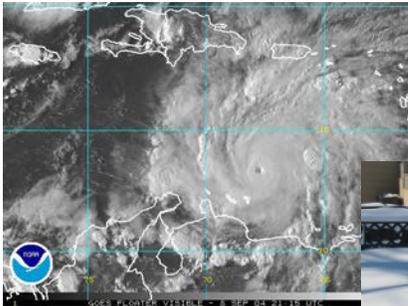




Town of Franklin

Home Guide To Emergency Preparedness



Preparing a plan for
emergencies



Prepared by the Franklin Fire Department

Home Guide To

Emergency Preparedness

...preparing for emergency events

Past winter's storms and the widespread power outages that resulted, demonstrated that many New Englanders were residents unprepared for an emergency. While there were few injuries and no reported deaths associated with the incident, hundreds of thousands of people were without electricity and heat for several days. In many respects, this incident served as a reminder that home emergency preparedness is a must for everyone, and it should be carefully planned.

Even though no one actually knows when the next emergency might occur, it makes sense to be prepared. Begin planning and communicating with family members now. Regardless of the type of event -- ice storm, hurricane, blizzard, hazardous materials emergency, terrorist activity, etc. -- there are things that you can do to minimize the effect on you and your family.

This Home Guide to Emergency Preparedness is designed to help you plan for such an emergency. Although it does not cover every conceivable emergency, it does offer information and resources to help you plan for most home emergency situations.

Check on Relatives and Neighbors

During storms and other emergency events, check to see how your relatives and neighbors are coping, especially senior citizens and persons with disabilities. If possible, consider helping them plan or locate resources in which to obtain assistance. The Town's Fire Department can be reached at 508-528-2323

Preparing Your Home for an Emergency

Planning for any emergency requires considering all likely scenarios that could result when things that you rely on daily -- like electricity, water, heat, air conditioning, telephone service and transportation -- are disrupted or lost for a considerable amount of time. Consequently, you should plan on having enough food, water and other essentials, to get you through the emergency. Most emergency management planners suggest having enough supplies to last you and your family for at least three to seven days. However, many things may impact your decision, including storage space, special needs, and number of people in the household and available resources.



What To Include In Your Home Emergency Preparedness Kit

The six basic items that should be stored in your home are water, food, first aid supplies, clothing and bedding, tools and emergency supplies, and specialty items. Keep the items that you would most likely need at home in one easy-to-carry container, such as a trash can, camping backpack or duffel bag. Store it in a convenient place and put a smaller version in your car. Keep items in airtight plastic bags. Remember to change the stored water and rotate the food supplies every six months (place dates on containers). Check the supplies and re-think your needs every year. Consult your physician or pharmacist about storing prescription medications, and maintain a list of your prescriptions needs.

WATER

Store water in plastic containers or purchase bottled water, avoiding using containers that will decompose or break, such as milk or glass bottles. Plan for one gallon of water per person per day. Water should be stored in a cool, dark place with the date labeled on the container. This is a good use for two liter soda bottles; rinse clean and refill with tap water.

FOOD

Store a supply of three to seven days of nonperishable food per person. Foods should require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking and little or no water. Examples include: ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits and vegetables; canned or boxed juices, milk and soup; condiments such as sugar, salt and pepper; high-energy food like peanut butter, jelly, low-sodium crackers, granola bars and trail mix; vitamins; foods for infants or persons on special diets; cookies, hard candy, instant coffee and sweetened cereals. Bulk food items such as rice, powdered milk, and grains can be stored for long periods of time. Some camping and outdoor suppliers have available MREs (meals ready to eat) that store for long periods and require no cooking. Remember to include utensils to open the containers and eat the foods.

FIRST-AID KIT

Assemble a first-aid kit for your home and each vehicle. Items should include: sterile adhesive bandages in assorted sizes, gauze pads, hypoallergenic adhesive tape, triangular bandages, sterile roller bandages, scissors, tweezers, needle, moistened towelettes, antiseptic, thermometer, tongue blades, tube of petroleum jelly or other lubricant, safety pins, cleansing soap (preferably waterless), eyewash, latex gloves, aspirin, anti-diarrheal medication, activated charcoal (for poisoning), laxatives.



TOOLS AND SUPPLIES

Keep the following items handy for all-around use: extra batteries of assorted sizes (check shelf life before purchasing), paper cups, plates and plastic utensils, battery-operated radio, flashlight, battery powered carbon monoxide and smoke detectors, cash, (include change) and/or traveler's checks, non-electric can opener and utility knife, small ABC fire extinguisher; pliers and other small tools you might need, waterproof matches, plastic storage containers, signal flares, paper and pencil, needles and thread, and medicine dropper. For sanitation make sure you have a sufficient supply of the following: toilet paper, soap and liquid detergent, feminine supplies, plastic garbage bags with ties, disinfectant and household chlorine bleach.

CLOTHING AND BEDDING

If you have to utilize the emergency shelter, assemble at least one or two complete changes of clothing per person, sturdy shoes or work boots, rain gear, blankets or sleeping bags, sleeping pad, hat and gloves, and thermal underwear (during cold weather)

SPECIALTY ITEMS

1. BABIES - formula, diapers, bottles, powdered milk and medication
2. ADULTS - medications, prescriptions, denture needs, eye glasses and/or contact lenses and related supplies
3. ENTERTAINMENT – games, books and several quiet toys for children
4. IMPORTANT FAMILY DOCUMENTS - wills, insurance policies, contracts, deeds, passports, stocks and bonds, immunization records, important phone numbers, credit card accounts, social security cards and other personal family records. All should be stored in a safe and secure place.

Public Emergency Shelters

Your home is the safest place to be even during an emergency. However when conditions warrant, Franklin's Emergency Management may establish community-based shelters for local residents. Normally, shelters are setup in public schools, or other appropriate facilities where residents can seek refuge from the event. Shelters to be opened will be designated based on the situation by Emergency Management. Persons in need of shelter are asked to bring food (as outlined previously), a change of clothing, bedding (blankets or sleeping bag and pad, bathing, and sanitary supplies, pre-filled prescription and other medical needs, denture and eye care materials and special dietary supplies or requirements. With the exception of guide dogs, **PETS ARE NOT PERMITTED IN THE SHELTERS. ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AND SMOKING WILL NOT BE ALLOWED.**



What To Do For Pets in Emergencies

Emergency planning should include all members of the family, including pets. If your family must re-locate to a shelter or other site, confine your pet to a specific room in the house and provide plenty of food and water to sustain the animal while you are away. If possible, arrange for someone to board the animal, or locate a relative or friend who can check on its well being on a regular basis. Put together a basic disaster kit for your pets, in case you must leave your residence quickly. Recommended items would include:

- An extra supply of pet food (for dogs a lower protein dog formula will produce less stool, a benefit when kept indoors).
- Plenty of clean water
- Bowls (disposable containers if you must leave your residence), can opener, kitchen trash bags, bleach, disinfectant, blankets, towels, paper towels, and other waste disposal supplies.

For more information on emergency preparedness for pets, a call to the Humane Society of Boston, or the Humane Society of the United States at 202-452-1100.

What To Do When Electrical Power is Lost

Disruption of electrical service can occur as a result of many things, including lightning, high winds, ice and heavy snow, and equipment failure. For the most part, service is normally restored within a short period. However, major power outages can happen for extended periods from time to time. When power is lost, you should:

- **Check to see if your neighbors have power.** It may be only in your home, a blown fuse or a tripped circuit. If your neighbors are also without service, call your local power company (see phone numbers). If you must go outside to assess the situation, take a flashlight and watch for downed power lines that could still be energized. If downed lines are located, don't go near them or touch anything that they may be in contact with. Report downed power lines immediately. Call 911 or Fire Department at 508-528-2323 for non emergency needs.
- **Turn off all major appliances.** Leave just a couple of light switches on in the home and the front porch light. When major appliances – refrigerators, electric water heaters, air conditioners and pumps – are left on, they could overload electric lines when power is restored causing a second outage;
- **Refrigerators and freezers.** Food can be kept cold enough for a day or two, if the doors are kept closed. During the winter, you may be able to store some items outside in a proper container. If temperatures are below freezing, it's possible to freeze water outside in containers and place them inside your refrigerator to help keep food cold. Try to consume perishable foods first. Some partially frozen foods can be refrozen as long as they contain ice crystals or are no warmer than 40 degrees Fahrenheit. Consider purchasing a thermometer for both the refrigerator and freezer. Don't refreeze meat, seafood, poultry, ice cream, cream sauces or anything susceptible to spoilage. **When in doubt... throw it out!**
- **Flashlights or Battery-operated Lanterns** -- should be used to illuminate the home. Candles and kerosene lanterns are not recommended for lighting because of the inherent fire safety hazards.



- **Portable Emergency Generators** – can be used to provide limited electrical power during an outage. But, take care to ensure that they do not pose a threat to you and your family. **Never fuel or run a portable generator or store extra fuel in the home or attached garage.** Gas-powered generators pose a serious fire and carbon monoxide threat. Never connect the generator directly to the house electrical service, unless approval has been granted by the power company and the generator is equipped with a double-throw transfer switch that protects your equipment and prevents feedback on power lines. Always operate according to the manufacturer's instructions. For additional information on the proper use of emergency generators, call your power company or the Town's electrical inspector.
- **Water Systems and Waste Water Systems with Electric Pumps** – such as wells or sewer ejector pumps -- will not operate when the power is out. Alternate sources of water and /or waste disposal will have to be used until power is restored. *However, home connected to the Town's Water and Sewer system will usually have service during power outages.*
- **Gas Appliances** – may not work if the electricity is off because the equipment may require electricity for ignition or valve operation.
- **Water Heaters** – that are drained to prevent damage from freezing, must have their power circuit shut off as well. Failure to do so could result in loss of the heating element when power is restored. Never turn on a water heater unless the tank is full.
- **Plumbing** – can freeze when power is lost during cold weather periods. Drain supply lines, water heaters, boilers and traps in drains of tubs, sinks, commodes, washing machines and dishwashers. Special environmentally safe anti-freeze is available to winterize drains To avoid major flooding when temperatures rise, you should also turn off supply lines to outside spigots. Leaving a cold water line running (just slightly) may keep the supply line from freezing during a prolonged period without heat.
- **Life Support Equipment** – required for family members who depend on these devices (respirators, ventilators, oxygen equipment or other life-sustaining devices) should be listed with the power company. If the power outage is not widespread, power companies attempt to restore power to these homes first. Regardless, you should have a contingency plan that always includes an alternate power source for the device and relocating the person.
- **Trees** –. While power companies have a regularly scheduled program for trimming trees away from power lines, they do not go on private property. Consider this when planting and/or trimming trees on your property, and always seek professional help in trimming limbs or branches that are close to power lines.



Keeping Warm

Select a single room in the home in which the entire family can live; ideally a room, which gets sunlight during daylight hours. Use fireplaces and wood-burning stoves with care and always supervise them when in use. Make sure the fireplace is in proper working condition and has been inspected before use. Wear layers of clothing, including sweaters and coats, which entraps warm air and helps to maintain body heat for longer periods. For homes with natural gas heaters, homeowners are reminded to keep meters and vents clear of ice and snow.

SAFETY NOTE – Never use gas ovens or stovetops to heat homes; charcoal or propane grills should never be used inside the home. They pose a serious threat of fire and the creation of poisonous carbon monoxide. When removing ashes from the fireplace, make sure that the ashes are cool, and are placed in a metal container outside and away from the home.

Keeping Updated on an Emergency

Getting information during an emergency situation is vital, especially at the height of the event, when evacuation may be required. Radio and television stations provide the quickest means to obtain information. If you have electrical power and cable television, turn to the local access channel for frequent updates. Have a battery-operated radio tuned to a local all-news or talk-radio station. WBZ AM 1030) are Franklin area primary stations of the Emergency Alert System.

In situations requiring immediate action by residents, the Town's Emergency Manager will transmit messages over the cable television system. The Town also maintains an emergency notification system that can provide information directly to your home phone, cell phone or email account. To register for this system, visit the Town's website at www.Franklin.ma.us and click on the CONNECT CTY icon and follow the directions for setting up an account for direct notification.

Have a family contingency communications plan so relatives can contact you



Important Phone Numbers

Emergencies (Police, Fire/ Medical).....	911
Non-emergency	
Police	508-528-1212
Fire	508-528-2323
National Grid Electric	
Report Power Outage	800-465-1212
Customer Service & Emergency	800-322-3223
Version (telephone repair)	
Residential	508-555-1611
Business	508-555-1515
Poison Center	617 232- 2120 800 682-9211
Columbia Gas (to report gas leaks)	800-525-8222
American Red Cross	617 375-0700
Cable Television Providers	
Comcast Residential Services	800-633-4266
Verizon	888-553-1555



Technology / Computer Contingency Planning

...contingency planning is a must

Every home and business should have a Continuity and Contingency Operating Plan, which assumes that there may be computer and embedded chip glitches. These plans provide a road map for ways to get around problems should they occur. Finally, inquire if your company has a policy in place regarding your status as an employee should disruptions result in temporary closing of your employer's business.

Financial and Personal Records

Keep all your financial records in order and up-to-date. Bank statements, credit and debit cards, investment portfolios, medical and prescription, insurance information, taxes and other records show transactions related to your account may be susceptible to technology glitches. Should a problem exist with any of these records because of a computer or software problem, your records may be the sole source for validating the correct information. Keep your documents and records in a safe place and preferably in a container. If you leave your home for an extended period you can take the documents with you, if necessary

Travel

If you plan to travel, check to see how the community you are planning to visit is prepared to deal with issues. If your plans include transportation by airplane, train or ship, inquire about the carrier's planning efforts, including contingency plans for alternate travel means should a problem develop. Also, consider taking some extra cash or travelers checks (preferred) in case of problems related to ATM machines and credit card verification systems.

Testing Your Personal Computer

Your Personal Computer's (PC) hardware and software may be vulnerable; with some planning and attention to detail, you can protect yourself from technology disruptions.

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