



## Do You Have a Family Emergency Plan?

Almost as important as the disaster supplies kit is your family's emergency plan. Decide on a location for your family to meet outside the home in the event of a home evacuation. For instance, if your home catches on fire, plan to meet in a particular neighbor's yard.

**Separation is a real possibility during the day when adults are at work and children are at school.** To that end, pick a location like a park or a favorite family restaurant at which to meet.

Furthermore, have an out-of-town friend or family member act as the family contact to relay messages. If you can't make it to the family meeting spot, you can call the family contact and leave a message with your location and condition. All family members should carry the contact's name and phone number with them at all times.

If you are asked to evacuate due to a hazardous waste spill or the threat of a hurricane coming ashore, **know where you are going.** Make arrangements in advance to stay with friends or relatives who live outside of town. If there isn't time, know the location of emergency shelters. Pet-owners should find out where to take their animals in case they are not permitted at the shelter.

Once your family is prepared for the worst, and your Post home also is well-equipped for a disaster, be sure to check with your employer to ensure there is a disaster plan in effect at the workplace.

## What Can Your Post Do?

VFW members and Posts around the country are encouraged to work with Citizen Corps Councils to promote volunteer service opportunities in support of first responders, disaster relief and community safety. Contact your local Citizen Corps Council and ask to be a member. Offer your Post home as a meeting place for training, or provide meals to volunteers.

For more information on what to do in the event of a natural disaster or terrorist attack, visit these Web sites:

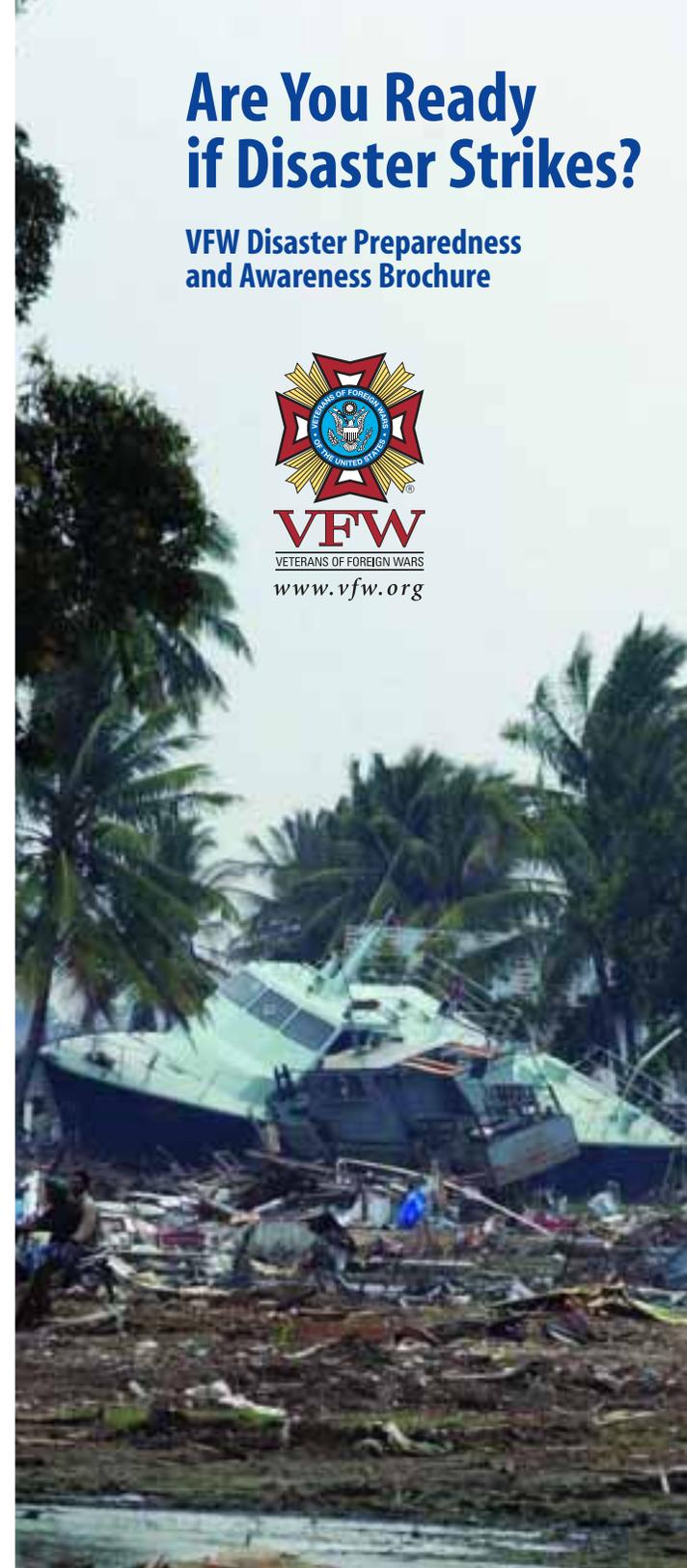
[www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)  
[www.citizencorps.gov](http://www.citizencorps.gov)



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# Are You Ready if Disaster Strikes?

**VFW Disaster Preparedness  
and Awareness Brochure**





## Spread the Word: Preparation is Key

If disaster strikes your community, will your VFW Post members and their families be prepared? Keep in mind that disasters range from floods, hurricanes and ice storms to hazardous waste spills and the unthinkable terrorist attack. September is *National Prepared Month*, so take this opportunity to share the following information with your members.

Everyone is susceptible to the possibility of emergencies. It doesn't matter if you live in the Midwest or New York City. **What does matter is whether or not you're prepared.**

This guide will help better prepare you in the event of a major storm or attack. You will be instructed how to put together a home disaster supplies kit, though you may want to make one for your Post as well.

Before you start gathering items you need for your disaster kit, here are some simple steps to take around your home:

- Check and change the batteries in your smoke alarms and replace all alarms that are more than 10 years old.
- Organize and practice a family fire drill.
- Locate the utility mains for your home and know how to manually turn them off.
- Post a list of emergency phone numbers next to the telephones in your home.
- Cordless phones won't work if the power is out. Be sure to have a regular telephone to plug in.

## Creating Your Disaster Supplies Kit

Following a catastrophe, it can take days before emergency workers are able to reach you and your family. The best way to plan for emergencies is to prepare a disaster supplies kit. Once the unfortunate event occurs, there will not be time to shop or search for supplies.

Before getting your kit together, be sure you have enough supplies for at least three days. **Consider making two kits.** In one, put everything needed to stay where you are and make it on your own. The other should be a lightweight, smaller version you can take with you should evacuation occur.

This is a suggested list of what your disaster kit should contain:

- One gallon of water per person per day
- A minimum three-day supply of non-perishable food including canned items, peanut butter, jelly, crackers, granola bars and trail mix
- One complete change of clothing and footwear per person, including hats
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Toilet paper and feminine sanitary products
- Disinfectant
- Trash bags with ties
- Mess kits or paper cups, plates and utensils
- Battery-operated radio and extra batteries
- Cash or traveler's checks
- Utility knife and a non-electric can opener
- Fire extinguisher
- Pliers
- Duct tape and plastic sheeting
- Compass
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Aluminum foil
- Signal flare
- Paper and pencil
- Shut-off wrench to turn off household utilities
- Filter masks

Be sure to keep your disaster supply kit in a convenient place known to all members of your family. **The items should be kept in airtight plastic bags.** Your food and water supply should be rotated every six months.

In addition to the important items already mentioned, a complete first aid kit will likely come in handy. Be sure to include the following:

- Sterile adhesive bandages
- 2- and 4-inch sterile gauze pads
- Hypoallergenic adhesive tape
- Triangular bandages
- 2- and 3-inch sterile roller bandages
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Needle
- Antiseptic
- Thermometer
- Tube of petroleum jelly
- Assorted safety pins
- Cleansing agent
- Latex gloves
- Sunscreen
- Aspirin or non-aspirin pain reliever
- Anti-diarrhea medication
- Antacid
- Ipecac
- Laxative
- Activated charcoal

