

How To Survive Any Natural Calamity

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Tips On Earthquake Emergency Preparation

In 1906, the residents of San Francisco, California, had an abrupt change of lifestyle. They learned that almost anything can happen without warning. An earthquake killed about 3,000 people and caused over \$400 million in property damages. In 1920, the Gansu earthquake in China took about 200,000 lives. Then in 1948, the region around Ashgabat in the Soviet Union suffered a powerful quake that claimed over two-thirds of that city's population (110,000 people died).

About Earthquakes

The most powerful earthquake ever recorded happened in 1960 in Chile. Registering 9.5 on the Moment magnitude scale, it created a tsunami that swept the entire Pacific Ocean. In 1972, 90% of the city of Managua, Nicaragua, was destroyed by a midnight earthquake that killed over 10,000 people. Then in 1985, the Great Mexican Earthquake struck, killing as many as 30,000 people, most of whom were never found. In 1989, San Francisco and surrounding areas experienced the "World Series Quake."

In 2003, the Bam Citadel, the largest adobe structure in the world and built before 500 B.C. was almost completely destroyed, together with 70% of the city of Bam and 70,000 residents.

Most of them happen along what is known as the circum-Pacific seismic belt or the "Pacific Ring of Fire" bounding the Pacific tectonic plate. With high-population cities like Mexico City, Tehran, and Tokyo growing in areas of high risk, it is possible that a future earthquake could take as many as 3 million lives.

It's hard to understand why people insist on living in earthquake-prone areas like San Francisco and the mountains of central and South America. But in fact, earthquakes are a common phenomenon, small ones happening somewhere in the world every day. Characterized by shaking and ruptures in the land, earthquakes also cause dangerous avalanches and landslides, fires like the terrible 1906 San Francisco experience, soil liquefaction where buildings literally sink into the earth, and massive tsunamis. Because the damage they do is

enduring, they also leave high risks for disease in their wake as people try to find potable water to drink and dry, safe places to sleep and live

People who live in high-probability earthquake zones must live each day as it comes, knowing that their fragile lives could be over in an instant. Knowing that tragedy can strike at any time, they prepare for it.

Technology specialist Jason lives near the Marina, the most high-risk area in his city. He accepts graciously the fact that living there is a risk, but he always stores basic supplies for that inevitable crisis. He keeps several gallons of fresh water, portable food packs, extra flashlights and batteries, and several thing-a-magics that would overwhelm the technologically-challenged.

Earthquake Safety Tips

- * Duck. Stay off heavy objects that may fall. Find an open area or stand in a doorway.
- * If you can't get out of the building, seek protection under a heavy table.
- * If you're driving when the earthquake strikes, stay inside your car.
- * If you're in a mall or store, move away from shelving and other movable objects.
- * In theaters and stadiums, duck under your seat and wait until the mob has largely left the area. Don't get caught up in the panic-filled crowds.

Another Word of Advice

Being well-prepared, having a plan of action, is the best way to prepare to survive an earthquake. Lacking this comfortable knowledge, you are more likely to panic and make deadly mistakes.

Know where strong, stable structures are that may provide shelter. Avoid areas of poor construction or materials. Stay calm. Stay alert. Things change very quickly, and you should be ready to respond.

Emergency Preparedness For A Hurricane

Nature's fury is mankind's nemesis. Natural disasters may be one of the only challenges planet Earth has left for us. We've learned to shape the land, modify crops, create new breeds of animals, and tame the wild beasts. But we haven't learned how to stop a natural disaster like a hurricane. There's little we can do when nature decides to release its fury on us. We can't stop it, but we can try to protect ourselves and our property.

The words "hurricane" and "typhoon" describe a meteorological event known as a tropical cyclone. These storm systems are characterized by a zone of low pressure at the center and large thunderstorms that produce high winds and floods of rain.

These systems form almost exclusively in the earth's tropical regions, spinning in a counterclockwise direction in the Northern Hemisphere and clockwise in the Southern Hemisphere.

Scientists have identified seven major basins where these tropical storm typically form. Four major basins are in the Pacific (North Central, Northeastern, Northwestern, and South/Southwestern), three are in the Indian Ocean (Northern, Southwestern, and Southeastern), and one is in the Atlantic (Northern). In 2004, the first documented tropical storm formed in the Southern Atlantic, striking Brazil.

Hurricane seasons vary geographically, appearing in a region's late summer, where the difference in temperatures between the air and sea are at their greatest. The most deadly hurricane on record struck the Ganges Delta in Bangladesh, killing from 300,000 to a million people. The Northern Indian basin has, since the early 1900s, been victim to the most and the most deadly hurricanes. Hurricanes are highly destructive of property. The recent Hurricane Katrina in the United States caused over \$80 billion in property damages.

Local governments tend to take most preventive measures to limit the loss of life and property. Most towns and cities create emergency plans, using sirens to alert citizens of coming danger. Emergency broadcast systems are in place to keep people informed. And many communities store food, water, and medicines in case of power or water system breakdowns.

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Most people who live on or near coastlines will experience a hurricane at least once during their lifetime. For some, it is a frequent occurrence, and they are prepared to board up windows and doors and evacuate almost out of habit. But many of us need to know what to do in the event of a hurricane.

What Can I Expect if a Hurricane is Near my Area?

* Luckily, hurricanes are easier to spot and prepare for than other natural disasters. With the advent of modern satellites, scientists are able to observe cloud formations and movement and reliably predict the direction and timing of the storm.

* As the hurricane nears landfall and it is spotted on radar, meteorologists will let the public know it's coming. At this early stage, many things could change. The storm can change in intensity and direction fairly quickly, so the local weather service can keep tabs and inform the community as the storm moves. During this period, local governments and emergency services begin to activate emergency plans and procedures.

* When they know the storm is coming their way, homeowners should begin to board up windows and doors and secure outdoor lawn furniture and equipment. As the storm nears, you and your family should evacuate the area. No sense taking needless chances.

* If you can't leave the storm, you should have stocked up on emergency supplies like plenty of fresh water, canned foods, candles and batteries, a battery-operated radio, and fuel for the generator. Water shortages can become life-threatening after a hurricane strikes, so it's a good idea to fill up every container you have - including your bathtub - with safe drinking water.

* The single most important item you will need during and after a major hurricane is a medical kit containing bandages, medical tape, antibiotics, and scissors. This may save your life by preventing serious infections if you or your family are injured.

* Long before the storm ever forms, you and your family should work out an emergency plan. Decide where to meet if people aren't home. Store essential supplies that can be used or easily moved to the car. Decide in advance where you will take shelter, and who will be responsible for

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helping family members unable to care for themselves. Establish clear roles and responsibilities for shutting up the house and securing outdoor items. The better prepared your family is, the less likely they are to be overwhelmed by the hurricane, and the more likely you will all survive with minimal injury or property damage.

What Will Happen During a Hurricane?

* When it hits land, the hurricane can bring winds over 100 miles per hour that can pick up and throw objects around as if they were toys. Cars, roofs, large pieces of metal or wood, and other flying debris can smash into homes. There is little one can do in this situation, but finding the safest shelter is the best bet. You may not be able to prevent serious damage to your home, but you can protect your life.

* Should the incoming hurricane grow a category 4 or 5, you will be advised to seek evacuate or, at the least, seek higher ground. Avoid trying to sit it out in your basement, as you might be trapped in a flood situation.

* If you can or must evacuate your community, travel light. Take only those items that you will need over a 24-48 hour period. A change of clothes, drinking water, and food should be included in your evacuation gear.

* As you drive to the nearest mass transportation outlet or in your own automobile, drive slowly and carefully. High winds and whipping rains will make it difficult to see, and accidents become very likely. Do NOT panic. This could also cause needless accidents and spread fearful behavior to other people in the same situation.

* The hurricane will pass in a few hours, and you will mostly likely be allowed to return to your home. Don't worry: the terrible flooding that kept people from returning to New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina was not the norm. Levees broke down, creating an abnormal situation.

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What about After the Hurricane?

* After a hurricane has happened, review your family's actions to see if your plan was reasonable and effective. Hurricanes are a fact of life in coastal areas, and you can benefit from your experience by preparing a better plan for the next time.

* Communities can only decide AFTER the hurricane whether their emergency plan and procedures were adequate. One good indicator is low loss of life or injuries being reported. The level of property damage will also be a sign of how effective emergency procedures were.

* State, city, and local governments who go through a hurricane should take stock after the event to do what they can to improve their plan and procedures. Citizens should ask government representatives about the results of their performance reviews and insist on necessary improvements.

Emergency preparedness for hurricanes is everyone's business and everyone's responsibilities. While governments are preparing to protect citizens' lives and property, individuals and families must plan their own solutions for personal health and safety and for protecting private property.

Emergency Preparedness For A Hurricane

There is nothing anyone can do when nature decides to lash out its fury. There is no way to stop it so people should brace for the worse and seek shelter.

In order to minimize the loss of life, most towns and cities have created emergency plans. Sirens are placed in strategic locations to announce a major evacuation; the emergency broadcast system is in place in the event that power and electricity has been cut off as well as stockpiles of food, water and medicine.

Those who live in the coastal communities will usually be battered by hurricanes. This happens between the months of June until November in the Atlantic and from May to November in the northern Pacific Ocean.

When this is first spotted on radar, the forecaster will already inform the public about it. There is no need yet to panic here since the weather conditions may change in the next few hours but if there are no improvements, it is time to activate emergency procedures.

The hurricane may pack winds exceeding more than a 100 miles per hour that can make cars, pieces of metal or wood cause severe damage to the home. Households can board up the windows and doors of the house with hurricane shutters and plywood.

People will rush to the supermarket to stock up on food, water and other essentials. These include candles, batteries for the radio and the flashlight as well as fuel for the generator.

All of these things are necessary especially water to prevent dehydration so every possible container must be used including the bathtub.

The most important which must never be forgotten is a medical kit. This should have bandages and some antibiotics to be able to treat anyone who is ill or injured until the person can be brought out to a medical facility for better treatment.

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Should the incoming hurricane be classified as a category 4 or 5, residents are advised to evacuate and seek higher ground. It will be a good idea to travel light so only a few pieces of clothing, food and water must be brought into the vehicle.

The citizens are also advised to drive slowly and avoid panicking since this could cause accidents on the road. The hurricane will pass within a few hours. This is the only time that people will be able to go out or return to see how much damage was done.

It is only after assessing the damage that towns and cities can say whether the emergency preparedness procedures that were sent in place were effective or not. One indication that it works is if no casualties are reported. This is because a house or even a building can be repaired but the life of an individual can never be replaced.

The people who live in the household can rehearse the emergency preparedness plan to see if some improvements need to be made. This is because time is of the essence in order to be safe in this type of crisis.

Emergency preparedness is key to ensure the survival of everyone present. People who live through this annually know what to do but those who are moving into the community should learn fast to be able to survive the onslaught of the hurricane.

Prepare For A Flood The Best Way You Could

Did you know that floods are the most common natural disaster in America? The Red Cross reports that, every year, floods take more than 100 lives and cause more than \$4 billion in damages.

Here are some tips everyone should know to prepare for that inevitable flood:

*** Anticipate the Expected**

You should know what impacts a flood could have on your home and property. The flow of water is easy to predict, and local terrain is a known factor. Try to estimate the damages if a tree was ripped from the ground and into your house or if debris should slide down the hill into your yard.

*** Ask Questions**

Local planning agencies have very good information about the location of flood plains and water flows throughout the community. Be sure to find out where your property is located relative to flood areas, and find out if there is a history of flooding where you live.

*** Educate Yourself**

Know the signs of imminent flooding and learn what type of alerts your community uses to warn citizens of impending floods.

*** Get with the Plan**

It's critical that you know what your community plans do to in case evacuation becomes necessary. Know how they will provide transportation and local emergency travel routes. Find out if there is a step-by-step plan you can follow to best cooperate with the community's effort.

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* Insure your Property

Especially for people in flood-prone areas, normal home insurance will probably not cover flooding. But finding and having individual private flood insurance has many benefits:

- it covers specific losses
- it's usually relatively inexpensive
- it covers you even when your area is not declared a formal "disaster area"
- you may not have to repay property or reconstruction loans
- you know you will be paid because the National Flood Insurance Program backs all approved policies
- you may be able to get a partial payment very quickly after the event to begin repairs

* Protect Important Documents

Make sure your passports, birth certificates, insurance policies, deeds, stock certificates, and other important documents are in a secure, waterproof location and container. Also be sure it's in a place where you can get to it easily.

* Consider a Home Reconfiguration

If your fireplace, furnace, electric panel, or water heater is now in your basement or ground floor, consider having them moved to your attic. While this may be costly, it will save you in the long run, especially if you live in flood-prone area.

You should also find out about local building codes and requirements to find out whether you can build retaining walls and barriers to protect your home.

* Plug It Up

Check trap sewers in your house with check valves to be sure flood water can't leak into your house from the community's sewer system. During flood emergencies, you may want to use stoppers or corks to plug your tubs and sinks as well.

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* **Protect by Waterproofing**

Be sure the walls of your basement and lower floors are watertight. Use waterproof compounds to seal cracks so that water can't get in.

* **Keep Necessities at Hand**

Be sure you have a flood kit by assuring there are a battery-operated radio and other supplies readily available. Set aside some fresh drinking water, canned goods, extra clothing, and blankets in a dry area that won't be flooded. Most important, keep a first aid kit updated and well-supplied.

Careful preparation is the best way to prevent damage and injury from floods. Especially if you live in at low altitudes or in coastal areas, you are likely to have this experience at least once in your life. You'll be much happier if you know what to do and take the proper precautions before a flood washes through your life.

Prepare For The Worst Hurricane In The Best Way Possible

USA Today.com reports that, over one century, the United States is likely to be struck by about 280 hurricanes, 81 of those being major storms with winds over 111 miles per hour. On average, one major hurricane lands somewhere on the US coast every year.

Hurricanes are powerful storms, bringing high winds and rain. A category 3 hurricane, considered "extensive" on the Saffir-Simpson scale, can have winds from 111-130 miles per hour and storm surges from 9 to 12 feet. A category 5 hurricane, the "extreme" variety, can contain winds over 155 miles an hour and storm surges over 18 feet.

These tropical cyclones (the term describing both hurricanes and typhoons) are extremely dangerous. During the United States' hurricane season, from June through November, individuals and families who live in coastal areas should be prepared for their onslaught.

There are a few things you can do to protect your family and your property for the threats presented by a hurricane coming your way:

*** Stay Aware**

Every hurricane has different and unpredictable characteristics. The best bet is to be prepared for the worst, category 5, hurricane.

*** Have a Plan and Checklist**

While your family plans for their response to a hurricane, take an inventory. Make a list of items outdoors that you will need to bring into the house or other shelter to prepare for a storm. This may be your lawn furniture, gardening equipment and tools, or large toys.

*** Give your Lawn a Manicure**

Maintaining a healthy yard, including trees and shrubs, will keep it strong to withstand high winds. Keeping trees and plants trimmed and neat will also prevent the weakest branches from being snapped off to land in your bedroom!

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*** Stay High and Dry**

Check your gutters and drains frequently, and be sure they are clear of debris. This will reduce potential flooding in yard and home. Why add through negligence what Mother Nature will bring your way?

*** Invest in Hurricane Shutters**

Installing permanent shutters for windows and doors is much safer, and more attractive, than relying on plywood or tape over glass. If the storm is predicted to be a category 4 or 5 hurricane, you may want to add plywood over the outside to reinforce indoor shutters.

*** Have an Escape Route**

Be prepared to evacuate your home should it become necessary. Know where to find emergency information over the radio or through emergency agencies like the Red Cross. Find out where the official emergency travel routes are in your community, and identify nearby shelters.

*** Prepare to Camp Out**

Whether you're on the road or in a shelter, you'll want to have sleeping bags or blankets and a change of clothes. It's a good idea to bring your own fresh drinking water as well.

*** Consider Spot and Fluffy**

Decide in advance what you'll do to protect and care for your pets. After the experience of Katrina, agencies are more aware that pet owners do not want to abandon their pets. Have a supply of food and water set aside that you can either leave at home for the pet or bring with you.

*** Set up a Supply Cache**

To help you respond quickly, set up supplies that may be needed during the storm, whether you stay at home or evacuate. Include clean water, flashlights, batteries, a transistor radio, food, a can opener, blankets, extra clothing, and the all-important first aid kit.

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* **Unplug**

Unplug appliances and equipment to reduce energy use and fire hazards. You don't know what kind of damages your house will suffer, and you don't want to find a pile of ashes when you return. If you leave your refrigerator plugged in, set it to the highest setting.

* **Consider some Reconstruction**

If you are in an area that has frequent storms and flooding, you might want to look at elevating your home. If you can't do that, you might develop alternatives for getting furniture off the bottom floors.

Preparing for hurricanes is a fact of life for many Americans that live on our coasts. If you haven't done so in the past, now is a good time to sit down and make a plan to protect you, your family, and your property from the extensive damage a hurricane can impose.

Vital Steps In Preparation For An Industrial Emergency

Most large corporations recognize the benefits to emergency preparedness to protect their people and property in the case of an industrial emergency. They don't want to lose important business by allowing interruptions in production and operations due to an industrial emergency.

Effective emergency preparedness planning helps them identify potential hazards and conditions that might not have been recognized in the absence of planning and preparation. Industrial emergencies are not only costly. They can be deadly.

A good emergency preparedness procedure will assure vulnerabilities are exposed and addressed. Just a few examples of the many possible vulnerabilities that could create or exacerbate an industrial emergency include inadequate maintenance of or outdated equipment, insufficient training for personnel, inappropriate supplies, or poor facility design.

By developing a comprehensive emergency preparedness plan, corporations can correct potential problems before an industrial emergency occurs. Such planning can prevent losses of life and property and can protect the corporation from financial collapse.

Companies that follow these basic steps will be more likely to prevent or survive an industrial emergency.

The Emergency Preparedness Team

The company should set up a solid planning team that includes both managers and staff with the appropriate set of skills and experience to conduct the emergency preparedness process.

The team should establish a schedule, assign roles and responsibilities, and encourage wide participation in the process to assure buy-in and participation at all levels in the event of an industrial emergency.

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