

Emergency Preparedness Colima Ward

Overview

Members of the Church have been counseled for many years to be prepared for adversity. Preparation, both spiritual and temporal, can dispel fear (see [Doctrine and Covenants 38:30](#)). Elder L. Tom Perry taught, “The need for preparation is abundantly clear. The great blessing of being prepared gives us freedom from fear” (“[If Ye Are Prepared Ye Shall Not Fear](#),” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 36).

With the guidance of civil and Church leaders, individuals and families should prepare to be self-reliant in times of personal emergencies and large-scale disasters.

PERSONAL AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Benefits of Preparedness

When you identify your needs before a potential disaster, you have more choices available to you. You will have greater peace of mind and will also be able to have access to lifesaving supplies that may otherwise be inaccessible or in short supply during an emergency. Planning and preparing now will help you be equipped to help yourself, your family, and your community.

Getting Started

One way to prepare for a disaster is to make an emergency plan. Some areas of preparedness, such as, **financial preparation, home and food storage,**

and emotional preparedness, can prepare your family for a variety of emergencies.

Depending on your geographic location, you may also be able to identify which types of disasters are most likely to occur, how they may disrupt your daily activities or routine, and what you can do to prepare for them.

When thinking about disruptions that might affect your life, consider personal emergencies, such as job loss or the death of a family member, in addition to large-scale disasters such as a fire, tsunami, pandemic, etc.

The following will give you ideas to plan and prepare for the likely events of personal and family preparedness for short- and long-term emergencies.

Here are more ways to prepare:

The following ideas are things you can do to be more prepared. Applying these ideas might vary depending on the neighborhood you live in or your circumstances. This list isn't exhaustive, but it can help you begin:

Emergency Preparedness:

- [Designate a family gathering place](#) or shelter in case of specific disasters or separation.
- [Prepare a portable emergency supply kit](#) to include a change of clothes, food and water supplies, medications, special medical needs, comfort items (like books or toys for children), a light source, and a phone charger. A backpack is useful to store and transport your emergency kit.
- [Think about how you would communicate](#) with your family during an emergency. Memorize or list a few important phone numbers to carry with you. Your mobile phone is a good resource; make sure your mobile phone is charged and that a charging battery is available and charged.

Financial Preparedness:

[Establish an emergency fund](#) by saving a little money each week. Store a portion of funds along with important documents and pictures in a fireproof and waterproof container. A safe is a good resource.

Home Storage:

[Invest in a short-term food supply](#) that includes foods that are part of your normal diet. Make sure that the stored foods are rotated into your normal meals so that they do not expire. Also, keep a [longer supply of food \(2-3 months\)](#) by purchasing prepared freeze-dried meals. You may want to purchase them over a period of time if your budget does not allow purchase at one time. You may want to consider [growing a garden](#) and canning the fresh harvest.

Emotional Preparedness:

[Learn and practice healthy coping skills](#) to help develop emotional resilience. Start by understanding your body's needs and how to manage difficult emotions. Developing good coping skills can help prepare you for emergencies.

[Develop strong and healthy relationships with others.](#) When emergencies happen, you can receive help from those with whom you have good relationships.

Family Emergency Preparedness

Emergency Supplies

Do you have the supplies your family would need in case of emergency? Are those supplies in good working order and in a place where you can find them quickly? Or are they scattered all around your home? When emergency supplies are in a central place, your family will be better able to handle emergency situations. The following activity will help your family gather and organize the emergency supplies that can make your family more secure.

Activity

Recall together some emergencies that have happened in your home or area: a

blackout in the city, someone's falling and bumping his head, someone's cutting his finger on a knife, or a fire in the kitchen. When these things happened, where did you find the supplies you needed? Did you have to search for candles or antiseptic or bandages? Perhaps you could not find or did not have what you needed. Talk about how important it is to have emergency and safety supplies stored near the place where the emergency is most likely to happen and where everyone could find them quickly.

First decide where in your home you can put a central store of supplies. Then assign several family members to find the safety and emergency items that are scattered throughout your house. You likely have many of the items you need already. Look over the following suggested list of items. You may want to buy those on the list you do not have, as well as others you feel you might need.

1. Several flashlights in good working condition.
2. Extra batteries for radio and flashlight. Do not keep batteries in the flashlights or radio. Keep them in an airtight container.
3. Portable battery powered radio. Use for receiving emergency instructions.
4. Candles (bowl type). Keep in case of power failure. Bowl will help prevent fire in case candle is overturned. (You can make these inexpensively out of paraffin wax.)
5. Wooden matches. Use for lighting candles and relighting pilots on gas appliances. Be sure matches are kept in a metal container out of the reach of small children.
6. Fire extinguisher (ABC or dry chemical type for all classes of fires). Be sure you know how to handle and use it. Check it regularly.
7. Fuses (if your home has a fuse box). Numbers on the end of the fuse indicate size. When replacing blown fuses, be sure the number on the end of the new fuse is the same as the number on the old fuse. Most homes have circuit breakers; learn to reset them when necessary.
8. First-aid instruction book.
9. First-aid supplies. The following list suggests minimum items to be included in your first-aid kit.
 - Aromatic spirits of ammonia—one unbroken tube
 - Aspirin or other pain relieving medications
 - Calamine lotion (for insect bites, hives from allergic reactions, or exposure to stinging nettle or poison ivy)—one tube
 - Thermometer—one oral and one rectal for small children or babies
 - Scissors and tweezers—one of each
 - Safety pins—one package of assorted sizes

- Adhesive tape—one roll
- One large box of assorted adhesive bandages
- Matches (for sterilizing)—one box of wooden matches
- Absorbent cotton—one box or bag
- Rubbing alcohol—one unbreakable bottle
- Antibiotic ointment (Neosporin or Bacitracin)—one tube
- Bicarbonate of soda (used for shock and upset stomach)—one box
- Diarrhea remedy (Kao-pectate or Pepto Bismol)—one bottle
- Elastic bandages (for sprains and aches)—one 3-inch (about 7.5-cm) and one 6-inch (about 15-cm)
- Gauze—one roll
- Hot water bottle
- Hydrogen peroxide—one unbreakable bottle
- Ipecac syrup (induces vomiting)—one bottle
- Finger splints (popsicle sticks)—ten splints
- Roller bandages—two 1-inch (2.5-cm) and two 2-inch (5-cm)
- Three-by-three-inch (7.6-cm) sterile pads—one box
- Triangle bandages—four or more
- Hand soap—one bar
- Water purification pills and/or bottle of 2% tincture of iodine
- Eye drops and medicine dropper
- Razor blades
- Needles
- Measuring cups
- Knife
- Consecrated oil
- Soothing throat lozenges—one package

Place all these items in a waterproof container (metal, heavy plastic, or wooden). Also store blankets, sheets, and at least four thin board splints 30 inches long.

You may wish to add items to the kit as you need them. For example, if you have small children, you may wish to add liquid acetaminophen. If someone in the family needs special medication, add this to your kit.

Do the following:

1. Label your supplies, and date all medicines.
2. Check supplies periodically, replacing them as they are used and throwing away old or contaminated supplies. Do not throw old medicines into trash cans around the house, where small children could find and eat them. Instead, flush them down the toilet or dispose of them in some other safe way.
3. Perishable items should be rotated regularly to reduce expiration.
4. After you have gathered your safety supplies and decided what you need to buy, divide up assignments. Assign some family members to buy items you need, and others to label the items.
5. Buy things as you can afford them. It may take a while to get all the supplies you would like to have.
6. After you have gathered and stored your supplies, you may want to have a series of family home evenings where you discuss how to use them.

Additional Activities

1. Hold a family home evening and invite neighbors and extended family members. Learn together what to do in emergency situations.
2. Take a first-aid course from a school or organization in your community.
3. Assign a family member to periodically inspect your supplies to make sure they are kept current.
4. Take your first-aid kit along on a trip or campout.
5. Put together a kit of emergency supplies to keep in your car. You could include the following:
 - Standard first-aid kit
 - Reflector and flares in case your car stalls on the road or is involved in an accident
 - Flashlight and batteries
 - Blanket to be used for shock, cold weather, fire, or other emergencies
 - Tow chain
 - Fire extinguisher
 - Flat block to be used as a car jack support

The information above for family emergency preparedness is not all-inclusive, but is a start to determining what your individual family will need in an emergency. There may be situations where your living accommodations are unsafe and you need to develop a means for temporary shelter, clothing, and sanitary needs. You may need a backpack or go-bag filled with these items as if preparing for camping. Also, these items can be stored in sealable trash bins for each family member's needs.

WIDE SPREAD EMERGENCY

The Church is organized by Ward to communicate with most if not all of its known members through its ministering organizations; both Priesthood and Relief Society.

The structure of the organization is such that families and single members are assigned to a ministering brother or sister who communicates regularly with their assigned families. If there is a need communicated or seen during an emergency, it is attended to by the minister or communicated to a leader over the minister. The following is the chain of communication:

Member to

Minister to

Member of Elders Quorum Presidency/ Relief Society Presidency to

Elders Quorum President or Relief Society President to

Bishop

Along the chain of communication, the emergency reported by the member can be addressed with assistance as needed.