Disaster Preparedness: A Checklist

Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Americans are eager to make preparedness a part of their daily lives. The following checklist will help you take the necessary steps to protect yourself, your family, and your neighbors in the event of a future terrorist attack or other emergency.

For more detailed information on disaster preparedness, see www.fema.gov and www.redcross.org.

____ Make a list of important phone numbers, such as nonemergency numbers for the police and fire departments, FBI field office, and local emergency management office, and post it by your telephone. Make sure children know how to dial 911 or "0" in an emergency.

____ Develop a communications plan for your family. Choose someone who does not live with you (preferably out-of-town) that you and other family members can contact to check on each other in the event that you are separated during a disaster. Carry the number in your wallet.

____ Establish a meeting place for family members if home or neighborhood evacuation is necessary. Pick one place near your home and one outside your neighborhood in case you can't return after a disaster.

____ Assemble an emergency preparedness kit that contains the following supplies:

__ *three- to five-day supply of water (one gallon per person per day)*

__ *food that will not spoil and requires no cooking*

__ *first-aid kit and needed medicine*

__ *emergency tools, such as a battery-powered radio, cell phone, flashlight*

__ *extra batteries*

__ *personal items like toilet paper and plastic garbage bags*

__ *change of clothing and blankets for each person*

__ *portable generator if possible*

____ Take a basic course in CPR and first-aid.

____ Learn how to turn off water, gas, and electricity at main switches.

____ Learn about emergency plans for your children's school or day care center.

____ Draw a floor plan of your home and mark two escape routes from each room. Practice your evacuation plan.

____ Know your community's evacuation routes.

____ Work with your Neighborhood Watch group or civic association to create a community disaster preparedness plan.

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