

READY TOGETHER FOUNDATION
COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS RESOURCE LIBRARY

RTF-122

Emergency Evacuation Guide

A Practical Guide to Planning and Carrying Out Safe Evacuations
During Emergencies

Building Resilient Communities Together

Evacuating Early Saves Lives

Whether caused by wildfires, floods, hurricanes, chemical spills, earthquakes, or other emergencies, evacuation may become necessary with little notice.

Having a clear evacuation plan before an emergency occurs helps families leave quickly, safely, and confidently.

Preparation begins before evacuation is needed.

Why Evacuation Planning Matters

Preparing for evacuation helps your family:

- Leave dangerous areas safely.
- Reduce panic during emergencies.
- Stay together.
- Protect important belongings.
- Reach safety more quickly.

Prepared families know when and how to leave.

Before an Evacuation

Take these important steps:

- ☐ Learn your community's evacuation routes.
- ☐ Identify at least two ways to leave your neighborhood.
- ☐ Prepare a Go Bag for every family member.
- ☐ Keep your vehicle fueled whenever possible.
- ☐ Store important documents in waterproof containers.
- ☐ Plan where your family will meet if separated.
- ☐ Include pets in your evacuation plan.

Planning ahead saves valuable time.

Know the Difference

Voluntary Evacuation

Authorities recommend leaving because conditions may become dangerous.

Leaving early can help avoid traffic and reduce stress.

Mandatory Evacuation

Authorities have determined that remaining in the area is unsafe.

Leave immediately.

Your safety should always come first.

Your Go Bag

Every family member should have:

- ☐ Water.
- ☐ Non-perishable food.
- ☐ Flashlight.
- ☐ Batteries.
- ☐ First Aid Kit.
- ☐ Prescription medications.
- ☐ Important documents.
- ☐ Mobile phone charger.
- ☐ Clothing.
- ☐ Personal hygiene supplies.
- ☐ Cash.
- ☐ Comfort items for children.

Keep your Go Bag in an easily accessible location.

Before Leaving Home

If time allows:

- ☐ Lock doors and windows.
- ☐ Turn off appliances if appropriate.
- ☐ Follow utility guidance if instructed.
- ☐ Take your emergency kit.
- ☐ Bring pets.
- ☐ Inform a family member or friend where you are going.

Leave early whenever possible.

During Evacuation

- ☐ Follow official evacuation routes.
- ☐ Stay informed through official alerts.
- ☐ Drive carefully.
- ☐ Never drive through floodwaters.
- ☐ Avoid damaged roads.
- ☐ Follow instructions from emergency personnel.

Safety is more important than speed.

If You Need Transportation

If you cannot evacuate independently:

- ☐ Contact local emergency services if assistance programs are available.
- ☐ Reach out to trusted family, friends, neighbors, or caregivers.
- ☐ Learn about community transportation resources before emergencies occur.

Planning transportation ahead of time can reduce delays during an emergency.

At an Evacuation Shelter

Remember to:

- ☐ Register if requested.
- ☐ Follow shelter rules.
- ☐ Respect other families.
- ☐ Keep medications with you.
- ☐ Stay informed.
- ☐ Notify loved ones that you are safe.

Shelters provide safety, information, and support.

Returning Home

Return only when authorities announce it is safe.

Before entering:

- ☐ Inspect for hazards.
- ☐ Watch for damaged utilities.
- ☐ Photograph damage.
- ☐ Wear protective clothing if cleaning debris.
- ☐ Continue following official guidance.

Recovery begins safely.

Protecting Children

Help children by:

- ☐ Explaining evacuation plans.
- ☐ Practicing drills.
- ☐ Packing comfort items.
- ☐ Staying calm and reassuring.

Prepared children adapt more confidently.

Protecting Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities

Ensure they have:

- ☐ Medications.
- ☐ Mobility equipment.
- ☐ Transportation plans.

- ☐ Caregiver support.
- ☐ Emergency contacts.

Every evacuation plan should include everyone.

Caring for Pets

Prepare:

- ☐ Food.
- ☐ Water.
- ☐ Carrier or leash.
- ☐ Medications.
- ☐ Identification tags.
- ☐ Vaccination records.

Pets are family too.

Ready Together Action

Complete these three steps this week:

- ☐ Identify two evacuation routes from your neighborhood.
- ☐ Check every family member's Go Bag.
- ☐ Practice leaving your home within ten minutes.

Prepared families can leave quickly when every minute matters.

Review Your Evacuation Plan

Review your evacuation plan:

- ☐ Every six months.
- ☐ Before wildfire, hurricane, or flood seasons.
- ☐ After moving.
- ☐ After changes in your household.

Preparedness is an ongoing commitment.

Ready Together Action

Complete these three steps this week:

- ☐ Review your family's recovery plan.
- ☐ Update your emergency contacts.
- ☐ Discuss how your family can help neighbors after a disaster.

Prepared families help build resilient communities.

About Ready Together Foundation

Ready Together Foundation is dedicated to building resilient communities through emergency preparedness, emergency relief and response, youth engagement, and outreach to vulnerable populations.

Our work focuses on:

- Community Emergency Preparedness
- Emergency Relief & Response
- Youth Preparedness & Leadership
- Vulnerable Population Outreach

Together, we are building stronger, safer, and more resilient communities.

Ready Together Foundation

Building Resilient Communities Together

Website: www.readytogetherfoundation.org

Email: info@readytogetherfoundation.org

Phone: 323-387-1785

Preparedness is a journey, not a one-time event. Every small step you take today helps protect the people you care about tomorrow.