Sanitation and personal hygiene items
 - Copies of personal documents (medication list and pertinent medical information, deed/lease to home, birth certificates, insurance policies)
 - Cell phone with chargers
 - Family and emergency contact information
 - Extra cash
- If someone in your home is dependent on electric-powered, life-sustaining equipment, remember to include backup power in your evacuation plan.
 - Keep a non-cordless telephone in your home. It is likely to work even when the power is out.
 - Keep your car's gas tank full.

What should I do during a power outage?



Keep food as safe as possible.

- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible. First use perishable food from the refrigerator. An unopened refrigerator will keep foods cold for about 4 hours.
- Then use food from the freezer. A full freezer will keep the temperature for about 48 hours (24 hours if it is half full) if the door remains closed.
- Use your non-perishable foods and staples after using food from the refrigerator and freezer.
- If it looks like the power outage will continue beyond a day, prepare a cooler with ice for your freezer items.
- Keep food in a dry, cool spot and keep it covered at all times.

Electrical equipment

- Turn off and unplug all unnecessary electrical equipment, including sensitive electronics.
- Turn off or disconnect any appliances (like stoves), equipment or electronics you were using when the power went out. When power comes back on, surges or spikes can damage equipment.
- Leave one light turned on so you'll know when the power comes back on.
- Eliminate unnecessary travel, especially by car. Traffic lights will be out and roads will be congested.

Using generators safely

- When using a portable generator, connect the equipment you want to power directly to the outlets on the generator. Do not connect a portable generator to a home's electrical system.
- If you are considering getting a generator, get advice from a professional, such as an electrician. Make sure that the generator you purchase is rated for the power that you think you will need.

What should I do when the power comes back on?



- Do not touch any electrical power lines and keep your family away from them. Report downed power lines to the appropriate officials in your area.

Throw out unsafe food.

- Throw away any food that has been exposed to temperatures 40° F (4° C) for 2 hours or more or that has an unusual odor, color or texture. When in doubt, throw it out!
- Never taste food or rely on appearance or odor to determine its safety. Some foods may look and smell fine, but if they have been at room temperature too long, bacteria causing food-borne illnesses can start growing quickly. Some types of bacteria produce toxins that cannot be destroyed by cooking.
- If food in the freezer is colder than 40° F and has ice crystals on it, you can refreeze it.
- If you are not sure food is cold enough, take its temperature with the food thermometer. Throw out any foods (meat, poultry, fish, eggs and leftovers) that have been exposed to temperatures higher than 40° F (4° C) for 2 hours or more, and any food that has an unusual odor, color or texture, or feels warm to touch.

Caution: Carbon Monoxide Kills

- Never use a generator, grill, camp stove or other gasoline, propane, natural gas or charcoal-burning devices inside a home, garage, basement, crawlspace or any partially enclosed area. Locate unit away from doors, windows and vents that could allow carbon monoxide to come indoors.
- The primary hazards to avoid when using alternate sources for electricity, heating or cooking are carbon monoxide poisoning, electric shock and fire.
- Install carbon monoxide alarms in central locations on every level of your home and outside sleeping areas to provide early warning of accumulating carbon monoxide.
- If the carbon monoxide alarm sounds, move quickly to a fresh air location outdoors or by an open window or door.
- Call for help from the fresh air location and remain there until emergency personnel arrive to assist you.

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Be Red Cross Ready

Thunderstorm Safety Checklist

A thunderstorm is considered severe if it produces hail at least 1 inch in diameter or has wind gusts of at least 58 miles per hour. Every thunderstorm produces lightning, which kills more people each year than tornadoes or hurricanes. Heavy rain from thunderstorms can cause flash flooding and high winds can damage homes and blow down trees and utility poles, causing widespread power outages.

Know the Difference

Severe Thunderstorm Watch—Severe thunderstorms are possible in and near the watch area. Stay informed and be ready to act if a severe thunderstorm warning is issued.

Severe Thunderstorm Warning—Severe weather has been reported by spotters or indicated by radar. Warnings indicate imminent danger to life and property.

Every year people are killed or seriously injured by severe thunderstorms despite advance warning. While some did not hear the warning, others heard the warning and did not pay attention to it. The following information, combined with timely watches and warnings about severe weather, may help save lives.

How can I prepare ahead of time?



- Learn about your local community's emergency warning system for severe thunderstorms.
- Discuss thunderstorm safety with all members of your household.
- Pick a safe place in your home for household members to gather during a thunderstorm. This should be away from windows, skylights and glass doors that could be broken by strong winds or hail.
- Make a list of items to bring inside in the event of a severe thunderstorm.
- Make trees and shrubbery more wind resistant by keeping them trimmed and removing damaged branches.
- Protect your animals by ensuring that any outside buildings that house them are protected in the same way as your home.
- Consult your local fire department if you are considering installing lightning rods.
- Get trained in first aid and learn how to respond to emergencies.
- Put together an emergency preparedness kit:
 - Water—one gallon per person, per day
 - Food—non-perishable, easy-to-prepare
 - Flashlight • Battery-powered or hand-crank radio (NOAA Weather Radio, if possible) • Extra batteries • First aid kit
 - Medications (7-day supply) and medical items • Multi-purpose tool • Sanitation & personal hygiene items • Copies of personal documents • Cell phone with chargers • Family & emergency contact information • Extra cash

What should I do during a thunderstorm?



- Listen to local news or NOAA Weather Radio for emergency updates. Watch for signs of a storm, like darkening skies, lightning flashes or increasing wind.
- Postpone outdoor activities if thunderstorms are likely to occur. Many people struck by lightning are not in the area where rain is occurring.
- If a severe thunderstorm warning is issued, take shelter in a substantial building or in a vehicle with the windows closed. Get out of mobile homes that can blow over in high winds.
- If you can hear thunder, you are close enough to be in danger from lightning. If thunder roars, go indoors! The National Weather Service recommends staying inside for at least 30 minutes after the last thunder clap.
- Avoid electrical equipment and telephones. Use battery-powered TVs and radios instead.
- Shutter windows and close outside doors securely. Keep away from windows.
- Do not take a bath, shower or use plumbing.
- If you are driving, try to safely exit the roadway and park. Stay in the vehicle and turn on the emergency flashers until the heavy rain ends. Avoid touching metal or other surfaces that conduct electricity in and outside the vehicle.
- If you are outside and cannot reach a safe building, avoid high ground; water; tall, isolated trees; and metal objects such as fences or bleachers. Picnic shelters, dugouts and sheds are NOT safe.

What do I do after a thunderstorm?



- Never drive through a flooded roadway. Turn around, don't drown!
- Stay away from storm-damaged areas to keep from putting yourself at risk from the effects of severe thunderstorms.
- Continue to listen to a NOAA Weather Radio or to local radio and television stations for updated information or instructions, as access to roads or some parts of the community may be blocked.
- Help people who may require special assistance, such as infants, children and the elderly or disabled.
- Stay away from downed power lines and report them immediately.
- Watch your animals closely. Keep them under your direct control.

If Lightning Strikes ...

Follow these steps if someone has been struck by lightning:

- Call for help.** Call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number. Anyone who has sustained a lightning strike requires professional medical care.
- Check the person for burns and other injuries.** If the person has stopped breathing, call 9-1-1 and begin CPR. If the person is breathing normally, look for other possible injuries and care for them as necessary. People who have been struck by lightning do not retain an electrical charge and can be handled safely.

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Be Red Cross Ready

Winter Storm Safety Checklist

Winter storms can range from a moderate snow over a few hours to a blizzard with blinding, wind-driven snow that lasts for several days. Some winter storms are large enough to affect several states, while others affect only a single community. Many winter storms are accompanied by dangerously low temperatures and sometimes by strong winds, icing, sleet and freezing rain.

Know the Difference

Winter Storm Outlook

Winter storm conditions are possible in the next 2 to 5 days.

Winter Weather Advisory

Winter weather conditions are expected to cause significant inconveniences and may be hazardous. When caution is used, these situations should not be life threatening.

Winter Storm Watch

Winter storm conditions are possible within the next 36 to 48 hours. People in a watch area should review their winter storm plans and stay informed about weather conditions.

Winter Storm Warning

Life-threatening, severe winter conditions have begun or will begin within 24 hours. People in a warning area should take precautions immediately.

What should I do?



- Dress in several layers of lightweight clothing, wear mittens and a hat (preferably one that covers your ears).
- Wear waterproof, insulated boots to keep your feet warm and dry and to maintain your footing in ice and snow.
- Minimize travel. If travel is necessary, keep a disaster supplies kit in your vehicle.
- Listen to a NOAA Weather Radio or other local news channels for critical information from the National Weather Service (NWS).
- Winterize your vehicle and keep the gas tank full. A full tank will keep the fuel line from freezing.
- Insulate your home by installing storm windows or covering windows with plastic from the inside to keep cold air out.
- Maintain heating equipment and chimneys by having them cleaned and inspected every year.
- Bring pets/companion animals inside during winter weather. Move other animals or livestock to sheltered areas with non-frozen drinking water.
- Running water, even at a trickle, helps prevent pipes from freezing.
- All fuel-burning equipment should be vented to the outside and kept clear.

Cold-Related Emergencies

- Frostbite** and **hypothermia** are two dangerous and potentially life-threatening emergencies. Learn how to care for these emergencies by taking a first aid class.

What supplies do I need?



- Water—at least a 3-day supply; one gallon per person per day
- Food—at least a 3-day supply of non-perishable, easy-to-prepare food
- Flashlight
- Battery-powered or hand-crank radio (NOAA Weather Radio, if possible)
- Extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Medications (7-day supply) and medical items (hearing aids with extra batteries, glasses, contact lenses, syringes, cane)
- Multi-purpose tool
- Sanitation and personal hygiene items
- Copies of personal documents (medication list and pertinent medical information, proof of address, deed/lease to home, passports, birth certificates, insurance policies)
- Cell phone with chargers
- Family and emergency contact information
- Extra cash
- Baby supplies (bottles, formula, baby food, diapers)
- Pet supplies (collar, leash, ID, food, carrier, bowl)
- Tools/supplies for securing your home
- Sand, rock salt or non-clumping kitty litter to make walkways and steps less slippery
- Warm coats, gloves or mittens, hats, boots and extra blankets and warm clothing for all household members
- Ample alternate heating methods such as fireplaces or wood- or coal-burning stoves

What do I do after a storm?



- Go to a designated public shelter if your home loses power or heat during periods of extreme cold.
- Avoid driving when conditions include sleet, freezing rain or drizzle, snow or dense fog.
- Before tackling strenuous tasks in cold temperatures, consider your physical condition, the weather factors and the nature of the task.
- Protect yourself from frostbite and hypothermia by wearing warm, loose-fitting, lightweight clothing in several layers. Stay indoors, if possible.
- Help people who require special assistance such as elderly people living alone, people with disabilities and children.
- Check on your animals and make sure that their access to food and water is not blocked by snow drifts, ice or other obstacles. If possible, bring them indoors.

Caution: Carbon Monoxide Kills

- Never use a generator, grill, camp stove or other gasoline, propane, natural gas or charcoal-burning devices inside a home, garage, basement, crawlspace or any partially enclosed area. Locate unit away from doors, windows and vents that could allow carbon monoxide to come indoors.
- The primary hazards to avoid when using alternate sources for electricity, heating or cooking are carbon monoxide poisoning, electric shock and fire.
- Install carbon monoxide alarms in central locations on every level of your home and outside sleeping areas to provide early warning of accumulating carbon monoxide.
- If the carbon monoxide alarm sounds, move quickly to a fresh air location outdoors or by an open window or door.
- Call for help from the fresh air location and remain there until emergency personnel arrive to assist you.

Let Your Family Know You're Safe

If your community experiences a severe winter storm, or any disaster, register on the American Red Cross Safe and Well Web site available through RedCross.org to let your family and friends know about your welfare. If you don't have Internet access, call **1-866-GET-INFO** to register yourself and your family.