

# MAFES Dawg Tracks



October 19, 2009

Emergency Preparedness for Disaster Use



We talked about disasters from inclement weather conditions, which we all hope not to have to experience again. But like all aspects of life, we need to be prepared for whatever fate may deal us. If we had an inclement weather event today, where would our families be? If yours are like ours, it could be work, play, and school, in the car or “hanging out” with friends.

A disaster may force you to leave home or might confine you to the home, depending upon the time of the disaster. Regardless of the time or location, there are precautions and plans to consider and prepare for to alleviate some of the inconvenience of the event.

Following are some tips that, if implemented, can help to offset some problems that can and probably will happen in the event of a disaster:

- **Gather Information on Weather Conditions for your area** – If you are new to the area or unfamiliar with the type of disasters (weather types) that could occur, I would contact the local Red Cross, Mississippi Emergency Management Authority (MEMA), and maybe the National Weather Service for your area to get familiar with the types of weather conditions native to your area. Get familiar with the community’s weather signals, evacuation plan and evacuation routes.
- **Set up time to Create a Family Plan** – When you have the family together:
  - ~Discuss the information that you have gathered.
  - ~Set up two collection points for gathering. One outside the home, possibly on the property, in case it is a fire or wind damage, etc. A second location should be off the property and in an area out of your immediate neighborhood, in case you can’t return to your property. Also, another good idea is to set up a party or person in another town as a family-contact person, in case the family gets separated.
  - ~Post all the pertinent emergency telephone numbers in conspicuous places around the home and make billfold/purse cards with these numbers for all family members.
- **Implementing the Physical Part of the Plan** – Once you have a written plan for disaster assistance, you need to continue with completing the physical plan of what is needed.

~ Install smoke detectors and fire extinguishers (if you don’t already have them.)

~Do a “Home Inspection” to determine if unknown hazards exist, such as loose tiles or carpet (trip/fall hazard), and potential fire hazards.

~Arrange for all familiar members to learn CPR/First Aid.

~Teach members to use a fire extinguisher, how to turn off utilities as needed.

~Teach children how and when to call 9-1-1 and the local emergency numbers.

**Preparing Disaster Kits for the Home and Vehicles** – A supply of staple rations, water, and basic medical supplies should be assembled in a kit.

Following are specific articles to include:

~A battery-powered NOAA radio (extra batteries) and a regular radio. (Extra batteries)

~A flashlight. (Extra batteries)

~A copy of the emergency phone numbers, maps of the city, county and surrounding area. It is a good idea to have copies of important documents in plastic, waterproof folders.

~Staple foods to last for three days for each family member.

~Water for a three day period (One gallon per day for each member).

~ One change of clothing and footwear for each member.

~ One blanket or a sleeping bag for each member.

~ A first aid kit and a supply of medicines for the special needs members of the family.

~ A small bag of emergency tools.

~In the kit with maps, etc., a set of car keys and a credit card.

I would store all these items in large sterilite containers with duffle bags or backpacks. The backpacks or duffle bags would be good to transfer some goods to each bag once a safe location has been reached.

A small bag of some of these supplies is ideal to store in a vehicle that you might be using in the emergency.

~Proper Planning Prevents  
Poor Performance~

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Health and Safety - Words to live by!