

72-Hour Preparedness Kit

What is 72 Hour Preparedness?

The very basic level of preparedness is planning for 72-hours. That alone should be self-explanatory. Make a kit that you can survive on, or out of, for three days. 72 hours is the time frame it may take for emergency responders, police, neighbors, or family to reach you during a disaster. Keep in mind, 72 hours is for **each member in your household**, including your pets and other animals.

What to put into a kit

Here are some simple steps you can take to get prepared in case of emergency or natural disaster.

First, choose a container that can withstand damages and one you can seal shut. Backpacks are a good choice for each member of the family. It should contain clothing and personnel items just for each member.

Food

Rather than buying special emergency food items, store food items that are familiar to your family. Consider any dietary restrictions and preferences you may have. Ideal foods are: shelf-stable (no refrigeration required), low in salt, and do not require cooking (e.g., canned fruit, vegetables, peanut butter, jam, low-salt crackers, cookies, cereals, nuts, dried fruit, canned soup or meats, juices and non-fat dry milk). Mark a rotation date on any food container that does not already have an expiration date on the package. Include baby food and formula or other diet items for infants or seniors. Store the food in airtight, pest-resistant containers in a cool, dark place. Most canned foods can safely be stored for at least 18 months. Low acid foods like meat products, fruits, or vegetables will normally last at least two years. Use dry products, like boxed cereal, crackers, cookies, dried milk, or dried fruit within six months.

After a power outage, refrigerated food will stay cold longer if you keep the door closed. Food should generally be consumed within four hours. Food in the freezer will normally remain safe for two days.

Household/Family Tips

Talk with your family about potential disasters and why it's necessary to prepare for them. Involve each member of your family in the planning process. By showing them simple steps that can increase their safety, you can help reduce their anxiety about emergencies. Account for the special needs of children, seniors, or people with disabilities, family members who don't speak English, and pets. Make sure everyone knows where to find your disaster supply kit and go-bags. Plan where to meet after a disaster if your home becomes unsafe. Choose two places—one just outside your home and one outside your neighborhood in case you are told to evacuate. Be sure your gas tank is always at least half full.

Determine the best escape routes from your home. Try to identify two escape routes. Make sure each member knows who your family's out-of-state contact is, and instruct them to call this person and tell him/her where they are. Locate the gas main and other utilities and make sure family members know where they are and how to turn them off/on as well.

Go-bags

Make a go-bag for each member of the family. Keep them where everyone will know where they are. You may not be at home when a disaster strikes, so it is important to keep a go-bag in your car with what you would need just for immediate safety.

Ideas for a go-bag:

- Flashlight
- Radio – battery operated
- Batteries
- Whistle
- Pocket knife
- Sturdy shoes, a change of clothes, and a warm hat
- Some water and food
- List of emergency point-of -contact phone numbers
- List of allergies to any drug (especially antibiotics) or food
- Copy of health insurance and identification cards
- Extra prescription eyeglasses, hearing aid, or other vital personal items
- Prescription medications and first aid supplies
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Extra keys to your house and vehicle
- Any special-needs items for children, seniors, or people with disabilities. Don't forget to make a Go-bag for your pets.

For additional information about “To go bags” please visit [Just in case Arizona](#).

Have a plan

Before a disaster, decide where you will go in case you are evacuated or you decide to leave your home. Before you leave, notify someone that you are leaving and what route you will take. Take your pets, or make arrangements for them before you go. Leaving them alone with food and water really isn't a plan. When you leave your home, lock your home, and shut off gas/propane unless instructed otherwise. When you arrive at your designation, notify local authorities so they know you are gone and how they may reach you if necessary.

Be prepared when traveling

Pay attention to the weather forecast for your destination. Travel and weather websites can help you avoid storms and other regional challenges that could impact your safety.

Examples of emergency preparedness and items for your car:

- Don't let your vehicle's gas tank get too low.
- Antifreeze levels— ensure they are sufficient to avoid freezing.
- Windshield wiper equipment. Repair any problems and maintain proper washer fluid level.
- Carry a bag with disaster supplies such as high protein snacks, water, first aid kit, flashlight, etc. in your truck.
- Have your cell phone and phone charger in the car.

Let someone know your destination, your route, and when you expect to arrive. If your car gets stuck along the way, help can be sent along your predetermined route.

Other items to consider

- A shovel
- Windshield scraper and small broom
- Battery powered radio
- Extra batteries
- Matches
- Extra hats, socks and mittens
- Pocket knife
- Necessary medications
- Blanket(s)
- Tow chain or rope
- Road salt and sand
- Booster cables
- Emergency flares
- Fluorescent distress flag
- Find out types of disasters may occur in the place where you are traveling.
- For example, would you know what to do in the event of a tornado?