



# Your Family Disaster Response Plan

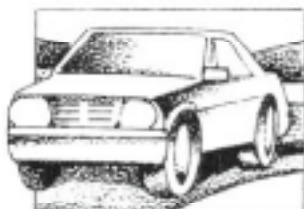
**W**here will your family be when disaster strikes? They could be anywhere:



at work



at school



or in the car

How will you find each other?  
Will you know if your children are safe?

Disaster can strike quickly and unexpectedly. It can be as small as a home fire or as big as an earthquake. It can force you to evacuate your neighborhood or confine you to your home.

What would you do if the basic public utilities - water, gas, electricity or telephones - were cut off? Local officials and relief workers will be on the scene, but they cannot reach everyone right away.

Families can cope with disasters by preparing in advance and working together as a team. Follow the steps listed in this brochure to create your family's disaster response plan. Knowing what to do is your responsibility and your best protection.



## EMERGENCY SUPPLIES



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Keep enough supplies in your home for at least three days. Assemble a Disaster Supplies Kit with items you may need in an evacuation. Store these supplies in sturdy, easy-to-carry containers such as backpacks, duffle bags or large plastic buckets.



Include:

- A three-day supply of water (four liters per person per day) and food that will not spoil.
- One change of clothing and footwear per person, and one blanket or sleeping bag per person.
- A first aid kit and your family's prescription and non-prescription medications.
- Emergency tools including a battery-powered radio, flash light and plenty of extra batteries.
- An extra set of car keys and cash, or possibly a credit card.
- Hygiene materials.
- Special items for infant, elderly or disabled family members.
- An extra pair of glasses.

Keep important family documents in a waterproof container. Also keep a kit in the trunk of your car.

## UTILITIES

Locate the main electric fuse box, water service main and natural gas main. Learn how to turn these utilities off when necessary. Teach all responsible family members. Keep necessary tools near gas and water shut-off valves.

Remember, turn off the utilities only if you suspect the lines are damaged or if you are instructed to do so.

*If you turn the gas off, you will need a professional to turn it back on.*

## 4 Steps to Safety

# 1

### Find Out What Could Happen to You

Contact your local Civil Protection office and Bulgarian Red Cross chapter - be prepared to take notes:

- Ask what types of disasters are most likely to happen. Request information on how to prepare to respond for each allowed inside emergency shelters due to health regulations.
- Learn about your regions warning signals: what they sound like and what you should do when you hear them.
- Find out how to help elderly or disabled persons, if needed.
- Ask about animal care after disaster. Animals may not be allowed inside emergency shelters due to health regulations.
- Next, find out about disaster response plans at your work place, your children's school or daycare center and other places where your family spends time.

# 2

### Create a Disaster Response Plan

Discuss with your family why you need to prepare for disaster. Explain the dangers of fire, severe weather and earthquakes to children. Plan to share responsibilities and work together.

- Discuss the types of disasters that are most likely to happen. Explain what to do in each case.
- Pick two places to meet:
  1. Right outside your home in case of a sudden emergency, at a safe distance.
  2. Outside your neighborhood in case you cannot return home. Everyone must know the address and phone number.
- Ask an out-of-region friend to be the contact person for all the members of your family. After a disaster, it is often easier to call long distance. Other family members should call this person and tell them where they are. Everyone must know your contact's phone number.
- Discuss what to do in an evacuation. Plan how to take care of your pets.

### Fill out, copy and distribute to all family members



#### FAMILY DISASTER RESPONSE PLAN

Emergency Meeting Place \_\_\_\_\_ (outside your home)  
Meeting Place \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
(outside your neighborhood)  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Person (name) \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ (day) Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ (night)

# 3

## Complete the Following Tasks

- Post emergency telephone numbers by phones (fire, police, ambulance, etc.).
- Teach your children how and when to call emergency numbers.
  - 112.
  - Medical 150.
  - Fire 160.
  - Police 166.
- Show each responsible family member how and when to turn off the water, gas and electricity at the main switches.
- Check if you have adequate insurance coverage.
- Teach all responsible family members how to use a fire extinguisher and show them where it is kept.
- Install smoke detectors, if available, especially near bedrooms.
- Conduct a home hazard hunt.
- Stock emergency supplies and assemble a Disaster Supplies Kit.
- Take a Red Cross First Aid and CPR class.
- Determine the best escape routes from your home. Try to find two ways out of each room.
- Find the safe spots in your home for each type of disaster.

# 4

## Practice the Implementation of the Plan

- Quiz your kids every six months so they remember what to do.
- If available, test your smoke detectors monthly and change the batteries at least once a year.
- Conduct evacuation drills.

Year _____	Drill Date _____	January <input type="checkbox"/>	July <input type="checkbox"/>
_____	_____	February <input type="checkbox"/>	August <input type="checkbox"/>
_____	_____	March <input type="checkbox"/>	September <input type="checkbox"/>
		April <input type="checkbox"/>	October <input type="checkbox"/>
		May <input type="checkbox"/>	November <input type="checkbox"/>
		June <input type="checkbox"/>	December <input type="checkbox"/>

- Replace stored water every 6 months and check your food every 3 months - watch expiration dates.
  - Test and recharge your fire extinguisher(s) according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Change batteries in \_\_\_\_\_ each year.  
(month)

## NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS

Working with neighbors can save lives and property. Meet with your neighbors to plan how the neighborhood could work together after a disaster until help arrives. If you are a member of a neighborhood organization, such as a home association or crime watch group, introduce disaster preparedness as a new activity. Know your neighbors' special skills (e.g., medical, technical) and consider how you could help neighbors who have special needs, such as disabled and elderly persons. Make plans for child care in case parents cannot get home.

## HOME HAZARD HUNT

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During a disaster, ordinary objects in your home can cause injury or damage. Anything that can move, fall, break or cause a fire is a home hazard. For example, a hot water heater or a bookshelf can fall. Inspect your home at least once a year and fix potential hazards.

*Contact your local fire department to learn about home fire hazards.*



## EVACUATION

**Evacuate immediately if told to do so:**

- Listen to your battery-powered radio and follow the instructions of local emergency officials.
- Wear protective clothing and sturdy shoes.
- Take your Disaster Supplies Kit.
- Lock your home.
- Use travel routes specified by local authorities - do not use shortcuts because certain areas may be impassable or dangerous.
- Shut off water, gas and electricity before leaving, if necessary.
- Post a note telling others when you left and where you are going.
- Find care for your pets.

## IF DISASTER STRIKES

### If disaster strikes

Remain calm and patient. Put your response plan into action.

### Check for injuries

Give first aid and get a medical team to help for seriously injured people.

### Listen to your battery powered radio for news and instructions

Evacuate, if advised to do so. Wear protective clothing and sturdy shoes.

### Check for damage in your home...

- Use flashlights - do not light matches or turn on electrical switches, if you suspect damage.
- Check for fires, fire hazards and other household hazards.
- Sniff for gas leaks, starting at the water heater. If you smell gas or suspect a leak, turn off the main gas valve, open windows, and get everyone outside quickly.
- Shut off any other damaged utilities.
- Clean up spilled medicines, bleaches, gasoline and other flammable liquids immediately.

### Remember to:

- Secure your pets.
- Call your contact person - do not use the telephone again unless it is a life-threatening emergency.
- Check on your neighbors, especially elderly or disabled persons.
- Make sure you have an adequate water supply in case service is cut off.
- Stay away from downed power lines.

**Learn More. Have a First Aid and CPR class.**

**Contact your local BRC Branch for more information regarding First Aid and CPR classes.**

For more information contact your local Civil Protection and BRC Branch.

*This brochure has been printed with the financial support of the American Red Cross.*

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

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Your

# Family Disaster Response Plan



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