

Prepare Denton County

A Guide for Individuals and Families



Health Emergency Alert Response Team
Denton County Health Department



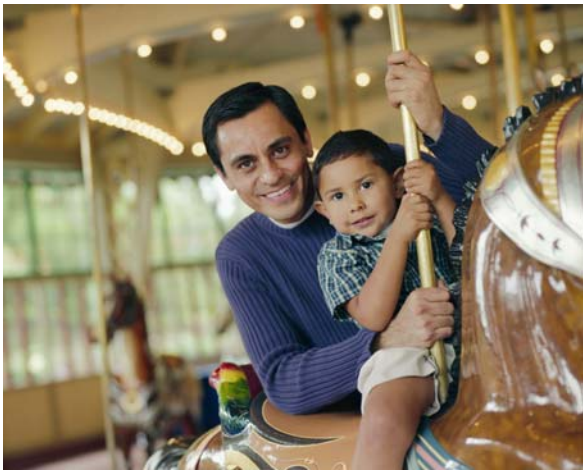
Plan Now, Act Now, Be Prepared

Emergencies, whether man-made or natural, often occur without warning. While officials are responding to the larger event they may not be able to respond to individual needs. You may be required to shelter in your current place (shelter in place) or even leave familiar surroundings (evacuate). The key to managing yourself in an emergency is to have a plan and prepare yourself and your family for emergencies that may occur. Your family will cope best by preparing for disaster before it strikes. Once disaster hits, you will not have time to shop or search for supplies. If you gather supplies and make plans in advance, your family can endure an evacuation or shelter in place situation. This workbook will help you and your family plan and act so that you can be prepared!

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Importance and Benefits of Being Prepared

The effects of an emergency can be lessened if you prepare ahead of time. Preparing for a disaster will help bring peace of mind and confidence to deal with an emergency.



A health emergency would touch every aspect of society, so every part of society must begin to prepare. All have roles in the event of an emergency. Federal, state, and local governments are developing, improving, and testing their plans for emergency situations. Businesses, schools, universities, and other faith-based and community organizations are also preparing plans.

As you begin your individual or family planning, you may want to review your state's planning efforts and those of your local public health and emergency preparedness officials. The local, state, and federal government will provide up to date information and guidance to the public if an emergency situation unfolds. For reliable, accurate, and timely information visit the Denton County Health Department's web site at www.dentoncounty.com/heart and the federal government's web site at www.ready.gov.

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Challenges and Preparation

As you and your family plan for an emergency, think about the challenges you might face, particularly if the emergency is severe.

You can start to prepare now to be able to respond to these challenges. The following are some challenges you or your family may face and recommendations to help you cope. In addition, checklists and other tools have been prepared to guide your planning efforts.

Essential Services You Depend on May Be Disrupted

- Plan for the possibility that normal services may be interrupted. These could include services provided by area hospitals and other health care establishments, financial institutions, restaurants, government offices, telephone companies, and the post office.
- Stores may close or have limited supplies. The planning checklists can help you prepare to manage without stores.
- Transportation services may be disrupted and you may not be able to rely on public transportation. Plan to take fewer trips and store essential items. It is also important to arrange for transportation if you were asked to evacuate.
- Public gatherings, such as faith-based services or community events, may be canceled. Prepare contact lists including important family and friend contacts, emergency service numbers, and physicians contact information.
- Consider that the ability to travel, even by car if there are fuel shortages, may be limited.
- You should also talk to your family about where family members and loved ones will go in an emergency and how they will receive care, in case you cannot communicate with them. During this discussion, it is important to select an out of state contact for you and your family to communicate with so that you know your family members' status.
- In an emergency, there may be widespread illness that could result in the shut down of local ATMs and banks. Keep a small amount of cash in small denominations for easy use.

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Food and Water Supplies May Be Interrupted and Limited

Food and water supplies may be interrupted causing temporary shortages. You also may have difficulty getting to a store. To prepare for this possibility you should store 10 day supply of non-perishable food and fresh water for emergencies.

Food

- Store 10 days of non-perishable food.
- Select foods that do not require refrigeration, preparation (including use of heat or water), or cooking.
- Insure that formulas for infants and any family member's special nutritional needs are a part of your planning. This can include special dietary needs for chronic diseases or special preferences for family members.

Water

- Store 10 days of water, 1 gallon of water per person per day. (2 quarts for drinking, 2 quarts for food preparation/sanitation), in clean plastic containers. Avoid using containers that will decompose or break, such as milk cartons or glass bottles.
- Remember to prepare for your pets' needs as well. Allot 1 gallon of water per animal per day.

Being Able to Work May Be Difficult or Impossible

- Ask your employer how business will continue during an emergency.
- Discuss staggered shifts or working at home with your employer. Discuss telecommuting possibilities and needs, accessing remote networks, and using portable computers.
- Discuss possible flexibility in leave policies. Discuss with your employer how much leave you can take to care for yourself or a family member.
- Plan for possible loss of income if you are unable to work or the company you work for temporarily closes.

For the Business Checklist for health emergencies, such as pandemic influenza visit: <http://pandemic.dentoncounty.com>.

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Schools and Daycare Centers May Be Closed for a Period of Time

In the event of a health emergency, schools, and potentially public and private preschool, childcare, trade schools, and colleges and universities may be closed to limit the spread of disease in the community and to prevent children from becoming sick. Other school-related activities and services could also be disrupted or cancelled. School closings would likely happen very early in a health emergency and could happen on short notice.

- Talk to your teachers, administrators, and parent-teacher organizations about your school's emergency plans, and offer your help.
- Plan now for children staying at home for extended periods of time, as school closings may occur along with restrictions on public gatherings, such as parks, malls, and movie theaters.
- Plan home learning activities and exercises that your children can do at home. Have learning materials, such as books, school supplies, and educational computer activities and movies on hand.
- Talk to teachers, administrators, and parent-teacher organizations about possible activities, lesson plans, and exercises that children can do at home if schools closed. This could include continuing courses by TV or internet.
- Plan entertainment and recreation activities that your children can do at home. Have materials, such as reading books, coloring books, and games, on hand for your children to use.



For the “Childcare, School, and University Checklist” visit
<http://pandemic.dentoncounty.com>.

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Medical Care Could Be Disrupted

In a severe health emergency, hospitals and doctors' offices may be overwhelmed with those who are sick.

- If you have a chronic disease, such as heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, asthma, or depression, you should continue to take your medication as prescribed by your health care provider.
- Make sure you have necessary medical supplies such as glucose and blood pressure monitoring equipment.



- Talk to your health care provider to ensure adequate access to your medication. This may mean that, at a minimum, you have copies of your prescriptions including dosage requirements available in your emergency supplies.
- If you receive ongoing medical care, such as dialysis, chemotherapy, or other therapies, talk with your health care provider about plans to continue care during a health emergency. This includes plans in the case that you would have to evacuate your home.

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Family Disaster Plan

Making a family disaster plan can ensure that your family knows what to do during an emergency. This may help to keep you safe if disaster strikes your area. Follow these steps and consider these suggestions as you develop your family disaster plan.

- Meet with your family to discuss what you would do, as a group, in each situation.
- Find out what could happen to you in your area.
 - What severe weather is prevalent in your area? (floods, tornadoes, etc.)? For example, in Denton County, we would not need to plan for a hurricane or earthquake, but do need to plan for flooding or severe weather such as thunderstorms and tornadoes.
 - What are other emergency situations that may arise? What are some health emergencies that could occur? For more information on health emergencies, log onto www.dentoncounty.com/heart.
- Complete a checklist of what you and your family need to do (this booklet should help with different checklists).
- Form a plan. Prepare your family for emergencies by creating a family disaster plan that includes a family communication plan and assembling emergency supplies kits for each member of your household. It is also important to include shelter in place and evacuation planning.
- Teach children how to recognize danger signals. Make sure children know what smoke detectors, fire alarms and community warning systems sound like.
- Teach children how and when to call for help. Post emergency numbers by the phone.
- Help children memorize family name, address, and phone numbers.
- Practice your plan as a family.

Practicing your plan:

- ✓ Select a time and conduct your own family emergency drill. A good time might be around a family or national holiday.
- ✓ Make it fun. Consider asking young children to help create the emergency kits to prepare.
- ✓ Instill in your family the importance of emergency planning as a way to reduce stress during a disaster.

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Evacuation and Shelter in Place

Evacuation: leaving an area because of possible danger

Shelter in place: staying where you are because of possible danger. This may be at your home, work, school, or other places you spend time.

Consider the role that evacuating or sheltering in place may play in your family disaster planning. Make sure to include plans for these 2 important scenarios.

Creating an Evacuation Plan:

- Find at least 2 escape routes from each room. If someone uses a wheelchair, make sure the exits are wheelchair accessible.
- Designate a meeting place outside to meet up with family members.
- Map out at least 2 escape routes away from your home and neighborhood.
- Choose a location outside of your neighborhood to meet with family and members of your personal support network in case you cannot return home.

Planning to Shelter in Place:

Consider what you would do if an emergency occurred at your home, work place, school, and at other areas where you spend time. If authorities asked you to stay where you were for a period of time, do you have the resources necessary? Most often, you will be at home when asked to shelter in place. In some emergencies, you may be asked to shelter in place in your “safe room”. This room is a small, interior room, with no windows. When going into your safe room, remember your pets, and be sure to have additional food and water supplies for them. In certain health emergencies, you may be asked to shelter in place for a long period of time, maybe 10 days, to help reduce the spread of disease. Could you stay home for 10 days without a trip to the grocery store? Make plans now so that you are able to stay at your home for 10 days. The main thing you can do to help your family in this type of emergency is to create a “Stay Kit”. Information on creating a “Stay Kit” is located in this booklet.

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Health Emergency Checklist for Individuals and Families

When preparing for disasters, learn about possible health emergencies and prepare for them, along with other natural disasters. You can prepare for a health emergency now. You should know both the magnitude of what can happen during a disease outbreak and what actions you can take to help lessen the impact on you and your family. This checklist will help you gather the information and resources needed to start.

To plan for a health emergency:

- Store a 10 day supply of water and food. During a health emergency, if you cannot get to the store, or if stores are out of supplies, you and your family will be prepared with supplies on hand. This can be useful in other types of emergencies, such as power outages and natural disasters.
- Ask your health care provider and insurance company if you can get an extra supply of your regular prescription drugs. If that is not possible, make sure you have copies of prescriptions or list of prescriptions with the medication dosage with other important documents.
- Have non-prescription drugs and other health supplies on hand, including pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, fluids with electrolytes, and vitamins.
- Talk with family members and loved ones about how they would be cared for if they got sick, or what will be needed to care for them in your home. This is also important if you have neighbors or family members that cannot care for themselves. Include such people in your family's emergency planning.
- Volunteer with local groups to prepare and assist with emergency response. One local Denton County group is the Denton County Medical Reserve Corps. It is a group of medical and non-medical volunteers that are trained and equipped to respond to emergencies or disasters that overwhelm current resources. To receive additional information on the Medical Reserve Corps, call 940-349-2923.
- Get involved with your community as it works to prepare for emergencies.

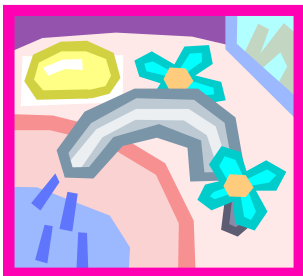
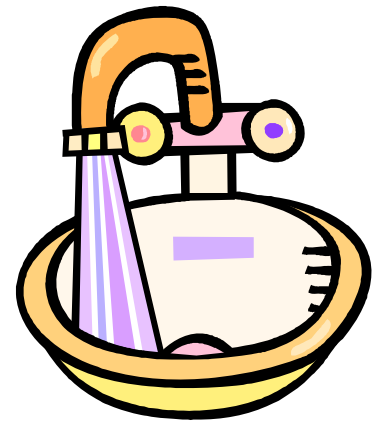
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To limit the spread of germs and prevent infection:

- ❑ Teach your children to wash hands frequently with soap and water or alcohol based hand sanitizer, and model the behavior.
- ❑ Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or into the crease of their elbow, and be sure to model the behavior.
- ❑ Teach your children to stay away from others as much as possible when they are sick. Stay home from work or school if sick.

how to WASH YOUR HANDS

1. Wet hands with warm running water.
2. Add soap, then rub hands together to make a soapy lather. Make sure to wash the front and back of your hands, nails and nail beds, wrists, and between fingers.
3. Wash hands for 20 seconds or the length of singing "Happy Birthday".



4. Rinse hands with warm running water with your hands pointed down.
5. Dry hands thoroughly with a clean towel and use that towel to turn off the water and open the door.

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Make Emergency Supply Kits

To be prepared for an emergency, you and your family should work together to create 3 different emergency supply kits: Stay Kit, Go Kit, and Pet Kit.

Stay Kit

One will be your “Stay Kit”. You will keep your “Stay Kit” at your home in a convenient, safe place, such as your designated “safe room”. The “Stay Kit” supplies should be in a portable, waterproof container, such as a rubber tote. Your “Stay Kit” should contain enough supplies to stay at home for 10 days.

Go Kit

Another kit that needs to be created prior to an emergency situation is a “Go Kit”. Your “Go Kit” can be used if you are asked to evacuate. Many times when asked to evacuate, people have very little time to gather supplies. You may keep your “Go Kit” in your car or in a convenient place near an entrance to your house, such as an entry way closet. Your “Go Kit” should include 3 days worth of supplies.

Pet Kit

A “Pet Kit” should be created if you have household pets or service animals. Many times our family pets and service animals are considered part of our family and as such, they need to be protected during emergencies. Having a “Pet Kit” ready in case you are asked to shelter in place or evacuate will help keep pets and service animals safe and happy during an emergency.

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Make sure you include the following lists of items in an emergency kit for your home. This “Stay Kit” should be kept in a convenient location in your home.

<i>Examples of food supplies 10 day supply for family</i>	<i>Examples of health supplies</i>	<i>Examples of emergency supplies</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Bottled water (1 gallon of water per person per day) <input type="checkbox"/> Ready to eat canned meats, fish, fruits, vegetables, beans, and soup. <input type="checkbox"/> Protein or fruit bars <input type="checkbox"/> Dry cereal or granola <input type="checkbox"/> Peanut butter or nuts <input type="checkbox"/> Dried fruit <input type="checkbox"/> Crackers <input type="checkbox"/> Canned juice <input type="checkbox"/> Canned or jarred baby food and formula (if needed) <input type="checkbox"/> Other nonperishable food <input type="checkbox"/> Manual can opener <input type="checkbox"/> Disposable plates, cups, utensils <input type="checkbox"/> Utility knife 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Prescription medications or copies of medications with dosage requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Prescribed medical supplies such as glucose and blood pressure monitoring equipment <input type="checkbox"/> First Aid Kit <input type="checkbox"/> Soap and water, or alcohol based (60-95%) hand wash <input type="checkbox"/> Medicines for fever, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen <input type="checkbox"/> Thermometer <input type="checkbox"/> Anti-diarrheal medication <input type="checkbox"/> Vitamins <input type="checkbox"/> Fluids with electrolytes <input type="checkbox"/> Cleansing agent/soap <input type="checkbox"/> Any other commonly used over the counter medication <input type="checkbox"/> Personal car items, such as toothbrush, toothpaste, feminine hygiene supplies, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Records, including medical history and family medical history. <input type="checkbox"/> Dust or surgical mask 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Battery powered radio. <input type="checkbox"/> NOAA weather radio <input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight <input type="checkbox"/> Extra batteries for radios and flashlight <input type="checkbox"/> Tools, such as a wrench or pliers <input type="checkbox"/> Important family documents (birth certificates, social security cards, insurance policies, adoption papers, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Cash and change <input type="checkbox"/> Car and home cell phone charger <input type="checkbox"/> Extra clothes (season and weather appropriate) <input type="checkbox"/> Blankets <input type="checkbox"/> Tissues, toilet paper, disposable diapers (if needed) <input type="checkbox"/> Garbage bags <input type="checkbox"/> Duct tape <input type="checkbox"/> Household chlorine bleach

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Go Kit

As important as it is to have needed supplies on hand at your home, it is also important to have items ready if you are asked to evacuate your home very quickly. You can keep this Go Kit in your car or in a convenient place in your house where you can “grab and go”. If you keep the items in your car, rotate batteries, food, and water often. You should prepare for 3 days worth of supplies for your Go Kit.

- Non-perishable food items (nutrition bars work well because they are portable)
- Bottled Water
- Flashlight and batteries
- First Aid Kit
- Map
- Tire repair kit
- Booster Cables
- Windshield scraper
- Prescription and over the counter medications and any needed medical equipment
- Copies of important family documents (birth certificates, social security cards, insurance policies, adoption papers, etc.)
- Car and home cell phone charger
- Cash and change
- Extra clothes
- Blankets
- Tissues/toilet paper/personal care items
- Needed baby supplies



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Special Food Considerations

During an emergency, the food you eat is very important. Make sure that you are prepared for the following circumstances:

- Contaminated or spoiled food and water
- Limited food supplies
- Skipped or delayed meals or snacks
- Inability to cook due to power failures
- High carbohydrate meals in a shelter or at a mobile meal van site. This would not affect those without special dietary considerations, but could if a chronic disease limits the number of carbohydrates you are “allowed” to have each day.
- If you have a chronic disease, such as Diabetes, that affects your diet, please plan for those issues. With Diabetes, it is still necessary for you to eat on your regular schedule and as close to your normal intake as possible. Do not skip or delay meals.

Remember...

- Do not forget food utensils, manual can openers, and disposable dishes.
- Food items should be stored with other emergency items in a water proof container, and replaced yearly.



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Pet and Service Animal Considerations

If you have family pets or service animals, make sure that you prepare them for emergencies as well. Make sure that you have items in your family's emergency kit for them. It is also important to make a "Go Kit" for your pets and service animals in the case that you were asked to evacuate your home. It is a good idea to find out the plans that your city has for sheltering pets in emergencies. If a plan has not been developed, encourage it to be done.

- Food and food bowls
- Water and water bowls
- Cat litter and litter box
- Medications
- Leash/carrier/pet bed
- Toys



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Family Emergency Health Information Sheet

It is important to think about health issues that could arise if a health emergency occurs, and how they could affect you and your loved ones. For example, if a health emergency occurred and the health department opened a Point of Dispensing (POD) site to give medication or vaccinations to part or all of the community, you may need to provide as much information as you can about your medical history when you go, especially if you have a serious health condition or allergy.

Create a family emergency health plan using this information. Fill in the information for each family member in the space provided. Like much of the planning for a health emergency, this can also help prepare you for other emergencies.

1. Family Member Information

<i>Family Member</i>	<i>Blood type</i>	<i>Allergies</i>	<i>Past/current medical conditions</i>

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2. Family Member Medication Information

Family Member Name: _____

Family Member Date of Birth: _____

If child, family member weight: _____

<i>Medicine</i>	<i>Is it a pill, capsule, liquid, or shot?</i>	<i>Dosage</i>	<i>How often? (frequency)</i>

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2. Family Member Medication Information (Continued)

Family Member Name: _____

Family Member Date of Birth: _____

If child, family member weight: _____

<i>Medicine</i>	<i>Is it a pill, capsule, liquid, or shot?</i>	<i>Dosage</i>	<i>How often? (frequency)</i>

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2. Family Member Medication Information (Continued)

Family Member Name: _____

Family Member Date of Birth: _____

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<i>Medicine</i>	<i>Is it a pill, capsule, liquid, or shot?</i>	<i>Dosage</i>	<i>How often? (frequency)</i>

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Family Member Name: _____

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<i>Medicine</i>	<i>Is it a pill, capsule, liquid, or shot?</i>	<i>Dosage</i>	<i>How often? (frequency)</i>

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<i>Medicine</i>	<i>Is it a pill, capsule, liquid, or shot?</i>	<i>Dosage</i>	<i>How often? (frequency)</i>

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3. Emergency Contacts

Make sure that you have access to the people and places that you may need during an emergency situation. Examine the checklist below to make sure that you have completed these items to ensure your family's communication during an emergency.

- Find out about disaster plans at places you and your family may spend time.
- Discuss preparing for emergencies with your family and how best to communicate with those you love during an emergency.
- As a part of your Family Disaster Plan, make a family communications plan. This plan should include contact information for family and personal support network members. Also include important local numbers.
- Choose an out of state contact. It is important to choose someone who lives at least 100 miles away because it is often easier to make a long distance call, rather than a local call during and after an emergency.
- Form a personal support network. Personal support network details are discussed in this booklet.
- Form a list of emergency numbers (worksheet included in this booklet).
- Identify radio stations in your area where emergency information is disseminated.



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3. Emergency Contacts

Personal Support Networks

A personal support network can help you prepare for a disaster by identifying the people and resources you would need, to effectively respond if a disaster was to occur.

- Choose at least 3 people for each location you spend the most time, such as home, religious/spiritual meeting places (church or synagogue), work, or others.
- Choose those who will be able to help you within minutes.
- Discuss with network members what your needs would be in an emergency.
- Arrange more than one person to check on you in an emergency.
- Teach network members how to operate any special equipment you use, and label your equipment with the instructions.
- If you are comfortable enough, give your networks a key to your home, car, or any other place to find you in an emergency.
- Complete a personal assessment to determine what needs you may have (contained on following page of this booklet).
- Provide network members with important information such as:
 - ✓ Emergency and medical lists
 - ✓ List of any special equipment and disability-related supplies.
 - ✓ Shelter in place and evacuation plans
 - ✓ Personal disaster plan, including your family communications plan.
 - ✓ Personal assessment results

Work Together to Prepare for Emergencies!

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3. Emergency Contacts: Personal Assessment

Completing a personal assessment will help you decide what you can do for yourself and what assistance you may need before or after a disaster.

Daily living needs

Personal care needs, such as bathing and grooming

Food needs

Electricity dependent equipment

How will you continue to use equipment that runs on electricity?

Do you have back up power source?

How long will it last?

Utilities

Do you know how to turn off your water, electricity, gas, or other utilities during an emergency?

Could you do it by yourself?

Do you have the tools necessary to turn off your utilities during an emergency?

What would you do if your water, electricity, gas, or other utility sources were cut off for several days?

Mobility/Getting Around

Can you get around your home by yourself?

Are you able to move around disaster debris in or around your home during or after an emergency?

Evacuating

Could you leave your home very quickly by yourself?

Do you know where the building exits are in your home, work or school?

Do you need help leaving?

Do you have transportation or would you need someone to pick you up to evacuate?

Do you have mobility aids or is ramp access necessary?

Do you have service animals that would also need to evacuate?

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3. Emergency Contacts:

Contacts	Name/Phone Number
Local personal emergency contact	
Out of town contact	
Hospital near Work	
Hospital near Home	
Hospital near School	
Family Physician	
Pharmacy	
Employer contact information	
School contact information	
Religious/spiritual organization	
Veterinarian	
Dialysis Clinic	
AM Radio Station FM Radio Station	

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Additional Considerations

- Consider getting a medical alert system that will allow you to call for help if you are immobilized in an emergency. Most require a working phone line, so have a back up plan if the regular lines are disrupted.
- If you use an electrical scooter or wheelchair, have a manual wheelchair available to be used as a back up.
- Store extra walking aids in different rooms throughout the house if mobility is a concern.
- Know where fire exits and fire extinguishers are in your home and buildings where you spend time.
- Take first aid or CPR classes, when available.
- Post 9-1-1 (911) emergency numbers beside all phones.
- Register for any emergency notification systems available in your area. Your local fire department or city government can notify you of what is available.
- Install smoke detectors on each level of your home, by bedrooms.
- Establish a safe room in your home away from windows to be sheltered in the case of severe weather. This is a good place to keep your “Stay Kit”.

Additional Planning Notes: _____

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Take Time to Plan!

You'll be glad you did!



Information provided courtesy of:

Health Emergency Alert Response Team (HEART)

Denton County Health Department

(940) 349-2909

www.dentoncounty.com/heart

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