



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS GUIDE

2017

From the Hood County Office of Emergency Management

By reading this guide you have taken the first step in preparing for emergencies. Emergencies happen quickly and may leave their victims feeling lost. The best thing you can do to be prepared is to get involved.

- Know the hazards
- Know your needs
- Know the plan and practice it
- Know the programs and use them

Members of the Hood County Fire Marshal's Office and Emergency Management designed this comprehensive easy guide to help citizens begin the planning process. It is a walk-through, providing contact information needed during and after a disaster and brief descriptions of programs that help families and individuals become more prepared.

Please take full advantage of this guide; it truly is a matter of life and death. Don't hesitate to contact us for clarification or additional information at 817.579.3335.

Sincerely,

Ray Wilson
Hood County Fire Marshal
Emergency Management Coordinator

WHAT EVERYONE SHOULD DO TO PREPARE

Even though responses vary with disasters, preparing for each situation is similar. For example, the emergency kit and family communication plan for a tornado will be similar for other emergencies.

BE PREPARED!

Find the safest area in your home to gather the family during severe weather, away from windows, doors, and skylights. Ensure everyone knows what to expect and what to do in case the family isn't together when an event occurs.

TYPICAL TEXAS WEATHER EVENTS

- Flooding
- Hail
- Ice Storms
- Straight-line windstorms
- Thunderstorms
- Tornadoes
- Wildfires
- Droughts
- Extreme Heat

FLOODING:

Flash flooding is common in Hood County and may form a wall of water carrying deadly debris. Gradual flooding may be just as dangerous. [Floods](#)

HAIL:

Hail is quite common in Hood County, and can be as large as softballs and is potentially deadly.

ICE STORMS:

Ice Storms are somewhat a common occurrence in Texas, and may cause possible business, school and road closures.

STRAIGHT-LINE WINDSTORMS:

Damaging winds are often called "straight-line" winds to differentiate the damage they cause from tornado damage.

THUNDERSTORM:

A thunderstorm is a rain shower during which you hear thunder. Since thunder comes from lightning, all thunderstorms have lightning. A thunderstorm is classified as "severe" when it contains one or more of the following: hail one inch or greater, winds gusting in excess of 50 knots (57.5 mph), or a tornado. [Thunderstorms](#)

TORNADO:

A tornado appears as a rotating, funnel-shaped cloud that extends from a thunderstorm to the ground with whirling winds that can reach 300 miles per hour. Damage paths can be in excess of one mile wide and 50 miles long. Before a tornado hits, the wind may die down and the air may become very still. [Tornadoes](#)

WILDFIRES:

A wildfire is simply an uncontrolled fire that is wiping out large fields and areas of land. These fires sometimes burn for days and weeks. [Wildfires](#)

DROUGHTS:

Drought is a deficiency in precipitation over an extended period, usually a season or more, resulting in a water shortage causing adverse impacts on vegetation, animals, and/or people. [Droughts](#)

EXTREME HEAT:

Temperatures that hover 10 degrees or more above the average high temperature for the region and last for several weeks are defined as extreme heat. [Extreme Heat](#)

FLOODS and THUNDERSTORMS

Floods threaten some neighborhoods more than any other hazard. Hood County has many low water crossings and run off areas from higher elevations. The rule for safety is simple: Head for higher ground and stay away from flood-waters. Do not cross moving water! Just 6 inches of moving water can knock you down, and 2 feet of water can sweep your vehicle away.

Thunderstorms occur on a regular basis. Although most are not what most people would consider dangerous, there are many hazards associated with them. Heavy rain can result in flooding. Lightening and wind often accompany a thunderstorm and can be hazardous.

FLOODS

- Are longer-term events that may last more than a week
- More frequent in the spring.
- In rural settings, low water crossing and natural flow of surface water may cause it to occur without notice.

BE AWARE OF FLASH FLOODS

- May occur within a few minutes or several hours of heavy rainfall, or may happen if no rain has fallen in your area.
- Floods are the number one killer among North Texas Disasters.
- May push massive debris ahead of them and may trigger ground erosion.
- Typically caused by-slow moving or frequent thunderstorms.

ALERTS and WARNINGS

Flood Watch = "**Be Aware.**" Conditions are right for flooding to occur in your area.

Steps to Take

- Turn on your TV/radio. You will receive the latest weather updates and emergency instructions.
- Know where to go. You may need to reach higher ground quickly and on foot.
- Build or restock your emergency preparedness kit. Include a flashlight, batteries, cash, and first aid supplies.

Prepare Your Home

- Bring in outdoor furniture and move important indoor items to the highest possible floor. This will help protect them from flood damage.
- Disconnect electrical appliances and do not touch electrical equipment if you are wet or standing in water. You could be electrocuted.
- If instructed, turn off your gas and electricity at the main switch or valve. This helps prevent fires and explosions.

Flood Warning = "**Take Action!**" Flooding is either happening or will happen shortly.

Steps to Take

- Move immediately to higher ground or stay on high ground.
- Evacuate if directed.
- Avoid walking or driving through flood waters. Turn Around, Don't Drown! Just 6 inches of moving water can knock you down and 2 feet of water can sweep your vehicle away.

BEFORE THE FLOOD WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Fill the bathtub and other containers with water so you have an uncontaminated supply if water service is cut off;
- Stock food requiring little cooking and no refrigeration;
- Build or restock your [emergency preparedness kit](#);
- Make a flood [emergency plan](#);
- Keep a NOAA weather radio, battery-powered radio, emergency cooking equipment and flashlights in working order.

IF YOU ARE TOLD TO EVACUATE

- If there's time, secure outdoor equipment
- Lock doors and windows.
- Turn off utilities at the main switches and valves.
- Tell someone where you're going.
- Follow recommended evacuation.
- Watch for washed-out roads and bridges.
- Watch out for down power lines.
- Don't try to wade, swim, or drive through high water as the current may be deadly.

AFTER THE FLOOD

- Avoid standing water; it may be contaminated or electrically charged.
- Avoid moving water; six-inch deep water can sweep you off your feet.
- Roads and bridges may be weakened and could collapse at anytime.
- Stay out of disaster area unless authorities ask for volunteers.
- Return home only after authorities say it's safe.
- Stay out of buildings surrounded by water.
- Listen for reports on tap water's safety before using.
- Throw out fresh food that came in contact with floodwater.
- Boil tap water before drinking. Have wells tested for purity before using it for drinking.
- Seek necessary medical care at nearest hospital
- Food, clothing, shelter and first aid may be available through the American Red Cross.
- Dry out and check electrical equipment before using.
- Use flashlights, not open flames, of any kind to examine buildings; there may be flammable residue and/or gases.
- Report broken utility lines to proper authorities.

HAIL and ICE STORMS

Hailstorms typically do not have a major long lasting impact on the area. However, hailstorms can knock out utilities, damage roofs, vehicles and cause injuries.

Ice storms occur on a fairly regular basis throughout north Texas. Typically they do not have a long term effect, however utilities may be down, road, school and business closures may occur. Pets and livestock are affected.

HAIL

- Short term
- Localized damage

ICE STORMS

- May cover large geographic area
- Last several days
- Damage to utilities
- Hazardous road conditions

PREPARATION

- Seek shelter indoors
- Move pets and livestock to shelter
- Place vehicles under covered area
- Avoid unnecessary travel
- Have emergency lighting (flashlights)
- Monitor weather broadcast
- Maintain supply of food and water to last 3 days
- Have additional blankets, jackets and other warm items available

TORNADOS and STRAIGHT-LINE WINDS

Tornadoes are nature's most violent storms. Spawned from powerful thunderstorms, tornadoes can cause fatalities and devastate a neighborhood in seconds. Tornadoes can and do occur in Hood County. They are not as frequent as straight-line winds. Major damage can occur. Straight-line winds are a regular occurrence and can result in major damage. They are often confused with tornadoes.

PREPARATION

- To begin preparing, you should [build an emergency kit](#) and make a [family communications plan](#).
- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio or to commercial radio or television newscasts for the latest information. In any emergency, always listen to the instructions given by local emergency management officials.
- Be alert to changing weather conditions. Look for approaching storms.
- Look for the following danger signs:
 - Dark, often greenish sky
 - Large hail
 - A large, dark, low-lying cloud (particularly if rotating)
 - Loud roar, similar to a freight train.
 - If you see approaching storms or any of the danger signs, be prepared to take shelter immediately.

Quick facts you should know about tornadoes:

- They may strike quickly, with little or no warning.
- They may appear nearly transparent until dust and debris are picked up or a cloud forms in the funnel.
- The average tornado moves Southwest to Northeast, but tornadoes have been known to move in any direction.
- The average forward speed of a tornado is 30 mph, but may vary from stationary to 70 mph.
- Tornadoes can accompany tropical storms and hurricanes as they move onto land.
- Waterspouts are tornadoes that form over water.
- Tornadoes are most frequently reported east of the Rocky Mountains during spring and summer months.

- Peak tornado season in the southern states is March through May; in the northern states, it is late spring through early summer.
- Tornadoes are most likely to occur between 3 pm and 9 pm, but can occur at any time.

TORNADO WARNINGS:

Tornado Watch - Tornadoes are possible. Remain alert for approaching storms. Watch the sky and stay tuned to NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio or television for information.

Tornado Warning - A tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar. Take shelter immediately.

AFTER IT PASSES:

- Listen to local officials for updates and instructions.
- Check-in with family and friends by texting or using social media.
- Watch out for debris and downed power lines.
- If you are trapped, do not move about or kick up dust. Tap on a pipe or wall or use a whistle, if you have one, so that rescuers can locate you.
- Stay out of damaged buildings and homes until local authorities indicate it is safe.
- Photograph the damage to your property in order to assist in filing an insurance claim.
- Do what you can to prevent further damage to your property, (e.g., putting a tarp on a damaged roof), as insurance may not cover additional damage that occurs after the storm.
- If your home is without power, use flashlights or battery-powered lanterns rather than candles to prevent accidental fires.

WILDFIRES

Wildfires are common in Texas, especially after long periods of drought. They can spread quickly and produce dangerous smoke, threatening property, lives and health. Help reduce your risks by learning how to respond. But even after fires are put out, people should take care to avoid injuries as they return home to begin the recovery process.

What do I need to know about a wildfire in my area?

Be prepared to evacuate. When the threat of wildfires is high, stay tuned to local radio, television or get information from the National Weather Service about NOAA Weather Radio. Be prepared to evacuate immediately. Taking the following precautions can help you evacuate safely and quickly:

- Park your car in the direction of escape and keep the windows rolled up to prevent smoke from entering.
- Load your family disaster supply kit in the car and keep family photos or other things you plan to take with you nearby.
- Don't let children or other family members stray far from home.
- Wear protective clothing (long sleeves and long pants) and keep a handkerchief in your pocket to protect your face.
- Confine all pets to one room or area of the yard so you can gather them quickly.
- Leave the lights in your home on so that fire fighters can see it through dense smoke.
- Before you leave, call an out-of-town contact and tell them where you plan to go.

DROUGHTS

In Texas, the weather alternates between drought and flood. In fact, these are the two most common disasters in Texas. Getting prepared for them, however, is very different. The primary impact from a drought is reduced water supplies, but that's not the only impact. Air quality may suffer due to dust, and wildfires can become a major threat.

These tips will help you be ready:

1. Water your yard efficiently. Don't let water runoff. If it rains, turn your automatic sprinkler system off.
2. Landscape your yard with drought-tolerant grasses, plants and trees. Natives are usually a good choice. Use mulch to retain moisture.
3. Install water-efficient appliances, toilets, faucets and shower heads. Repair leaks.
4. Don't run faucets unnecessarily. Instead of pouring wastewater down the drain, use it for watering your garden.
5. If you live in an area with a limited water supply, have a plan for an alternative source for drinking and sanitation.

During a drought, follow these tips and be safe:

1. When dust or smoke is in the air, wear a face mask, especially if you have a respiratory illness. A mask with an N95 rating is recommended. It will filter out 95 percent of airborne particles.
2. Protect your indoor environment by frequently changing the air filters on your air conditioning and heating systems. Stock up on filters so you never run out.
3. Don't swim in stagnant creeks, ponds or lakes. They are at risk of being contaminated and may cause illness.
4. Dust storms may become a threat, reducing visibility and making driving conditions dangerous. Never drive in a dust storm.
5. Wildfire dangers increase. Be sure to have your emergency supply kit packed and ready to load, and plan your route of escape ahead of time. [Learn more about wildfires.](#)

EXTREME HEAT

Heat can create serious health problems. If fluids are not replaced soon enough, heat stroke can follow causing extremely high body temperature, red and dry skin, rapid pulse, confusion, brain damage, loss of consciousness and death.

Other heat precautions include:

- Never leave anyone in a closed, parked vehicle during hot weather, even for a short time.
- Drink plenty of fluids but avoid drinks with alcohol, caffeine or a lot of sugar. Start drinking fluids before going out into the heat.
- Plan strenuous outdoor activity for early morning or evening when the temperature is lower.
- Take frequent breaks when working outside.
- Wear sun block, hats and light-colored, loose-fitting clothes.
- Stay indoors in air conditioning as much as possible.
- Eat more frequently, but be sure meals are well balanced and light.
- Don't dress infants in heavy clothing or wrap them in blankets.
- Check frequently on the elderly and those who are ill or may need help.
- Check with a doctor about the effects of sun and heat when taking prescription drugs, especially diuretics or antihistamines.
- At first signs of heat illness (dizziness, nausea, headaches, muscle cramps) move to a cooler place, rest a few minutes, then slowly drink a cool beverage. Seek medical attention immediately if conditions do not improve.

The best defense against heat-related illness is prevention. Staying cool, drinking plenty of fluids, wearing cool clothing and monitoring outdoor activities are keys to staying healthy in hot weather.

OTHER HAZARDS

HOMELAND SECURITY

A new terrorism warning system which will provide the public with information on specific threats, replaced the color-coded alerts on April 27, 2011. The new system call the National Terrorism Advisory System has two levels of alerts:

- Elevated Threat: which "warns of a credible terrorist threat" to the United States
- Imminent Threat: which "warns of a credible, specific and impending terrorist threat,"

TERRORISM:

Terrorism is, in its broadest sense, the use of intentionally indiscriminate [violence](#) as a means to create terror or [fear](#), in order to achieve a political, religious, or ideological aim.

- Always be aware of your surroundings.
- Get to know your neighbors.
- Be alert to and report suspicious behavior.
- Never accept packages from strangers or leave baggage unattended.
- Leave an area if you feel uncomfortable with a situation.
- Know emergency exits from buildings you enter.

CHEMICAL/BIOLOGICAL/RADIOLOGICAL/NUCLEAR (CBRN):

CBRN incidents are responded to under the assumption that they are intentional and malicious; evidence preservation and perpetrator apprehension are of greater concern than with [HAZMAT](#) incidents.

- Prepare a room with as few windows and doors as possible in case authorities ask you to shelter in place.
- Lock doors, close windows, air vents and fireplace dampers.
- Turn off air conditioning/heating system, exhaust fans and clothes dryers.
- Monitor radio or TV for further instructions.

HAVE A PLAN AND KNOW WHAT TO DO...

BECAUSE EVERY MINUTE COUNTS!

COMMUNICATION PLANS

- Create a family communication plan so you can get in touch with family members. Give copies of contact information and meeting locations to everyone in your family
- Options are available: telephones, cell phones and e-mail are all great ways to get in touch with family members.
- Make a decision about where you will meet in case you can't get home during an emergency.
- Understand that it may take time to get through to everyone. Try to be patient.
- Have a contact outside of the area (preferable out of state) that each family member can call

YOUR FAMILY'S SAFETY DEPENDS ON BEING PREPARED.

- Assemble disaster supplies kit.
- Create emergency communications plans.
- Establish a meeting place.
- Check on school emergency plans
- Remember in disasters stay calm.
- U.S. Department of Homeland security web site, www.ready.gov.

PLANNING FOR PETS

- Keep pets inside during emergency.
- If you must evacuate, remember that the American Red Cross emergency shelters DO NOT ALLOW PETS.
- Make a pre-plan for housing your pets.
- Identify shelters. For public health reasons, many emergency shelters cannot accept pets. [Find out which motels and hotels in the area you plan to evacuate to allow pets](#) well in advance of needing them. There are also a number of guides that list hotels/motels that permit pets and could serve as a starting point. Include your local animal shelter's number in your list of emergency numbers.
- Assemble portable pet kit with food, water, collar, leash identification, vaccination record and phone numbers for vet and boarding facilities. Make sure you have a secure pet carrier, leash or harness for your pet so that if he panics, he can't escape
- For lost pets, contact your local Animal Care and Control Center
- If a pet must be left behind, prepare an outdoor emergency pen with a three-day supply of food and water.

MAKE A PLAN FOR WHEN YOU ARE AT WORK AND IN YOU CAR.

Prepare a small emergency kit to place in your car or at your desk. Kits should include emergency lighting, blanket, water, food, emergency contacts, medication and any other item you feel is essential.

GATHER THE FAMILY AND TALK ABOUT WHAT SHOULD BE DONE IF A DISASTER STRIKES.

- Prepare a first aid kit - [First Aid Kit](#)
- Make sure everyone in the family knows the plan - [PDF](#) or [HTML](#)
- Practice the plan
- Have enough water for 72 Hours
- Store non perishables
- Have clothes that are seasonably appropriate
- Identify temporary shelters in your city or town
- Identify media sources that will bring you the information that you need during a disaster
- Always refill medications as soon as you can
- Know your children's school's plans
- Wind up flashlight
- Wind up radio
- Evacuate if you are told to
- Have plans for your pets
- Have plans for your livestock
- Learn alternative routes to leave your area
- Have a first aid kit in your car
- Always carry extra clothes, blankets and flashlight in your car
- Update your emergency information with family (cell phone number, etc.)
- Name a person outside of your area to contact in case you get separated from the family
- If you have people with special needs in your family, have a plan for them
- Listen and obey authorities
- Pay attention to the local weather updates
- Keep important papers together - [Emergency Documents](#)
- Be aware of what disasters can occur in your location
- Keep your car tuned up and filled with gas in case you need to evacuate
- Keep extra food for your pets

NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards (**NWR**) is a nationwide network of radio stations broadcasting continuous weather information directly from the nearest National Weather Service office. NWR broadcasts official Weather Service warnings, watches, forecasts and other hazard information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. NOAA weather radios are like a smoke detector for severe weather, and can wake you up when a warning is issued for your area so you can take appropriate action, radios may be purchased at any store.

The Emergency Alert System (**EAS**) is a national public warning system that requires broadcasters, cable television systems, wireless cable systems, satellite digital audio radio service (SDARS) providers, and direct broadcast satellite (DBS) providers to provide the communications

capability to the President to address the American public during a national emergency. The system also may be used by state and local authorities to deliver important emergency information, such as AMBER alerts and weather information targeted to specific areas.

OUTDOORS WARNING SIRENS:

- Did you know that sirens are only designed to be heard while you are outside? Many people rely on them as a warning system wherever they are but don't realize that they likely will not hear them indoors.
- When sounded outdoor warning sirens mean that something life-threatening is happening and you should go indoors and get more information.

STAY INFORMED AT ALL TIMES

Emergency Alert Station WBAP- 820AM and KRLD-1080AM are the Primary stations.

KPIR-1420 AM IS THE LOCAL STATION IN HOOD COUNTY

KDFW-CHANNEL 4, KXAS-CHANNEL 5, WFAA-CHANNEL 8.

RECOVERY TIPS: DEALING WITH DISASTER'S AFTERMATH

How do I find my local emergency management office?

Hood County Fire Marshal's Office
401 Deputy Larry Miller Dr.
Granbury, Texas 76048
817-579-3335

How do I request disaster assistance?

Disaster assistance is provided based on the need of the affected area. Local volunteer agencies step in to provide immediate, essential needs such as shelter, food, water and clothing. News media will announce locations where agencies have set-up facilities to distribute these items.

How can I get in touch with my family?

Call American Red Cross of North Texas, 817-335-9137, to access a family-location database. Do not call the disaster area.

What if my home is damaged?

All structural damage should be reported to your local emergency management office. **817-579-3335**. If damage is so severe and has displaced you from your home, contact the American Red Cross (Disaster Services) at 817-335-9137. In addition, before a disaster strikes you want to ensure that you have adequate insurance coverage on your home, including: flood, wind, and hail. Most typical homeowner's insurance policies do not cover these items and you may be left without insurance relief.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

EMERGENCY: 911

Non-Emergency Numbers:

Hood County Dispatch: 817-579-3307

Erath County Dispatch: 254-965-3318

Somervell County Dispatch: 254-897-2242

Texas Highway Patrol: 817-579-3337

Granbury Police: 817-573-2648

Hood County Fire Marshal's Office: 817-579-3335

Granbury Hood County EMS (Ambulance): 817-279-1408

Poison Control: 800-222-1222

TXU Power outage: 800-242-9113

TXU Gas leak: 800-817-8090

Texas-New Mexico Electric: 888-866-7456

Tri-County Electric: 817-279-7010

United Cooperative Electric: 817-556-4000

SBC Repair 800-246-8464

Alltel: 800-982-2280

Lipan-Bluff Dale Telephone: 254-728-3500

Hood County Crime Stoppers: 817-573-TIPS

Hood County Health Department: 817-579-3288

Hood County Commissioners Office 817-579-3300

American Red Cross Chisholm Chapter: 817-335-9137

National Weather Service: 817-429-2631

National Youth Crisis Hotline: 800-448-4663

National Domestic Violence Hotline: 800-799-SAFE

Crisis Intervention Agencies: 888-818-HOPE

Mission Granbury: 817-579-6848

Texas Runaway Hotline: 888-680-HELP FBI (Dallas): 972-559-5000

FBI (Dallas): 972-559-5000