



2015 Disaster Checklist



It's been years since Hurricane Katrina and SuperStorm Sandy. While that is good news it also means that people aren't thinking about preparedness, supplies in survival kits are stale or expired, and contact lists may not include current information.

Every day we see news about severe storms and wildfires. Is your family prepared? How about your business? You need supplies for all the possible people you will have to shelter. Make sure you have enough.

Please share this with your family and business associates.

____ Family / Business Communications Plan

- ✓ Write down critical cell and landline numbers in case your phone dies
- ✓ Know where your family members or business colleagues will meet if cell towers and landline phones go out
- ✓ Designate an out-of-area relative everyone should contact if they can't reach each other
- ✓ For your business, complete a contact sheet for all workforce members, including their personal e-mail address, their spouse/partner contact info, and an out-of-area contact you can call if you can't reach your employee

____ Water - Water systems may be contaminated and unsafe for 3 or more days

- ✓ Buy cases of water or fill pots and pitchers with drinking water – 1 gallon per day per person
- ✓ Store 10 gallons of clean water for cooking
- ✓ Use food-grade water containers from camping stores
- ✓ Replace the water every six months if not using commercially bottled water
- ✓ Never use water from toilet flush tanks or bowls, radiators, waterbeds, or swimming pools/spas.
- ✓ Purchase LifeStraw water purifiers to filter contaminated water

____ Food

- ✓ Store non-perishable food you don't have to cook
- ✓ Include food needed for special diets
- ✓ Store non-perishable food for your pets

____ Utilities

- ✓ Know how to turn off your electric, water, and gas services
- ✓ Keep tools near your shutoffs for quick action
- ✓ Never turn on your utilities until authorized
- ✓ Always have a professional turn your gas back on

____ Cash - Credit cards won't work if power and communications go down.

- ✓ Withdraw \$ 200 - \$ 300 in small bills so you can make cash purchases

____ Automobile - gas pumps won't work if power fails

- ✓ Fill your gas tank when you first hear a warning
- ✓ Don't drain your car battery charging cell phones or other devices
- ✓ Keep an emergency kit in your car in case you are stranded away from home

____ Cell phones

- ✓ Register your cell phone to receive calls from your county's emergency management system
- ✓ Install weather and disaster preparedness apps and configure for alert notifications
- ✓ Text messages use less battery and get through when calls can't
- ✓ Photograph the contents of your house or business every 6 months or after major changes
- ✓ Store emergency contact info for family members and employees, including alternate e-mail contacts and phone numbers for their close friends and relatives in case you can't reach them directly
- ✓ Bring external batteries to keep your cell phone powered– keep them charged
- ✓ Pack your car charger and home charger if you evacuate

- ✓ Extend your battery by turning off wi-fi and other services you aren't using
- ✓ Solar chargers will work when power is out for extended periods
- ✓ Learn how to set up your cell phone as a personal Internet hotspot

Computers

- ✓ Back up critical data onto external hard drives or the cloud
- ✓ If you have to evacuate take critical equipment with you, or seal it in garbage bags and store it in a high spot to protect against water damage
- ✓ Pack your laptop charger if you evacuate
- ✓ For businesses, do a test-restore of your backup files every quarter to ensure that (a) the backups will work during an emergency and (b) all critical data is backed up. Don't just move files- make sure your business functions will work in the backup environment

Generators - can use 7 – 10 gallons of gasoline PER DAY

- ✓ Use gasoline or propane generators - communities may turn off natural gas service prior to a disaster
- ✓ Plan your needs to be sure you can power heating, refrigerators, lights, and television for 7 days
- ✓ Store gasoline in safe containers with fuel stabilizer. Replace stored gas every 6 – 10 months
- ✓ During disaster turn generator off for maximum use but enough to keep food cold
- ✓ Buy a siphon to 'borrow' fuel for your generator from cars and mowers

Evacuation

- ✓ Have a backpack or overnight bag pre-packed with clothes, medications, sweatshirt and sweatpants; energy/meal replacement bars; emergency blankets (look in the camping supply areas of sporting goods or department store;) sanitation and hygiene items (hand sanitizer, moist towelettes, and toilet paper;) photocopies of identification and credit cards; special needs items such as prescription medications, eye glasses, contact lens solution, and hearing aid batteries; items for infants, such as formula, diapers, bottles, and pacifiers.
- ✓ Follow instructions to shut off water, gas, and electricity before you leave
- ✓ Know your evacuation routes before you go. Print out directions from your county emergency mgt. website

Hand-crank weather radio

- ✓ Purchase one at Lowes, Home Depot, Sam's, Costco, or Walmart
- ✓ Make sure the radio has SAME alerting so you will only receive alerts for your local area.
- ✓ These also charge cell phones through a USB cable

Batteries

- ✓ Enough for flashlights, lanterns, radios for 1 week

Flashlights/LED lanterns

- ✓ No need for fuel or mantles; safer than candles
- ✓ Some lanterns come with removable LED flashlights

Common Sense

- ✓ Evacuate if your local government issues an order
- ✓ Don't drive through flooded streets
- ✓ Stay away from downed wires

Don't panic

- ✓ Practice your disaster response so everyone knows what to expect
- ✓ Keep your cool for your own safety and your family's



Mike Semel is a Certified Business Continuity Professional. Semel Consulting has helped hundreds of businesses create effective Business Continuity plans that have helped them survive SuperStorm Sandy, the Joplin tornado, and many small disasters and business interruptions you never heard of. For help creating your plan, or if you have questions about disaster preparedness for your family or business, visit www.semelconsulting.com.

Be Red Cross Ready

Hurricane Safety Checklist

Hurricanes are strong storms that cause life- and property-threatening hazards such as flooding, storm surge, high winds and tornadoes.

Preparation is the best protection against the dangers of a hurricane.

Know the Difference

Hurricane Watch—Hurricane conditions are a threat within 48 hours. Review your hurricane plans, keep informed and be ready to act if a warning is issued.

Hurricane Warning—Hurricane conditions are expected within 36 hours. Complete your storm preparations and leave the area if directed to do so by authorities.

What should I do?



- Listen to a NOAA Weather Radio for critical information from the National Weather Service (NWS).
- Check your disaster supplies and replace or restock as needed.
- Bring in anything that can be picked up by the wind (bicycles, lawn furniture).
- Close windows, doors and hurricane shutters. If you do not have hurricane shutters, close and board up all windows and doors with plywood.
- Turn the refrigerator and freezer to the coldest setting and keep them closed as much as possible so that food will last longer if the power goes out.
- Turn off propane tanks and unplug small appliances.
- Fill your car's gas tank.
- Talk with members of your household and create an evacuation plan. Planning and practicing your evacuation plan minimizes confusion and fear during the event.
- Learn about your community's hurricane response plan. Plan routes to local shelters, register family members with special medical needs as required and make plans for your pets to be cared for.
- Evacuate if advised by authorities. Be careful to avoid flooded roads and washed out bridges.
- Because standard homeowners insurance doesn't cover flooding, it's important to have protection from the floods associated with hurricanes, tropical storms, heavy rains and other conditions that impact the U.S. For more information on flood insurance, please visit the National Flood Insurance Program Web site at www.FloodSmart.gov.

What supplies do I need?



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

What do I do after a hurricane?



- Continue listening to a NOAA Weather Radio or the local news for the latest updates.
- Stay alert for extended rainfall and subsequent flooding even after the hurricane or tropical storm has ended.
- If you evacuated, return home only when officials say it is safe.
- Drive only if necessary and avoid flooded roads and washed-out bridges.
- Keep away from loose or dangling power lines and report them immediately to the power company.
- Stay out of any building that has water around it.
- Inspect your home for damage. Take pictures of damage, both of the building and its contents, for insurance purposes.
- Use flashlights in the dark. Do NOT use candles.
- Avoid drinking or preparing food with tap water until you are sure it's not contaminated.
- Check refrigerated food for spoilage. If in doubt, throw it out.
- Wear protective clothing and be cautious when cleaning up to avoid injury.
- Watch animals closely and keep them under your direct control.
- Use the telephone only for emergency calls.

Let Your Family Know You're Safe

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

Cellphones Become Our Comfort Objects During Disaster



Two days after a 8.8 magnitude earthquake displaced them from their homes and separated them from dear ones, people gathered at a fire-station in Concepcion, Chile to charge their cellphones—their comfort objects during this disaster. Source: <http://gizmodo.com>

Chile was becoming a trending topic on Twitter before even the fastest newscasters got a chance to talk about Saturday's earthquake, thanks to many hastily posted Tweets—most of which likely came from mobile devices. Tweets, text messages, emails, calls, voicemails—everything flew across the networks, draining phones and granting people some comfort and peace. Just hearing a familiar voice or reading words of assurance—knowing that your mobile device links you to the world, to family, and to much needed aid—makes one heck of a difference.

Tips for using Cell Phones during disasters

1. Cell systems be damaged or clogged by emergency providers and victims during disasters.

When voice calls often will not go through, TEXT MESSAGES become a more reliable way to communicate.

You can send messages phone-to-phone, or by sending an e-mail which arrives as a text message.

The major US cellular carriers use the 10_digit_number@cell.carrier_domain.com format for SMS to text capable cell phones, with a limit of 160 characters in the subject and message body (total).

Carrier	Send Email to 10-digitphonenumber@....
Alltel	@message.alltel.com
AT&T	@txt.att.net
Boost	@myboostmobile.com
Nextel	@messaging.nextel.com
Sprint	@messaging.sprintpcs.com
SunCom	@tms.suncom.com
T-mobile	@tmomail.net
US Mobile	@mms.uscc.net
VoiceStream	@voicestream.net
Verizon	@vtext.com (text only) or @vzwpx.com (pictures and videos)
Virgin	@vmobl.com

2. **WI-FI enabled smartphones can use specialized apps to send calls over the Internet if cell systems are down.**
3. **What will you do when your battery fails?** Have extra AC, car, and USB charging cables for your phone. You can buy small standby batteries and solar chargers for smart phones and other electronic devices, or use your laptop's battery to recharge your phone.

USB Cable

With a USB cable you can charge your phone from a universal car USB power plug, universal home USB power adapter, or from your laptop.

Standby battery – a small rechargeable battery that comes with tips to connect to various phones and devices.

Solar Charger

