

Remaining items: Building from home

FEMA's supplemental list includes several other important items that I did not purchase either because I already had them at home or they did not apply to me.

Some items – like prescription medications, glasses, pet food and extra water for my dog, blankets, complete changes of clothing for each family member, personal hygiene items, bleach, writing supplies and books and games – were already in ample supply in my home and would not take long to collect.

From the additional lists I found online, I would bring work gloves, sunscreen, sunglasses, decks of cards, and hand sanitizer from my home.

Cash and change are also critical, and I found valuable specifics about what denominations of money to include. According to a publication released by the New York Office of Emergency Management, your kit should include at least \$100 in small bills – meaning nothing larger than \$10 notes – so if you run into a situation where change cannot be made, you're not losing much. Keeping enough quarters on hand (at least \$20 worth) can come in handy at toll booths, for dialing pay phones if/when cell phones are not an option, or for buying snacks from a vending machine.

A point I encountered repeatedly was that each family or individual preparing a disaster kit should consider their individual needs when planning for emergencies. If you have a prescription that runs out quickly, think about getting an extra refill to have on-hand. If you have a child who suffers from allergies, make sure to include a package of antihistamines as there is no telling which allergens may be present in the event of an evacuation. Make sure to look around your home and think about what you would really need in case of an emergency.

Family documentation

A facet of the disaster kit preparation process that might take some effort is the collection of personal and family documents including insurance policies, identification and bank account records.

As stated in "How to Prepare an Emergency Grab & Go Kit" by Rianne Hill Soriano, "Prepare a plastic envelope (or other waterproof container) where you can safely place documents and lists of phone numbers, addresses and

email addresses of families, friends, schools, work, medical and financial advisors, utilities and service providers, hospitals, doctors, pharmacies and media. Also, write down current prescriptions and medical histories of (each member of) the family. Gather all information about your credit cards, bank, brokerage, mortgage and bank accounts and their contact numbers, websites and emails."

Finally, Soriano advises that families "assemble copies of passports, birth and marriage certificates, current photos of each family member, health insurance policy information, claim forms and copies of insurance cards."

On the City's new Emergency Preparedness page, we have also provided a link for FEMA's Emergency Financial First Aid Kit. It provides space to fill in personal household information and identify professional advisors, and also includes checklists of important legal documents to collect.

Your documentation container would be an ideal spot for planned meeting spots in the event of an emergency. I would recommend using your area maps to designate locations locally, in contingent counties and in other states as applicable. These spots could be anything from the home of a friend or family member to a specific hotel – just make sure each family member is aware of the plan and its location in your kit.

Concluding thoughts

Finally, take the time to visit some of the Web sites I utilized in putting together this story. Ready.gov has great advice for preparing pets, infants, young children and seniors for emergencies, in addition to providing FEMA's recommended and supplemental supply lists, the site also includes supplies for unique needs based on climate and other considerations. There is great information on emergency food choices, cooking methods and sanitation.

The Texas Department of State Health Services' preparedness Web site, http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/preparedness/e-prep_public.shtm, also offers emergency supply lists, planning strategies and suggestions for those with special needs.

Please take the time to visit our Emergency Preparedness page. From emergency supply lists to maps of surrounding counties, it provides many valuable tools that we hope local families will take advantage of.

Thank you for reading, and happy preparing!

Emergency Supply List

Compiled by the Federal Emergency Management Agency

Recommended Items:

- Water, one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
- Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Whistle to signal for help
- Dust mask, to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter in place
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Can opener for food (if kit contains canned food)
- Local maps

Additional Items:

- Prescription medications and glasses
- Infant formula and diapers
- Pet food and extra water for your pet
- Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records in a waterproof, portable container
- Cash or traveler's checks and change
- Emergency reference material such as a first aid book or information from www.ready.gov
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person
- Complete change of clothing including a long-sleeved shirt, long pants and sturdy shoes
- Household chlorine bleach and medicine dropper
- Fire extinguisher
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items
- Mess kits, paper cups, plates and plastic utensils, paper towels
- Books, games, puzzles or other activities for children

Survivors: Share Disaster Recovery Information with Friends and Neighbors

Word of mouth is a powerful way to spread news. Amazing as it may seem, some people are so busy with their recovery from severe weather events or disasters, they may not have heard about federal help. Spread the word that the first step toward getting recovery assistance is to register with FEMA.

You could be the one to bring this important message to someone you know, perhaps a friend, neighbor, coworker, family member or acquaintance. Affected individuals, households and communities will be able to recover faster and stronger.

Disaster Assistance Is For Renters, Too

Renters whose homes and property are damaged by severe storms, tornadoes and flooding may be eligible for federal disaster assistance. Federal grants can help pay for temporary housing not covered by insurance. These rental grants are initially for two months.

Registering with State and Volunteer Agencies is NOT the Same as Registering with FEMA

Many residents affected by severe storms, tornadoes, flooding, and/or other disasters may have registered for assistance with state or volunteer agencies. State and federal recovery officials want survivors to know this is not the same as registering for federal disaster aid with the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

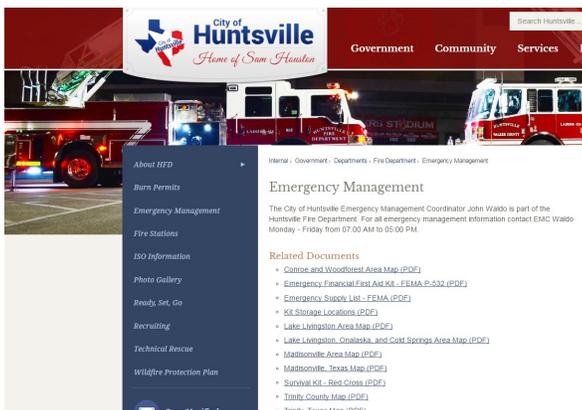
While FEMA, the Texas Division of Emergency Management and volunteer agencies often work together, their missions, programs and funding are not the same. Be sure you are also registered with FEMA.

City of Huntsville Emergency Preparedness

The City's Emergency Preparedness page features several downloadable tools including:

- Meal plans for emergencies;
- Shopping lists;
- Maps of surrounding counties;
- FEMA's Financial First Aid Kit;
- Tips for creating and maintaining supply kits and more.

To access the page, visit www.huntsvilletx.gov, scroll over Departments and Fire Department and select "[Emergency Management.](#)"



State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR)

Call 2-1-1 to register today!

The State of Texas offers residents the option to register with the STEAR program, a free registry that provides local emergency planners and responders with additional information on the needs of their community.

While registration is voluntary and does not guarantee specific services, joining the 2-1-1 network allows local responders to maintain an up-to-date database of those individuals who may need special assistance during emergencies.

Required information to register:

Name, address, phone number, primary language

Who should register?

- People with disabilities;
- People with access and functional needs such as:
 - (1) Those with limited mobility;
 - (2) Those with communication barriers;
 - (3) Those who require additional medical assistance during an emergency event;
 - (4) Those who require transportation assistance; and
 - (5) Those who require personal care assistance.

Additional questions asked to capture vital information for local emergency planners and responders:

Emergency contact information; caregiver information; any necessary information related to pets; transportation assistance for home evacuation; communication barriers; disability, functional or medical needs.

How to register:

Dial 2-1-1 or use a video phone relay option. Alternatively, contact Emergency Management Coordinator John Waldo at (936) 291-5945.

For more information, visit <https://www.211texas.org/cms/>.

FEMA Officials Urge Applicants for Aid to 'Stay in Touch,' get answers, resolve issues

Residents who have registered with FEMA for disaster aid are urged by recovery officials to "stay in touch." It's the best way to get answers and resolve potential issues that might result in assistance being denied.

"Putting your life back together after a disaster is difficult," said John Long, federal coordinating officer for FEMA. "While the process of getting help from FEMA is intended to be simple, it's easy to understand how sometimes providing important information is overlooked or missed."

After registering, it's important to keep open the lines of communication. "It's a two-way street," said Long. "FEMA can't offer assistance to survivors who – for whatever reason – have not provided all the necessary information."

After registering with FEMA, applicants will receive notice by mail within ten days on whether or not they qualify for federal disaster assistance.

- If eligible, the letter explains how much the grant will be, and how it is intended to be used.
- If ineligible – or if the grant amount reads "0" – you may still qualify. The denial may just mean the application is missing information or that you missed an appointment with an inspector.

Applicants who are denied assistance may call the Helpline to understand why, or go online to www.disasterassistance.gov or m.fema.gov. Becoming eligible for assistance may be as simple as supplying missing paperwork or providing additional information.

FEMA looks at a number of things to determine if a survivor will receive disaster assistance. The agency must be able to:

- Verify an applicant's identity.
- Verify damages. If you believe the inspector didn't see all of your damages, call the FEMA Helpline at 1-800-621-3362.
- Verify home occupancy. Applicants need to provide proof of occupancy such as a utility bill.
- Collect insurance information.

"FEMA personnel are here to help," said Scott Bass, state coordinating officer with the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management. "Keep in touch. Use the Helpline. You'll get answers to your questions and help with understanding the assistance process, and ways to move your personal recovery forward."

To register for assistance:

- call 800-621-3362 (FEMA). If you are deaf, hard-of-hearing or have a speech disability and use a TTY, call 800-462-7585. If you use 711-Relay or Voice Relay Services, call 800-621-3362; or go to www.DisasterAssistance.gov

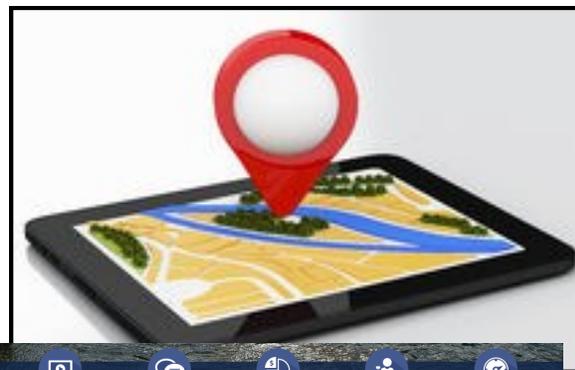
The toll-free telephone numbers will operate from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. seven days a week. Multilingual operators are available.

FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.

Code RED

The City of Huntsville and Walker County have instituted an emergency notification system called CodeRED which is an ultra high-speed telephone communication service. This system allows us to telephone all or targeted areas of the City and Walker County in case of an emergency situation that requires immediate action (such as a missing child or evacuation notice). The system is capable of dialing 60,000 phone numbers per hour delivering emergency notifications to any number you have registered in the system.

To sign up to receive Code RED notifications go to huntsvilletx.gov, and look for the CodeRED tab under the blue buttons on the homepage.



Stay Notified Online Payments Requests & Concerns Transparency Meeting Video City Maps

City News Events & Meetings Publications CodeRED

Conversion of Bobby K. Marks Drive and Bearkat Boulevard to One-Way Traffic has been Completed
The conversion of Bobby K. Marks Drive and Bearkat Boulevard to one-way traffic has been completed.
[Read on...](#)

7-19-2016 City Council Meeting
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[Read on...](#)

Visitor Center Coordinator Recently Recognized as a Certified Tourism Executive
Jamie Matthews, the City of Huntsville's Visitor Center Coordinator, was recently recognized as a Certified Tourism Executive.
[Read on...](#)

Water Division Performing Annual Water Line Cleaning
The City of Huntsville Water Division has been conducting annual water line cleaning to improve water quality and reduce the buildup of minerals. This process can lead to reduced water pressure in the area being cleaned.
[Read on...](#)

Traffic Restricted on Bearkat Boulevard Until August 19 Due to Construction
Beginning July 14, traffic on Bearkat Boulevard between Sycamore Avenue and Bobby K. Marks Drive/Avenue H will be limited to one lane to allow for construction on the Town Creek drainage project.
[Read on...](#)

November Election Candidate Packets Now Available
The City will hold a General Election for four At-Large City Council positions on November 8, 2016.
[Read on...](#)

Sam Houston Statue and Visitor Center Introduces New Discount Cards
This weekend the Sam Houston Statue and Visitor Center will be rolling out a new discount card for guests who are visiting from outside Huntsville zip codes. Various local businesses have joined forces to offer a 10% discount to out-of-town travelers.
[Read on...](#)

Transfer Station is Now Accepting Credit Cards
The Scale House at the Transfer Station is now able to accept Credit Cards and Debit Cards that can be used as credit. This service was added to continue to serve our customers and make their experience at the Scale House more convenient.
[Read on...](#)

FEMA Aid Recipients Cautioned About Using Funds for Intended Purpose

Recovery officials caution Texans who have received disaster assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to use the funds for their intended purpose and to keep disaster spending receipts for three years.

Disaster assistance is to help residents meet basic disaster-related needs and funds are distributed via check or direct deposit. A letter explaining what the payment is to be used for arrives within a day or two of the check or direct deposit payment.

If an applicant spends the payment on anything other than the purpose for which it is directed, he/she may be denied assistance the next time the need arises. In some cases, FEMA will ask the funds be returned.

Those receiving aid are urged to keep receipts of their disaster spending for three years to document the money was used to meet disaster-related needs. If a recipient receives an insurance settlement to cover the same expenses, he or she must reimburse FEMA. Random audits confirm funds were spent properly.

Disaster assistance can include grants for temporary housing and home repairs, low-cost loans to cover uninsured property losses, and other programs to help individuals and business owners.

The first step is to register with FEMA at DisasterAssistance.gov.

For more information on recovery, visit the disaster webpage at fema.gov/disaster/4266. Twitter at twitter.com/femaregion6 and the Texas Division of Emergency Management website, txdps.state.tx.us/dem. Visit fema.gov/texas-disaster-mitigation for publications and reference material on rebuilding and repairing safer and stronger.

Don't Forget About Fido

Just like you prep for your family, remember to prepare supplies for your four-legged family members. Think basics for survival first by including at least three days of food in an airtight container and three days of water specifically for your pet. Be proactive and talk with your veterinarian about what is most appropriate for your pet's emergency medical needs. Most kits for pets should include cotton bandage rolls, bandage tape and scissors, antibiotic ointment, flea and tick prevention, and any medication your pet takes on a regular basis.

Your pet should wear a collar with its rabies tag and identification at all times. Be sure you also include a backup leash, collar, and ID tag in your pet's supply kit. Place copies of your pet's registration, vaccination, and medical records in a waterproof bag to keep in the kit at all times.

If you become separated from your pet during an emergency, a picture of you and your pet together will help you document ownership and also will allow others to assist you in locating your pet.

Lastly, put a few of their favorite treats and toys in the kit. These familiar items can help reduce stress for your pet. Be prepared to adapt this information to your personal circumstances and make every effort to follow instructions received from authorities on the scene. With these simple preparations, you can be ready for the unexpected. Those who take the time to prepare themselves and their pets will likely encounter less difficulty, stress and worry. Take the time now to get yourself and your pet ready.



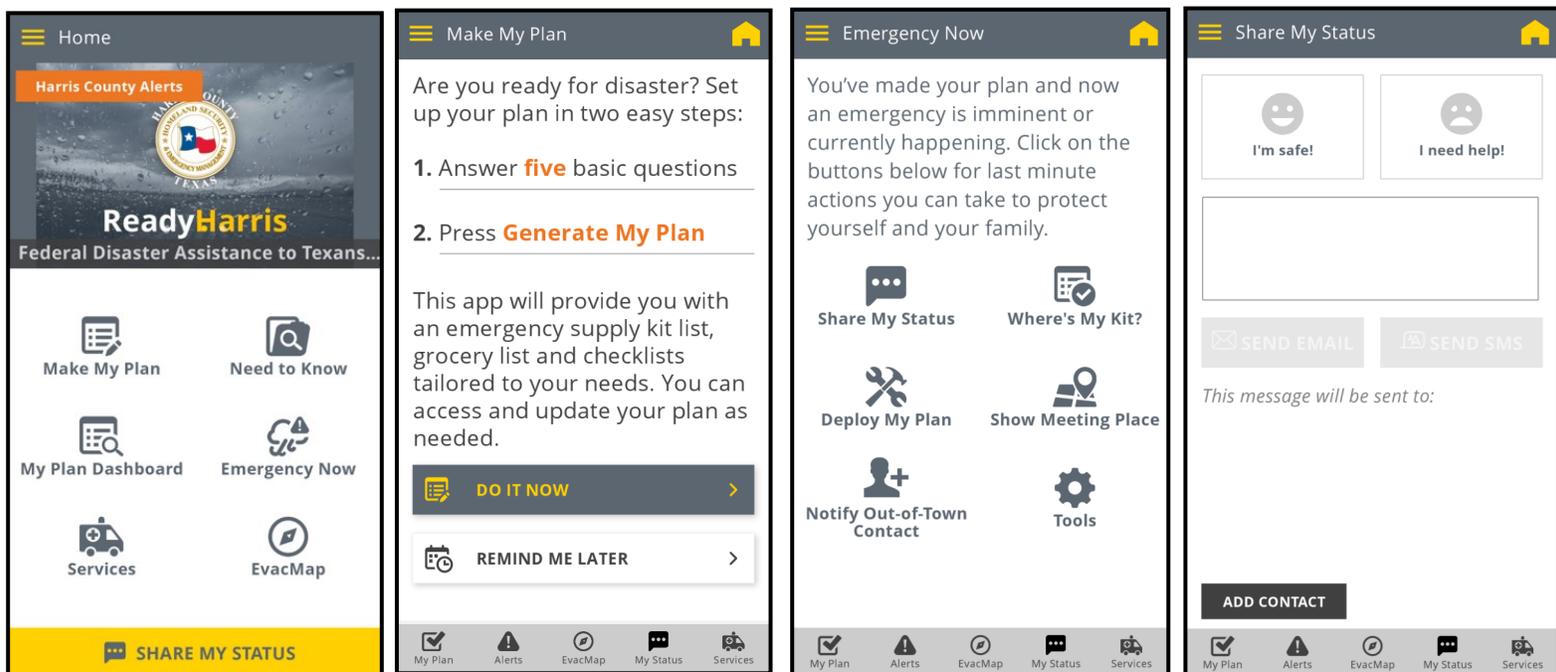
Preparedness Goes Digital

Being prepared for an emergency has never been easier. We think in 2016 there should be an app for everything and Harris County thought the same thing when they recently launched the free ReadyHarris app for emergency planning.

Harris County Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Management released a free mobile app, ReadyHarris, just in time for hurricane season. The app helps Harris County residents build a personal preparedness plan and get real-time updates during emergencies. The ReadyHarris app delivers real time weather alerts, hosts a step-by-step guide to building a personalized family disaster plan, offers survival tip sheets, maps evacuation routes and locates local emergency services. The app is available in both English and Spanish.

The release comes at a time when recent surveys find that people depend on their smartphones more than ever for breaking news, important government information and what is happening in their community.

In the app you can create your emergency plan by just answering a few questions, learn disaster preparedness tips, send alerts to family members on your current status during an emergency, see real-time evacuation maps and many more options so you are fully prepared in the event of a disaster.



What You Need to Know

Shelter-in-place Means selecting a small, interior room, with few or no windows, and taking refuge there. It does not mean sealing off your entire home or office building. In the event of a shelter-in-place it is advised to shut off the air-conditioning, tape the door frames off and plug vent holes. In any emergency you need to always keep a head-count of the individuals with you. If you believe you will be stuck in that place for an extended period of time call 911 and let them know your location. If an evacuation of your space needs to be made during the event emergency crews will know exactly where to rescue your group. .

Flash Flood alerts If you see water on the roadways, *Turn Around, Don't Drown*. You may not be able to see the road conditions under the water. The roadway could be weak and washing away even if the water is still relatively low. If you see a barricade blocking a roadway, turn around. Emergency crews put the blockades out to keep you safe so don't endanger yourself and emergency crews by ignoring safety precautions.

Flood Water If you are in an area with high flood waters, do not enter the water for recreational use. In many cases the flood waters are contaminated with gas and oil. The flood waters are also home to many snakes, broken glass and sharp objects. There are often man-holes which the covers have been swept off which creates a dangerous current and can sweep people under.

Bomb Threat If your area receives a bomb threat, evacuate immediately. Your team should have a plan already in place for a safe evacuation spot and leaders who will be responsible for keeping a head-count of everyone inside to assure everyone got out safely.

Evacuation Know where to go and have your emergency kit for your family and pets ready. If you are at your workplace, have a leader to keep a headcount of the individuals who were inside. Know where your safe spot is.

How Texans Can Volunteer and Help Texas Survivors

In the face of disaster, Texans always come together with courage, compassion and unity to ask, “How can I help?” If you want to volunteer for disaster work, there are many tasks that can aid in recovery – cleaning-up and rebuilding are two of the biggest. The Federal Emergency Management Agency suggests that volunteering through a local voluntary organization may be the best way to find meaningful volunteer work after the disaster.

Such organizations are often in the best position to know about opportunities for immediate volunteer needs as well as volunteers in the long and difficult recovery phase. In addition, going through an established organization provides a better chance of having insurance and liability protection when you work as a volunteer.

The Texas Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (TXVOAD) is a good source to find the local organizations in need of volunteers. TXVOAD represents more than three dozen faith-based, community, nonprofit and non-governmental groups that include volunteer engagement as a key component of their operations. Showing up at a disaster site unexpectedly can create an additional burden for first responders. If you want to help, it is advised to first reach out to an organization that is coordinating recovery needs in your community.

For a complete list of these organizations, with links to their websites, visit [Texas Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster](#).

In the immediate disaster response period there are often many people who want to volunteer at the same time. Be patient because it may not be clear until weeks after the incident how volunteers can get involved. There are often greater needs for

volunteer help when the community enters the long-term recovery period which can be weeks or even months after a disaster.

Texans can learn more about volunteering and the benefits of volunteering during a disaster by viewing this video at go.usa.gov/cuX3V.

If you cannot volunteer your time or talent, FEMA officials say making a donation to an organization involved in disaster recovery is a sensible, efficient way of helping the people in need. Cash contributions to volunteer organizations make good sense for a number of reasons:

- Financial contributions help ensure a steady flow of important services to disaster survivors in need.
- Local organizations spend the money in the local disaster area, accelerating recovery of the local economy;
- Cash donations – rather than unsolicited donated goods – avoid the complicated, costly and time-consuming process of collecting, transporting and distributing the goods; and
- With a receipt, cash donations to recognized relief organizations are tax-deductible.

If a disaster survivor has needs, they can call 211 to be matched with a volunteer group that can help.

For more information on Texas recovery, visit FEMA on Twitter at twitter.com/femaregion6 and the Texas Division of Emergency Management website, txdps.state.tx.us/dem.

MYTH	FACT
There are enough volunteers to help Texans as they recover from the recent disasters.	Volunteers are needed in the immediate aftermath of a disaster, but there's often a greater need for help when a community faces long-term recovery – weeks or months after a disaster strikes.
	

Make Things Easier After a Disaster by Documenting Your Items Now

Every firefighter, police officer or first responder we have interviewed says that a home inventory is the most important thing a family can do.

Why... It's easier to write the details now - it's harder after a traumatic event.

A home inventory is a list or videos/photos of everything in your home.

- Make a home inventory folder, box, or binder to hold videos, photos, written lists and documents of your belongings. Label it!
- Do one room at a time.
- Video tape and narrate. Focus on the big items like couches, tables, electronics, art, etc. Turn on the time and date function to show when you recorded your home and possessions.
- Include information like "I bought this TV in 1998 with my VISA card. I got it at Best Buy and it cost \$400. The receipt and warranty are in (file cabinet, safe deposit box, etc.)."

No video camera? Take photographs and label them with the same info above. Consider holding a ruler next to items to show the dimensions.

If you use a digital camera, you can load the inventory list on the same CD as your photos. Another way to ensure safe keeping of your records are to upload them to the cloud or email the documents to yourself.

Write or describe each item, its brand name, make, model, serial numbers and the price. Include any other information you think might be helpful.

Doing the preparation in advance will help you when submitting insurance claims. Find more tips from people who have survived natural disasters at <http://www.whathappensnow.com/>

Storm Damage?

- 1 Before you start cleaning up, take photos of the damage to your home and belongings.
- 2 Make a list of damaged/lost items, and gather any original receipts you have for those items.
- 3 Call your insurance agent to submit a claim.

Having this info on hand will help speed up the process with your insurance company and other programs.

FEMA

What to Tell Your Children about Disasters

It's important for all family members to know how to react in an emergency, because when a disaster strikes, you may need to act quickly.

Discuss possible disaster plans with your children—in a very general way—so that they will know what to do in various situations. For example, if you live in a part of the country that is prone to tornadoes, it is important for your children to know what to do if a tornado is coming. Remember that it is possible that you and your children may be in different places when a disaster strikes; for example at school and work. Also, older children may be home alone when faced with an emergency.

It is important to warn children, without overly alarming them, about disasters. Tell children that a disaster is something that could hurt people or cause damage. Explain that nature sometimes provides “too much of a good thing” – fire, rain, or wind. Talk about things that could happen during a storm, like the fact that the lights or phone might not work. Tell children there are many people who can help them during a disaster, so that they will not be afraid of firemen, policemen, paramedics, or other emergency officials.

Teach children how to call for help, when to use emergency numbers and to call the family contact if they are separated. Be sure to visit ready.gov/kids to see tips and planning tools to prepare for your children in a disaster. They also offer great tools for kids to play games to learn about disaster preparedness and building their emergency kit, check out the games here <https://www.ready.gov/kids/games>

After your family survives a disaster it is crucial you speak to your family about what has happened to reassure them everything will be fine and to prevent anxiety.

Healthychildren.org has some great tips including leaving the television off since news coverage of disasters—especially if children see their own town or school on TV—can be traumatic to children of all ages. They also provide great activities to get your children talking about the disaster that they have gone through.

