

The American Red Cross prevents and alleviates human suffering in the face of emergencies by mobilizing the power of volunteers and the generosity of donors.

PREPARE FOR A DISASTER

For Seniors By Seniors



San Diego/Imperial Counties Chapter
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Allergies				Pharmacy/ Prescription Drug Plan					
Name of Medication	Strength and Frequency	Taken For	Prescribed By	Notes					

Contents:

The Three Steps to Preparedness

1. Make a Plan
2. Get a Kit
3. Be Informed

Emergency Contact Page

Emergencies can strike quickly and without warning. This may force you to evacuate your neighborhood or be confined to your home. What would you do if your basic services - water, gas, electricity or communications - were cut off?

Learn how to protect yourself and cope with disaster by planning ahead. Even with physical limitations, you can still prepare and protect yourself.

Local officials and relief workers may not be able to reach everyone. By preparing in advance with your support network: your family, neighbors and friends, you can manage disasters better. Knowing what to do is your responsibility. This booklet is a guide to help you prepare.

Step 1 : Make a Plan

The next time a disaster strikes, you may not have much time to act. Planning ahead reduces anxiety. Prepare now for a sudden emergency and remember to review your plan regularly.

Meet With Your Family and Friends

Explain your concerns to your family and caregivers in your support network. Work with them as a team in your meeting and planning efforts. Also, assess your needs and your household. What personal liabilities and limitations may affect your response to a disaster? Discuss your concerns with your family and friends. Details are important to ensure your plan fits your needs. Practice the planned actions to make sure everything “works.”

Family Communication Plan

- Carry family contact information in your wallet or purse.
- Choose two out-of-town contact persons. After a disaster, it is often easier to make a long-distance call than a local call from a disaster area.

Emergency Contact Information

Name: _____

Home Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Three Local Contacts: _____

Two Out-of-Area Contacts: _____

Family Meeting Place Outside your Home:

Family Meeting Place Outside the Neighborhood:

Important Contact Information

Police: _____

Fire Department: _____

Family Doctor: _____

Ambulance Agency: _____

Poison Control Center: 1-800-222-1222

For more information, visit: redcross.org/sandiego

Useful Web Sites

American Red Cross San Diego redcross.org/sandiego

Department of Homeland Security ready.gov

American Red Cross prepare.org

Federal Emergency Management Agency fema.gov

AARP aarp.org

San Diego County Office of Emergency Services readysandiego.gov

State of California ca.gov

safeandwell.org register during emergencies

For more information, please contact your local emergency management office or the American Red Cross San Diego/Imperial Counties at (858) 309-1200.

Escape Routes and Meeting Places

- Plan the best and quickest escape routes out of your home and evacuation routes out of your neighborhood.
- Decide on a meeting place outside your home in case of a fire and a meeting place outside your neighborhood in case you cannot return home.
- If you or someone in your household uses a wheelchair, make sure all escape routes from your home are wheelchair accessible.
- Know the safe places within your home in case you need to shelter during extreme weather events (e.g., tornado).
- Practice your escape drill every six months.
- Plan for transportation if you need to evacuate to a shelter.

Post Emergency Numbers Near Your Phones

Post emergency numbers near all of your phones. Include the numbers of those in your support network. Remember that in some emergencies telephone lines might not be working. Consider having alternative plans for contacting those in your network.

Plan For Those With Disabilities

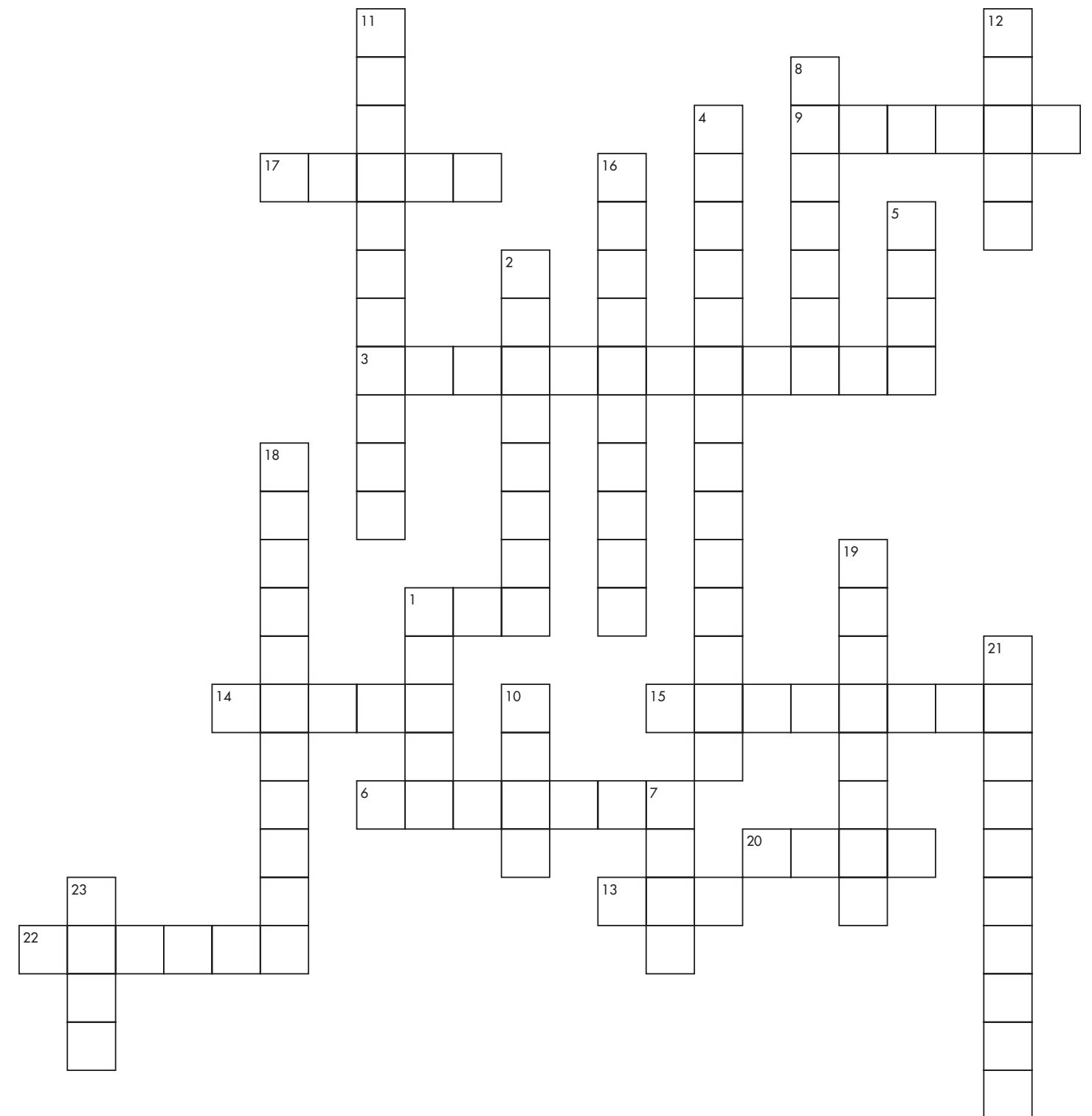
Keep support items like wheelchairs and walkers in a designated place so they can be found quickly. This step is essential for those who have home-health caregivers, particularly for those who are bed-bound.

Plan For Your Pets or Service Animals

Take your pets with you if you evacuate. However, be aware that pets (except service animals) are not permitted in emergency public shelters for health reasons. Prepare a list of family, friends, boarding facilities, veterinarians and 'pet-friendly' hotels that could shelter your pets in an emergency.

Utilities

Talk to your utility company about emergency procedures and know how and when to turn off water, gas and electricity at the main switches or valves. Keep any tools you will need nearby. Turn off the utilities only if you suspect a leak or if local officials instruct you to do so. (Note: If gas is turned off for any reason, only a qualified professional can turn it back on. It could take several weeks for a professional to respond. Heating and cooking would need alternative sources.) Share this information with your family.



Possible Answers:

amsixhundred cash cloth contacts cpr earthquakes exit fires flashlight
floods food hazard kit medications neighbor pets plan practice
radio safeandwellorg seventytwo shelter water whistle

Preparation Makes a Difference

It's much easier to remain calm when you know what to do. Use this booklet to help you prepare.

Take responsibility by planning now.

Prepare San Diego Crossword Puzzle

Across:

1. Cycles of 30 compressions and 2 breaths
3. Emergency radio station
6. Signal for help
9. Cupboards without latches
13. Emergency supplies - food, water, blankets, etc.
14. Solar-powered and hand cranked
15. Twice per year to stay up to date
17. One gallon per person, per day
20. Need a disaster kit and an emergency place to stay
22. Unsafe to walk or drive through

Down:

1. Signal for help during fires
2. Immediate help
4. Register at this website during emergencies
5. Three-day supply recommended
7. Preplanned evacuation route
8. Place to sleep
10. ATMs do not function
11. Drop, cover and hold
12. Crawl low under smoke
16. Use instead of candles and to signal for help
18. Doctor prescribed
19. Out of state
21. Number of hours to be prepared
23. Emergency meeting places

Smoke Alarms and Carbon Monoxide Alarms

Test your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms regularly. Consider strobe or vibrating alert systems that might meet your needs. Change the batteries in all alarms at least once a year or according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Vital Records and Documents

Keep copies of vital family records and other important documents such as birth and marriage certificates, social security cards, passports, wills, deeds, and financial, insurance and immunizations records in a safe location, like a fire safe or safety deposit box.

Hearing Aids/Cochlear Implants

If you wear hearing aids or assistive devices, consider storing them in a bedside container that is attached to your nightstand using velcro. Some disasters (e.g., earthquakes) may shift items that are not secured, making them difficult to find quickly.

Step 2 : Get a Kit

Disasters can happen at any moment. Plan ahead to evacuate quickly to avoid waiting in long lines for critical supplies, such as food, water, and medicine. You should also have essential items if you need to evacuate.

- For your safety and comfort, have a disaster supplies kit packed and ready in one place before a disaster hits.
- Assemble enough supplies to last for at least three days.
- Store your supplies in one or more easy-to-carry containers, such as a backpack or duffel bag. You may want to consider storing supplies in a container that has wheels.
- Be sure your bag has an ID tag.
- Label any equipment, such as wheelchairs, canes or walkers, that you would need with your name, address and phone numbers.
- Keeping your kit up-to-date is also important. First in first out practices. Check expiration dates on contents at least every six months and shift your stored supplies into everyday use before they expire.

On the following page are some suggestions for building your disaster kit. Include additional items that you feel might be useful for your particular needs.

Financial Exploitation/Scams

Unfortunately, after a disaster there may be some people who will try to take advantage of your vulnerability. Beware of high-pressure sales, disclosing personal financial information (account numbers and credit card information) and services provided with no written contract. For information on scams, go to ftc.gov.

Home Caregivers - Special Considerations

Prepare a disaster supplies kit for any family members who cannot do so on their own. If this person receives home care, speak with the case manager to see what the agency's role would be in case of emergency at home or if evacuation is indicated.

Develop home fire escape and evacuation plans and practice them every month in case of fire and other disasters particular to your area. Enlist the assistance of other family members if possible.

Find out what provisions are available in your area in case evacuation is needed, especially if your family member requires an uninterrupted power source for survival.

Know that you may be directed to a hospital or a medical or functional support shelter and you may need to continue caring for that person during the emergency situation.

Public Shelters

Relief organizations, like the American Red Cross, may open shelters if a disaster affects a large number of people or the emergency is expected to last several days.

Be prepared to go to a shelter if -

- Your area is without electrical power
- Floodwater is rising
- Your home has been severely damaged
- Police or other local officials tell you to evacuate

Services Provided at a Red Cross Shelter

- Food
- Temporary shelter
- Basic first aid

All American Red Cross emergency services are provided free of charge.

To learn about Red Cross shelters that have been opened in your area, listen to your local media, visit redcross.org/sandiego, or call (858) 309-1200.

- Three-day supply of nonperishable food. Foods that do not need cooking or refrigeration (canned, dried, ect.)
- Three-day supply of water (one gallon per person, per day)
- Battery-operated or cranked/solar powered radio
- Flashlight with extra batteries and bulbs (do not use candles)
- First aid kit and manual
- Sanitation and hygiene items (toilet paper, feminine products)
- Cell phone with an extra battery and charger
- Whistle (to attract the attention of emergency personnel)
- One change of clothing
- Blanket
- Manual can opener
- Photocopies of personal documents/identification in a fire-proof, safety deposit box
- Insurance agent's name and number
- Cash and coins (ATMS may not be accessible)
- Pet supplies (including food and vaccination records)
- Map of the local area
- Extra set of keys (car, house, etc.)
- Plastic garbage bags
- Family and friends' emergency contact information
- Puzzles, books and cards to provide entertainment and pass the time

Every Six Months:

- Review your plan with all of your friends and family
- Check your disaster supplies kit and refresh all expiring items (e.g. food, water, medications and batteries)
- Conduct fire and emergency evacuation drills on a regular basis with your family to ensure that all your plans “work”

At Least Once a Year:

Change the batteries in all essential devices at the same time each year (e.g. smoke alarms)

- Call your out-of-town contacts and let them know you are okay.
- Stay away from downed power lines.
- Do not drive through flooded roads.
- Monitor local broadcasts for information about where you can get disaster relief assistance.

If Electrical Power Is Lost

- Use a flashlight or battery-operated lantern.
DO NOT USE CANDLES.
- Turn off or unplug all major appliances (e.g., stove, refrigerator, dryer). They could be damaged by the electrical surge when the power is restored.
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible.

Sheltering In Place

In some emergencies such as a chemical emergency, you would need to know how to seal a room for safety on a temporary basis, called “shelter in place.” This means stay where you are and make yourself as safe as possible until the emergency passes or you are told to evacuate. In this situation it is safer to remain indoors than to go outside. Stay in your home and listen to instructions from emergency personnel. Listen to your television or radio for emergency messages. Be prepared to be on your own and have additional food and water for seven to fourteen days.

What You Can Do About House Fires

If your smoke alarm goes off, get out immediately.

Escape safely if you can. Once you are out, stay out! Do not go back inside a burning building for any reason. Call the fire department (911) from another location such as a neighbor's house.

If you cannot use stairways, make special arrangements for help in advance (neighbor, manager, etc.)

If exits are blocked, or if you are unable to get out, stay in the room with the door closed. Stay by the window near the floor and signal for help by hanging a sheet or cloth out the window and by MAKING NOISE (e.g. use a whistle or air horn). If there is a phone in the room or you have a cell phone, call the fire department. In a small scale disaster like a single house fire, medic alert systems can also be used.

Immediately After a Disaster

- If the emergency occurs while you are at home, check for damage using a flashlight. DO NOT light matches or candles or turn on electrical switches. Check for fires, chemical spills and gas leaks.
- Shut off any damaged utilities.
- Check on your neighbors, especially those who are elderly or have disabilities.

Step 3: Be Informed

Community Hazard Assessment

What hazards threaten your community and neighborhoods? Make a list of how they might affect you. Think about both natural (e.g. flooding, tsunamis and earthquakes) and human-caused (e.g. hazardous materials and transportation accidents) and about your risk from those hazards.

- Do you live alone?
- Do you drive or own a car?
- How good is your sense of smell?
- Do you have any physical, medical, thinking or learning limitations?
- Has your sense of hearing or vision decreased?
- Are you reliant upon any medical equipment?
- Are you reliant upon a caregiver?

Community Warning

Know how local authorities will warn you of a pending or current disaster situation. Certain television and radio stations will broadcast emergency messages from local authorities. Find out which stations broadcast on the Emergency Alert System (EAS), such as KOGO AM 600.

Local Neighborhood Emergency Teams

Connect with a group in your local neighborhood. Some of these could include CERT (Community Emergency Response Team), neighborhood watch, faith-based organizations, etc. Let them know your needs and ask them how they could assist with your disaster plan. If available, take advantage of advance registration systems in your area for those who need help during community emergencies.

Seniors Living and Assisted Living Communities

If you live in a senior community, become familiar with any disaster notification plans that may already exist. Talk to your community management or resident council about how you can be more prepared together.

Staying Safe in Disasters

One of the most important things you can do for yourself is to learn how to keep safe when disaster strikes. It can help prevent or reduce injury and also help you remain calm.

What You Can Do About Earthquakes

During an earthquake: Take cover where you are.

- If you are inside, stay inside. Most injuries occur from glass, brick and other materials falling from the outside of buildings.
- Specifically, **DROP, COVER, AND HOLD ON** during the shaking.
- If you cannot drop to the floor, stay where you are and cover your head.
- If you are in a wheelchair, lock the brake and cover your head.
- If you are in bed, stay there and cover your head with your pillow.

You will also need to protect yourself during aftershocks. These smaller earthquakes can also cause damage and injury because buildings may have been weakened in the main quake. Their frequency, strength and length of time after the original quake cannot be predicted.