

1. Get Informed about what might happen.

Find out about which emergencies are most likely to happen in your area and request information on how to prepare for them. **The redstickready.com website is a great resource!** Think about emergency plans for your workplace, your child's school, or other places where your family spends time. Many of the things you can do to prepare for an emergency, like having a kit ready and making a family plan, are the same for both manmade and natural disaster. The differences in how you should prepare are based on each type of emergency so do the research and make those changes to your plans.

2. Make a Plan for what you and your family will do.

Be prepared to evaluate the situation. Exercise your plans, use common sense and most importantly, take care of yourself and your loved ones.

Create your Family Emergency Plan. Explain the dangers of all hazards such as fire, severe weather, and hurricanes to children. Plan to share responsibilities and work together as a team.

- Meet with your family to talk about why you need to prepare for an emergency.
- Talk about the types of hazards that can happen and the specific plan to address each one.
- Pick a couple places to meet if the emergency does not require evacuation.
 - Choose one that is right outside your home in case of a sudden emergency, like a fire.
 - Choose a location outside the neighborhood in case you can't return home.
- Make sure that everyone knows the addresses and phone numbers for the places to meet.
- Ask an out-of-state family member to be your family contact. Other family members should call this person to let them know where they are. Everyone should know the contact's phone number.
- Discuss what to do in an evacuation to take care of your pets. It is important to take your pets with you, but know that many shelters do not allow animals inside. Plan ahead by checking on which shelters or hotels will allow animals to stay.
- Find out the plan for your child's school. How will they let families know there is an emergency? How will the school protect them?



Create a Shelter-in-Place Plan.

Sometimes the best thing to do is to remain indoors to protect yourself. Examples of this would be a chemical release or more commonly, severe weather activity.

- In the case of a release, it may be important to seal off as much of the house as possible from outside contaminants.
- Have some sort of plastic sheeting and duct tape to seal off whatever safe room you have chosen.
- Don't forget to turn off the A/C or heater.**
- Make sure you have chosen a central room in your home, away from windows.
- Bring your emergency preparedness kit and turn on your weather radio to get updates about the situation.

3. Build a Kit of emergency supplies.

It is very important that when an emergency happens, you and your family need to be ready to respond. Too much time can be lost when trying to scramble around and get things together. Having a ready bag that can be easily transported to where its needed will not only ensure that you have the necessary items should an emergency happen, but it will also give you peace of mind knowing that you have what you and your family needs. A smaller car ready bag should also be considered.

We recommend having at least the following items:

- A three day supply of water (one gallon per person per day) and food that will not spoil (non-perishable). **Don't forget the can opener!**
- A weather radio and flashlights are valuable tools provided you pack extra batteries.
- A first aid kit that includes your family's prescription medication. In the event of a hurricane, check into obtaining an extra prescription incase you are displaced.
- An extra set of car keys and credit cards, cash, or traveler's checks.
- Sanitation and hygiene supplies.
- One change of clothing and footwear per person and one blanket or sleeping bag per person.
- Special items for infants, elderly, or disabled family members.
- Small toys, games, or books to keep your children occupied through power outages and car rides.
- Keep copies of important family documents in a waterproof container.
- Food and water for your pets.
- Safety equipment such as a multipurpose tool, thick gloves, heavy shoes, and protective eyewear.



4. The Buddy System can save lives.

Working together with other residents of your neighborhood can save lives and property. Meet with your neighbors to plan how the neighborhood can work together after a disaster until help arrives. Make note of elderly residents and offer to help them with getting prepared. Check to see that they have family or someone looking out for their well being. Know what special skills your neighbors might have and how they can best be utilized in an emergency situation. Consider signing your neighborhood association members up for a Community Emergency Response Team training course to get specialized instruction on responding to a crisis.

Above all else, check with your friends, family, and neighbors and make sure they are on the same page for being as ready as they can be **before** an emergency happens. Remember, don't just be ready, be **Red Stick Ready!**