



**American  
Red Cross**  
of Greater Indianapolis

**Be Red Cross Ready**

## Get a Kit

Getting a disaster supplies kit is the most basic step you can take to prepare for a disaster. You can build one or buy one, but you need to have one. Getting a kit doesn't have to be an overwhelming process. Chances are you already have some of the items lying around your house. You just need to put everything together. You also can build your kit step-by-step, picking up a different item each time you go to the store.

The Red Cross recommends having enough emergency supplies on hand to sustain everyone in your household for at least three days. There are nine basics you should stock in your kit:

- Water (3-day supply for evacuation, 2-week supply for home)
- Food (3-day supply for evacuation, 2-week supply for home)
- First-aid supplies
- Radio
- Flashlights
- Clothing
- Bedding
- Tools and supplies
- Special items:
  - Items for babies and older adults
  - Pet supplies
  - Medications
  - Copies of important family documents

## What to include in your Kit

**Water:** Store a minimum of one gallon per person per day for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene. Avoid using containers that will decompose or break, such as milk cartons or glass bottles. Keep in a cool, dark place.

**Food:** Store at least a three day supply of nonperishable food for each person. Select familiar food items that family members enjoy eating, are compact and lightweight and require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking and little or no water. Include a selection of the following foods: Ready-to-eat canned fruits and vegetables, canned juices, staples (such as salt, pepper, sugar and spices), high-energy foods such as peanut butter, dried fruit and nuts and snack bars, comfort/stress foods and vitamin, mineral and protein supplements. Individuals with special diets and allergies will need special

attention, as will babies, toddlers and older adults. Also store a manual can opener. Keep food in a dry, cool spot—a dark area, if possible. Twice a year replace items that might not stay fresh.

**First-aid supplies:** Assemble or purchase a first-aid kit for you and your family. Also assemble a kit for your car.

**Radio:** Hand-crank or battery-powered AM/FM radio with NOAA Weather Radio and extra batteries.

**Flashlights:** Hand-crank or battery-powered flashlights and extra batteries. One flashlight for each family member is recommended.

**Clothing:** Pack at least one complete change of clothing and sturdy footwear, as well as rain gear and sunglasses for each person in your household. Make seasonal changes—swap sweaters, jeans, hats and gloves and thermal underwear for T-shirts and lighter pants when the weather turns warm and vice versa.

**Bedding:** Include blankets or sleeping bags for every member of your household. Again, switch out heavy blankets for lighter-weight sheets and blankets in the warmer months.

**Tools and supplies:** Make sure you have these items on hand to help maintain as normal a life as possible.

Remember you may be without services such as electricity, gas or water.

- Cash or traveler's checks, change
- Mess kits or paper cups, plates and plastic utensils
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Personal care items
- Feminine supplies
- Sanitation needs:
  - Toilet paper, towelettes
  - Soap, liquid detergent
  - Plastic garbage bags and ties
  - Plastic bucket with tight lid
  - Disinfectant
  - Household chlorine bleach
  - Rubber gloves
  - Paper towels
- Essential tools such as a shut-off wrench to turn off gas or water and other common tools such as a screwdriver, hammer, pliers and a utility knife
- Duct tape and plastic sheeting for shelter-in place situations
- Plastic storage containers or re-sealable bags
- **Be Red Cross Ready** resource guide
- Extra set of car and house keys
- Cell phone charger (or flashlight/radio with cell phone charger)

**Additional items that would be nice to have:**

- Fire extinguisher (small canister ABC type)
- Tube tent
- Compass
- Map of area
- Aluminum foil
- Signal flare
- Paper and pencils
- Needles and thread
- Medicine dropper
- Whistle

**Special items:** Remember family members with special requirements. Also make copies of vital documents and keep with your disaster supplies, just in case.

- Infants: Formula, bottles, pacifiers, diapers, baby wipes, burp cloths, baby blankets, toys, changing pads and medications
- Pets: Food, treats, water, leash, cage/carrier/crate, identification, medications, favorite toys and other items
- Contact lenses and supplies, extra eyeglasses, hearing aids, denture supplies and other necessities
- 7-day supply of medications or a list of current medications, family physician contact information and medical device style, serial numbers and copy of instruction manual (Ask your physician or pharmacist about storing prescription medications.)
- Important family documents: Personal identification, passports and social security cards; wills; insurance policies; contracts; deeds; stocks and bonds; immunization records; bank and credit card information (numbers and companies); household inventory; important phone numbers; and birth, marriage and death certificates
- Games and books
- Portable music device

Make sure your kit is in a sturdy, but easy-to-transport, container. A large covered trash container with wheels, overnight backpack, duffel bag or rolling suitcase will work. To avoid damage to paper supplies, medications and food items, store them in re-sealable plastic bags. It also is recommended that you have more than three days of supplies at home in case you're unable to leave for an extended period of time. Also consider getting a kit for your car. Remember to check your kit(s) every six months and rotate perishable items or restock as necessary. Re-think your kit and family needs at least once a year.