

Family Emergency Plan

- Identify an **out-of town contact**. It may be easier to make a long-distance phone call than to call across town, so an **out-of-town contact** may be in a better position to communicate among separated family members.
- Be sure every member of your family **knows the phone number** and has a cell phone, **coins**, or a **prepaid phone card** to call the emergency contact. If you have a cell phone, program that person(s) as "ICE" (In Case of Emergency) in your phone. If you are in an accident, emergency personnel will often check your ICE listings in order to get a hold of someone you know. Make sure to tell your family and friends that you've listed them as emergency contacts.
- Teach family members how to use text messaging (also known as SMS or Short Message Service). Text messages can often get around network disruptions when a phone call might not be able to get through.
- Subscribe to **alert services**. Many communities now have systems that will send instant text alerts or e-mails to let you know about bad weather, road closings, local emergencies, etc. Sign up by visiting your [local Office of Emergency Management web site](#).

Planning to Stay or Go

Depending on your circumstances and the nature of the emergency, the first important decision is whether you stay where you are or evacuate. You should understand and plan for both possibilities. Use common sense and available information, including what you are learning here, to determine if there is an immediate danger. In any emergency, local authorities may or may not immediately be able to provide information on what is happening and what you should do. However, you should watch TV, listen to the radio or check the Internet often for information or official instruction as it becomes available. For information on staying put or sheltering in place,

Emergency Information

Find out what kinds of disasters, both natural and man-made, are most likely to occur in your area and how you will be notified. Methods of getting your attention vary from community to community. One common method is to broadcast via **emergency radio** and **TV broadcasts**. You might hear a special siren, or get a telephone call, or emergency workers may go door-to-door.

Emergency Plans

Use the **New** Online Family Emergency Planning Tool created by the Ready Campaign in conjunction with the Ad Council to prepare a printable Comprehensive Family Emergency Plan:

<http://ready.adcouncil.org/beprepared/fep/index.jsp>