

September 2006 Issue

YOUR FAMILY @ HOME

Be Ready

Is your family prepared for a disaster?

September is National Preparedness Month, the perfect time to make certain your family is prepared in the event of an emergency. ReadyOC, a disaster preparedness awareness program that seeks to educate and inform Southern California residents and businesses about the importance of preparing for any type of disaster, offers these tips for families.

Create a plan

Your family and loved ones may not be together in the event of an emergency, so plan now how you will contact one another and review what you will do in different situations.

- Meet with your family, share responsibilities and work together as a team.
- Discuss what to do in each type of emergency.
- Pick two places to meet. 1) Right outside your home. 2) Outside your neighborhood in case you can't return home.
- Write down important information about your family's health, like each person's blood type, allergies, pre-existing medical conditions and current medications.
- Ask an out-of-state friend to be your "family contact."
- Plan how to take care of your pets.

Make a kit

Just like having a working smoke detector, having emergency supply kits will put the tools you may need at your fingertips. Keep the items that you would most likely need during an emergency in an easy-to-carry container.

- Water (and plenty of it)
- Non-perishable food
- First-aid supplies
- Battery-operated radio & batteries
- Flashlight & batteries
- Medications (2 weeks supply of prescription medications)
- Clothing and bedding
- Tools and emergency supplies
- Sanitation and personal hygiene
- Important family documents
- Cash and change
- Specialty items for babies, pets, and important medical needs

Be involved

Be involved in your community and at work by spreading the word about being ready. Working with neighbors and co-workers can save lives and property.

Here's how:

In your community

- Meet with your neighbors to plan how the community could be ready for an emergency.
- Introduce emergency preparedness as a new activity at your neighborhood organization.
- Know your neighbor's special skills (i.e., medical, technical).
- Consider how you could help neighbors who have special needs, such as disabled and elderly persons.
- Attend CPR and first-aid training.

At work

- Make sure your business has an updated plan and emergency kit.
- Contact your local emergency professionals and organizations on how to be better prepared.
- Pass out this information to all employees.
- Inform your customers and clients about the need to prepare.

Information supplied by the ReadyOC pamphlet. Visit readyoc.org for more details. ReadyOC works in partnership with the American Red Cross. Contact your local chapter for more information.