

# Family Disaster Plan

These are general steps to be followed in addition to the more specific disaster responses given elsewhere in this brochure.

## BEFORE:

- Find out which disasters could occur in your area and how to prepare for each. Learn what community warning signals there may be and where evacuation routes are.
- Find out what disaster plans are in place where you work and at your children's school.
- Develop a home emergency plan. Discuss with your family the proper response to each type of disaster.
- If the emergency requires you to **stay in your home**, identify places inside that would offer safety.
- If the emergency requires you to **leave your home**,
  - Draw a floor plan with two escape routes from each room.
  - Choose a meeting place near your home that you can see from main windows.
  - Choose another meeting place outside your neighborhood in case you can't return home
- Find out how to care for elderly or disabled persons, if needed. Plan how to care for pets after a disaster.
- Post emergency numbers near telephones. Teach children when to call them.
- Develop a plan for maintaining family contact. Pick an out-of-state relative or friend for family members to call if they are separated during a disaster.
- Test smoke detectors twice a year to make sure they work.
- Teach family members how to use a fire extinguisher.
- Show family members how to turn off the water, gas, and electricity at main switches and valves, and when to do so. Keep tools needed for this at the location.
- Take a basic first aid and CPR class.
- Verify that you have adequate disaster insurance.
- Prepare a **DISASTER KIT** for your home and vehicle.

## DURING:

- Remain calm and put your disaster plan into action. Follow steps appropriate for the particular type of disaster.
- Listen to battery-powered radio for emergency broadcasts.
- Stay indoors or evacuate as directed.

## AFTER:

- Check for injuries; administer first aid if needed.
- If the electricity is out, use flashlights or battery-powered lanterns. Don't use candles or open flames indoors because of possible gas leaks.
- Wear protective clothing: long pants, long-sleeve shirts, gloves, sturdy shoes, eye protection.
- Look for and extinguish small fires.
- Inspect utility lines for damage. Turn off utilities at the main switches or valves if needed. Disconnect electrical appliances — *but not if you're standing in water*.
- Open windows and leave the building if you smell gas.
- Check for structural damage.
- Stay inside if you can. If you must go out, stay away from hazards and areas of damage.
- Use the phone only to report a life-threatening emergency.

# Emergency

## Preparedness

## Checklists

## Be ready for what could happen in Alaska



DENALI SAFETY COUNCIL

# DISASTER KIT

Prepare emergency kits to meet your family's specific needs. Use the following to get started; add what you think you need.

## FOR YOUR HOME:

- **Water:** One gallon or more per person per day. Store in sealed, unbreakable, non-biodegradable containers. Keep a seven-day supply.
- **Food:** A supply of non-perishable packaged or canned food. Select the meat, fruit, and vegetables you normally eat and like, not survival rations no one wants. Include necessities, high-energy bars and comfort foods, as well as food for infants and those with special diets.
- **Clothing:** Sturdy shoes, long-sleeved shirts and long pants, rain and cold weather gear, hat, gloves, eye protection.
- **Bedding:** Blankets or sleeping bags.
- **First Aid:** A first aid kit and prescription medicines.
- **Radio:** A battery-powered radio, with extra batteries.
- **Tools:**
  - Flashlight and extra batteries.
  - Plastic cups, plates, and utensils.
  - Utility knife, pliers, non-electric can-opener.
  - Shut-off wrench for gas and water.
  - Fire extinguisher, ABC type.
  - Matches in waterproof container.
  - Tent, plastic sheeting, duct tape.
  - Plastic garbage bags, storage containers.
  - Map, compass, whistle, signal flares.
- **Personal:**
  - Soap, towels, toilet paper.
  - Personal hygiene and sanitation supplies.
  - Cash, change, credit cards, car keys.
  - Extra eyeglasses, sunglasses.
  - List of family physicians.
- **Entertainment:** Games and books.
- **Documents:** Bank account numbers, insurance policies, credit card numbers, other important family records.

## FOR YOUR VEHICLE:

- Local maps.
- Jumper cables.
- Tow-strap or tow-chain, tire chains.
- Road flares, flashlight with extra batteries.
- Vehicle tool kit, cigarette-lighter tire pump.
- Sturdy shoes, long-sleeved shirts and long pants, rain and cold weather gear.
- Plastic sheeting for wet or frozen ground.
- Sleeping bag or blanket.
- Bottled water, when outside temperature permits.
- Non-perishable food (high-energy bars) stored in containers.
- First aid kit, prescription medicines.
- Fire extinguisher, ABC type.
- Tissues and towlettes, sealable plastic bags.

# WINTER STORM

## UNDERSTAND WEATHER FORECASTING TERMS:

- **Freezing Rain:** Rain freezes when it hits the ground, coating roads and walkways with ice.
- **Sleet:** Rain turns to ice pellets before it hits the ground. Roads freeze and become slippery.
- **Frost/Freeze Warning:** Below freezing temperatures are expected.
- **Winter Weather Advisory:** Cold, ice, snow are expected.
- **Winter Storm Watch:** Heavy snow and ice is possible within the next day or two.
- **Winter Storm Warning:** Severe winter conditions have begun or will soon begin.
- **Blizzard Warning:** Heavy snow and strong winds will produce near-zero visibility, deep drifts, and life-threatening wind chill.

## PREPARE FOR POSSIBLE ISOLATION IN YOUR HOME:

- Make sure you have sufficient heating fuel, also emergency heating equipment and fuel. Extend fuel by keeping only one room of the house warm.
- Follow your **Family Disaster Plan**.

## BE PREPARED OUTDOORS:

- Wear several layers of loose fitting, light weight, warm clothing rather than one heavy layer.
- Wear hat and mittens to reduce body heat loss.
- Cover mouth with a scarf to protect lungs from cold air.
- Pace yourself shoveling snow; avoid over-exertion. Your body will lose heat if it gets sweaty or wet.
- Watch for *frostbite* – loss of feeling and pale appearance of fingers, toes, nose, or earlobes.
- Watch for *hypothermia* – uncontrollable shivering, memory loss, disorientation, incoherence, slurred speech, drowsiness, or apparent exhaustion.
- Keep your car winterized with antifreeze and snow tires, studded where permitted.
- If traveling by car: stay on main roads, travel by day, keep others informed of your schedule.

## IF TRAPPED IN YOUR CAR IN A BLIZZARD:

- Pull off the road, set hazard lights flashing, hang distress flag from window or radio aerial.
- Remain in your vehicle where rescuers are most likely to find you. You can easily become disoriented on foot.
- Keep the engine and heater running ten minutes each hour. Open a window slightly for ventilation.
- Use your vehicle **DISASTER KIT**.
- Exercise to maintain body heat. Use road maps, seat covers, etc. for insulation.
- Take turns sleeping; always keep one person awake.
- Turn on inside dome light at night.
- If stranded in a remote area, spread something on the snow that can be seen from the air.

# Avalanche

## HOW TO SURVIVE AN AVALANCHE:

- If caught in an avalanche, try to "swim" to the surface.
- If buried, make a space to breathe and try to remain calm.
- If searching for an avalanche victim, those recovered in the first 30 minutes usually survive. Chances diminish substantially thereafter.

## TAKE APPROPRIATE GEAR IN AVALANCHE COUNTRY:

- A **portable shovel** digs faster with than your hands.
- A **probe** will help you find a buried victim, as will an **avalanche beacon**, if you use it correctly.

## BE AWARE OF CONDITIONS that can cause avalanche when traveling in snowy backcountry:

- **Weather:** Avalanches are most likely to run during a significant snowfall or in the 24 hours afterwards.
- **Snowfall:** Additional snow of a foot or more puts stress on the existing snowpack, especially if it does not adequately bond to its surface. The extra weight can cause a slab to break off and start to slide.
- **Temperature:** Continued melting and refreezing will stabilize a snowpack internally. Warmer temperatures that last a few days can make upper snow layers unstable. In temperatures consistently below zero, the snowpack will remain unstable.
- **Wind Direction:** Wind will "scour" snow from one side of a mountain (windward) and deposit it on the other (leeward), packing snow unevenly on the leeward side. A cornice or icy overhang atop a mountain or ridge is a danger sign.
- **Snowpack Conditions:** Snow falls in many layers through the season. Melting and freezing affects the snow and determines how layers stick together. Warm temperatures or rain make new snowfalls unstable.
- **Slope Angle:** Most avalanches occur on slopes of 30 to 45 degrees. Very wet, very dry, or granular snow will slide on slopes less steep.
- **Slope Orientation:** Most avalanches run on slopes facing north, east, or northeast. These slopes receive less sun and have a colder, deeper snowpack with less melting and bonding within the layers.

- **Terrain:** Be wary of bowls, gullies, or clear slopes where avalanches do or have already run. Another avalanche could easily follow. Cross steep slopes cautiously. Your own weight could trigger an avalanche.



# VOLCANO

## IF YOUR AREA IS AFFECTED by a distant volcanic eruption:

- Stay indoors if ash is falling. Close doors, windows, and all ventilation in the house. Put machinery in a garage or barn. Bring animals and livestock into closed shelters.
- Keep car or truck engines turned off and avoid driving in ash if possible. If driving is a necessity, keep speed below 35 mph so as not to create and ash cloud behind you.
- Seek shelter if outdoors. Use goggles to protect your eyes. A dust mask or damp cloth over your face will protect your lungs.
- Follow your **Family Disaster Plan**.
- Clear buildings of ash accumulation that may cause a roof to collapse.

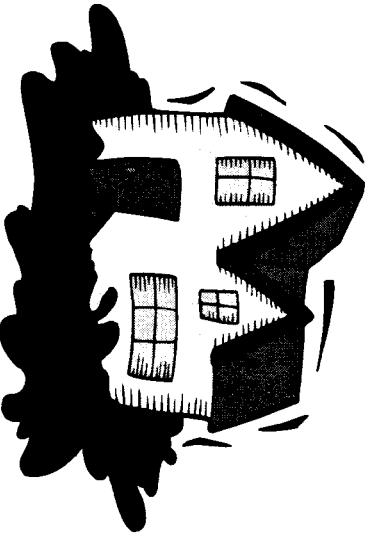


## IF YOU ARE NEAR A VOLCANIC ERUPTION:

- Stay away from the volcano site; the volcano could explode suddenly.
- Move out of the path of lava flow or flying rocks. Avoid areas downwind from the volcano if ash is being expelled.
- Be aware of mudflows. Hot ash or lava melts snow at the summit of a volcano. Meltwater mixes with falling ash, soil, and debris on lower slopes. The result is a mudflow that follows drainages and stream channels and can move 20 to 40 mph. Move uphill to avoid areas where mud may flow and stay off bridges if you see a mudflow coming.

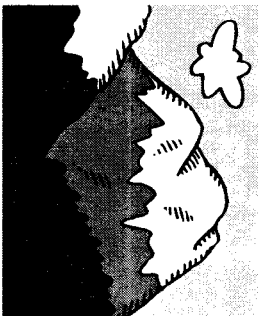
# FLOOD

- Be aware of streams, drainage channels, or marshes in your area known to flood suddenly.
- If it has been raining hard for several hours, or steadily for several days, listen for flood warnings:
  - **Advisory:** Streams, streets, and low-lying areas may flood. Listen for further information.
  - **Watch:** Flooding is possible; listen for further information. If flash flooding is possible, move to higher ground; it may come without warning.
  - **Warning:** Flooding is occurring or soon will; evacuate if advised to do so. If a flash flood is occurring, move to higher ground immediately.
- If you must evacuate, and if you have time:
  - Bring outdoor equipment or furniture inside or tie it down. Move essential items to upper floors.
  - Sterilize the bathtub and fill it with water in case water supplies become contaminated.
  - Fill your car with fuel.
  - If deep flooding is likely, allow floodwater to flow into your basement. This will equalize structural pressure and reduce damage.
  - Do not stack sandbags against your house. The pressure of ground and surface waters may collapse the walls and burst concrete floors.
- Move to higher ground away from rivers, streams, creeks, and storm drains. Stay away from floodwaters. They may be contaminated or be electrically charged from downed power lines.
- Six inches of moving water can knock you off your feet. If you must walk in a flooded area, go where the water is not moving or use a walking stick or ski pole to stabilize your movement.
- Do not drive in flooded areas. If water rises around your car, abandon it and move to higher ground. Be careful of areas where floodwaters have receded. Roads may have weakened and could collapse.
- Follow your **Family Disaster Plan**.



# landslide

Hills and mountains are constantly being weathered, worn down by ice, water, wind, and gravity. Ice freezes in cracks and breaks off pieces. Rain washes particles away; wind carries them, too. Rocks roll downhill, breaking or moving other rocks. It's a slow, barely noticeable process, except when it happens all at once.



- WHAT IT IS:**
- When slopes become steeper due to earthquake, erosion, volcanic eruption, or construction, they sometimes reach the point where gravity can no longer hold the ground in place. Rocks and dirt begin to move, most often after being soaked by heavy rain or rapid snowmelt.
  - Slopes burned free of brush and trees are more prone to landslide. Without vegetation to hold the ground in place, it takes less rain to get it moving.
  - Landslides start on steep hillsides and grow in speed and volume as they flow. They attain typical speeds of 10 mph but can move up to 35 mph.
  - Slides from many places can combine in drainage channels. Their destructive power is thus greatly increased.
  - The slide's consistency ranges from watery mud to thick, rocky mud that can carry large items such as boulders, trees, and cars.
  - Debris carried by a slide spreads over a broad area when the flow reaches flatter ground, sometimes causing widespread damage in developed areas.

- WHAT TO DO:**
- Areas vulnerable to landslides include existing old landslides, the bases of steep slopes, the bases of drainage channels, and developed hillsides where leach-field septic systems are used.
  - Stay alert during storms. If you live in such an area, listen for unusual sounds that might indicate moving debris. Listen for broadcast warnings.
  - Note any sudden increase or decrease in water flow in a nearby stream or channel, or a sudden change from clear to muddy water.
  - If a landslide occurs, move out of its path. If you are indoors and cannot leave, go to an upper story.
  - Stay away from the landslide area. There may be additional slides.
  - Stay alert while driving. Watch the road for collapsed pavement, mud, fallen rocks, and other indications of debris flow.
  - Follow your **Family Disaster Plan**.

# Hazardous Material Incident

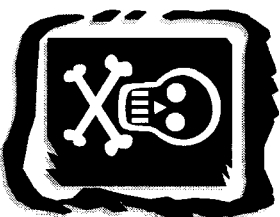
Hazardous materials are substances that, because of their chemical, physical, or biological nature, pose a potential risk to life, health, or property if released. Common household products mixed by accident or spilling may create hazardous materials.

## **HAZARDOUS MATERIALS — IN YOUR HOME:**

- If you mix or spill products that create smoke or fire, use a fire extinguisher if you can do so safely.
- If you mix or spill products that create unusual vapor, open windows and doors for ventilation.
- Get your family out of the house, if necessary.
- Call 911 and try to determine the problem's seriousness.
- Follow instructions provided.

## **HAZARDOUS MATERIALS — IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD:**

- If you witness a hazardous materials accident, call 911, your local emergency number, or the fire department.
- If you hear a warning signal, listen to emergency broadcasts for further information.
- Stay away from the incident site to minimize risk of contamination.
- If you are outside during an incident, stay upstream, uphill, and upwind at least half a mile from the site. If you are in a car, close windows and shut off ventilation.
- Avoid contact with any spilled liquid materials, airborne mist, or condensed chemical deposit. Keep your body fully covered.
- Evacuate immediately if you are told to do so.



## **IF YOU ARE REQUESTED TO STAY INDOORS** rather than evacuate:

- Seal all entry routes to your home. Close and lock windows and doors. Seal gaps under windows and doorways with wet towels and duct tape. Close as many internal doors as possible.
- Seal gaps around window air conditioners, exhaust fan grilles, stove and dryer vents. Close fireplace dampers.
- Turn off ventilation systems, including furnaces, air conditioners, vents, and fans.
- Sterilize the bathtub and fill it with water. Fill other large containers as well.
- Close storm shutters, drapes, curtains, and shades if warned of outdoor explosion. Stay away from windows to prevent injury from flying glass.
- Remain in protected, internal areas of the building where toxic vapors are reduced. Keep your radio with you.
- Follow your **Family Disaster Plan**.

## **IF YOU HAVE BEEN EXPOSED** to hazardous chemicals:

- Follow decontamination instructions from local authorities.
- Seek medical treatment for unusual symptoms.
- If medical help or decontamination information is not available, and you think you may have been exposed, remove all your clothing and shower thoroughly (unless you've been advised the chemical is water reactive). Change into loose, warm clothing and seek medical help as soon as possible.
- Place exposed clothing and shoes in tightly sealed containers without allowing them to contact other materials. Call to local authorities about proper disposal.

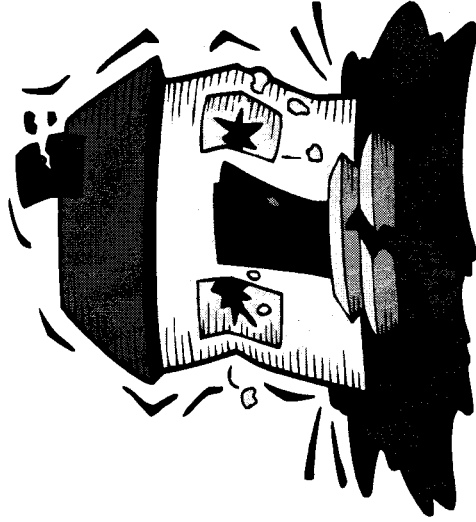
# Earthquake

## BEFORE:

- Bolt down water heaters and gas appliances. Repair defective wiring and utility connections.
- Fasten shelving to the wall, also tall furniture and anything that could fall and hurt someone or block an exit.
- Locate beds away from windows and outside walls.
- Store large, heavy, or breakable items on low shelves or in cabinets that can fasten shut.
- Anchor overhead lighting fixtures.
- Check for and repair structural damage.

## DURING:

- If you are **indoors** – take cover under a sturdy desk, table, or bench, or against an inside wall, and *hold on*. Stay away from glass, windows, outside doors, or objects that may fall.



- If you are **outdoors** – move away from buildings, streetlights, and utility wires.
- In a crowded **public place** – take cover away from objects that may fall. Do not rush for a doorway.
- In a **vehicle** – stop safely and stay inside. Avoid stopping near or under trees, buildings, overpasses, or utility wires.

## AFTER:

- Follow your **Family Disaster Plan**.
- Be prepared for aftershocks.
- Clean up spilled medicines, bleaches, gasoline, and other flammable liquids inside buildings.
- Open cabinets carefully. Beware of objects that can fall off shelves.

# Tsunami



- Earthquakes under the ocean cause tsunamis. Waves start small where the ocean is deep but grow taller near shore as water becomes shallow. Tsunami waves move outward from the quake's center averaging 450 miles an hour.
- A tsunami is a series of waves, not a single wave. The first wave to hit shore is usually not the biggest. A small tsunami at one beach can be a giant wave a few miles away. Most tsunami waves are less than 10 feet but could be up to 100 feet.
- If you feel an earthquake in a coastal area, listen for tsunami warnings on the radio. Noticeable rise or fall of coastal water depth is nature's advance tsunami warning.
- Pay attention to tsunami announcements:
  - **Information:** an earthquake has occurred that will likely not generate a tsunami.
  - **Advisory:** an earthquake has occurred which may generate a tsunami.
  - **Watch:** a tsunami may be on its way but is at least two hours away
  - **Warning:** a tsunami may be on its way and evacuation may be necessary
- Learn about tsunami risk in your community. Know the height of your street above sea level and your distance from the coast.
- Plan an evacuation route to an area at least 100 feet above sea level or up to two miles inland.
- Stay away from shoreline if a tsunami is coming. If you can see the wave, it's too late to get away.
- Follow your **Family Disaster Plan**. Escape when advised to along your planned evacuation route.

*Information in this brochure obtained from:*

**American Red Cross, National Disaster Education Coalition, Federal Emergency Management Agency, National Snow and Ice Data Center, and University of Alaska Fairbanks Cooperative Extension Service.**

# WINDSTORM

Alaska has no hurricanes or tornados but we sometimes have winds exceeding 100 mph. Simple precautions can keep you safe during such a storm:

- Bring outdoor equipment and furniture inside or tie it down.
- Bring pets and livestock to shelter.
- Put vehicles in a garage or under cover to protect them from flying debris.
- Stay indoors. Close storm shutters, draperies, curtains, or shades. Stay away from unprotected windows. Flying shingles, tree branches, and other airborne objects can smash through and spray glass.
- If winds seem severe, stay off the upper floors of your house. If the roof goes, you don't want to be there.
- Sterilize the bathtub and fill it with water.
- If outdoors, seek shelter.
- Drive only if necessary. Streets may be filled with debris such as fallen trees and rolling trashcans. Flying objects may hit your car.
- Stay away from downed power lines. Report them to the power company.
- Follow your **Family Disaster Plan**.

