

Prepare in a Year



2. Action Plan



What disasters can affect you?

Communities throughout the Pacific Northwest are subject to many types of disasters. While we hope that such occurrences never happen, it has been shown time and time again that being prepared for disasters is wise. Now is the time to do some research either online or by attending a preparedness fair or presentation hosted by your local jurisdiction or community group to learn about your local hazards.

Create a Disaster Plan

Meet with your family and discuss why you need to be prepared for disasters. Plan to share the responsibilities and work together as a team.

Develop a family/household communication and reunification plan so that you can maintain contact and take the best actions for each of you to re-unite if you are separated.

Discuss the types of disasters that are likely to happen. Explain what to do in each case. Discuss what to do in an evacuation. Pick two places to meet:

- Right outside your home in case of fire.
- Outside your neighborhood in case you can't return home.

Everyone must know the address and phone number.

Put your Plan into Action

Teach children how and when to call 911. Show them

how your cell phone works. Many counties in Washington allow Text to 911. Call if you can, text if you can't!

Post emergency telephone numbers in a visible location.

Show each family member how and when to turn off the water, gas and electricity at the main switches.

Other tips:

- Check for adequate insurance coverage.
- Install an ABC fire extinguisher in your home. Teach each family member to use it and where it is kept. (See Step Seven)
- Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors on each level of your home, in appropriate areas.
- Stock emergency supplies and assemble disaster supply kits.
- Take a First Aid and CPR class.
- Determine the best escape routes from your home. Find two ways out of each room.
- Find a safe spot in your home for each type of disaster.

<p>DISASTER meeting place (if you cannot return home):</p> <hr/> <p>EXACT LOCATION</p> <p>HOUSE FIRE meeting place (near home, everyone is safely outside):</p> <hr/> <p>EXACT LOCATION</p> <p>LOCAL emergency contact (if you are hurt):</p> <hr/> <p>PRINT NAME PHONE</p>
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 <p>OUT OF AREA CONTACT PERSON <i>WHY?</i> Local phone systems may be shut down in a disaster. However, you frequently can place a long-distance call.</p> <p>Name (print):</p> <hr/> <p>Phone number (with area code):</p> <hr/> <p>Cell phone number (with area code):</p> <hr/> <p><i>TIP:</i> You may be able to text message all your loved ones on your cell phone. Keep these messages short.</p>
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What to do NOW

Learn what types of disasters are likely to happen in your area.

Learn about your community's warning signals — what do they sound like and what should you do when you hear them? Also, learn which radio stations will provide emergency information for your area.

Learn about animal care in your area.

If you are disabled and unable to care for yourself, your planning needs to include your support network who will help you and your household.

Find out about the disaster plans at your workplace, your children's school or child-care center and other places your family frequently visits.

Before an Evacuation

- Plan how you will leave and where you will go if you are advised to evacuate.
- Identify several places you could go in an emergency, such as a friend's home in another town or a motel. Choose destinations in different directions so that you have options during an emergency.
- If needed, identify a place to stay that will accept pets. Shelters may or may not be able to accommodate your pet. Have supplies ready to take.
- Be familiar with alternate routes and other means of transportation out of your area.
- Always follow the instructions of local officials and remember that your evacuation route may be on foot depending on the type of disaster.
- Assemble supplies that are ready for evacuation, both a "go-bag" you can carry when you evacuate on foot/ bicycle or public transportation and larger supplies for traveling in a personal vehicle.

If you evacuate by car

Always keep a half tank of gas in case of an unexpected need to evacuate. Keep a full tank of gas if an evacuation seems likely. Gas stations may be closed during emergencies and unable to pump gas during power outages.

- Plan to take one car per family to reduce delay.
- Make sure you have a portable emergency kit in the car.
- If you do not have a car, plan how you will leave via other forms of transportation or on foot.

If evacuation is urgent, you will not have time to prepare, which is why it is important to plan ahead. Certain evacuations, like a tsunami, may require an evacuation by foot.

During an Evacuation

During an evacuation you will want to consider the following items:

- A list of open shelters is typically announced on social

Practice and Maintain Your Plan

- Review your plans every six months so everyone remembers what to do.
- Conduct fire and emergency evacuation drills.
- Test and recharge your fire extinguishers, according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Test your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors every month; replace batteries every six months.
- Replace stored water and food every six months to a year, depending on expiration dates.
- Update plan as necessary.

Evacuation Planning

A wide variety of emergencies may cause an evacuation. In some instances, you may have a day or two to prepare, while other situations might call for an immediate evacuation. Planning is vital to ensuring that you can evacuate quickly and safely, regardless of the circumstances.



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media or traditional media. But don't wait for a shelter to open; pre-arrange places to stay ahead of time.

- Listen to a battery-powered radio and follow local evacuation instructions.
- Take your emergency supply kit.
- Leave early enough to avoid being trapped by impending hazards — volcanic, flooding, tsunami or fire.

Follow your local official's messages in regards to bringing animals to shelters. If there is time:

- Call, text or email the out-of-area contact in your family communications plan. Tell them where you are going.
- Secure your home by closing and locking doors and windows.
- Unplug electrical equipment such as radios, televisions and small appliances. Leave freezers and refrigerators plugged in unless there is a risk of flooding. If there is damage to your home and you are instructed to do so, shut off water, gas and electricity before leaving.
- Leave a note telling others when you left and where you are going.
- Wear sturdy shoes and clothing that provides some protection such as long pants, long-sleeved shirts and a hat.
- Check with neighbors who may need a ride.
- Follow recommended evacuation routes. Do not take shortcuts; they may be blocked.
- Be alert for road hazards such as washed-out roads or bridges and downed power lines. Do not drive into flooded areas.

After an Evacuation

- Check with local officials before you travel back to areas impacted by the disaster.
- If an area is closed, stay out! It is closed for your safety.
- Depending on the disaster, many residents may be in public shelters for an undetermined time frame.
- Residents returning to disaster-affected areas after significant events should expect and prepare for disruptions to daily activities, and remember that returning home before debris is cleared is dangerous.
- Some events may mean that there is not a home to return to, such as lahars, wildfires or tsunamis.
- Fill up your gas tank and consider downloading a fuel app to check for outages along your route.
- Bring supplies such as water and non-perishable food for the car/bus ride.
- Avoid downed power or utility lines; they may be live with deadly voltage.

Potential Threats

Avalanches - Avalanches have killed more than 190 people in the past century.

Drought - In the past century, Washington State has experienced a number of drought episodes, including several that lasted for more than a single season.

Earthquake - More than 1,000 earthquakes occur in Washington each year. Some can be felt. Some go unnoticed.

Flood - Damage from flooding exceeds damage by all other natural hazards in Washington state.

Landslide - Landslide is the movement of rock, soil and debris down a hillside or slope. Landslides take lives, destroy homes, businesses and public buildings, interrupt transportation, undermine bridges, derail train cars and damage utilities.

Severe Storm - All areas of Washington state are vulnerable to severe weather.

Tsunami - Tsunamis are a series of powerful waves that threaten people and property along shorelines.

Volcano - Washington has five major volcanoes – Mount Baker, Glacier Peak, Mount Rainier, Mount St. Helens and Mount Adams.

Wildfire - Short-term loss caused by wildland fire can include the destruction of timber, wildlife habitat, scenic vistas and watersheds, and increase vulnerability to flooding. Long-term effects include smaller timber harvests, reduced access to affected recreational areas and destruction of cultural and economic resources and community infrastructure.

Hazardous Material - Hazardous material incidents are intentional and/or unintentional releases of a material, that because of their chemical, physical or biological nature pose a potential risk to life, health, environment or property.

Radiological - A radiological hazard is the uncontrolled release of radioactive material that can harm people or damage the environment.

More information: <https://mil.wa.gov/hazards>