

# fact sheet

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## Preparing for an Emergency – Neighbours Helping Each Other

### Preparing for emergencies

There are many things you can do to prepare yourself, your family and your home for emergencies and a number of organisations that can help you with these preparations.

The type of emergencies you might want to prepare for may include:

- Bushfires;
- Extreme heat conditions; and
- Storms and flooding.

Organisations with handy tips for making preparations are listed later in this fact sheet.

### Make an emergency plan

There are many things you should consider when preparing for and making an emergency plan, such as:

- A list of important phone numbers;
- Where to relocate if you have to - such as family or friends, or to an evacuation centre if one is set up;
- Evacuation routes to reach safer destinations;
- Details of your prescriptions or an adequate supply of medication if you have to leave home;
- Whether you have adequate insurance cover;
- Storage of important documents (passports, wills etc);
- Involving your family so they know what to do in an emergency;
- Arrangements for pets;



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- Where to turn off gas, electricity and water supply;
- What to include in your emergency kit;
- What won't work if the power goes off – e.g. landline phones, garage doors, pumps, fridges and cooking appliances;
- Having a battery operated torch, and radio handy, with spare batteries;
- Keeping a first aid kit available and fully stocked; and
- Keeping sufficient amounts of basic food supplies in case you need to stay at home for an extended period. Help in planning for food supplies is available at [www.pantrylist.com.au](http://www.pantrylist.com.au).

Further details of how you can prepare a plan are available from the Red Cross and Emergency Services Agency sites listed below.

## Know your neighbours

In preparing for emergencies you might also like to consider what you can do to help your neighbours and vulnerable members of the community who may not have the support of family or friends.

Getting to know, and helping your neighbours also builds stronger communities and is an important part of preparing for emergencies.

Household emergency plans work best when a person feels part of their community, and can provide and receive support.

## Who can you help?

Some people in the community may need more help than others in an emergency. You can help by thinking about people in your neighbourhood who might need your help:

- Older people or people who live alone;
- People with disability;
- People who are ill;
- Single parents with young children;



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- Large families;
- People who are new to the area; and
- People who do not speak English.

## How you can help

As well as developing your own emergency plan, neighbours can help each other by:

- Checking to make sure they have heard emergency warnings;
- Providing information about what is happening, or where up to date emergency information can be found;
- Encouraging each other to prepare plans, finding out where to get information about preparing themselves and their homes for an emergency; and
- Helping prepare homes for emergencies, for example clearing yards and gutters before the bushfire season, moving furniture and other items if flooding is likely.

## Organisations that can assist

Organisations that can provide handy tips and advise how to prepare for emergencies include:

- ACT Emergency Services Agency at [www.esa.act.gov.au](http://www.esa.act.gov.au) provides weather and other emergency warnings, guidelines for preparing emergency plans as well as information on preparing your home for bushfires and other emergencies.
- ACT Health which provides advice on health warnings like influenza pandemics, at [www.health.act.gov.au](http://www.health.act.gov.au).
- The Australian Red Cross, which has information on REDiPlan and a checklist on Knowing Your Neighbours at [www.redcross.org.au](http://www.redcross.org.au).



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- Your local radio station who will broadcast regular emergency warnings.
- Your regional community service, or other community agency who might already be providing assistance to you.

**For further information contact Canberra Connect on 13 22 81.**