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**THE RESIDENT  
EMERGENCY/DISASTER**

**HANDBOOK**

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# The Resident Emergency/Disaster Handbook

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This manual has been prepared to provide Residents with information on how to cope with various emergency/disaster situations. ALPS, Inc. urges you to read this material and keep it in a convenient location so you can refer to it when needed. In the back of this handbook, you will find useful checklists to help you prepare for any situation.

If at any time, you have questions regarding this handbook, please contact us as soon as possible so we can discuss it with you.

## **WHAT CAN HAPPEN?**

Below is a list of emergencies or disasters that can happen where your residence is located. The sections following this will help you prepare in the event any of these situations happen.

**Household Chemicals**

**Power Outages**

**Home Fire**

**Wild fires**

**Flood**

**Pandemic flu**

**Chemical**

**High winds**

**High Winds**

**Hail**

**Freezing conditions**

**Extreme Heat**

**Hurricanes**

**Tornados**

## RENTERS' INSURANCE

We cannot stress this enough – if you do not already have renters' insurance – PURCHASE IT IMMEDIATELY!

Throughout the country this year, there have been many disasters – tornadoes, flooding, and fires. You never know when something could happen to your residence. Therefore, obtaining renter's insurance is crucial to handling an emergency or disaster. It is amazing how much money it can take to replace personal belongings. If you do not think so, sit down and make a list of what you own and how much it would take to buy it again. You will find the results amazing.

It is a misconception by many tenants that the property owner's insurance will cover their contents. This is not the case - the owner's insurance covers the structure and certain areas of liability, but it will not include the tenant's personal property.

It is also crucial to review what the various renters' insurance policies cover. Many people think all renters' insurances are the same, but that is far from true. Just like car insurance, they can have a varied and wide range of coverage. Review the insurance to see if it "will replace" your valuables and personal property. Some policies include electronics and jewelry but some do not. Take a complete inventory before purchasing or reviewing a renters' insurance policy before making a decision.

Consider whether the insurance company will offer "actual cash value" (ACV) or "replacement cost coverage" for your belongings. As the name implies, ACV coverage will pay only for what your property was worth at the time it was damaged or stolen. For example, if you purchased a camera five years ago for \$700, it would be worth significantly less today. While you could still need to spend about \$700 for a new camera, your insurance company will pay only for what the old one was worth, minus your deductible. Replacement coverage can make a big difference.

Here are other items to consider:

- Additional living expenses: some policies include payments for living somewhere else when events such as a fire or flood happen in a residence.
- Additional benefits: an example of this is a policy that covers the liability of water-filled furniture.
- Liability protection: although this is standard with most renters' policies today, it is a very important item to have if an accident occurs in the residence and the injured party sues you.
- The amount of the deductible: this can vary from policy to policy. It is important to review "what if something happens" and how the deductible will affect the outcome.

The Internet is a great source of information where you can find not only insurance companies but also price comparisons. Call different insurance agents to verify your information. Protect yourself - obtain or review your renters' insurance policy today.

## FIRES

Because fires are one of the more common emergencies, we are addressing this issue first. Fires are frightening and devastating. They can happen anywhere, both inside and outside of your residence. You can take steps to prevent fires or at the very least, escape safely.

### Smoke alarm/Carbon Monoxide Alarm

The first important step is ensuring that your smoke and Carbon Monoxide detectors are working. Many people die yearly because they do not ensure their smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are working. This can save your life and those of your family and friends.

- Check your smoke alarm/detectors at least monthly same for CO detectors.
- Never disconnect a smoke alarm/detector, particularly because it is beeping – it can save lives. A beeping smoke alarm generally means that the battery is dead – so replace it immediately.
- Test your batteries at least once a month and when necessary, replace them, even if they also electric.
- If you have replaced the batteries, tested them, and they are still not working, notify the Property Management Company immediately.

### If there is a fire

- If there is a fire, stay calm, call 911, keep low, avoid breathing in smoke or gases, and evacuate quickly.
- After you have safely evacuated, contact our office as soon as possible.
- Contact emergency services for aid – you will find some emergency services information later in this handbook.

### Develop a plan.

- Buy portable fire extinguishers and place around the residence. Keep them current.
- Put important papers and other valuables together so you can quickly take them with you during evacuation if possible.
- Everyone should be aware of what can happen when there is a fire. Plan a meeting or meetings to discuss what can cause fires, how to prevent them, and how to handle them if they occur. Make sure to include all residents, including minors.
- Regularly test the smoke alarm/detector and if it has a battery, replace it when necessary.
- Find different ways for everyone to sound an alarm – they can yell, pound on a wall, whistle, etc. Do not just rely on the smoke alarm/detector.
- If someone is hearing impaired, figure out how to alert them, such as vibration, flashing lights, or another method.
- Make sure physically handicapped persons can escape and have assistance.
- Organize critical documents in advance to take if there is time, but be sure every resident knows escaping safely is the most important thing.
- Store important documents/computer files in another location.
- Determine an escape plan from every room in the house – if possible, every room should have two means of escape and rope ladders are useful for evacuating upper floors, unless there is a fire escape in the building or outside stairs.

- Make sure everyone knows how to sound an alarm and escape. Practice the escape route in advance.
- If the fire is an outside fire, work out evacuation routes and transportation to escape.
- Post emergency numbers by or on the telephone. Train everyone on how to call 911 and give the correct information if there is time.
- Make a plan where everyone knows to meet after a fire occurs.

### Steps to prevent exterior fires

- It is crucial to keep landscape watered all year round. Dry bushes and grasses are fires waiting to happen.
- Keep grasses mowed and trimmed wherever possible to avoid areas that could kindle easily and keep debris picked up. It is particularly important to keep grasses trimmed around the residence.
- Never put hot ashes from a fireplace in a garbage receptacle, on a wood deck or porch, or on any grassy area – it only takes a spark to start a major fire.
- Make sure cigarettes are disposed of properly and never toss into dry grass or debris.
- Never store newspapers, boxes, or any other debris against the residence that could easily burn.
- When using a barbecue grill outside, leave sufficient space away from siding and eaves.
- Always supervise a grill until it is cold, and in the case of gas grills, be sure hose connections are tight and check hoses for leaks.
- Never store gasoline near a possible ignition source and never smoke when handling gasoline; store gasoline in proper containers approved by the local or state fire authorities.
- Only start a lawnmower several feet from the residence and away from any area that could possibly ignite, such as dry grass.
- Do not use fireworks around your residence – attend a professional fireworks display where you can truly enjoy a spectacular event and avoid a fire.

### Steps to prevent interior fires

- Are the stove and oven clean, devoid of grease and debris? Never store items in the oven. Built-up grease can easily catch fire – clean it up before it can happen.
- Don't use any frayed electrical cords, power strips, or extension cords. Check small appliances, floor lamps, table lamps, vacuums, hair dryers, curling irons, cords, or any other appliance. If there is a bad cord, discard or replace it.
- Don't leave your appliances running when you leave home? Avoid this habit at all times to lower the risk from a fire from overheating of appliances.
- Do you like to BBQ? Only use grills designed for indoor use if grilling inside. Never use one designed for the outside. Not only could it cause a fire, but also could emit deadly carbon dioxide poisons.
- Do you overload the dishwasher? Items can catch fire if they land on the heating coils.
- Are you aware if you are using too many appliances? Overloaded circuits can cause fires. If your appliances are constantly shutting down, tripping a GFI circuit, or you see blinking lights, you are probably overloading the circuits. Discontinue use when this happens.

- Do you use any type of additional heating appliance, such as a space heater? Never place a heating appliance near anything flammable or combustible, and turn it off when leaving the room or the house. It is advisable to use a heating appliance that will automatically shut off if it tips over or overheats.
- Do you use many candles? If so, determine if the candle placement or the candle itself could cause a fire. Do not leave candles burning unattended, extinguish them when you leave the room.
- Do you have a fireplace? These are by agreement for decoration and cosmetic purposes only.
- Do you use matches, lighters, or halogen lights? If so, store matches and lighters properly and keep them out of reach of children. Keep halogen lights clear of flammable window coverings, furnishings, low ceilings, and turn off when leaving the house.
- Do you check your holiday lights? Never put up any lights, inside or out, without checking them and discarding any that are not working properly.

## **POWER OUTAGES**

Power outages can cause many problems, so take the following precautions:

### **Prepare these items in advance**

- Portable radio
- Flashlights
- Batteries for radio and flashlights
- Plenty of water
- Supply of non-perishable food

### **What to do when it happens**

- Turn off all electrical equipment that you were using, such as computers, printers, hair dryers, and irons, as soon as possible. There may be a power surge when power comes back on and this can damage electronics and appliances.
- Only use flashlights – do not use candles.
- Avoid opening refrigerators and freezers to conserve food as long as possible.
- Do not use a generator inside your residence or garage. If you do have a generator, read the information on the generator on how to use it properly. Generators can cause carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning, which will kill you without warning.
- Only connect equipment to a generator outside the home – do not connect the generator to the home electrical system.
- Listen for information on the local radio or the emergency line of your utility provider.



# CHEMICAL HAZARDS

## Steps to prevent chemical hazards

- Buy only as much of a chemical as you think you will use.
- Keep products containing hazardous materials in their original containers and never remove the labels unless the container is corroding.
- You should repackage and clearly label corroding containers.
- Never store hazardous products in food containers.
- Never mix household hazardous chemicals or waste with other products. Incompatibles, such as chlorine bleach and ammonia, may react, ignite, or explode.
- Take precautions to prevent and respond to accidents.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for the proper use of the household chemical.
- Never smoke while using household chemicals.
- Never use hair spray, cleaning solutions, paint products, or pesticides near an open flame (e.g., pilot light, lighted candle, fireplace, wood burning stove, etc.) Although you may not be able to see or smell them, vapor particles in the air could catch fire or explode.
- Clean up any chemical spill immediately. Use rags to clean up the spill. Wear gloves and eye protection. Allow the fumes in the rags to evaporate outdoors, and then dispose of the rags by wrapping them in a newspaper and placing them in a sealed plastic bag in your trash can outside. Do not keep inside the house.
- Dispose of hazardous materials correctly. Take household hazardous waste to a local collection program. Check with your county or state environmental or solid waste agency to learn if there is a household hazardous waste collection program in your area.
- Post the number of the emergency medical services and the poison control center in the kitchen. In an emergency, you may not have time to look up critical phone numbers. **The national poison control number is (800) 222-1222.**

## If there is a danger of fire or explosion:

- Evacuate everyone from the residence immediately.
- Do not waste time collecting items or calling the fire department when you are in danger.
- Call the fire department from outside (a cellular phone or a neighbor's phone) once you are safely away from danger. Then notify your property manager as soon as possible
- Be sure to stay upwind and away from the residence to avoid breathing toxic fumes.

## **Recognize and respond to symptoms of toxic poisoning:**

- Difficulty breathing
- Irritation of the eyes, skin, throat, or respiratory tract
- Changes in skin color
- Headache or blurred vision
- Dizziness
- Clumsiness or lack of coordination
- Cramps or diarrhea

## **If toxic poisoning symptoms or exposure to a household chemical**

- Find any containers of the substance that are readily available in order to provide requested information to medical personnel.
- Later discard contaminated containers when appropriate because many chemicals do not wash out completely – dispose of them properly.
- Beware of first aid advice found on containers because it may be out of date or inappropriate.
- Call 9-1-1 if necessary. Follow the emergency operator or dispatcher's first aid instructions carefully.
- Do not give anything by mouth unless advised to do so by a medical professional.

## **BEFORE A MAJOR EMERGENCY/DISASTER**

### **Take specific steps**

As stated previously, go to this website to obtain information for specific action steps for you to develop, review with your family, friends, and neighbors. Don't overlook the benefits of having a practice drill; this can be very important if children are residing in the household.

<http://www.fema.gov/plan/index.shtm>

### **Reminder: obtain renters' insurance**

Once again, we want to remind you that the property owner's insurance will not cover your contents. Do NOT wait until it is too late – if you do not have insurance, get it as soon as possible.

### **Meet with all household members and form a plan**

You need a plan for a major emergency/disaster so that when an event occurs everyone knows what to do. Put it in writing and keep it available to everyone in a central part of the home.

### **Put together an emergency/disaster kit**

It is important to have an emergency/disaster kit available so you have the right supplies. There is a list in the last section of this handbook.

### **Keep non-perishable food and water supplies available**

It is important to have food and water available for at least three days. Remember, you may not be able to cook and more than likely, you will lose power. You need food that will not perish and bottled water because the water supply may become contaminated.

## Use an emergency/disaster checklist

This will help you prepare a plan. We have a handy checklist located in the last section of this handbook to help you

## Create a communication plan

Sit down with your household members and figure out how you will communicate when an emergency or disaster happens. Figure out what members will do if the phone lines are out and even cellular phones are out.

## Learn area emergency signals

Most communities have warning signals. Find out what they sound like and what to do after you hear them. Contact the fire department or the local Red Cross for information.

## Plan an evacuation route

Figure out several evacuation routes for major emergency/disasters. This will be useful when something happens to avoid unnecessary stress. Educate everyone in your household of the evacuation routes.

## Plan places to meet

Pick two places to meet. One should be near your home if there is a sudden emergency, like fire. The other should be outside your neighborhood in the event you can not go home.

## Have emergency contact numbers

You should have a local one and a contact out-of-state. Then family members, friends, and your management company can contact them to find out how you are and what has happened in your residence. **If you have not already done so, contact our company and supply us with your emergency numbers.**

## Keep your vehicles in working condition

It will make evacuation difficult if you do not have reliable transportation. If you have any suspicion that you will have to evacuate, fill up your gas tank. Best practice, never let the gas get below a quarter of a tank. Gas will become a major commodity when an emergency/disaster occurs.

## Locate emergency shelters

Contact your local government for shelter in your area. Many churches and schools are set up for emergency/disaster situations.

## Prepare for your pets

Many people forget they need to make arrangements for their pets – shelters generally do not take in pets.

- Keep pets inside the home unless you have to evacuate
- Monitor the pets' behavior for signs of stress
- Have emergency food and medicines ready for your pets
- Locate shelters and veterinarians that will accommodate pets
- Plan with family members who will be responsible for evacuating the pets

## **DURING A MAJOR EMERGENCY/DISASTER**

### **Do not panic; remain calm**

It is important to remain calm when an emergency or disaster happens. Panic leads you into unnecessary mistakes.

### **Take specific steps**

The steps you take during an emergency/disaster may save your life, the lives of your family and or the lives of your friends and neighbors. No plan is perfect but a good source of information for you to develop an action plan right for you can be found at:

<http://www.fema.gov/plan/index.shtm>

### **Only make necessary calls**

- Make quick calls as planned to family members, but only those that are needed.
- Call 9-1-1 if you really need medical or rescue assistance.
- Although we are concerned for your safety, we ask that you do not call your Property Manager until the danger passes, unless the emergency or disaster is manageable.
- If you do call us, be brief and concise when you leave a message. If we are able to assist you, we will. Vendors and emergency services will be handling only the worst-case problems.
- Unnecessary calls will only tie up telephone lines and we will not be able to send out vendors to help you.

### **Follow your emergency plan**

This is the time to put your emergency plan in action. Quickly collect items you will need for evacuation and they should include medical supplies, disaster supplies, necessary clothing, temporary bedding, car keys, and personal records.

### **Check on neighbors or disabled persons**

Don't assume someone is taking care of neighbors or the disabled – they may need your help and not be able to contact you.

### **Take actions to secure your pets**

Follow your plan and make sure that your pets are getting out of the residence or getting the right care. Do not let them roam – they will become disoriented and lost.

### **Listen to a battery operated radio**

There will be emergency/disaster reports – tune into the stations that will give you the most information. Limit radio time to prolong battery life.

## **Keep your car in the driveway if necessary**

Depending on the situation, it may be wise to keep your car in the driveway for evacuation.

## **Shut off utilities if necessary**

Shut off the electricity at the main fuse or breaker and turn off the water at the main valve. Unless advised, leave the gas on. Disconnect any propane tanks.

## **Evacuate if ordered**

If you receive an order to evacuate – EVACUATE! Your safety and the safety of members of your household is the most important thing.

# **AFTER A MAJOR EMERGENCY/DISASTER PASSES**

If forced to evacuate your residence:

- Wait until local officials have declared your area safe
- Above all, use caution.
- Check for all injuries.
  - Do not attempt to move seriously injured persons unless they are in immediate danger of death or further injury.
  - If you must move an unconscious person, first stabilize the neck and back, then call for help immediately.
- Keep a battery-powered radio with you so you can listen for emergency updates and news reports.
- Have a battery-powered flashlight ready
  - Note: The flashlight should be turned on outside before entering - the battery may produce a spark that could ignite leaking gas, if present.
- Be wary of wildlife, other animals, and if applicable, poisonous snakes
- Use the phone only to report life-threatening emergencies.
- Stay off the streets when possible.
- Watch for fallen objects, downed electrical wires, and weakened walls, bridges, roads, and sidewalks.

## **Before you enter your residence**

- Walk carefully around the outside and check for loose power lines, gas leaks, and structural damage.

## **When NOT to enter your residence**

- If you have any doubts about your safety
- If you think the building is unstable
- If you smell gas
- If floodwaters remain around the building
- If fire damaged the residence and the authorities have not declared it safe

## **When you do enter your residence**

- Enter the home carefully and check for damage.
- Turn on your flashlight before entering – do NOT use candles
- Be aware of loose boards and slippery floors.
- If you smell gas, or hear a hissing or blowing sound, open the door and leave immediately. Do not attempt to turn anything off – it could spark an explosion.
- Turn off the main gas valve from the outside, if you can.
- Call the gas company from a neighbor's residence or a cellular telephone.
- If you shut off the gas supply at the main valve, you will need a professional to turn it back on.
- Do not smoke or use oil, gas lanterns, candles, or torches for lighting inside a damaged home until you are sure there is no leaking gas or other flammable materials present.
- Check the electrical system unless you are wet, standing in water, or unsure of your safety.
- If possible, turn off the electricity at the main fuse box or circuit breaker.
- If the situation is unsafe, leave the building and call for help. Do not turn on the lights until you are sure they are safe to use.
- If it looks like the building may collapse, leave immediately.
- If appliances are wet, do not turn them on
- If damaged pipes, turn off the main water valve.
- Check with local authorities before using any water to see if the water is contaminated.
- Do not flush toilets unless you know that sewage lines are safe.
- Throw out all food and other supplies that you suspect may have become contaminated or come into contact with floodwater.
- Open cabinets and be alert for objects that may fall.
- Clean up household chemical spills if safe to do so.
- Disinfect items you suspect are contaminated by raw sewage, bacteria, or chemical
- Call your insurance agent to report damage to your personal items

## **Call your Property Manager**

- Call our management company to report the damage to the property
- Report if you must remain evacuated or if you can move back in
- Remain patient if there is damage – vendor services will be swamped
- Keep trying if you cannot get through – the telephone lines may still be inoperable

## **Understand how disaster can affect your family or friends**

- It is normal to feel anxious about your own safety and that of your family and close friends.
- Profound sadness, grief, and anger are normal reactions to an abnormal event.
- Acknowledging your feelings helps you recover.
- Focusing on your strengths and abilities will help you heal.
- Accepting help from community programs and resources is healthy.
- Everyone has different needs and different ways of coping.
- It is common to want to strike back at people who have caused great pain.
- Children and older adults are of special concern in the aftermath of disasters.

## **Recognize Signs of Disaster Related Stress**

If you have someone in your household who has exhibits any of the following signs, they might need crisis counseling or stress management assistance:

- Difficulty communicating thoughts
- Difficulty sleeping
- Difficulty maintaining balance in their lives
- Low threshold of frustration
- Increased use of drugs/alcohol
- Limited attention span
- Poor work performance
- Headaches/stomach problems
- Tunnel vision/muffled hearing
- Colds or flu-like symptoms
- Disorientation or confusion
- Difficulty concentrating
- Reluctance to leave home
- Depression, sadness
- Feelings of hopelessness
- Mood-swings and easy bouts of crying
- Overwhelming guilt and self-doubt
- Fear of crowds, strangers, or being alone

## **Handling Disaster-Related Stress**

The following are ways to ease disaster-related stress:

- Talk with someone about your feelings - anger, sorrow, and other emotions - even though it may be difficult.
- Seek help from professional counselors who deal with post-disaster stress.
- Do not hold yourself responsible for the disastrous event or be frustrated because you feel you cannot help directly in the rescue work

- Take steps to promote your own physical and emotional healing by healthy eating, rest, exercise, relaxation, and meditation.
- Maintain a normal family and daily routine, limiting demanding responsibilities on yourself and your family.
- Spend time with family and friends.
- Participate in memorials.
- Use existing support groups of family, friends, and religious institutions.
- Ensure you are ready for future events by restocking your disaster supplies kits and updating your family disaster plan.

## **ORGANIZATIONS THAT CAN HELP**

Here are some organizations that will provide emergency services. Check your directory for local telephone numbers or check out the following Internet sites. You should also research churches and shelters that are near your residence.

### **American Red Cross**

- <http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/>

### **Federal Emergency Management Agency - FEMA**

- <http://www.fema.gov/individual/index.shtm>
- <http://www.fema.gov/assistance/index.shtm>

### **Centers for Disease Control (CDC)**

- <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/preparedness/>

### **Salvation Army**

- [http://www.salvationarmyusa.org/usn/www\\_usn\\_2.nsf](http://www.salvationarmyusa.org/usn/www_usn_2.nsf)

## **IMPORTANT FORMS & INFORMATION**

On the following pages, you will find these useful forms.

**Emergency/Disaster Kit**

**Emergency/Disaster Checklist**

**Hazardous Chemical List**

**Personal Inventory List**



# EMERGENCY/DISASTER KIT

## Emergency supplies

- Battery-powered radio or television and extra batteries, a NOAA weather radio
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Shutoff wrench, pliers, shovel and other tools.
- Duct tape, scissors, plastic sheeting
- Fire extinguisher
- Paper, pens, pencils.
- Needles and thread.
- Paper plates, plastic cups and utensils.
- Plastic trash bags
- Hand sanitizer, liquid detergent, towelettes, soap.
- Toilet paper, paper towels
- Chlorine bleach and other disinfectant cleaners

## First-aid supplies

- First-aid manual,
- Scissors, sterile bandages, gauze pads, cotton balls, safety pins, latex gloves
- Antibiotic ointment, cleansing agents such as isopropyl alcohol and hydrogen peroxide, germicidal soaps, moistened towelettes
- Needles, tweezers, scissors, thermometer
- Aspirin, anti-diarrhea medication, antacids, syrup of ipecac (to induce vomiting), vitamins

## Documents/Information

- Contact number
- Copies of important documents
- Household documents
- Cash or traveler's checks

## Your vehicle

- An emergency backpack
- Bottled water

## Supplies for temporary shelter

- Blankets, bedding, sleeping bags
- Comfortable clothes and shoes
- Supplies for babies and the elderly
- Supplies for your pets
- Things to do: books, games, toys

## Food & Water

- Store bottled water, non-perishable food, and emergency supplies to last at least three days--the longer, the better.

## Personal Emergency/Disaster Checklist

**Pre- Emergency/Disaster Checklist:** Review and implement this list – it could be a lifesaver.

- Take an inventory of your belongings, complete with photos, descriptions, and serial numbers. Items to list are TVs, stereos, cameras, sports equipment, jewelry, silver, computers, or anything of value
- Know where the shut off valves are in your residence
- Keep copies of important papers stored in a safety deposit box
- Make sure your renters insurance is current at all times
- Discuss with your family or other residents what emergency procedures you will use and post them in the kitchen, office area, etc.
- Plan escape routes in the event of fire and inform every resident of the routes, including children
- Teach children how to use 911 or call for other services
- Always maintain a reserve of bottled water/drinks and non-perishable foods in your residence, along with a manual can opener.
- Have a portable radio with plenty of extra batteries and the right kind for the radio
- Have two or more flashlights with the extra batteries and for the right kind the flashlight
- Have large long-burning candles and matches available
- Have an adequate first aid kit and replace items when necessary
- Keep your cellular phone charged

### Use this list when an emergency/disaster occurs:

- In a gas leak is possible during an emergency/disaster, immediately turn off the gas valve
- Keep your car in the driveway, if it is practical, for any necessary evacuation
- Call 9-1-1 only to access help and NOT to learn news
- Call the office when it is practical, but remember that the company will do what they can to help you, but is not an emergency service. Many repairs will have to wait until the emergency/disaster passes
- Only call people when necessary and have an emergency contact outside your area who can notify other people
- Limit use of the telephones during emergencies/disaster to avoid overloading the circuits
- Unplug or turn off major lights and appliances - such as space heaters, washers, dryers, computers, TVs, etc. Several appliances coming back on at the same time may overload circuits or hot appliances may come on while you are away or asleep causing fire hazards
- Leave a single light on to alert you that power is restored
- If you use candles and matches, do it safely – you do not want to create another problem
- Limit cell phone usage or use your car to charge batteries
- If you have to call emergency services, be calm, state your problem, and be patient. Emergency services will be overloaded.
- If you have standing water in a room, do not enter if the electricity is on; try to wait for a professional
- Do not vacuum wet floors or carpets unless you have the right equipment for water removal. Using a normal vacuum is dangerous with water
- Only open freezers and refrigerators when necessary to avoid losing food as long as you can
- Conserve water and food when disaster occurs
- If you are in a car when power lines fall, remain in the car until you can get help or you are certain that it is safe to do so; then jump clear of the car, not touching any metal.

## HAZARDOUS HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

### Cleaning Products

Oven cleaners  
Drain cleaners  
Wood and metal cleaners and polishes  
Toilet cleaners  
Tub, tile, shower cleaners  
Bleach (laundry)  
Pool chemicals

### Indoor Pesticides

Ant sprays and baits  
Cockroach sprays and baits  
Flea repellents and shampoo  
Bug sprays  
Houseplant insecticides  
Moth repellents  
Mouse and rat poisons and baits

### Automotive Products

Motor oil  
Fuel additives  
Carburetor and fuel injection cleaners  
Air conditioning refrigerants  
Starter fluids  
Automotive batteries  
Transmission and brake fluid  
Antifreeze

### Workshop/Painting Supplies

Adhesives and glues  
Furniture strippers  
Oil- or enamel-based paint  
Stains and finishes  
Paint thinners and turpentine  
Paint strippers and removers  
Photographic chemicals  
Fixatives and other solvents  
Lawn and Garden Products  
Herbicides  
Insecticides  
Fungicides/wood preservatives

### Miscellaneous

Batteries  
Mercury thermostats or thermometers  
Fluorescent light bulbs  
Driveway sealer  
Other Flammable Products

### Propane tanks and other compressed gas cylinders

Kerosene  
Home heating oil  
Diesel fuel  
Gas/oil mix  
Lighter fluid