

# Emergency Information HANDBOOK



**New York State  
Division of Homeland Security  
and Emergency Services**

*New York State Warning Point: (518) 292-2200*

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# NY-ALERT

New York State's All-Hazards Alert and Notification System is a web-based portal that allows State agencies, county and local governments, emergency service agencies and institutions of higher learning to provide emergency alerting information and private notifications to a defined audience (local, county, regional or statewide).

NY-ALERT is free and subscription-based. If you wish to receive emergency information, you can register on the NY-ALERT website at:

**[www.nyalert.gov](http://www.nyalert.gov)**

You can receive emergency information such as major road closures and weather events at home, work or on the go. And you can receive that information the way you choose: e-mail, telephone call at home, at work, or through your cell phone; Simple Message Service (SMS) text message; fax; pager; and on the web through your RSS (Really Simple Syndicate) Reader, or by visiting the NY-ALERT website at [www.nyalert.gov](http://www.nyalert.gov).

If you do not have access to the worldwide web, you may still sign up for NY-ALERT by calling **1-888-697-6972**.



# BEFORE AN EMERGENCY HAPPENS



An emergency — be it a natural disaster such as a flood or winter storm, a power outage or a terrorist act — can occur quickly and without warning. Although we cannot prevent emergencies, there are some simple things that we can do now as individuals, families and organizations to be better prepared.

Two actions that you can take to become better prepared to protect yourself and your family are to **develop an emergency plan** and **prepare a portable cache of emergency supplies** that can be used at home or at work.

Learn about the types of emergencies or hazards that may affect your community and about community emergency plans that are in place and how you will be notified of an event. Emergencies may strike when you and your family members are away from home, so learn about plans at your work, school or anywhere else you and your family spends time.



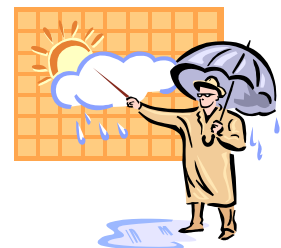
Remember the special needs of family members. Infants, the elderly, and persons with disabilities need the same planning as everyone else, and sometimes a little more, to be prepared for an emergency.



Keep an eye on your neighbors and be prepared to lend a helping hand. If someone you know is elderly or dependent on life-sustaining or health-related equipment such as a ventilator, respirator or oxygen concentrator, you should make plans now to ensure their needs are met during severe winter weather, possible power outages or other emergencies. Check on them, if possible, during and after the emergency. Notify others who could provide help such as neighbors, relatives, nearby friends and local emergency responders such as the fire department.

Make plans now on what to do with your pet in the event you have to leave your home. Public health regulations do not allow pets in public shelters, nor do most hotels/motels allow them.

Pay attention to the news. Know your local radio and television stations that can provide you with up-to-date information during an emergency. Make sure you know which of your stations are part of the Emergency Alert System (EAS). These EAS stations are the primary outlets for official information on protective actions.



If possible, get a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio to monitor severe weather. Know the county in which you live and the names of nearby cities. Be aware that severe weather warnings are issued on a county basis.

The most effective homeland security strategy begins with the individual. In these uncertain times, be aware of your surroundings with regard to terrorism. If you see something unusual or suspicious, please contact local law enforcement or call New York State's counterterrorism tips hotline at **1-866-SAFE-NYS (1-866-723-3697)**. In New York City, call the NYPD at **1-888-NYC-SAFE (1-888-692-7233)**.

# DEVELOPING AN EMERGENCY PLAN

Meet with your family members and discuss the dangers of possible emergency events including fire, severe weather, hazardous spills, and terrorism. Discuss how you and your family will respond to each possible emergency, including evacuation.



- Know how to contact all family members at all times.
- Discuss what to do in case of power outages or personal injuries.
- Select two (2) places to meet: a spot outside your home for an emergency such as fire, and a place away from your neighborhood in case you cannot return home (a real possibility during the day when most adults are at work and children are at school).
- Identify an out-of-town friend or relative as your "emergency family check-in contact" for everyone to call if the family is separated. Make sure all family members have that number.
- It is often easier to call out-of-town during an emergency than within the affected area.
- Post emergency contact numbers near all telephones. Include local police, fire and health departments, poison control, your children's schools, doctors, child/senior care providers and insurance agents.
- Make sure everyone knows how and when to call 9-1-1 or your local emergency medical services phone number.
- Install safety features in your home such as smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Inspect your home for potential safety hazards — and correct them.
- Have your family learn basic safety and first aid measures.
- Keep all family records in a waterproof and fireproof safe.
- Have emergency supplies on hand.
- Teach adults how to turn off the water, gas and electricity at main switches.
- If for any reason you do turn off natural gas service to your home, call your natural gas utility to restore service. **DO NOT** attempt to restore gas service yourself.
- **PRACTICE** the Plan!

## CONDUCT A HOME INSPECTION

- Check each bedroom for the best window or door for an emergency escape. If necessary, rearrange bedrooms to provide easier escape for children, elderly and the disabled.
- Ensure everyone has a second way out—consider escape ladders.
- Test windows to ensure they open easily and are large and low enough. Be sure that everyone in your home, including children, can reach, unlock and open doors and windows that are included in your plan.
- If your windows have security bars, check to see if they are equipped with inside quick-release devices.
- Check security devices to make sure they can be opened easily – in an emergency, you might not be able to find a key.
- Check your smoke detector. If you don't have one, get one.

## CREATE A FLOOR PLAN

- Draw an outline of your home or apartment. Make a drawing for each floor where people sleep. Dimensions do not need to be exact.
- Add each bedroom and label it.
- Show important details: stairs, hallways, roofs that could be used as a fire escape.
- Choose a family meeting place and show it on the plan.
- Use blue or black arrows to show the normal way out, such as the stairs or hall. Use different colored arrows to show emergency exits in case fire blocks your normal route.



Make sure that your plan includes:

- Working smoke alarms
- Two exits from each room
- An outside meeting place
- Emergency phone numbers (local police, fire, EMS)
- Alternatives for any family member needing extra assistance

## **PRACTICE YOUR PLAN**

Practice with all members of your household at least twice a year. Review and revise your plan whenever there are changes in your household, e.g., sleeping arrangements, new baby, etc. The more you practice, the better you will be able to act quickly and automatically in an emergency.

- Begin with everyone in his or her bed.
- Sound the alarm: press the smoke alarm test button and yell FIRE or use some other signal.
- Everyone should roll out of bed, stay low and feel the door for heat.
- Exit the house:
  - First time: use the normal exit. Brace your shoulder against the door and open it slowly, ready to shut it quickly if there is heat or smoke.
  - Second time: pretend doors are hot. Everyone must use the second way out.
- Gather at meeting place and check that everyone is out.
- Appoint someone to simulate calling local emergency services.
- Get together to talk about the drill. Make changes to the plan if necessary and rehearse them.

**Use the Family Emergency Plan on the following pages to document your family's emergency plan.**



# **FAMILY EMERGENCY PLAN**



## Household Members

Name	Relation	Birth Date	Social Security #

# Pets

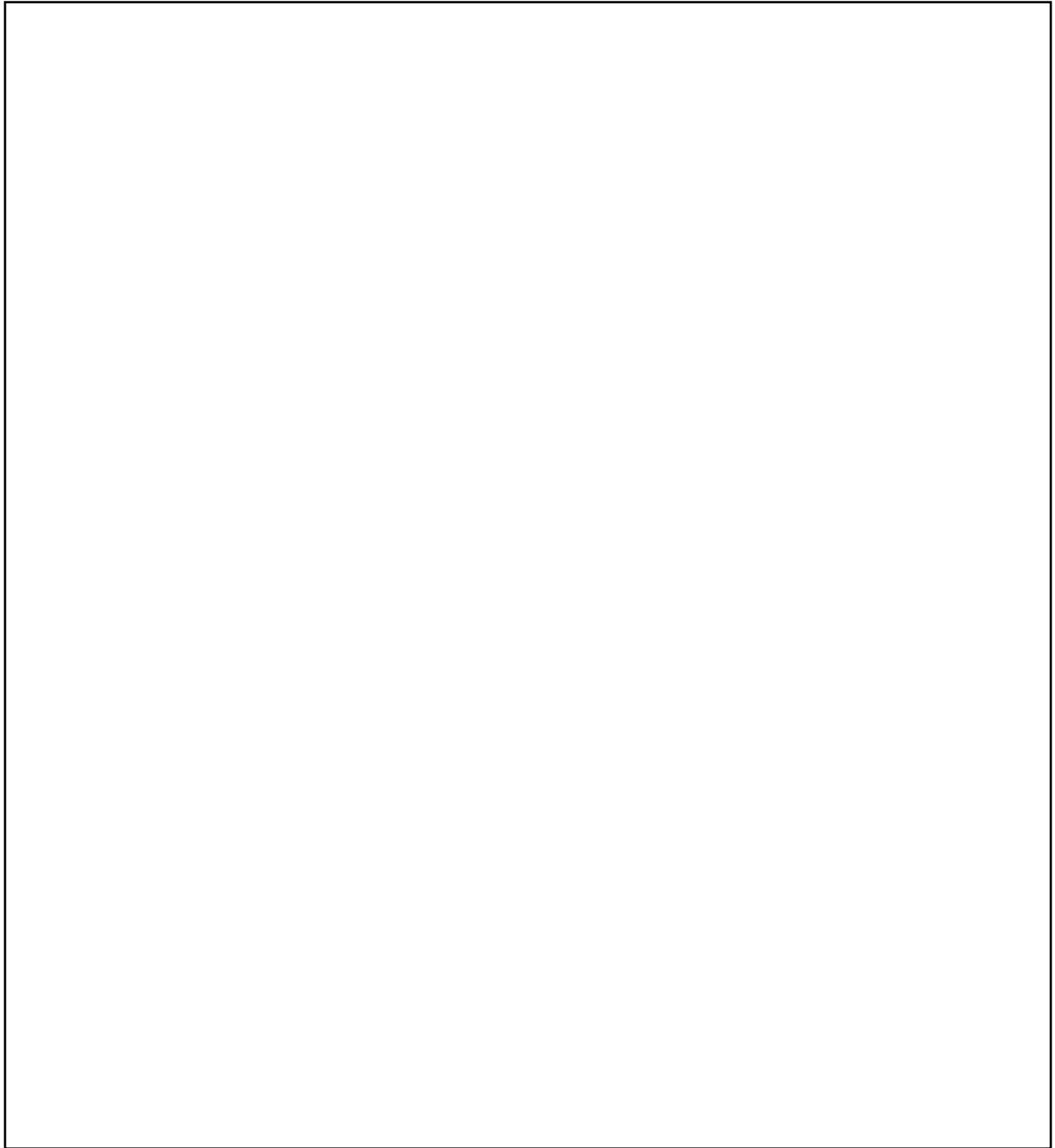
Name	Type / Breed	Rabies Vaccination #	Veterinarian Name & Number

# Floor Plan

Use the space provided below to draw a simple floor plan with two (2) escape exits in case of emergency. Write down two (2) places where your family will meet in an emergency:

Location (near home): \_\_\_\_\_

Location (away from home): \_\_\_\_\_

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for drawing a floor plan. The box is oriented vertically and occupies most of the lower half of the page.

# Key Contact Information

**Emergency: 9-1-1**

## **OUT OF AREA CONTACT**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone # (day) \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone # (night) \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell # \_\_\_\_\_

## **LOCAL CONTACT**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone # (day) \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone # (night) \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell # \_\_\_\_\_

## **NEAREST RELATIVE**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone # (day) \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone # (night) \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell # \_\_\_\_\_

## **FAMILY WORK NUMBERS**

Father \_\_\_\_\_  
Mother \_\_\_\_\_  
Other \_\_\_\_\_  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

**SCHOOLS**

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

**UTILITIES**

Electric \_\_\_\_\_

Gas \_\_\_\_\_

Oil \_\_\_\_\_

Water \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Cable TV \_\_\_\_\_

Internet Provider \_\_\_\_\_

**OTHER INFORMATION**

Police \_\_\_\_\_

Fire \_\_\_\_\_

Doctor \_\_\_\_\_

Pharmacist \_\_\_\_\_

Veterinarian \_\_\_\_\_

Medical Insurance \_\_\_\_\_

Home Insurance \_\_\_\_\_

Auto Insurance \_\_\_\_\_

# EMERGENCY SUPPLIES

Identifying and collecting emergency supplies now can save you precious time in the event you must evacuate or go without electricity, heat or water for an extended time. Consider including these items in your emergency supplies kit:

- Portable battery-powered radio
- Flashlight(s)
- Extra batteries for all portable electronic devices
- At least a 3-day supply of water (1 gallon per person per day); store water in sealed, unbreakable containers and replace every 6 months
- 3- to 5-day supply of emergency ready-to-eat non-perishable packaged or canned foods that do not require refrigeration – include peanut butter, crackers, granola bars and other high energy foods
- Manual can opener
- Clothing, rain gear and sturdy shoes for each family member
- Sleeping bags, bedding or blankets for each family member
- One week's supply of essential prescription medicines (be sure to check the expiration dates)
- Emergency heating equipment (used properly with adequate ventilation) with ample fuel supply and fire extinguisher
- Special items for infants, the elderly or family members with special needs
- Extra pair of glasses or contact lenses and solution (be sure to check the expiration dates)
- List of family physicians, important medical information, and the style and serial number of medical devices such as pacemakers
- Identification, credit cards, cash and photocopies of important family documents including home insurance information
- Extra set of car and house keys



## **EMERGENCY FIRST AID KIT**

- First aid manual
- Sterile adhesive bandages and gauze pads
- Over-the-counter drugs (e.g., aspirin, antidiarrheal medications, activated charcoal)
- Antiseptic ointment
- Latex gloves
- Thermometer
- Tweezers
- Needles
- Tongue depressors

## **OTHER ITEMS**

- Soap
- Screwdrivers
- Cutters and scissors
- Duct tape
- Waterproof matches
- Flares
- Plastic storage containers
- Needle and thread
- Pen and paper
- Garbage bags
- Regular household bleach (for disinfecting)

# DURING AND AFTER AN EMERGENCY

## DURING AN EMERGENCY



- Remain calm, but take immediate action.
- Follow emergency orders issued by authorities.
- Check on family and neighbors, especially infants, the elderly, and those with disabilities.

## AFTER AN EMERGENCY

- Contact interested parties to let them know that you are safe.
- Obey all curfews and emergency orders.
- DO NOT enter evacuated areas until local officials have issued an “All Clear.”
- Stay away from disaster areas. Do not sightsee!
- If driving, be aware of road and bridge washouts, and storm debris on roadways.
- Avoid all downed power lines. Assume all have live electricity.
- Report broken utility lines and damaged roadways and railways to appropriate authorities.
- When helping injured or trapped persons, do not try to move the seriously injured unless they are in immediate danger of further injury.

## RETURNING HOME AFTER A DISASTER

- Stay out of damaged buildings and return home only when authorities say it is safe.
- Beware of structural damage. Roofs and floors may be weakened and need repair. When entering a fire-damaged building, look for signs of heat or smoke.
- Turn off any outside gas lines at the meter or tank. Let the building air out to remove foul odors or escaping gas.
- Upon entering the building, use a battery-powered flashlight. Do not use an open flame as a source of light—some gas may still be trapped inside.
- When inspecting the building, wear heavy-soled rubber boots and gloves. Watch for electrical shorts and live wires before making certain the main power switch is off.
- Check the building foundation, chimney, and surrounding land for damage.
- Have electric, gas, and water connections checked before turning them back on.
- Clean up spilled medicines, bleaches, or gasoline or other flammable liquids immediately. Leave area immediately if you smell gas or chemical fumes.
- Take extra precautions to prevent fire. Lowered pressure in water mains may make firefighting extremely difficult.
- Contact your local disaster relief service, such as the American Red Cross or Salvation Army, if you need housing, food, or personal items that were destroyed.
- Take pictures of damages, keep records of all clean up and repair costs, and report to your insurance company.
- Do not throw away any damaged goods until an official inventory has been taken.



## FOOD AND WATER SAFETY

- Check for spoilage before using food from refrigerator or ice chest: “When in doubt, throw it out!”
- Frozen and refrigerated foods can also be unsafe. Thawed and refrigerated foods should be thrown out after four hours.
- Commercially canned food should be discarded if there is bulging or if it is open.
- Undamaged, commercially canned foods can be saved if you remove the labels and then disinfect the cans in a bleach solution. Use 1/4 cup of bleach in one gallon of water; re-label the cans including expiration date and type of food.
- Infants should be fed only pre-mixed canned baby formula.
- Throw out medicine or food that has had contact with floodwaters.
- Test drinking water for potability. Wells should be pumped out and water tested for drinking.
- Use your emergency supply or boil water before using until there is official word that the water is safe.
- If the public water system is declared unsafe by health officials, water for drinking and cooking should be boiled vigorously for 10 minutes.



## PREVENTING ILLNESS: SANITATION AND HYGIENE

- Always wash your hands with soap and water that has been boiled or disinfected before eating and after toilet use, cleanup activities or handling items contaminated by floodwater or sewage.
- Flood waters may contain fecal matter from sewage systems, agricultural and industrial waste and septic tanks. If you have open cuts or sores exposed to the floodwater, keep them as clean as possible by washing them with soap and disinfected or boiled water. Apply antibiotic ointment to reduce the risk of infection.
- Do not allow children to play in floodwater or with toys that are contaminated by floodwater.
- If floodwaters are covering your septic tank and leach field you should not use any flush toilets attached to the system.

## PREVENTING MOLD GROWTH

- Moisture that enters buildings from leaks or flooding accelerates mold growth. Molds can cause disease, trigger allergic reactions and continue to damage materials after the storm.
- Remove standing water from your home or office. Remove wet materials promptly and ventilate; use fans and dehumidifiers if possible.
- If mold growth has already occurred, it is best to have a professional remove it.
- Individuals with known mold allergies or asthma should never clean or remove mold.
- Be careful about mixing household cleaners and disinfectants, as combining certain types of products can produce toxic fumes and result in injury or death.

## **ADDITIONAL HOUSEHOLD CLEANUP**

- Walls, hard-surfaced floors and many other household surfaces should be cleaned with soap and water and disinfected with a solution of 1 cup of bleach to five gallons of water.
- Thoroughly disinfect surfaces that come in contact with food and children's play areas.
- Wash all linens and clothing in hot water or dry-clean.
- Items that cannot be washed or dry-cleaned, such as mattresses and upholstered furniture, must be air dried in the sun and sprayed thoroughly with a disinfectant.
- Steam-clean all carpeting.
- Replace fiberboard, insulation and disposable filters in your heating/cooling system.
- Wear rubber boots and waterproof gloves during clean-up.
- It can be difficult to throw away items in a home, particularly those with sentimental value. However, keeping certain items soaked by sewage or floodwaters may be unhealthy. Materials that cannot be thoroughly cleaned and dried within 24-48 hours should be discarded.

## **GARBAGE: STORAGE, COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL**

- As you start cleaning, you will likely produce a great deal of garbage. Local authorities will tell you where and when collection will occur. Garbage invites insects and rodents. Rodents, in particular, may be looking for food because the flood may have destroyed their homes and normal food source.
- Store any garbage in watertight, rodent/insect-proof containers with tight-fitting covers. Use plastic liners if available.
- Put garbage in a convenient location but not near your well.
- Heavy rains and flooding can lead to an increase in mosquitoes that may be infected with West Nile virus. To protect against mosquitoes, remain diligent in your personal mosquito protection efforts. Avoid being outdoors when mosquitoes are most active. For many species, this is during the dusk and dawn hours.
  - Wear clothing that covers most of your skin.
  - Repellents containing DEET (N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide), picaridin or OLE (oil of lemon eucalyptus) are options. Use strictly according to label instructions. Do not allow children to apply repellents and avoid applying repellents to the hands of young children.
  - Check around your home to rid the area of standing water.
  - Eliminate other breeding sites—remove old tires and turn over or remove empty plastic containers.

# THOSE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Individuals who have special needs often require more detailed planning before a disaster or emergency strikes. Consider taking the following actions now:

- Learn what to do in case of a power outage. Know how to connect and start a back-up power supply for essential medical equipment.
- Consider purchasing a medical alert system that will allow you to call for help if you are immobilized in an emergency. Because most alert systems require a phone line, consider owning a cell phone or pager, in case regular landlines are disrupted.
- If you use an electric wheelchair or scooter, keep a manual wheelchair for backup.
- Teach those who may need to assist you how to operate necessary equipment.
- Label and attach laminated instructions to your equipment.
- Store back-up equipment such as mobility, medical, etc., at a neighbor's home, school or your workplace.
- If you are vision impaired, deaf, or hard of hearing, and if you are unable to use the TV or radio, plan for someone to convey emergency information to you.
- If you use a personal care attendant, check to see if the employing agency has special provisions for emergency, such as providing services at another location if an evacuation is ordered.
- If you live in an apartment, ask management to identify and mark accessible exits and areas designated for emergency shelter or safe rooms. Ask about plans for alerting and evacuating those with sensory disabilities.
- Have a cell phone with an extra battery. Keep numbers you may need to call nearby if the 9-1-1 emergency number is overloaded.
- Learn about devices and other technology such as PDAs, text radio, and pagers to assist you in receiving emergency instructions and warning from local officials.

## CREATE A PERSONAL SUPPORT NETWORK

A personal support network can help you prepare for an emergency or disaster by helping you identify the resources you need and get them quickly. Network members can also assist you after a disaster happens.

Organize a network that includes your home, school, workplace, volunteer site, and any other places where you spend a lot of time. Members of your network can be roommates, relatives, neighbors, friends, and co-workers — they should be people who you trust and who can check to see if you need assistance. Network members should know your capabilities and needs, and they should be able to provide help within minutes.

You should include a minimum of three people in your network for each location where you spend a lot of time, because people work different shifts, take vacations, and may not always be available.

## **COMPLETE A PERSONAL ASSESSMENT**

Decide what you will be able to do for yourself and what assistance you may need before, during and after a disaster. This will be based on your environment after the disaster, your capabilities and your limitations.

Consider the following in your assessment:

- Personal care (bathing, dressing, grooming)
- Personal care equipment (shower chair, tub-transfer bench)
- Water service
- Adaptive feeding devices (special utensils)
- Electricity-dependent equipment (dialysis, electrical lifts)
- Disaster debris
- Transportation
- Building evacuation/exits
- Mobility aids/ramp access
- Service animals/pets supplies & licenses

**To help you complete your personal assessment, fill out the Special Needs Emergency Information forms on the following pages.**



**SPECIAL NEEDS EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

# Medical Information

Primary Physician \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Hospital Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Type of Health Insurance \_\_\_\_\_

Policy Number \_\_\_\_\_

Blood Type \_\_\_\_\_

Allergies and Sensitivities

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Specific Medical Conditions

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Physical Conditions

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Adaptive Equipment and Vendors' Phones

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Communication / Cognitive Difficulties

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Other

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## Medications & Dosages

**Medication**

**Dosage**

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# Location of Supplies and Medical Equipment

Use this list to help emergency responders determine the types of supplies and special equipment that you use, and where to find them quickly in an emergency.

*Location*

Glasses \_\_\_\_\_

Eating Utensils \_\_\_\_\_

Grooming Utensils \_\_\_\_\_

Dressing Devices \_\_\_\_\_

Writing Devices \_\_\_\_\_

Hearing Devices \_\_\_\_\_

Suction Equipment \_\_\_\_\_

Dialysis Equipment \_\_\_\_\_

Sanitary Supplies \_\_\_\_\_

Urinary Supplies \_\_\_\_\_

Ostomy Supplies \_\_\_\_\_

Oxygen \_\_\_\_\_

Flow Rate \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Wheelchair \_\_\_\_\_

Wheelchair Repair Kit \_\_\_\_\_

Motorized / Manual \_\_\_\_\_

Walker \_\_\_\_\_

Crutches \_\_\_\_\_

Cane (s) \_\_\_\_\_

Dentures \_\_\_\_\_

Monitors \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Service Animal & Pet Supplies**

Food \_\_\_\_\_

Extra Water \_\_\_\_\_

Leash / Harness \_\_\_\_\_

Collar \_\_\_\_\_

ID Tags \_\_\_\_\_

Medications \_\_\_\_\_

Vaccinations and Medical Records \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# KEEPING YOUR PETS SAFE

Should a disaster occur or appear imminent, and if emergency officials recommend that you stay in your home, it is crucial that you keep your pets with you. Always bring them inside at the first sign of danger. Your pets may become stressed during their in-house confinement, so consider crating them for safety, comfort, and to make evacuation easier.



Identification such as collars, tags, microchips and tattoos will increase the chances of your pet's safe return home should they become separated from you.

On the carrier and harness, write your pet's name, your name and contact information with a permanent marker. Include a picture of your pet. Keep an extra harness for safety, and a crate, cage or carrier for each pet.

Keep a copy of your pet's medical records, feeding and medication requirements, and a recent photo of your family with your pet in a zip-lock bag.

Do not evacuate and leave your pets behind in a crate, because they will be rendered helpless unless you return or until someone else reaches them. Post stickers on your front and back doors that say "PETS INSIDE." Write number of and types of pets in your home on each sticker. Should you evacuate with your pets, if time allows, write, "EVACUATED" across the stickers.

Talk to neighbors, friends and relatives about designating someone to care for pets when emergencies occur. Ensure that whoever cares for your pets knows your evacuation plan and has an extra set of keys. If you have multiple pets, consider making arrangements with several friends and build an emergency contact list.

Call or visit pet-friendly hotels, veterinary hospitals, boarding kennels and animal shelters outside your area.

Know the phone numbers of your local animal control agency, humane society, local Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) and local emergency veterinary hospital.

## EMERGENCY SUPPLIES FOR PETS

Emergency supplies for pets should be kept easily accessible, clearly labeled, easy to carry, and water-resistant. Family and friends should know where they are kept. Items to consider:

- Extra harness; crate, cage or carrier for each pet — post your pet’s behavioral or medical issues on the carrier and harness.
- Seven (7) days’ worth of pet food in a plastic, airtight container — rotate food every two months.
- Seven (7) days’ worth of drinking water for each pet (specific amount based on individual pets’ needs) in a cool, dark place and replace every two months.
- Roll of paper towels, liquid dish soap, hand sanitizer, household bleach, a week’s worth of litter, cage liner and/or bedding for your pet.
- Garbage bags (for cleanup).

Ask your veterinarian for recommendations about what to include in your pet’s first aid kit.

## ADDITIONAL SUPPLIES

- Dogs: long leash, blanket, yard stake, toys, chew toys, newspaper
- Cats: pillowcase or “EvackSack,” harness, leash, blanket, toys, small litter pans
- Birds: Catch net, heavy towel, cuttlebone, blanket or sheet to cover cage, newspaper
- Small animals: salt lick, water bottle, small hide-box or cardboard tube (for cage)
- Reptiles: pillowcase or “EvackSack,” warming device (hot water bottle, heating pad), soaking dish



# HOMELAND SECURITY

## SAFEGUARD NEW YORK

Safeguard New York is a vital outreach program of the New York State Office of Counter Terrorism. It is designed to promote the early recognition and reporting of potential terrorist activity to the New York State Terrorism Tips Hotline at:

**1-866-SAFE-NYS**  
**(1-866-723-3697)**

The continued vigilance of all citizens of New York State – from first responders, to business owners and employees, to members of community organizations and visitors to our state – is essential.

**“IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING!”**

Terrorist groups have been known to:

- Establish cells and operations within the United States.
- Be diverse and encompass members of different cultures.
- Engage in criminal entrepreneurship for funding purposes.
- Counterfeit money for funding purposes (\$100 bills and \$50 bills are the most common).
- Smuggle and traffic drugs through various means including personal vehicles, tractor trailers, motorcycles, small private planes, small boats, snowmobiles and sleds.
- Engage in illegal liquor and cigarette trade.
- Illegally purchase and trade weapons.
- Utilize the internet to promote their mission, network with those people who believe in their cause, and gain new members.

## **EIGHT SIGNS OF TERRORISM**

- **Surveillance:** Recording or monitoring activities, taking pictures, making drawings.
- **Suspicious questioning:** Attempts to gain information about operations, staffing, and security.
- **Tests of security:** Any attempts to measure reaction times to entering restricted areas.
- **Funding:** Suspicious transactions involving large cash payments, deposits, withdrawals, or transfers of money; bulk cash smuggling; suspected financial fraud; sale of counterfeit goods; or misleading charities.
- **Acquiring supplies:** Obtaining explosives, weapons, uniforms, badges, credentials, etc.
- **Suspicious persons out of place:** This may include people who are in places they should not be, as well as people who do not fit in to the daily routine of your neighborhood or community.
- **Dry or trial run:** Putting people into position and moving them around without actually committing a terrorist act.
- **Deploying assets:** People and supplies getting into position to commit the act.

## **HELP PREVENT TERRORISM**

Be alert as you go about your daily business — this will help you to learn the normal routines of your neighborhood, community and workplace. Understanding these routines will help you spot anything out of place.

Be aware of what is going on around you. Whether traveling, at work or at home, be on the lookout for suspicious activities. Learn to spot suspicious mail, packages, luggage abandoned in a crowded place like an office building, an airport, a school, or a shopping center. If you hear or know of someone who has bragged or talked about plans to harm citizens in violent attacks or who claims membership in a terrorist organization, take them seriously and report it to law enforcement immediately.

## **DESCRIBING SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOR**

WHO did you observe?

WHAT did you see? Be specific.

WHERE did you see it?

WHEN did you see it?

WHY is it suspicious?

## **IF YOU OBSERVE SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY:**

DO NOT take direct action.

DO NOT confront the individual.

DO NOT reveal your suspicions.

DO record as many details as possible.

DO notify appropriate authorities as soon as possible

# CYBER SECURITY

## TERMS TO KNOW



**Vulnerability:** Each year, the volume of software security vulnerabilities discovered increases, and hacking tools available to exploit vulnerabilities become more readily available and easier to use. Exploitation of vulnerabilities may occur by opening documents, viewing an email that contains malicious code, or visiting a website hosting malicious content. Vulnerabilities can lead to your computer and the information that resides on it being compromised. Keep software and hardware updated to reduce vulnerability risks.

**Patch:** Computer software update that fixes problems in the software, adds functionality, or most importantly, fixes vulnerabilities that impact the security of the software and your computer.

**Malware** (malicious software): Unauthorized, stealthy software downloaded to a computer or computer device such as keylogger (see below), spyware, screen capture, trojan horse, or backdoor that remotely controls the computer or takes other undesired actions.

**Keylogger:** Software that captures every stroke on a keyboard. This can be quietly downloaded from a malicious application or website onto a vulnerable computer or computer device and the data can be remotely sent back to the attacker.

**Malvertising** (malicious advertising): An attack method used by cyber criminals through which fake malicious ads are delivered (often via advertising networks) to well-known websites as a way to reach millions of users at once on websites they normally trust. After visiting the trusted website, malvertising attacks can quietly download malicious code directly onto a user's vulnerable computer while the victim views the website.

**Phishing:** A scam which attempts to entice email recipients into clicking on a link that takes them to a bogus website. The website may prompt the recipient to provide personal information such as social security number, bank account number or credit card number, and/or it may download malicious software onto the recipient's computer. Both the link and website may appear authentic; however, they are not legitimate.

**Botnet:** Derived from “robot” and “networks,” these are networks of compromised computers, controlled by malicious individuals, including organized crime.

**Data Breach:** Generally refers to instances where information has been subject to unauthorized access, often where the information is lost, stolen or hacked into. Examples of data that should be protected include customer or employee information (names, addresses, Social Security numbers, credit card numbers, passwords and other identity-related information); intellectual property; financial information; and individual health records.

**Mobile (Portable) Devices:** Mobile communication devices (e.g., BlackBerrys, iPhones, smart phones) have become indispensable tools for today's highly mobile society. Small and relatively inexpensive, these multifunction devices can be used not only for voice calls but also text messages, email, Internet access along with stand-alone applications similar to those performed on a desktop computer.

**Identity Theft:** A crime in which personal information such as name, social security number, date of birth, and address is stolen and may be used by someone to assume another identity, often for the purpose of financial gain. Methods a criminal may use to steal data over the Internet include hacking or using spam and phishing. Identity theft is not just a risk for those who use the Internet—criminals can obtain information by sorting through garbage, eavesdropping, stealing wallets, picking up receipts at restaurants, and other means.

**Encryption:** With major data breaches being reported frequently, organizations are now placing increased emphasis on security of personal, private and sensitive information. One method of increasing security is through data encryption. Encryption is the process of scrambling a message or data so that only the sender and the intended recipient can read it. Militaries, businesses, and governments use it in a variety of ways.



## CYBER SECURITY: PREPARE AND PROTECT

### Install Proper Security Measures

Ensure that any computer used to connect to the Internet has anti-virus, anti-spyware, and anti-adware software installed and a firewall to protect it. Make sure to update your security software regularly.



### Use and Apply Updates and Patches

- Make sure your computer operating system and software applications have the latest updates installed and that the auto-update feature is enabled, if available.
- Check vendor and manufacturer websites for device driver updates, and apply patches as needed.
- Patching will close holes that hackers could exploit.

### Use Strong Passwords

- Always change default passwords that come with your computer.
- Use hard-to-guess passwords with at least eight characters using numbers, special characters, and upper and lower case letters.
- Don't use the same passwords for websites that you use for logging onto your computer. Establish different passwords for each website.
- Never share your login and/or password.

### Think Before You Click

- Think before you click on links or images in an email, instant message, or on websites.
- Be cautious when you receive attachments from unknown sources.
- Even if you know and trust the sender of the email, instant message, website, or social networking page, it is prudent to use caution when navigating web pages and clicking on links or images.

### Secure Your Online Transactions

When accessing any type of e-commerce or banking sites using your log-on credentials (user id and password), always look for the "lock" icon on the browser's status bar and be sure "https" appears in the website's address bar—the "s" stands for "secure."

### Dispose of Information Properly

Before discarding your computer or portable storage devices, ensure that the data contained on the device has been "overwritten" or "wiped." Overwriting software or hardware products are available to overwrite read/writable media (including your hard drive). Be aware that printers, copiers and scanners increasingly come with hard drives capable of storing large volumes of information—remove or wipe these hard drives before disposal.

## Secure Your Wireless Network

Wireless networks are not as secure as the traditional "wired" networks, but you can minimize the risk on your wireless network by:

- Enabling encryption
- Changing the default password
- Changing the Service Set Identifier (SSID) name (which is the name of your network)
- Turning off SSID broadcasting
- Using the MAC filtering feature, which allows you to designate and restrict which computers can connect to your wireless network.

## Avoid Phishing Scams

Phishing is a form of identity theft where the intent is to steal your personal data, such as credit card numbers, passwords, account data, or other information. Phishing scams typically increase during and after an emergency or disaster. Do not reply to emails that ask you to "verify your information" or to "confirm your user-id and password."

## Protect Your Portable Devices

Ensure that portable devices are secured to protect both the device and the information contained on the device. Always establish a password on all devices. Consider using encryption for sensitive data and data transmissions whenever possible.

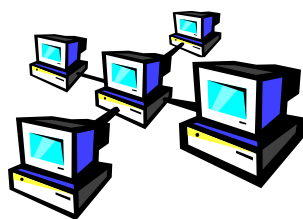


## Wireless Hot Spots

Be cautious when using wireless hotspots offered in public areas such as a café, airport, hotel, train station, etc. Confidential and valuable data can be intercepted by hackers while being transmitted over wireless networks unless appropriate encryption is employed.

Most wireless networks extend out far past the walls of the building where they are located. Anyone in the parking lot or on a nearby street may be able to access the wireless network. In order to prevent unauthorized access, wireless networks need to be configured to employ an appropriate encryption methodology.

## Social Networking Sites



The volume and accessibility of personal information available on social networking sites have attracted malicious people who seek to exploit this information. The same technologies that invite user participation also make the sites easier to infect with malware that can shut down an organization's networks, or keystroke loggers that can steal credentials.

Common social networking risks such as spear phishing, social engineering, spoofing, and web application attacks attempt to steal a person's identity. Such attacks are often successful due to the assumption of being in a trusting environment social networks create.

## CYBER SECURITY: BACKING UP FILES

Loss of data from your computer can be devastating, especially if the information cannot be recovered or reproduced. Whether data is lost due to a physical disaster, virus, theft, or accidental deletion, the recovery of the data cannot be accomplished unless you have a recovery plan in place.



The need to back-up important data to ensure its availability in the event of loss or theft cannot be overstated. Back-up and recovery plans are essential for home users. Back-up your important files on a weekly basis (at a minimum) and keep backed-up data in a safe and fireproof location.

**Use your computer's back-up tools:** Most operating systems now provide back-up software designed to make the process easier.

**Back-up data at regular intervals:** Evaluate the importance of your data and the frequency of change in the data to determine the necessary frequency with which the data should be backed-up.

**Verify data has been backed-up:** Back-up media needs to be reviewed periodically to determine if all of the data has been backed-up accurately. Use the "back-up log" provided by most back-up applications. Generate a "back-up report" that can quickly identify problems or skipped files. Be sure to review these logs periodically.

**Store back-up media in a secure location:** Two (2) back-ups be maintained: one on-site and one off-site. Back-up media should be stored in a physically secure location.

**Test data restoration:** Periodically test your ability to restore back-up data in the event that loss occurs.

**Back-up media:** CDs , DVDs, USB flash drives and external hard drives are effective back-up devices. Be sure to keep your back-up data in a secure place.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- NYS Office of Cyber Security (OSC): [www.cscic.state.ny.us](http://www.cscic.state.ny.us)
- OSC newsletters: <http://www.cscic.state.ny.us/cscorner/news/index.cfm>
- U.S. Computer Emergency Readiness Team (US-CERT): <http://www.us-cert.gov/nav/nt01>
  - Information for non-technical users
- OnGuardOnline.gov: <http://www.onguardonline.gov/default.aspx>
  - Provides tips from the federal government and the technology industry
- Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3): [www.ic3.gov](http://www.ic3.gov)
- Federal Trade Commission (FTC) – Identity Theft: [www.ftc.gov/idtheft](http://www.ftc.gov/idtheft)
- Spam, including phishing emails, can be forwarded to: [spam@uce.gov](mailto:spam@uce.gov)
- Phishing emails can also be reported to: [www.antiphishing.org/report\\_phishing.html](http://www.antiphishing.org/report_phishing.html)

# BUSINESS PREPAREDNESS



## ASSESS BUSINESS OPERATIONS

- Carefully assess how your company functions, both internally and externally, to determine which staff, materials, procedures and equipment are absolutely necessary to keep the business operating.
- Review your business process flow chart if one exists.
- Identify operations that are critical to survival and recovery.
- Include emergency payroll, expedited financial decision-making and accounting systems to track and document costs.
- Establish procedures for succession of management. Include at least one person who is not at the company headquarters, if applicable.
- Plan for payroll continuity.

## IDENTIFY PARTNERS, RESOURCES

- Identify suppliers, shippers, resources and other businesses with whom you interact with daily.
- Develop professional relationships with more than one company to use in case your primary contractor cannot service your needs. A disaster that shuts down a key supplier can be devastating to your business.
- Create a contact list for critical business contractors and others you plan to use in an emergency. Keep this list with other important documents on file, in your emergency supply kit and at an off-site location.

## PLAN FOR BUSINESS INACCESSIBILITY

- Plan what you will do if your building, plant or store is not accessible. This type of planning is often referred to as a continuity of operations plan, or COOP, and includes all facets of your business.
- Consider if you can run the business from a different location or from home.
- Develop relationships with other companies to use their facilities in case a disaster makes your location unusable.

## INVOLVE STAFF

- Decide who should participate in creating your emergency plan.
- Include co-workers from all levels in planning and as active members of the emergency management team.
- Consider a broad cross-section of people from your organization; focus on those with expertise vital to daily business functions.
- Include people with technical skills as well as managers and executives.

## **DEFINE PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Define crisis management procedures and individual responsibilities.
- Make sure those involved know what they are supposed to do.
- Train others in case backup is needed.

## **COORDINATE WITH OTHERS**

- Meet with other businesses in your building or industrial complex.
- Talk with first responders, emergency managers, community organizations and utility providers.
- Plan with suppliers, shippers and others with whom you do business.
- Share your plans and encourage other businesses to set in motion their own continuity planning and offer to help others.

## **REVIEW EMERGENCY PLANS ANNUALLY**

- Just as your business changes over time, so do your preparedness needs. When you hire new employees or when there are changes in how your company functions, you should update your plans and inform your people.



# **MULTI-HAZARD SAFETY TIPS**

# EARTHQUAKE

## TERMS TO KNOW

**Aftershock:** One of many earthquakes that often occur during the days to months after some larger earthquake has occurred.

**Epicenter:** The location directly above the focus or place where an earthquake originates.

**Richter Magnitude Scale:** Used to express the total amount of energy released by an earthquake. Values are typically between 1 and 9 — each increase of 1 represents a 32-fold increase in released energy.



## BE PREPARED!

- Fasten shelves, bookcases, and other tall furniture securely to wall studs. Brace or anchor high or top-heavy objects. Secure items such as televisions and computers.
- Install strong latches or bolts on cabinet doors to prevent contents from flying out during the quake.
- Move large or heavy objects and fragile items to lower shelves where they are less likely to fall or break, and store breakable items such as bottled foods, glass, and china in low, closed cabinets with latches.
- Store weed killers, pesticides, and flammable products securely in closed cabinets with latches and on bottom shelves.
- Hang heavy items such as pictures and mirrors away from beds, couches, and anywhere people sit.
- Brace overhead light fixtures.
- Secure water heaters and gas appliances by strapping them to the wall studs and bolting them to the floor.
- Install flexible pipe fittings to avoid gas or water leaks.
- Repair any deep cracks in ceilings or foundations.
- Check to see if your house is bolted to its foundation.
- Consider having your building evaluated by a professional structural design engineer who can give you advice on how to reduce potential damage.
- Earthquakes are not covered under standard homeowners' insurance policies. Consider purchasing earthquake insurance.

## **DURING THE QUAKE**

**Duck, Cover, and Hold:** Duck or drop down to the floor. Take cover under a desk, table, or other sturdy furniture, or seek cover against an interior wall and protect your head with your arms. If you are taking cover beneath sturdy furniture, hold onto it until the ground stops shaking.

**Stay Inside!** The most dangerous thing to do during the shaking of an earthquake is to try to leave the building because objects such as bricks, glass and other building materials are likely to be falling from the sides of a building. Stay away from windows, mirrors, skylights, and furniture that could fall on you.

**If you are in a crowded building,** do not rush for the exit – others may have the same idea. Seek shelter beneath a stable piece of furniture instead. If you are in a high-rise building, stay away from windows and outside walls. Remain on the same floor. Do not use elevators.

**If you are outdoors,** move into the open, away from buildings, trees, signs, streetlights, and utility wires. Once in the open, stay there until shaking stops.

**If you are in a moving vehicle,** move to a clear area away from buildings, trees, overpasses, or utility wires. Avoid bridges or ramps that might have been damaged by the quake. Stop quickly and stay in the vehicle. Once shaking has stopped, proceed with caution.

**Expect aftershocks,** which often follow earthquakes and may be as strong as or even stronger than the initial quake.



# FIRE



## TERMS TO KNOW

**Burning Ban:** A declared ban on open air burning within a specified area, usually due to sustained high fire danger.

## WILDFIRE TERMS

**Crawling Fire:** Fire that spreads via low-level vegetation, e.g. bushes.

**Crown Fire:** Fire that "crowns" (spreads to the top branches of trees) can spread at an incredible pace through the top of a forest.

**Jumping Fire:** Burning branches and leaves carried by wind sometimes start distant fires; the fire can "jump" over a road, river, or even a firebreak.

## BE PREPARED!

- Buy and carefully maintain a quality smoke detector.
- Learn what causes fire and inspect your home to eliminate or control fire hazards.
- Install at least 5-pound A-B-C type fire extinguishers in the home and teach family members how to use them.
- Establish a well-planned escape route with your family. Hold practice fire drills until family members are thoroughly familiar with plan.
- If you have an older home, have the wiring checked by a qualified electrician to make sure it meets current building codes.
- Have your chimney and fireplace cleaned and inspected yearly for creosote build-up, cracks, crumbling bricks or mortar and any obstructions.
- Keep storage areas clean and tidy.
- Keep curtains, towels, and potholders away from hot surfaces.
- Store solvents and flammable cleaners away from heat sources. Never keep gasoline in the house.
- Inspect extension cords for frayed or exposed wires or loose plugs.
- Keep an eye on your cooking and stay in the kitchen.
- Wear short or close-fitting sleeves when cooking.

## **DURING A FIRE EMERGENCY**

### **Home or High-Rise Fire**

- Roll out of bed and get low—one breath of smoke or hot gases can kill.
- Before you open the door, feel it by using the back of your hand. If the door is hot or warm, do not open the door. If the door is cool, open it just a little to check the hallway. If you see smoke, do not leave. If there is no smoke in the hallway, leave and close the door. Go directly to the stairs to leave.
- Once outside, go to your family meeting place. Check to see if everyone is safe. Once you're out, stay out!
- Call 911 or the appropriate emergency contact from a neighbor's house, cellular phone, or other safe location.
- If you cannot escape:
  - Use wet towels or tape to seal the door and any room supply vent.
  - If you have a balcony and there is no fire below it, go out. If there is fire below, go to the window. Do not open the window, but stay near the window. If there is no fire below, go to the window and open it. Stay near the open window.
  - Hang a blanket or a towel out of the window to let people know that you are there and need help.
  - Be calm and wait for someone to rescue you.

### **Cooking Fire**

- Slide a pan lid over flames to smother a grease or oil fire, then turn off the heat and leave the lid in place until the pan cools. Never carry the pan outside.
- Extinguish other food fires with baking soda. Never use water or flour on cooking fires.
- Keep the oven door shut and turn off the heat to smother an oven or broiler fire.

## **HOME HEATING SAFETY**

Heating equipment is among the leading causes of home fires nationally and in New York State. Heating related fires are often the result of a lack of maintenance or simple acts of carelessness. Following the guidelines below will help to ensure that you reduce the possibility of experiencing a heating related fire.

To prevent fires, keep furnishings and other combustibles 36 inches from all heating sources. A heating source too close to combustibles is the leading cause of fires due to home heating. Store matches and other fire starting appliances out of the reach of children. Fires started by children often have tragic results.

Proper maintenance and an annual inspection of heat pumps, furnaces, space heaters, wood and coal stoves, fireplaces, chimneys and chimney connections by qualified specialists can prevent fires and save lives.

- Review the owner's manual for operating and safety features.
- Have heating systems inspected and serviced at least once a year.

- Follow manufacturer's instructions for installation, venting, fueling, maintenance and repair.
- Make sure chimneys and vents are checked for blockages, corrosion and loose connections.
- Open flues completely when fireplaces are in use.
- Use proper fuel in space heaters.
- Never burn charcoal or barbecue grill inside a home or enclosed space.
- Never use portable fuel-burning camping equipment inside a home, garage, vehicle, or tent.
- Never leave a car, mower, or other such item running in an attached garage, even with the garage door open.
- Never operate unvented fuel-burning appliances in any room where people are sleeping.
- Never use the kitchen range for heating a house.
- Never run a gas powered generator in a garage, basement, or near any overhang on the home; keep it at a distance.

**Space Heaters:** When using portable heaters, do not place them where it is possible for small children or pets to fall against them or to receive a contact burn. Avoid the use of extension cords with electric heaters. Always turn off space heaters before leaving the room or going to bed.

**Fuel Burning Appliances:** When taking a heater out of storage in the fall, install batteries and inspect the shut-off mechanism and wick for proper operation. Fill the tank with fresh fuel. Let the heater cool down before refueling. Adding fuel to a hot heater can start a dangerous fire.

**Wood Burning Appliances and Fireplaces:** Do not burn trash in the wood stove or fireplace. Burn only well-seasoned hardwoods. Be sure the fire you build fits your fireplace or stove, don't overload it. Be sure wood stoves are installed at least 36 inches away from the wall. Keep combustible materials well away from the fireplace, stove and chimney. Keep the area around them clean. Always use a fireplace screen to prevent sparks from leaving the fireplace and starting a fire. Never leave a fire unattended.

**Chimneys:** Creosote accumulation is the leading cause of chimney fires. A chimney that is dirty, blocked or is in disrepair can inhibit proper venting of smoke up the flue and can also cause a chimney fire. Nearly all residential fires originating in the chimney are preventable. An annual chimney inspection by a qualified chimney sweep can prevent fire or carbon monoxide poisoning.

**Ashes:** Keep wood stoves and fireplaces free of excess ash buildup. Excessive ash buildup prevents good circulation of air needed for combustion. When removing ashes, use a metal container with a tight-fitting cover. Always place ashes in an outside location away from structures. Ashes that seem cool may contain a smoldering charcoal that can start a fire.

## SMOKE ALARMS

**FACT:** Most fatal fires occur at home while people are sleeping – between midnight and 8 a.m.

**FACT:** Toxic gases and heat (over 1000° F) can rise and travel far ahead of the actual flames. When your smoke alarm sounds, you may have less than 2 1/2 minutes to get out.

**FACT:** More than one-third of smoke alarms in the home are inoperable because of dead or missing batteries. Nearly one-half of U.S. fire deaths occur in homes with no smoke alarms at all. Smoke alarms can only save your life if they're present and functional.

**FACT:** Home fires outnumber other building fires by more than three to one. Most people feel safer from fire in their homes than in public buildings. However, public buildings have strict safety regulations and are better protected than homes.

**FACT:** Without an escape plan you have practiced, you may not make it. If you don't have a smoke alarm, you risk never waking up.

- Place smoke alarms on every level of your home, outside each sleeping area, and in every bedroom.
- Alarms should never be disconnected.
- Smoke alarm batteries should never be removed for other uses.
- Test your smoke alarm at least once a month—push the test button or blow smoke into the detector.
- Clean your alarm at a minimum of once a year—vacuum out dust and any cobwebs that have accumulated.
- Replace the battery twice a year (e.g., when you change your clocks in the spring and fall).
- Replace your smoke alarm after ten years.

If you smell smoke or the smoke detector goes off, activate the nearest pull-station and call the fire department at once. Don't waste time dressing or looking for valuables or pets—as much as they may mean to you, your life is more important. NEVER use an elevator during a fire.

## **CARBON MONOXIDE: THE SILENT KILLER**

You can't see it, smell it, or taste it, but carbon monoxide (CO) is a poisonous gas that can kill you if breathed in. It is called the "silent killer" because it can take your life without warning. Most people that die in home fires die at night while asleep—they don't wake up because CO puts them in a deeper sleep and they are unable to respond and escape.

When air containing CO is inhaled, it displaces oxygen in the bloodstream and reduces the blood's ability to carry oxygen to vital organs such as the heart and brain. In addition to flu-like symptoms, it can cause vomiting, loss of consciousness, brain damage and death. Unborn babies, infants, senior citizens, and people with heart and breathing problems are at especially high risk.

The symptoms of CO poisoning are flu-like, including headache, fatigue, nausea, dizziness, and confusion. Prolonged exposure can result in vomiting, blackouts, and, eventually, brain damage and death. The amount of CO inhaled and how long you are exposed to it determines the effect.

### **Where does CO come from?**

CO is a product of incomplete combustion. Any fuel-burning device has the potential to produce dangerous levels of CO gas. Examples of common devices that may emit CO include fuel-fired furnaces (not electric); gas water heaters; fireplaces and wood stoves; gas stoves; non-electric space heaters; gas dryers; charcoal grills; lawnmowers, snow blowers, etc.; automobiles; and gas powered generators.

### **What can be done to prevent CO poisoning?**

Since carbon monoxide is colorless, odorless, and tasteless, the best way to alert your family is to install a carbon monoxide detector/alarm to warn of the gas's build-up.

### **Where should CO alarms be installed?**

CO is almost identical in weight to normal air and thus mixes freely with air. For this reason, alarms may be installed at any level in a room. If the alarm is being ceiling mounted, it should be installed away from existing smoke alarms in order to be able to distinguish between the CO alarm and the smoke alarm in an emergency. Every home should be equipped with at least one CO alarm near the sleeping area. For maximum protection, additional alarms should be located on each level of your home.

### **What should I do if the CO alarm sounds?**

Stay calm. Most situations resulting in activation of a CO alarm are not life threatening and do not require calling the fire department.

**How do I determine whether someone has CO poisoning?**

Ask everyone in the house: “Do you feel ill? Do you have flu-like symptoms of headache, nausea, or dizziness?” If the answer to these questions by anyone in the house is “yes,” evacuate the house and have someone call the fire department. Failure to get out immediately may result in prolonged exposure, worsening effects from the CO.

***The best initial treatment for CO exposure is fresh air.***

If the answer to the questions above by everyone is “no,” the likelihood of a serious exposure is much less and you may not need to call the fire department. Instead, turn off all fuel-burning devices, ventilate the area, and attempt resetting the alarm. If the alarm will not reset or resounds, call a qualified technician to inspect and service or repair your fuel-burning device.

If at any time during this process someone begins to feel ill with the symptoms described above, evacuate everyone from the building to a safe location and call the fire department.

# FLOOD

## TERMS TO KNOW

**Flood or Flash Flood Watch:** Indicates that flooding or flash flooding will occur within a few hours of heavy rainfall, a dam or levee failure, or water is being released from an ice jam.

**Flood or Flash Flood Warning:** Inundation of a normally dry area near a stream or other watercourse, or unusually severe ponding of water has been reported or is imminent.



## BE PREPARED!

- Learn the safest route from your home or business to high, safe ground should you have to leave in a hurry.
- Find out how many feet your property is above and below possible flood levels. When predicted flood levels are broadcast, you can determine if you may be flooded.
- Have emergency waterproofing supplies on hand, including sandbags, plywood, plastic sheeting, and lumber.
- Move essential items and furniture to the upper floors of the house. Disconnect electrical appliances that cannot be moved. Do not touch them if you are wet or standing in water.
- If you are told to shut off water, gas, or electrical services before leaving your home, do so.
- Secure your home: lock all doors and windows.
- Leave early to avoid being marooned on flooded roads. Follow recommended routes. Do not sightsee. As you travel, monitor local radio broadcasts for the latest information.
- Watch for washed-out roads, earthslides, broken water or sewer mains, loose or downed electrical wires, and falling or fallen objects.
- Watch for areas where rivers or streams may suddenly rise and flood, such as highway dips, bridges, and low areas.
- Do not attempt to drive over a flooded road. Turn around and go another way. Water moving at two miles per hour can sweep cars off a road or bridge.
- If you are in your car and water begins to rise rapidly around you, abandon the vehicle immediately.

# HEAT



## TERMS TO KNOW

**Heat Wave:** More than 48 hours of high heat (90 degrees Fahrenheit or higher) and high humidity (80% relative humidity or higher) are expected.

**Heat Index:** A number in degrees Fahrenheit that tells how hot it feels when relative humidity is added to actual air temperature. Exposure to full sunshine can increase heat index by 15 degrees.

## HEAT HEALTH HAZARDS

**Heat Stroke:** Also known as sunstroke - can be life threatening. Body temperature can rise and cause brain damage; death may result if not cooled quickly. Signals include hot, red, and dry skin; changes in consciousness; rapid, weak pulse, and shallow breathing. Relief for lowering body temperature can be with a cold bath or sponge.

**Heat Exhaustion:** Less dangerous than heat stroke, heat exhaustion usually occurs when people exercise too heavily or work in warm, humid places where body fluids are lost. Signals include cool, moist, pale or flushed skin; heavy sweating; headache; nausea or vomiting; dizziness and exhaustion. If symptoms occur, get the victim out of sun, and apply cool, wet cloths.

**Sunburn:** Sunburn slows the skin's ability to cool itself. Signals include redness and pain; in severe cases, swelling of skin, blisters, fever, and headaches can occur. Ointments can be a relief for pain in mild cases. A physician should see serious cases.

**Heat Cramps:** Muscular pains and spasms caused by heavy exertion. Loss of water and salt from sweating causes cramping. Signals are abdominal and leg muscle pain. Relief can be firm pressure on cramping muscles, or gentle massages to relieve cramping.

## PEOPLE WHO SHOULD BE AWARE

- Elderly persons and small children are mostly affected.
- Persons with weight or alcohol problems are very susceptible to heat reactions.
- Persons on certain medications or drugs.

## BE PREPARED!

- Slow down on strenuous activity and exercise, especially during the sun's peak hours – 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Exercise should be done in the early morning between 4-7 a.m.
- Eat less protein and more fruits and vegetables. Protein produces and increases metabolic heat, which causes water loss. Eat small meals, but eat more often. Do not eat salty foods.
- Drink at least 2-4 glasses of water per hour during extreme heat, even if you do not feel thirsty. Avoid beverages containing alcohol or caffeine.



- If possible, stay out of the sun and stay in air conditioning. The sun heats the inner core of your body, resulting in dehydration. If air-conditioning is not available, stay on the lowest floor, out of the sunshine, or go to a public building with air conditioning.
- If you must go outdoors, wear sunscreen with a high sun protector factor rating (at least SPF 15) and a hat to protect your face and head. When outdoors, wear loose-fitting, lightweight and light-colored clothing. Cover as much skin as possible to avoid sunburn and over-warming effects of sunlight on your body.
- Do not leave children, pets or those who require special care in a parked car or vehicle during periods of intense summer heat. Temperatures inside a closed vehicle can reach over 140 degrees Fahrenheit quickly. Exposure to such high temperatures can kill within a matter of minutes.
- Make an effort to check on your neighbors during a heat wave, especially if they are elderly, have young children or have special needs.
- Make sure there is enough food and water for pets.

## **ENERGY CONSERVATION**

- Power outages are more likely to occur during warm weather, when utility usage is at its peak.
- To avoid putting a strain on the power grid, conserve energy to help prevent power disruptions.
- Set your air conditioner thermostat no lower than 78 degrees.
- Only use the air conditioner when you are home.
- Turn non-essential appliances off. Only use appliances that have heavy electrical loads early in the morning or very late at night.

# HURRICANE

## TERMS TO KNOW

**Hurricane Watch:** Hurricane conditions MAY threaten an area within 48 hours. When a Hurricane Watch is issued, listen for further advisories and be prepared to act promptly.

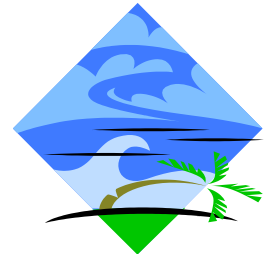
**Hurricane Warning:** Hurricane conditions are expected in a specified area in 36 hours or less. Hurricane conditions include winds of or exceeding 74 miles an hour (64 knots) and/or dangerously high tides and waves. When a Hurricane Warning is issued, actions for protection of life and property should begin immediately.

**Flash Flood Watches and Warnings:** Flash Flood Watch means a flash flood is possible in the area; stay alert. Flash Flood Warning means a flash flood is imminent; take immediate action.

**Tornadoes:** Spawned by hurricanes and sometimes produce severe damage and casualties. If a tornado is reported in your area, a warning will be issued.

## BE PREPARED!

- Know the hurricane risks in your area. Learn the storm surge history and elevation of your area.
- Listen for weather updates and stay informed.
- Learn safe routes inland and official shelter locations. Plan a flood-free evacuation route and know where to go.
- Obtain and store materials, such as plywood, necessary to secure your home properly.
- Clear loose and clogged rain gutters and downspouts.
- Keep trees and shrubbery trimmed of dead wood.
- Clear your yard of all loose objects.
- Review your insurance policy.
- Moor your boat securely and determine where to move your boat in an emergency.
- If a hurricane is forecast to impact your area, shutter, board, or tape all windows.
- If ordered to evacuate, comply immediately!



# LANDSLIDE



## WARNING SIGNS

- Springs, seeps, or saturated ground in areas that have not typically been wet before.
- New cracks or unusual bulges in the ground, street pavements or sidewalks.
- Soil sidewalks, stairs moving or pulling away from foundations.
- Ancillary structures such as decks and patios tilting and/or moving relative to the main house.
- Tilting or cracking of concrete floors and foundations.
- Broken water lines and other underground utilities.
- Offset telephone poles, trees, retaining walls or fences.
- Sunken or down-dropped roadbeds.
- Rapid increase in creek water levels, possibly accompanied by increased turbidity (soil content).
- Sudden decrease in creek water levels when rain is still falling or has recently stopped.
- Sticking doors and windows, and visible open spaces indicating jambs and frames out of plumb.
- Collapsed pavement, mud, fallen rocks, and other indications of possible debris flow can be seen when driving (embankments along roadsides are particularly susceptible to landslides)

## BE PREPARED!

- If you have concerns about landslides on your property, have a ground assessment conducted.
- Contact local officials, state geological surveys or departments of natural resources, and university departments of geology. Ask for information on landslides in your area and request a professional referral for a detailed site analysis of your property and corrective measures you can take.
- Do not build near steep slopes, close to mountain edges, or near drainage ways or natural erosion valleys.
- Do not dump materials, leaves, grass or demolition debris on top of or over steep slopes adjoining your property – cumulative added weight increases the chance of a landslide.
- Watch storm-water drainage near your home and note places where runoff water converges, increasing flow in channels.
- Have flexible pipe fittings installed to avoid gas or water leaks (only the gas company or professionals should install gas fittings).
- Plant ground cover on slopes and build retaining walls.
- In mudflow areas, build channels or deflection walls to direct the flow around buildings.
- Remember: If you build walls to divert debris flow, and the flow lands on a neighbor's property, you may be liable for damages.

## **DURING A LANDSLIDE**

- If you suspect imminent danger, evacuate immediately! Be sure to contact your local police, fire department and/or public works department.
- Stay alert and awake – many debris-flow fatalities occur when people are sleeping.
- Listen to a NOAA Weather Radio or portable, battery-powered radio and local media reports for warnings of intense rainfall. Be aware that intense, short bursts of rain may be particularly dangerous, especially after longer periods of heavy rainfall and damp weather.
- If you are in areas susceptible to landslides and debris flows, consider leaving if it is safe to do so. Remember that driving during an intense storm can be hazardous. If you remain at home, move to a second story if possible.
- Listen for any unusual sounds that might indicate moving debris, such as trees cracking or boulders knocking together. A trickle of flowing or falling mud or debris may precede larger landslides. Moving debris can flow quickly and without warning.
- Be alert for any sudden increase or decrease in water flow near streams or channels, and for a change from clear to muddy water – such changes may indicate landslide activity upstream.
- Be aware that strong shaking from earthquakes can induce or intensify the effects of landslides.

# LIGHTNING



Lightning is the result of the building and discharge of electrical energy. The air in a lightning strike is heated to 50,000 degrees Fahrenheit – this rapid heating of the air produces the shock wave that results in thunder.

Severe thunderstorms are those storms with winds in excess of 58 mph or hail larger than 3/4 inches in diameter.

If severe thunderstorms and lightning are forecast, plan an alternate activity or know where you can take cover quickly.

## SEEK SAFE SHELTER

A house or other substantial building offers the best protection from lightning. For a shelter to provide protection, it must contain a mechanism for conducting electrical current from point of contact to the ground. On the outside, lightning can travel along the outer shell of the building or follow metal gutters and downspouts to the ground. Inside, lightning can follow conductors such as electrical wiring, plumbing, and telephone lines to the ground.

## AVOID UNSAFE SHELTERS

Unless specifically designed to be lightning safe, small structures do little, if anything, to protect occupants from lightning. Many small open shelters on athletic fields, golf courses, parks, picnic areas, schoolyards and elsewhere are designed to protect people from rain and sun, but not lightning.

## IF YOU ARE OUTDOORS

- Look for darkening skies, flashes of lightning, or increasing wind, which may be signs of an approaching thunderstorm.
- When lightning is seen or thunder is heard, or when dark clouds are observed, postpone activities promptly. Do not wait for rain. Lightning often strikes as far as 10 miles away from any rainfall. Go quickly inside a completely enclosed building. If no enclosed building is convenient, get inside a hard-topped all-metal vehicle.
- The principle lightning safety guide is the 30-30 rule. The first 30 represents 30 seconds. If the time between when you see the flash and hear the thunder is 30 seconds or less, the lightning is close enough to hit you. If you haven't already, seek shelter immediately. The second 30 stands for 30 minutes. After the last flash of lightning, wait 30 minutes before leaving your shelter.
- Be the lowest point. Lightning hits the tallest object. In the mountains, if you are above the tree line, quickly get below the tree line and get into a grove of small trees. Crouch down if you are in an exposed area.
- If you can't get to a shelter, stay away from trees. If there is no shelter, crouch in the open, keeping twice as far away from a tree as it is tall.
- Avoid leaning against vehicles. Get off bicycles and motorcycles.

- Get out of the water, off the beach and out of small boats or canoes. If caught in a boat, crouch down in the center of the boat away from metal hardware. Avoid standing in puddles of water, even if wearing rubber boots.
- Avoid metal! Drop metal backpacks and stay away from clotheslines, fences, and exposed sheds. Do not hold on to metal items such as golf clubs, fishing rods, tennis rackets or tools.

### **IF YOU ARE INDOORS**

- Avoid contact with corded phones. Lightning can travel long distances in both phone and electrical wires, particularly in rural areas.
- Stay away from windows and doors and stay off porches as these can provide the path for a direct strike to enter a home.
- Avoid contact with electrical equipment or cords. If you plan to unplug any electronic equipment, do so well before the storm arrives.
- Avoid contact with plumbing. Do not wash your hands, do not take a shower, do not wash dishes, and do not do laundry.
- Avoid contact with concrete walls, which may contain metal reinforcing bars.
- Bring your pets indoors before the storm.

### **IF SOMEONE IS STRUCK BY LIGHTNING**

Call for help. Call 9-1-1 or your local ambulance service. Get medical attention as quickly as possible. Give first aid. If the victim has stopped breathing, begin rescue breathing. If the heart has stopped beating, a trained person should give CPR. If the person has a pulse and is breathing, address any other injuries, i.e., burns.

# POWER OUTAGE



## TERMS TO KNOW

**Blackout:** Equipment failure which occurs when the supply of power is cut, either by excessive demand on the power grid, lightning storms, ice on power lines, equipment failure or any accident which brings down a power line.

**Rolling Blackout:** Occurs when electrical power is turned off to selected areas to save power. Blackouts usually occur during peak energy usage times, between 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m., but they can happen any time. Blackouts may affect the same area more than once a day and they may exceed an hour's duration.

## BE PREPARED!

- If you use medication that requires refrigeration, most can be kept in a closed refrigerator for several hours without a problem - check with your physician or pharmacist.
- If you have space in your refrigerator or freezer, consider filling plastic containers with water, leaving an inch of space inside each one – this will help keep food cold if the power goes out.
- Plan to have an alternative cooking source, such as a camp stove or outdoor grill. Follow appropriate safety rules for its use outside the residence.
- Consider buying a generator and follow the rules for using it outside the residence. Before installing a generator, be sure to properly disconnect from your utility electrical service. If possible, have your generator installed by a qualified electrician.
- Have extra blankets, coats, hats, and gloves on hand to keep warm.
- If you have a computer, back up files and operating systems regularly. Turn off all computers, monitors, and other devices when they are not being used.
- If you have an electric garage door opener, locate the manual release level and learn how to operate.
- If you have a telephone instrument or system that requires electricity to work, plan for alternate communication such as a standard telephone handset, cellular telephone, or radio.
- Have a standby generator or an alternative source of power available.

## **DURING THE OUTAGE**

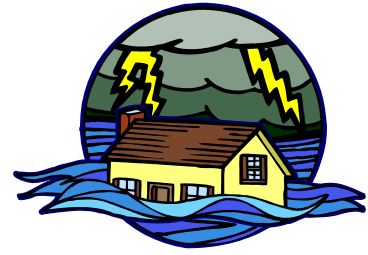
- Turn off major appliances to prevent damage from a possible surge when the power comes back on - keep one light turned on so you know when power returns.
- Call your utility provider to notify them of the outage.
- Check to see if your neighbors have power.
- Use only flashlights for emergency lighting -- candles pose the risk of fire.
- Keep your refrigerator and freezer doors shut to keep food from spoiling. When in doubt, throw it out!
- Do not use a charcoal grill indoors and do not use a gas stove for heat - they could give off harmful levels of carbon monoxide.
- In cold weather, stay warm by dressing in layers and minimizing time spent outdoors. Be aware of cold stress symptoms (i.e., hypothermia) and seek proper medical attention if symptoms appear.
- In hot weather, take steps to remain cool. Move to the lowest level of the house. Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing. Drink plenty of water.
- If you are in a tall building, take the stairs and move to the lowest level of the building.
- If trapped in an elevator, wait for assistance. Do not attempt to force the doors open. Remain patient - there is plenty of air and the interior of the elevator is designed for passenger safety.
- Remember to provide fresh, cool water for your pets.
- Eliminate unnecessary travel, especially by car. Traffic signals will stop working during an outage, creating traffic congestion and dangerous driving conditions. If you must drive during a blackout, remember to obey the 4-way stop rule at intersections with non-functioning traffic signals.
- Remember that equipment such as automated teller machines (ATMs) and elevators may not be working.



# THUNDERSTORM

## TERMS TO KNOW

**Severe Thunderstorm Watch:** Issued when severe thunderstorms are possible in and close to the watch area. The Watch is issued to alert you to the possibility that storms with damaging winds, lightning, and large hail may develop.



**Severe Thunderstorm Warning:** Issued when a severe thunderstorm has been spotted and will move through your area soon. Postpone outdoor activities if storms are imminent.

## DURING THE THUNDERSTORM

- If you can hear thunder, you are close enough to the storm to be struck by lightning. Go to safe shelter immediately.
- Move to a sturdy building. Do not take shelter in small sheds, under isolated trees, or in convertible automobiles.
- If lightning occurs and sturdy shelter is not available, get inside a hard top automobile and keep windows up.
- Get out of boats and away from water.
- Telephone lines and metal pipes can conduct electricity. Unplug appliances not necessary for obtaining weather information. Avoid using the telephone or any electrical appliances. Use phones only in an emergency.
- Do not take a bath or shower.
- Turn off air conditioners — power surges from lightning can overload compressors.
- Get to higher ground if flash flooding or flooding is possible.
- Do not attempt to drive to safety — most flash flooding deaths occur in automobiles.
- If outdoors, find a low spot away from trees, fences, and poles
- If you are in the woods, take shelter under short trees.
- If you feel your skin tingle or your hair stands on end, squat low to the ground on the balls of your feet; place your hands on your knees with your head between them; make yourself the smallest target possible; and minimize your contact with the ground.

# TORNADO

## TERMS TO KNOW

**Tornado Watch:** Conditions are favorable over a large area for severe thunderstorms and tornadoes to develop.

**Tornado Warning:** A tornado has been detected or seen, is on the ground and moving, and is expected to move through your area soon. Take cover immediately!



## DURING THE TORNADO

- **If outdoors:** Seek shelter in a substantial building immediately. If there is no shelter nearby, lie flat in a ditch or low spot with your hands shielding your head. Do not try to outrun a tornado in your car; instead, leave it immediately.
- **If at home or in a small building:** Go to the basement or an interior room on the lowest floor of the building. Stay away from windows. Closets, bathrooms, and other interior rooms offer the best protection. Get under something sturdy or cover yourself with a mattress.
- **If in a school, hospital, or shopping center:** Go to a pre-designated shelter area. Stay away from large open areas and windows. Do not go outside to your car.
- **If in a high-rise building:** Go to an interior small room or hallway on the lowest floor possible. Do not use the elevators. Use the stairs.
- **If in a mobile home or vehicle:** Get out of mobile homes or vehicles - they are easily tossed about by strong winds in the tornado.
- Take shelter in a substantial structure. If there is no shelter nearby, lie flat in a ditch or low spot with your hands shielding your head.

# WINTER WEATHER



## TERMS TO KNOW

**Winter Storm Watch:** Indicates severe winter weather may affect your area.

**Winter Storm Warning:** Severe winter weather conditions will affect your area.

**Blizzard Warning:** Large amount of falling snow or blowing snow with winds of at least 35 miles per hour expected to last for several hours.

**Wind Chill:** The effect of wind in combination with the actual temperature, which increases the rate of heat loss to the human body.

## WINTER HEALTH HAZARDS

**Frostbite:** Severe reaction to cold exposure that can permanently damage its victims. Symptoms include a loss of feeling and a white or pale appearance in fingers, toes, ears and nose.

**Hypothermia:** Occurs when the body's core temperature drops below normal. Symptoms include uncontrollable shivering, slow speech, memory lapses, frequent stumbling, and drowsiness. If frostbite or hypothermia is suspected, slowly warm the victim and seek immediate medical assistance.

**Overexertion:** Cold weather puts an added strain on the heart. Shoveling snow or pushing a car may cause a heart attack. Stay warm, dress warm, and slow down when working outdoors.

## BE PREPARED!

- Service snow removal equipment. Use rock salt to melt ice on walkways, and sand to generate traction.
- Winterize your home and have heating sources inspected annually.
- If you use heating oil, maintain an adequate supply.
- Have safe, emergency heating equipment available and use according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Install and check smoke detectors.
- Protect water pipes from freezing.
- Have adequate winter supplies on hand.

## **WINTER CAR SUPPLIES**

- Several blankets and sleeping bags
- Matches and candles
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Extra set of mittens, socks and wool caps
- First Aid kit with pocketknife
- Small sack of sand to generate traction
- Small shovel, pliers, wrench and screwdriver
- Windshield scraper and a small broom
- Booster cables and distress flares
- Set of tire chains or snow tires
- Brightly colored cloth (to use as a flag)

## **WINTER DRIVING TIPS**

The leading cause of death and injuries during winter storms is transportation accidents.

- Before starting your trip, check the weather forecast.
- Start your vehicle and allow it to warm up.
- Before getting behind the wheel, take a lesson from school bus drivers:
  - Clean all of the snow and ice from the entire vehicle.
  - Ensure the windshield is clear of frost. Don't start to drive if you only have a small area of the windshield clear – Good vision is a key to good driving.
- Plan your stops and keep more distance between cars. Be extra alert. Remember, snowdrifts can hide smaller children.
- Always match your speed to the road and weather conditions.
- Leave plenty of time to arrive at work or appointments without having to rush.

When driving on snow or ice, remember the following:

- Slow down and adjust your speed to the existing conditions.
- Increase the following distance between your vehicle and the one in front of you.
- Watch out for other drivers and scan the road ahead.
- Slow down prior to making a turn.
- Do not slam on the brakes.
- Do not use the cruise control.
- Steer smoothly without jerking the wheel.
- Always wear your seat belt.

## **IF STRANDED IN A VEHICLE**

- Stay in the vehicle. Do not leave the vehicle to search for assistance unless assistance is visible within 100 feet.
- Display a trouble sign. Hang a brightly colored cloth on the radio antenna, raise the hood, and turn on hazard lights. At night, use the dome light.
- Occasionally run the engine to keep warm. Run the heater sparingly. Beware of carbon monoxide poisoning. Keep the exhaust pipe clear and open the downwind windows.
- Do minor exercises to keep up circulation. Clap hands and move arms and legs. Try not to stay in one position for too long.
- If there is more than one person in the car, take turns sleeping. Huddle together for warmth.

# WEBSITES

Visit these websites for more information:

New York State Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Services

[www.dhSES.ny.gov](http://www.dhSES.ny.gov)

New York State Office of Counter Terrorism

[www.security.state.ny.us](http://www.security.state.ny.us)

New York State Office of Cyber Security

[www.cscic.state.ny.us](http://www.cscic.state.ny.us)

New York State Office of Emergency Management

[www.semo.state.ny.us](http://www.semo.state.ny.us)

New York State Office of Fire Prevention & Control

[www.dos.state.ny.us/fire](http://www.dos.state.ny.us/fire)

New York State Department of Health

[www.health.state.ny.us](http://www.health.state.ny.us)

American Red Cross

[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

Aware/Prepare

[www.nyprepare.gov](http://www.nyprepare.gov)

# 10 STEPS TO SAFETY

1. Identify and discuss potential emergencies with your family.
2. Develop an emergency plan.
3. Identify two places where you and your family will meet in an emergency.
4. Practice your plan.
5. Review and revise your plan as needed.
6. Prepare emergency supplies.
7. Gather and safeguard important documents.
8. Be aware of your surroundings.
9. Know where and how to get information during an emergency.
10. Work with your neighbors, especially those with special needs.