This common sense framework is designed to launch a process of learning about citizen preparedness.

For the most current information and recommendations,

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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

Preparing Makes Sense.

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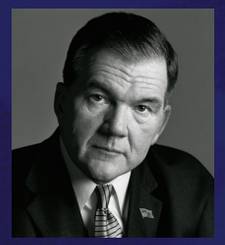
Homeland Security



"Terrorism forces us to make a choice.

We can be afraid.

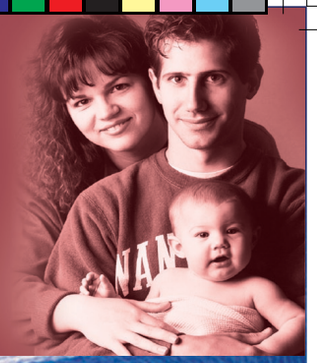
Or, we can be ready."

— Secretary Tom Ridge, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Preparing makes sense.

The likelihood that you and your family will survive a house fire depends as much on having a working smoke detector and an exit strategy, as on a well-trained fire department. The same is true for surviving a terrorist attack. We must have the tools and plans in place to make it on our own, at least for a period of time, no matter where we are when disaster strikes. Just like having a working smoke detector, preparing for the unexpected makes sense.

Get ready now.



1

Be prepared to improvise and use what you have on hand to make it on your own for at least three days, or longer.

While there are many things that might make you more comfortable, think first about fresh water, food and clean air.

Consider putting together 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 if you have to get away.

Make an Emergency Supply Kit

You'll need a gallon of **water** per person per day. Include in the kits canned and dried **foods** that are easy to store and prepare. If you live in a cold weather climate, include **warm clothes** and a sleeping bag for each member of the family.

Start now by gathering basic **emergency supplies** and setting them aside — a flashlight, a battery-powered radio, extra batteries, a first-aid kit, toilet articles and other special things your family may need.

Many potential terrorist attacks could send tiny microscopic "junk" into the air. Many of these materials can only hurt you if they get into your body, so think about creating a barrier between yourself and any contamination. It's smart to have something for each member of the family that **covers their mouth and nose**.

Plan to use two to three layers of a cotton t-shirt, handkerchief or towel. Or, consider **filter masks**, readily available in hardware stores, which are rated based on how small a particle they filter. It is very important that the mask or other material fit your face snugly so that most of the air you breathe comes through the mask, not around it. Do whatever you can to make the best fit possible for children.

Also, include **duct tape and heavyweight garbage bags or plastic sheeting** that can be used to seal windows and doors if you need to create a barrier between yourself and any potential contamination outside.

2

Plan in advance what you will do in an emergency.

Be prepared to assess the situation. Use common sense and whatever you have on hand to take care of yourself and your loved ones.

Depending on your circumstances and the nature of the attack, the first important decision is whether you stay put or get away.

You should understand and plan for both possibilities.

Make a Family Communications Plan

Develop a Family Communications Plan: Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so **plan how you will contact one another and review what you will do in different situations**. Consider a plan where each family member calls, or e-mails, the same friend or relative in the event of an emergency. It may be easier to make a long-distance phone call than to call across town, so an out-of-state contact may be in a better position to communicate among separated family members. You may have trouble getting through, or the phone system may be down altogether, but be patient.

Create a Plan to "Shelter-in-Place": There are circumstances when staying put and creating a barrier between yourself and potentially contaminated air outside, a process known as "shelter-in-place," can be a matter of survival. **Choose an interior room or one with as few windows and doors as possible. Consider precutting plastic sheeting to seal windows, doors and air vents.** Each piece should be several inches larger than the space you want to cover so that you can duct tape it flat against the wall. Label each piece with the location of where it fits.

If you see large amounts of debris in the air, or if local authorities say the air is badly contaminated, you may want to "shelter-in-place." Quickly bring your family and pets inside, lock doors, and close windows, air vents and fireplace dampers. Immediately turn off air conditioning, forced air heating systems, exhaust fans and clothes dryers. Take your emergency supplies and go into the room you have designated. Seal all windows, doors and vents. Watch TV, listen to radio or check the Internet for instructions.

Create a Plan to Get Away: Plan in advance how you will assemble your family and anticipate where you will go. **Choose several destinations in different directions so you have options in an emergency.** If you have a car, keep a half tank of gas in it at all times. **Become familiar with alternate routes as well as other means of transportation out of your area.** If you do not have a car, plan how you will leave if you have to. **Take your emergency supply kit** and lock the door behind you. If you believe the air may be contaminated, drive with your windows and vents closed and keep the air conditioning and heater turned off. Listen to the radio for instructions.

Plans at School and Work: Think about the places where your family spends time: school, work and other places your family frequents. **Talk to your children's schools and your employer about emergency plans.** Find out how they will communicate with families during an emergency. If you are an employer, be sure you have an emergency preparedness plan. Review and practice it with your employees. A community working together during an emergency also makes sense. **Talk to your neighbors about how you can work together.**

3

Be Informed

Some of the things you can do to prepare for the unexpected, such as assembling a supply kit and developing a family communications plan, are the same for both a natural or man-made emergency. However there are important differences among potential terrorist threats, such as biological, chemical, explosive, nuclear and radiological, that will impact the decisions you make and the actions you take.

Call:

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to learn about potential terrorist threats.

4

Remain Calm

Be prepared to adapt this information to your personal circumstances and make every effort to follow instructions received from authorities on the scene. Above all, stay calm, be patient and think before you act. With these simple preparations, you can be ready for the unexpected. If you have a working smoke detector, you understand that preparing makes sense.

Get ready now.

www.ready.gov