ARE YOU PREPARED?

The Albany County Sheriff's Office, Office of Emergency Management assists local municipalities and their citizens to prepare for emergencies through outreach programs and activities. The Office of Emergency Management strives to maintain a high level of preparedness throughout Albany County.

Each community's level of preparedness begins with **YOU**. It is with this thought in mind that this Preparedness Guide has been created.

Disasters happen anytime, anywhere. When disaster strikes, you may not have much time to react. A highway spill of hazardous materials might mean instant evacuation. A winter storm may confine your family at home. An earthquake, flood, tornado or any other disaster could cut off basic services – gas, water, electricity or telephone – for days.

Here, in Albany County, citizens should consider planning and preparing for:

- Winter Storms / Ice Storms
- Flooding
- Hazardous Materials Incidents (Fixed Site or Transportation)
- Fires
- Extreme Weather / Severe Storms
- Power / Utility Failures

Although this is not a complete list of hazards, preparing for these will also help you and your family prepare for other events that may occur. Become aware of your surroundings and what may occur that would interrupt your daily life.

This pamphlet is intended to be a guide for the individual to help lessen the effects of disaster events for the individual and the family.

- **Create an Emergency Plan**
- **Build a Disaster "Go Kit."**
- **Develop an Emergency Checklist**
- **Plan for Evacuation and Sheltering**

Create an Emergency Plan

Should a disaster occur, emergency workers will respond, however, you should be prepared to be self-sufficient and possibly on your own for up to three days (72 hours).

- Become aware of the hazards that may affect you. Learn what to do for each hazard.
- Have two meeting places, right outside your home in case of fire and one should be outside the neighborhood. Make sure everyone knows the address and phone number.
- Ask an out-of-state friend to become your "family contact." After a major disaster, it is often easier to call long distance. Use this person as a point of contact.
- Prepare a disaster supply kit, sometimes called a "Go Kit." Have emergency supplies on hand and keep them ready to use and current.
- Discuss what to do in an evacuation. Be sure to listen for official instructions on radio or TV. Plan how to take care of pets. They will not be allowed in shelters due to health reasons.
- Learn about how you will be warned and what to do when you receive warnings. Albany County uses 'ACCESS' – a means by which an affected area will be contacted and given emergency information over standard (non-cellular) telephone lines. Radio and TV broadcasts and door to door notification may also be utilized.
- Listen to radio and TV for updates and critical information. **Stay informed.**
- Keep essential family records in a fireproof and waterproof container.
- Also, do the same type of planning for your workplace, school or daycare center, or other places where you or your family spends time.
- Before disaster strikes, assemble supplies that may be needed in an evacuation. Ex: bottled drinking water, food that doesn't require cooking or can be cooked on an outside grill, flashlight, and cell phone charger for your car and a hardcopy of your phone contacts and a cord phone.
- Fill your car's and generator's gas tanks prior to a storm. Gas stations may not have power to their pumps during electrical outages.
- **Practice and maintain your plan.**

If Disaster Strikes
Remain Calm and Patient

Put Your Plan Into Action

THINK Before YOU Act
Don't Do Anything That Will Harm Yourself or Others

The "GO KIT"
Your Disaster Supply Kit

A Go Kit consists of items you may need if you must leave your home. While reviewing the below list consider if you may go to, a friend's, a relative's, hotel or shelter. Consider more than one option.

Items recommended for your "Go Kit:"

- A three day water supply (one gallon per person recommended)
- A three day supply of non-perishable packaged or canned foods, snacks
- One change of seasonal clothing, raingear, sturdy footwear, sleeping bag/blanket (Mylar "space blanket") You may prefer your own pillow and blanket at a shelter.
- First Aid Kit, prescription and non-prescription medicine, extra glasses
- Sanitation and hygiene supplies
- Emergency "tools" to include battery powered radio, flashlight, and extra batteries; a manual can opener; Swiss army knife; whistle, cell phone charger
- **Remember those with special needs –** items for infants, elderly, and disabled. Don't forget the pet's needs
- Important Documents in a waterproof container
- **Cash** (in small bills), credit cards
- Books, games, toys
- **A large supply of Patience**

You may want to keep a smaller version of the kit in your car. In addition you should add:
Jumper cables, fire extinguisher (5lb, A-B-C type), first aid kit, maps, shovel, flares, and an aerosol tire repair product.

EMERGENCY CHECKLIST

- Post emergency telephone numbers (doctor, relatives, friends…) near your telephone. Teach children how and when to call 9-1-1. Have one 'hard wired' phone – cordless home phones **will not** work in a power outage
- Keep important phone numbers in an alternate place besides your home, possibly your vehicle of cell phone.
- Learn how and when to turn off water, gas, and electricity to your home.
- Learn how to open your garage door without the electric opener.
- Purchase a generator, but use caution not to back feed the grid and do not operate near an open window which could cause a carbon monoxide issue. Follow the owner's manual and consult an electrician.
- Learn the proper use of an ABC fire extinguisher and keep one available.
- Learn basic safety, first aid and CPR measures.
- Determine the best escape routes from your home. Have two ways out of each room.
- Find safe locations in your home for each type of disaster.
- Stock emergency supplies at home and a "Go Kit" for evacuation.
- Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors on each level of your home.
- Remember friends and neighbors – check on them to make sure they are safe.
- Plan what to do with pets.

- **DIAL 9-1-1 FOR EMERGENCIES**

For more and in depth information contact:

Albany County Emergency Management
518-720-8025 or 518-765-2352
jlayton@albanycounty.com

American Red Cross www.redcross.org

EVACUATION AND SHELTERING

In Albany County, historically evacuations have been short term and precautionary in nature. You may be asked to go to a shelter where you can be accounted for, stay for the term of the incident or you will be given instructions on where to go and what to do.
You may need to Shelter in Place (Stay at Home) or Evacuate – IT DEPENDS ON THE INCIDENT. Keep informed by listening to radio and television.

Shelter in Place simply means to stay where you are; secure yourself in the building you are in and isolate yourself from outside air and the effects of the emergency – an interior room without windows would be best. Monitor emergency information by radio / TV (battery powered if necessary).

Evacuation: You may be advised to evacuate and report to a shelter. Listen for and follow instructions; bring your "GO KIT;" be prepared to assist those who are administering the evacuation by being cooperative and attentive.

Make arrangement for your pets. Pets are not allowed in shelters – **service animals are allowed.** For extreme cases Albany County does have sheltering equipment and supplies for pets, but self-preparation is best.

Temporary Emergency Shelters

BE AWARE – BE PREPARED

BE PREPARED

...a Guide to

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

PREPARED FOR THE PEOPLE OF ALBANY COUNTY

by
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