



# Preparing for a Disaster

## Earthquakes, Fires and Floods

Handout #6

*Healthy Children, Strong Families, Caring Communities*

### Earthquakes

Most injuries and casualties are caused by falling debris and shattered glass. To prevent this from happening in your home, visualize what might fall during an earthquake and secure it with materials from your local hardware store.

#### Be Prepared:

- Secure bookshelves into wall studs
- Brace and anchor the hot water heater
- Bolt your house to the foundation through sills and brace the perimeter foundation cripple walls (the walls that enclose the crawl space under your house)
- Keep children's play area away from brick walls or chimneys
- Store household chemicals so they cannot tip over and spill
- Secure the computer and monitor to the computer table
- Identify a safe area in each room (inside walls, doorways or under a table that is away from glass) and mark them with stickers or decals
- Teach children to DROP, COVER and HOLD
- Practice your earthquake drill with your children at least once a month

#### If an earthquake occurs, DROP, COVER and HOLD

DROP to the ground, take COVER under a sturdy desk or other furniture, HOLD on to it and be prepared to move with it. Hold this position until the ground stops moving. If you are outside, move away from buildings and power lines. If you are driving, stop if it is safe but stay inside the car. Do not stop on or under bridges, overpasses, trees, stop lights, power lines or street signs.

### Fires

A fire in the home may happen quickly with little or no warning. Developing an emergency plan will help you respond quickly to the situation.

#### Be Prepared:

- Draw a diagram of your floor plan showing all possible exits, including the location of your circuit breaker and shut-off valve to your gas line. Post this in each room
- Install smoke alarms
- If you don't have a smoke alarm, agree to a sound that communicates fire
- Designate a meeting place outside the home
- Practice your fire drill once a month
- Make sure your family knows how to "STOP, DROP and ROLL," and how to dial 9-1-1
- Keep the numbers of gas and electric companies near the phone

#### When Fire Occurs:

Touch the door with the back of your hand. If it feels cool, open it enough to check for smoke. If there is none, go to your designated meeting place. If the door is hot to the touch, do not open it. Use your alternative exit and go directly to your designated meeting place.

If you cannot leave the room you are in, stuff the cracks around the door with towels or clothes. Stay low to the ground and by the window. Shout for help and signal someone by waving a brightly colored cloth. Dial 9-1-1 and tell the dispatcher where you are.

#### Smoke Alarms

The best defense against fire is a smoke detector. Install them in hallways leading to sleeping areas, the basement and on each additional level in your home. Test them once a month and change the batteries in the spring and fall.



## Floods

Floods can develop over a period of days. Flash floods, however, are like walls of water that develop in a matter of minutes.

### Be prepared when a “Flood Watch” or “Early Warning” is issued:

- Move your furniture/valuables to higher floors
- Fill your car’s gas tank
- Listen to local radio and TV.
- Be able to evacuate at a moment’s notice
- Turn off the main electrical switch, disconnect all electrical appliances and cover outlets with tape

### When flooding occurs:

- Get to higher ground. Flood waters rise faster than expected. If one escape route is not clear, try another or back-track to higher ground.
- Don’t walk in flooded areas. Moving water can sweep you off your feet and can also be electrically charged. If your car stalls in rapidly rising waters, abandon it immediately and climb to higher ground.

## Child Care Survival Kit

It is important that you update your emergency information every six months. Know ahead of time where your child care provider will take your child in case of an emergency. Make a survival kit for your children to keep at their child care program. The kit should include:

- A laminated/waterproof “Emergency Card” with all pertinent current family medical and emergency contact numbers including any special health information, and emergency phone numbers.
- A picture of your family, including the family pet
- Cards, a book, crayons and paper

## Community Resources

American Red Cross • (916) 368-3131  
www.sacsierraredcross.org

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)  
1-800-621- 3362  
www.fema.gov

SMUD • 1- 888 456-7683  
www.smud.org

PG&E • 1-800-743-5000  
www.pge.com

## Vehicle Survival Kit

Along with a spare tire, tire jack and lug wrench you should carry the following emergency items:

Your kit should include:

- Cell phone and a battery-powered radio with extra batteries
- Flashlight with fresh and spare batteries
- Emergency flares
- Jumper cables
- Fire extinguisher
- First aid kit
- Bottled water
- Blankets
- A 10-foot length of rope and a shovel
- Tools (pliers, standard and Phillips screwdrivers, adjustable wrench, hammer, wire, wire cutters and a knife).

## Home Survival Kit

Pack a three-day supply of food and water in backpacks, large canvas bags or large plastic garbage cans with lids, preferably on wheels. You need two quarts of water per person per day. Use refillable plastic water bottles.

Your kit should include:

- Bottled water (for people and pets)
- Pet food
- Canned goods, powdered milk and a can opener
- Cooking pots and picnic supplies
- Plastic baby bottles and disposable diapers
- A change of clothes and rain gear
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Portable battery-powered radio with extra
- Prescription medications
- Items for elderly/disabled family members
- Cell phone with battery pack
- Life preservers (for floods)
- Matches
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Money

Sacramento City Police (non-emergency) • (916) 264-5471  
www.sacpd.org

Sacramento Sheriff Department (non-emergency)  
(916) 874-5115  
www.sacsheriff.com

Sacramento County Flood Safety Information  
(916) 875-RAIN  
www.FloodReady.org