



PREPARING FOR EMERGENCIES

WORKBOOK AND REFERENCE GUIDE

1ST EDITION



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Published June, 2024

WHAT IS SMFR WILDFIRE?

SMFR Wildfire is the South Metro Fire Rescue Wildfire educational program, designed to empower residents regarding the basics of wildfire, home hardiness, and preparedness.

WILDFIRE BASICS





WILDFIRE *Basics*

Introduction to Wildfire

A wildfire is an unplanned, unwanted fire burning in a natural area, such as a forest, grassland, or prairie. Wildfires can start from natural causes, such as lightning, but most are caused by humans, either accidentally or intentionally (1). Wildfires can damage natural resources, destroy homes, and threaten human safety.

One might think that more intense wildfires always lead to more homes burning in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI). However, this is not necessarily true. For homes to be destroyed, they must catch fire during these wildfires. Extreme wildfires can start fires in residential areas, but if the homes do not ignite, then the problem is mostly avoided. (2)

While wildfires cannot be completely prevented, their impact can be mitigated through various strategies (3). This guide will review basic wildfire mitigation strategies, terminology, and general emergency preparedness.

1. 2000-2017 data based on Wildland Fire Management Information

2. J. Cohen, 2002

3. NWCG.gov



WILDFIRE *Basics*

What is the Home Ignition Zone?

Retired USDA Forest Service fire scientist Jack Cohen developed the Home Ignition Zone (HIZ) concept in the late 1990s, following some breakthrough experimental research into how homes ignite due to the effects of radiant heat. The HIZ is divided into three zones:

Zone 1 (0-5 feet from the home) is the area nearest the home and other structures. It requires the most vigilant work to reduce wildfire hazards.

Zone 2 (5-30 feet from the home) is the area transitioning away from the home where fuels should be reduced.

Zone 3 (30-100 feet from the home) is the area farthest from the home. It extends 100 feet from the home on relatively flat ground.

Zone 1 Checklist

- Remove all flammable vegetation, including shrubs, slash, mulch, and other woody debris.
- Do not store firewood or other combustible materials inside this zone.
- Prune tree branches hanging over the roof and remove all fuels within 10 feet of the chimney.
- Regularly remove all pine needles and other debris from the roof, deck, and gutters.
- Rake and dispose of pine needles, dead leaves, mulch, and other organic debris within 5 feet of all decks and structures.
- Farther than 5 feet from structures, raking material will not significantly reduce the likelihood of ignition and can negatively affect other trees.
- Do not use space under decks for storage.

[Visit the Colorado State Forest Service Home Ignition Zone Info](#)

[Visit FireWise.Org](#)

PROTECT YOUR HOME AGAINST WILDFIRE



Colorado
Home
Ignition
Zone
Guide

KEEP TREES
TRIMMED HEALTHY

KEEP GUTTERS CLEAN AND MAINTAIN A
CLEAR ROOF LINE WITH NO OVERHANGING
VEGETATION

SECURE LOOSE GUTTERS
AND DOWNSPOUTS

USE 1/8" MESH TO COVER
VENTS

DEVELOP AN
EVACUATION
PLAN

MAINTAIN WORKING SMOKE
ALARMS IN YOUR HOME

RAKE AND REMOVE ALL PINE
NEEDLES AND OTHER FLAMMABLE
DEBRIS FROM A 5-FOOT RADIUS
AROUND THE FOUNDATION OF
YOUR HOME AND DECK

9195

ADDRESS SHOULD BE WELL
LIT AND VISIBLE FOR FIRST
RESPONDERS

Evacuation
Route



Benefits of Fire-Resistant Landscaping

Fire Risks are Increasing

Predicted increases in heat and drought across Colorado due to climate change will fuel more severe wildfires. As a result, it's important to consider wildfires and fire-resistant landscaping regardless of your location.

Low Maintenance

Fire-resistant landscaping does not have to be high maintenance. By choosing the right plants, homeowners can achieve a low-maintenance yard while still reducing fire risk and conserving water.

It Looks Great

Fire-resistant landscaping does not mean sacrificing the beauty of your yard. On the contrary, the recommended plants, with their colorful blooms and attractive foliage, can create visually pleasing landscapes that remain interesting all year round.



Yucca

Support Biodiversity

Fire-resistant plants can serve as valuable habitats for pollinators such as butterflies and bees. By selecting these plants, homeowners can support local biodiversity and contribute to the health of ecosystems.



Penstemons

Water Conservation

With water becoming more scarce, it is crucial to prioritize low-water landscaping strategies to conserve this valuable resource.



Prickly Pear

[See the Colorado State Forest Service Low-Flammability Landscape Plants List for more plant examples.](#)



Blanket Flower

It's important to note that while some plants may have inherent fire-resistant characteristics, no plant is entirely fireproof. Proper landscaping practices, such as maintaining adequate spacing between plants, regular pruning, and removing dead vegetation, are still essential to minimize fire risk.

Ponderosa Pine

- WILDFIRE TERMINOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS -

Key Words



WORD	DEFINITION
Defensible Space	An area within the perimeter of a parcel, development, neighborhood, or community where basic wildland fire protection practices and measures are implemented, providing the key point of defense from an approaching wildfire or defense against encroaching wildfires or escaping structure fires.
Ecosystem	The interacting system of a biological community and its nonliving environment.
Fire	Rapid oxidation, usually with the evolution of heat and light; heat, fuel, oxygen, and interaction of the three.
Fire Behavior	The way a fire reacts to the influences of fuel, weather, and topography.
Fire Hazard Mitigation	Various methods by which existing fire hazards can be reduced in a certain area, such as fuel breaks, non-combustible roofing, spark arresters, etc.
Fire Suppression	The act of putting out a wildfire.

- WILDFIRE TERMINOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS -

Key Words



WORD	DEFINITION
Fire Triangle	A representation of the three things required to start a fire: oxygen, heat, and fuel.
Fuel	Any living or dead material that will burn. This includes both natural and man-made materials.
Ladder Fuels	Fuels that provide vertical continuity between strata, thereby allowing fire to carry from surface fuels into the crowns of trees or shrubs with relative ease. They help initiate and assure the continuation of crowning.
Litter	Top layer of the forest, scrubland, or grassland floor, directly above the fermentation layer, composed of loose debris of dead sticks, branches, twigs, and recently fallen leaves or needles, little altered in structure by decomposition
Mitigation	Modifying the environment or human behavior to reduce potential adverse impacts of from a natural hazard.
Preparedness	Condition or degree of being ready to cope with a potential fire situation.

- WILDFIRE TERMINOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS -

Key Words



WORD	DEFINITION
Prescribed Burn	The planned application of fire to a forest, stand, prairie or slash pile with the intent to confine the burning to a predetermined area.
Urban	Describing a city or a town where people live and work and go to school.
Wildland	Land that has not been cultivated, especially land set aside and protected as a wilderness.
Wildland Fire	Uncontrolled fires that burn in the country or in wilderness or wildland areas. Any non-structure fire, other than prescribed fire, that occurs in the wildland.
Wildland Urban Interface	The line, area, or zone where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels.
Woodland (or open forest)	A wooded area in which the crowns of the trees do not form a closed canopy. (In other words, the leaves and branches of the trees and shrubs do not touch.)

Sources: Colorado State Forest Service, National Wildfire Coordinating Group, US Forest Service, National Fire Protection Association.

BE READY



Emergency Preparedness Checklist

Flashlight

Batteries

ENROLL NOW

ARAPAHOE



DOUGLAS COUNTY



JEFFERSON



South Metro Fire CO



Enroll in your county's emergency notification system now

Follow South Metro Fire Rescue on social media for updates and information

View active incidents and listen to radio communications on the PulsePoint Respond app





BEFORE THE *Emergency*

Don't Wait - Start Preparing Today

The actions taken in the initial minutes of an emergency are critical. Prompt action and warnings can save lives, minimize physical damage to structures and property, and improve resilience. Planning will help ensure that all the members of your household—including children, people with disabilities, and others with access and functional needs know what to do in an emergency.

Many kinds of emergencies can cause you to have to evacuate your home. In some cases, you may have a day or two to prepare while other situations might call for an immediate evacuation. Taking time to plan, not just for wildfires, but all types of emergencies, is an important part of living in Colorado.

The thought of experiencing an emergency can feel frightening. But having a plan in place is empowering!

Today is the day to create a family preparedness plan.



THE FIRST 72 ARE ON YOU



IT MAY BE AS LONG AS 72 HOURS BEFORE DISASTER SUPPORT SERVICES ARE ABLE TO ASSIST. YOU SHOULD BE PREPARED TO SURVIVE FOR THREE DAYS USING YOUR OWN DISASTER SUPPLY KIT.

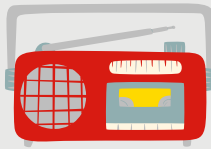
BUILD YOUR 72-HOUR KIT



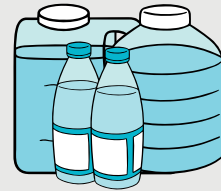
3 DAY SUPPLY OF NON-PERISHABLE FOOD



IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS



PORTABLE HAND CRANK RADIO



WATER FOR SANITATION AND DRINKING



FIRST-AID KIT AND MEDICATIONS



BATTERY POWERED FLASHLIGHT



EXTRA BATTERIES AND PHONE CHARGER



PERSONAL HYGIENE ITEMS



MANUAL CAN OPENER



COMFORT AND ENTERTAINMENT ITEMS



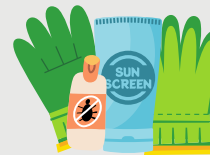
PET FOOD AND SUPPLIES



EXTRA CASH



WHISTLE AND MULTI-PURPOSE TOOL



PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT



EXTRA CLOTHING FOR THE FAMILY



DISASTER SUPPLY KIT CHECKLIST

- waterproof bag for important documents
- copies of medical, home, and car insurance documents
- social security cards
- hygiene items
- birth certificates
- canned food
- 3 gallons of water/person
- can opener
- protein bars and snacks
- medications
- pet food and supplies
- first aid kit
- hand crank radio
- phone charger
- prescription eyeglasses, contacts, and sunglasses
- extra cash



DISASTER SUPPLY KIT CHECKLIST, cont.

- at least one change of clothing per person
- paper map marked with at least two evacuation routes
- emergency contact list printed on paper
- whistle to call for help
- sleeping bag or warm blanket
- plastic sheeting, trash bags, and duct tape
- mess kits and paper towels
- matches in a waterproof container
- wrench and pliers
- flashlights and batteries
- pens, pencil, and paper
- extra set of keys
- cash, credit, and insurance cards
- medications
- activities for children
- portable stove
- fire extinguisher



BEFORE THE *Emergency*

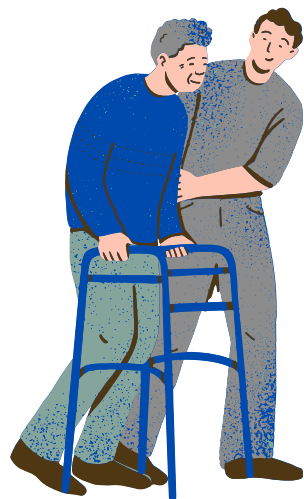


EMERGENCY CONTACT LIST

Having a paper list of important numbers is a good idea. Examples may include phone numbers for the following: Your doctor, pharmacy, insurance companies, bank, schools, employer, caregiver, clergy, neighbors, friends and family.

PREPARE THE FAMILY

OLDER ADULTS, PEOPLE WITH DIVERSE ABILITIES, AND CHILDREN ALL NEED SPECIAL CONSIDERATION WHEN PREPARING FOR A DISASTER.

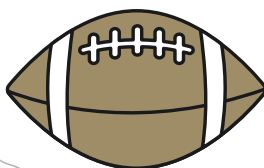
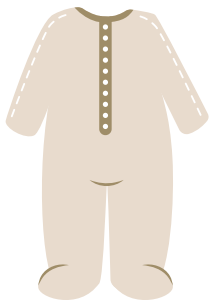


OLDER ADULTS & FAMILY MEMBERS WITH VARYING ABILITIES:

- Explain concerns to your family and others in your support network and work with them as a team to prepare.
- Arrange for someone to check on you at the time of a disaster.
- Include any caregivers in your meeting and planning efforts.
- Assess yourself and your household to determine what personal abilities and limitations may affect your response to a disaster.
- Identify details that are important to ensure your plan fits your needs.
- Practice the planned actions to make sure everything "works".
- Carry family contact information in your wallet
- Choose an out-of-town contact person.
- If you receive home care, speak with your case manager to see what their plan is in times of emergency and how they can assist with your plan.
- If you need medical oxygen, plan to have an adequate supply on-hand in case your service is interrupted.
- 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.
- If you live in an older adult community, assisted living community, or skilled nursing facility, it is important to become familiar with the disaster notification plans that already exist.

PREPARE THE FAMILY

OLDER ADULTS, PEOPLE WITH DIVERSE ABILITIES, AND CHILDREN ALL NEED SPECIAL CONSIDERATION WHEN PREPARING FOR A DISASTER.



Emergency plans for families with young children should be practiced regularly and modified as the children get older.

- Help toddlers understand how to respond in case of fire quickly and how adults can escape with babies.
- Please be sure to practice your family's fire escape plan and what to do to be safe when there is a wildfire nearby.
- Talk to toddlers and young children at a level they understand and do not create fear.
- Be open to your child's fears. Younger children may use play to communicate and process their fears. Older kids may simply need to talk about their fears, and you should give them plenty of space to do so.
- Be prepared for questions. It's OK to not have all the answers but do your best to explain the event in terms your child can understand and assure them that they are safe.
- Make sure you pack any supplies that children will need in your emergency supply kit or bag.

Visit [Ready.gov/plan](https://www.ready.gov/plan) for additional tips on preparing the whole family.

Visit [ChildrensColorado.org](https://www.ChildrensColorado.org) for tips on how to talk to kids when scary things happen.





The sheriff ordering the evacuation will identify and determine the evacuation route for you to take. Always follow the instructions of local officials.

BEFORE THE *Emergency*

EVACUATION PLANNING



If you have a car:

Keep a full tank of gas if an evacuation seems likely. Keep a half tank of gas at all times in case of an unexpected need to evacuate.

Only take one car per family to reduce congestion and delay.

01



If you do not have a car:

Plan how you will leave if you are required to. Decide with family, friends, or your local emergency management office to see what resources may be available.

02



Where will you go?

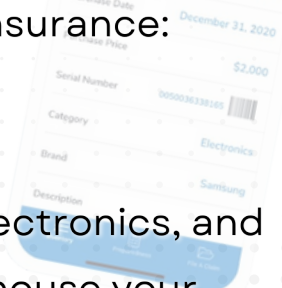
Identify several places you could go in an emergency, such as a friend's home in another town or a motel. Choose destinations in different directions so that you have options during an emergency.

Come up with a family/household plan to stay in touch in case you become separated; have a meeting place and update it depending on the circumstance. If needed, identify a place to stay that will accept pets.

03



INSURANCE

- 
- A smartphone app interface for home inventory. The screen shows a form for adding a new item. Fields include 'Purchase Date' (December 31, 2020), 'Purchase Price' (\$2,000), 'Serial Number' (W000233101), 'Category' (Electronics), 'Brand' (Samsung), and 'Description' (Samsung). There is an 'Add Photo' button with a camera icon.
- ✓ Review the Colorado Toolkit for Homeowners and HOAs on Insurance: <https://doi.colorado.gov/homeowners-hoainsurancetoolkit>
 - ✓ Make a property inventory list of your valuables, furniture, electronics, and **TAKE PICTURES!** Download the NAIC home inventory app to house your records.
 - ✓ Have copies of important documents like insurance policies, mortgages, and titles in your disaster supply kit.
 - ✓ A standard homeowners insurance policy **DOES NOT** cover full home replacement or wildfire damage!

Organizing and decluttering are important before an emergency. This can also help save space. Keep pathways, hallways, and exits clear and free of clutter. Remove anything that could prevent people from safely leaving, like storage or toys.

SAFE STORAGE IDEAS

You can diversify the locations of your most important items and heirlooms to avoid total loss.

- OFF-SITE STORAGE FACILITIES
- CLOUD-BASED STORAGE SYSTEMS
- DIGITAL FILE CABINETS
- SAFETY DEPOSIT BOXES



NO ANIMAL Left Behind



Get Prepared Early

Make sure pets are up to date on vaccines. Pet shelters, boarding facilities, and pet-friendly hotels may turn away unvaccinated pets.

Dogs: Rabies, DVPP2, and Bordetella

Cats: Rabies and FVRCP

Ferrets: Rabies

Always microchip your pets and keep information updated with the microchip company.

Evacuation

Call ahead to shelters to make sure they accept pets.

Check bringfido.com for a list of pet-friendly travel accommodations, including a list of shelters that accept pets during emergencies. Make sure pets are secured while traveling in your vehicle. Do everything in your power to bring your furry friends with you.

Evacuation and Shelter Supplies

Evacuating with your pets out of the impact area is the safest option. If that's not possible, stay at a pet-friendly shelter; they are first-come, first serve.

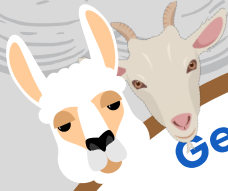


Pet food, water, and bowls
Litter, litter boxes, and a scoop
Vaccination records and medications

Toys and comfort items
Leash and collar with license
Sturdy carrier with bedding



Evacuating Farm Animals



Get Prepared Early

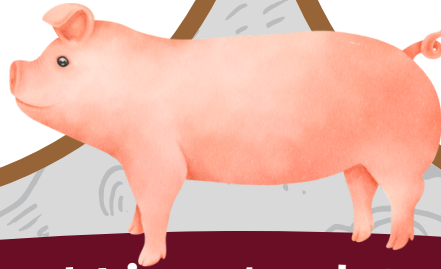
If you do not own enough trailers to quickly transport all of your animals to an evacuation site, coordinate with neighbors, local haulers, farmers, producers or other transportation providers in advance to establish a network of available and reliable resources that can help in the event of a disaster.



Evacuation



Be sure to **include birds in your disaster plans**. Plastic poultry transport crates/coops work well for transporting chickens if evacuation is necessary. Vehicle interiors should be warmed in winter or cooled in summer before transporting birds.



Equine and Livestock Evacuation

Locate and prearrange an evacuation site for your animals outside your immediate area.
Possible sites include:

veterinary colleges

racetracks

pastures

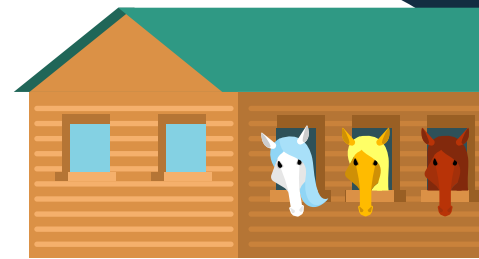
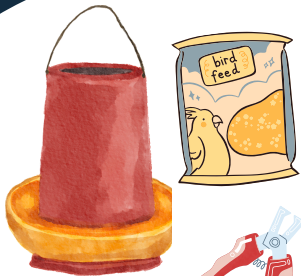
stables

equestrian centers

livestock corrals

stockyards or auction facilities

other boarding facilities



DURING AN EMERGENCY





DURING AN *Emergency*

Follow official instructions:

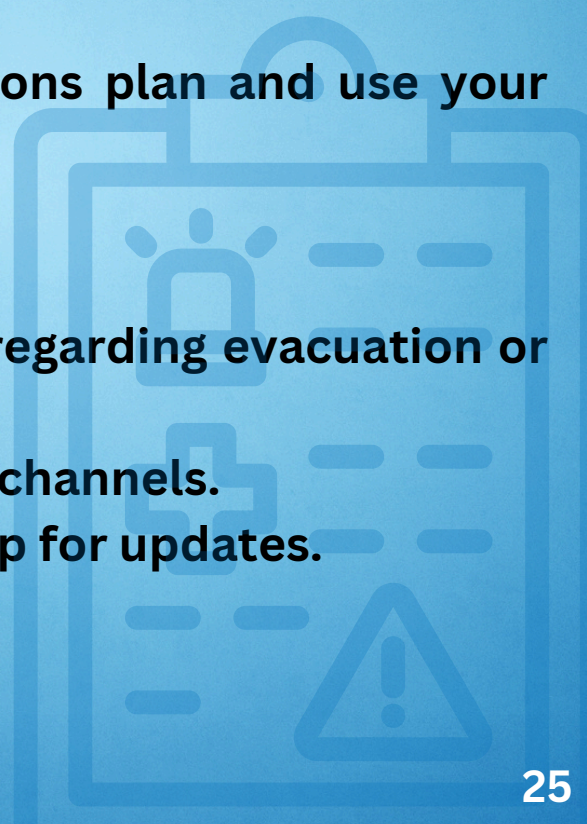
- Adhere to guidance from emergency services, including evacuation orders and shelter-in-place directives.
- Review the “Types of Warnings” for clear definitions.

It’s time to put your plan in place:

- Move quickly and with purpose. The time to enact your emergency plan has come.
- Follow your emergency communications plan and use your contact list.






Monitor alerts:

- Tune in for updates and instructions regarding evacuation or emergency assistance.
- See page 26 for emergency broadcast channels.
- Check your emergency notification app for updates.





Types of Warnings

	Red Flag Event	These events are defined by critical weather and fire danger conditions that could lead to extensive wildfire occurrences and/or control problems on existing wildfires.
	Pre-Evacuation	There is a high probability that you will be ordered to evacuate. Act immediately and prepare. You do not have to wait for an evac order to leave, get your things together and get moving.
	Evacuation Order	Your area is in imminent danger. You must leave immediately. If you are not home, do not attempt to go home.
	Shelter in Place	This means the best way to stay safe is to get inside a building or vehicle.
	Continue to Listen	Tune in to local radio, television, or the official agency's social media outlets for further instruction.

STORM WATCH

VS.

STORM WARNING

BE READY!

Conditions are favorable for severe weather to occur.

Actions: Prepare your home, review your evacuation plan, organize your disaster kit, stay up to date with the weather forecast.

TAKE ACTION!

Severe weather is imminent or occurring.

Actions: Finish storm preparations, evacuate if directed by local officials, and make sure your disaster preparedness kit is ready to go.

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION



WHAT TO DO WHEN A PRE-EVACUATION WARNING IS ISSUED

**LISTEN FOR FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS:
LOCAL TV AND RADIO
OFFICIAL PUBLIC SAFETY SOCIAL MEDIA FEEDS
EMERGENCY PERSONNEL
EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM (EAS)
EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM (ENS)**

**THE FIRST
72
ARE ON
YOU**

**ACT QUICKLY AND
WITH PURPOSE!
PREPARE TO LEAVE**

SHUT OFF HVAC

**SHUT ALL DOORS AND
WINDOWS**

**YOU DO NOT NEED
TO WAIT FOR AN
EVACUATION ORDER
TO LEAVE**

LEAVE LIGHTS ON

**MAINTAIN
A FULL
GAS TANK**

Evacuation
Route
←

**HAVE 72 HOURS OF
SUPPLIES LOADED IN
YOUR VEHICLE**

**GRAB YOUR
BASKET OF
LAUNDRY,
IT HAS A LITTLE
BIT OF
EVERYTHING YOU
NEED!**

**BRING IN OUTDOOR
FURNITURE
AND TRASH TOTES**

MAKE THE RIGHT CALL

9-1-1

FOR POLICE SERVICES:

- When there is a crime in progress.
- When there is an immediate threat to life or bodily injury.
- When there is major property damage or loss due to crime.

FOR FIRE SERVICES:

- To report a fire.
- To report hazardous materials.
- To initiate the rescue of a trapped person.

FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES:

- To report life-threatening medical emergencies that require an ambulance.



2-1-1

FOR CITY/COMMUNITY SERVICES & INFORMATION:

- Debris/Waste Pick-up.
- General questions and updates.
- Food assistance.
- Health services.
- Legal resources.



EMERGENCY

Management Offices

<https://www.arapahoeco.gov>



<https://www.dcsheriff.net.co.us/>



<https://www.jeffco.us>



RECOVERING AFTER THE EVENT





RECOVERING After the Event

Recovery Takes Time

When we experience a disaster or other stressful life event, we can have a variety of reactions, all of which can be common responses to difficult situations. These reactions can include feeling physically and mentally drained, having difficulty making decisions or staying focused on topics, becoming easily frustrated more frequently, arguing more with family and friends, feeling tired, sad, numb, lonely, or worried, and experiencing changes in appetite or sleep patterns. Most of these reactions are temporary and will go away over time. Look for ways to take one step at a time and focus on caring for your disaster-related needs and those of your family.



START WITH YOU

Take care of your safety. Find a safe place to stay and ensure your physical health needs and those of your family are addressed. Seek medical attention if necessary. Limit your exposure to the sights and sounds of disaster, especially on television, the internet, and social media.



Eat healthy. During times of stress, it is important that you maintain a balanced diet and drink plenty of water.



Get some rest. With so much to do, having enough time to rest or get adequate sleep may be difficult. Giving your body and mind a break can boost your ability to cope with the stress you may be experiencing.



Stay connected with family and friends. Giving and getting support is one of the most important things you can do. Try to do something as a family that you have all enjoyed in the past.



Be patient with yourself and with those around you. Recognize that everyone is stressed and may need some time to put their feelings and thoughts in order. That includes you!

Keep a particularly close eye on the children in your family. When disaster strikes, a child's view of the world as a safe and predictable place is temporarily lost. Children of different ages react in different ways to trauma, but how parents and other adults react following any traumatic event can help children recover more quickly and more completely.

ASSISTANCE FOLLOWING A DISASTER

36

FEMA Assistance

A disaster may be declared at the county level. FEMA's Public Assistance Program (FEMA assistance) is unavailable until a presidentially declared disaster, and not every disaster includes Individual Assistance.

After certain declared disasters, individuals may apply for assistance from FEMA's Individuals and Households Program. These programs aid individuals by offering financial assistance and other services that cannot be met through insurance. FEMA's assistance programs include housing, crisis counseling, and legal services.

To apply for assistance, please go to www.DisasterAssistance.gov or call FEMA toll-free at 800-621-3362. Disaster survivors who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability and use a Text Telephone (TTY) may call 800-462-7585. Disaster survivors who use 711 or VRS (Video Relay Service) may call 800-621-3362.

Depending on the incident, a Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) may be set up locally to apply for these services and check application statuses.

Non-Profits

Immediately after a disaster, established non-profits come together locally and federally to support disaster relief efforts.

- **American Red Cross** is commonly known for working with local partners to provide meals and snacks to those impacted by disasters. They also support various sheltering operations, provide comfort kits and other relief items, and offer financial aid to qualifying households. You can contact them at 303-722-7474 or visit www.redcross.org.
- **The Salvation Army** is known for deploying "Canteens" or mobile feeding units. They also provide disaster survivors and workers emotional/spiritual care and other emergency services. You can contact them at 239-278-1551 or visit www.salvationarmyleecounty.org.
- **Team Rubicon** is a volunteer organization that directly supports communities impacted by disaster by offering free debris clearance, expedient home repair services, and more.

5 SAFETY TIPS FOR GENERATORS



NEVER USE INDOORS

Do not run a generator indoors or in a partially enclosed space, such as a garage, and keep it 20 feet away from your home. Generators produce carbon monoxide which can be harmful.



FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS

Read all enclosed paperwork and become familiar with your generator prior to an emergency.



ESTIMATE THE RUNTIME

Check how long the model will run on a full tank or full battery and calculate your consumption rate. You should have the generator fuel source readily available before the emergency.



KEEP CHILDREN AWAY

Make sure children do not play near the generator and stay a minimum of 6 feet away at all times.



USE HEAVY DUTY, OUTDOOR RATED CORDS

Never connect worn-out cords or appliance cords to the generator.



BROKEN TRAFFIC LIGHTS

If traffic signals are out of order, stop as you would for a four-way stop sign.

Come to a complete stop at the marked stop line or before moving into the crosswalk or intersection. After stopping, you may turn right on red at most intersections if the way is clear.

WORKING WITH CONTRACTORS



Ask to see a state-issued license to verify:

- contractor's name
- license number
- address
- specialty

If a contractor has multiple employees, ask for their general liability and worker's compensation insurance policies.



Get written estimates from several licensed contractors.



Ask for references.

Avoid paying cash.



Don't use contractors who want to be paid in full before work begins.

Don't sign off on work until it's completed.



Most jobs require permits.



Check with the City's building department to ensure your permits have been issued.



WARNING SIGNS THAT A CONTRACTOR IS UNLICENSED

- They ask you to make a check payable to an individual instead of a company name.
- They cannot provide proof of insurance.
- They do not display a license number on advertisements.
- They are only willing to work on weekends.
- They are not willing to put a contract in writing.
- They say a permit is not necessary.
- They request a large down payment before work begins.
- They ask you to pay in cash or make a check payable to cash.
- Visit the DA's website for fraud alerts.

Check with the Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA) and your local government to determine if your contractor is properly licensed:

<https://dpo.colorado.gov/>



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