

Alpine County Citizen's Emergency Preparedness Handbook



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Emergency Phone Numbers

In all cases which pose a threat to the safety of lives or property, call 9-1-1. Remember that in a large scale disaster, the 9-1-1 system and First Responders may be overwhelmed.

This list contains most of the emergency numbers in Alpine County. We suggest you know who your various providers are and highlight the ones which apply to you, such as gas provider, electricity provider, etc.

Bear Valley Fire: (209) 753-2232

Woodfords Fire: (530) 694-2922

Kirkwood Fire: (209) 258-4444

Markleeville Fire: (530) 694-2223

Ebbetts Pass Gas Service: (209) 795-1391

NV Energy, (Liberty Energy): (775) 901-2063 or 2064

P.G.&E.: (800) 743-5000

Lake Alpine Water District: (209) 753-6241

Kirkwood Public Utility District:

Emergency Gas or Electric: (775) 901-1565

Emergency Water: (209) 296-8668

Emergency Phone Numbers

Find out who *your* Providers are and list their emergency numbers here.

Gas: _____

Electricity: _____

Water: _____

Sewer: _____

Doctor: _____

Health Insurance: _____

Home Insurance: _____

Car Insurance: _____

In the case of a disaster, the phone system may not work. Texting, email, and other alternatives may have to be used. Have the email addresses and cell phone numbers of your contacts written down as well.



Alpine
COUNTY LINE

Have a Plan

If you remember, in the Introduction of this booklet, we defined “mitigation” as doing things ahead of time, (preparing), so as to lessen the effects of a disastrous event. Here are some things that you can begin to do NOW to help yourself if a disaster occurs.

____ Scout out and select good evacuation routes *and write them down*. Select a few routes, because you do not know if your first choice will be open, depending on what the disaster is.

____ Know your evacuation routes out of your own home or building. Practice them with your family.

____ Decide on a meeting place outside of the evacuation area for your family to reunite.

____ Know good contact numbers for family and important friends, and have them written down somewhere, (like the Emergency Contact section of this booklet!).

____ Know ahead of time what you will take with you, (See list of suggestions in this booklet).

____ Know how to turn off power, water, and gas to your home if necessary, (See section on these items in this booklet).

____ Video record the entire contents of your home for insurance purposes. Store the video in a safe place *other* than your home.

If a disaster occurs, local Emergency Services may be overwhelmed. The more you can do to help yourself, the safer and better off you will be.

Designated meeting, (Reunion) locations:

Inside House _____

Outside House _____

Outside of Evacuation Area _____

There is nothing wrong with conducting family “drills” to practice what you would need to do in the case of an evacuation. You may notice something your plan was missing. It is always good to make sure you are all on the same page as to what you would do, especially if there are children involved.

Before an incident occurs is also the best time to research which radio stations, T.V. stations, and websites provide you with the best and most accurate information in your area. These will be relied upon heavily during an incident.

What To Bring If You Need To Evacuate

It is important to re-emphasize that it would be too late to prepare for a disaster *after* it occurs. This is another area where a little time spent now will save you a great deal of stress later. This list is not all-inclusive, but merely some suggestions of things you might want to gather *before* it is necessary to evacuate.

If possible, gather important family documents and place them in a waterproof, portable container. Examples include:

- ___ Insurance policies, wills, contracts, deeds, stock certificates, etc.
- ___ Passports, Social Security cards, immunization records.
- ___ Bank account information.
- ___ Credit card information
- ___ Family records such as Birth Certificates, Marriage Certificates, Death Certificates, etc.
- ___ Valuable and/or sentimental photographs.
- ___ Medical insurance cards.

For insurance purposes, and peace of mind, it is helpful to create a video inventory of valuable household items which would have to be left behind. Make, model number, serial number, and approximate value of each item would be helpful to your insurance and to law enforcement in the case of theft.

Disaster Kit

Here is a checklist of some items it would be important for you to take with you if you are forced to leave.

- ___ Essential prescription and non-prescription medicines.
- ___ First Aid Kit and manual.
- ___ Flashlight, radio, and extra batteries.
- ___ 3 day supply of non-perishable food and water, (1 gallon per person/day. Plates, utensils, etc.
- ___ Baby supplies if applicable.
- ___ All-purpose knife and/or can opener.
- ___ Toiletries, including toilet paper and feminine items.
- ___ Personal hygiene items, (soap, toothbrush, etc.).
- ___ Contact lens or denture supplies if applicable.
- ___ Pet food and supplies.
- ___ Complete change of clothes, (including shoes).
- ___ Cash. (ATM machines might not work).
- ___ Portable stove, cooking supplies, and water filter.

To see an example of a "Disaster Kit" you can come by the Sheriff's Office and we'll show you one of ours.

How to Turn Off Utilities if Necessary

It is important that you learn the particulars of *your* systems. There are several different types. Learn what YOU have and how to operate it ahead of time, so it is easier in panic mode. You might even want to practice a few times to make sure you have it down.

Gas:

There is usually an in-line valve on the line that leads from the tank or main pipe. The valve is usually a lever type valve. If it is pointing perpendicular to the gas line, the valve is in the “off” position. If the lever is parallel to the gas line, the valve is “open”.

CAUTION: You should not “practice” opening and closing gas valves because when you turn the gas off, all your pilot lights will go out, and they will have to each be re-lit by hand. Sometimes, when pilot lights go out, gas will continue to flow, and create a possibly explosive situation. Remember; in an emergency you do not want to shut off your gas unless you suspect you have a leak. It could take several days or more for the gas company to come to your home to turn your gas back on and re-light your pilot lights.

Water:

The main water valve is usually located outside, in front of your house, near your well, if you have well water, or near the street, if you have city or county water. Water valves are almost all screw-in types, just like most outside spigots. Tighten to close the valve, loosen to open it. Remember, “Righty-Tighty, Lefty-Loosie” or, for you grown-ups, clockwise to tighten, (close), and counter-clockwise to loosen, (open). If you are going to be away from your home for an extended period of time, and the weather is expected to be cold, it is wise to close your water valve, and then drain your system to prevent pipes from bursting due to the cold.

Electricity:

Electricity is not something to be fooled with. If you are not sure what you are doing, contact a licensed electrician to consult with first. Locate your main electrical panel. There is either a main switch, (usually a lever type switch), on the outside of the box, or one or two large circuit breakers inside the box that should be labeled “main”. Flip this switch to turn the power off or on.

Fire

There are two major types of fires which are possible in Alpine County: Structure fires and wildland fires.

Structure Fires:

Structure fires occur in buildings such as homes and offices. They occur with little or no warning, and can come from a variety of causes. There is often not much time to escape, and even less time to grab belongings.

Things you can do ahead of time:

___ Make sure your home has working smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms. Check batteries regularly.

___ Have evacuation plans, routes, and reunion, (meeting places), ready ahead of time and practice them. Plan at least 2 escape routes from each *room* and *building* and *neighborhood*, in case a route is blocked by fire.

___ Have your household equipped with a sprinkler system, and, at minimum, one fire extinguisher. Know how to use the fire extinguisher. Many local fire departments will show you how to operate an extinguisher if you are unsure.

___ Keep flammable liquids and other chemicals in a secure location, away from any heat source.

During a structure fire:

___ If you see or smell smoke or fire, get out first, call 9-1-1.

___ Remember the Stop, Drop, and Roll technique.

___ Close all doors and windows before you leave to slow the growth of the fire, (if there is time).

___ Before opening any door, feel it with the back of your hand. If the door is hot, chose another exit. If the door is cool, then check under the door to see if there is smoke coming through. When you open the door, be on your knees, and have your face turned away from the door. Open it slowly, for only a small distance, then check to see if it is clear to proceed.

___ Crawl low, beneath the smoke if possible to escape.

___ Use the stairs, not an elevator.

___ If you cannot escape, cover your face with a cloth, and place wet towels at the bottom of doors to keep smoke out as long as possible. Stay low, and try to attract attention through a window.

___ Never go back inside a burning building for any reason! Remember, during a structure fire, there is little time to react. The more things you have done ahead of time to prepare, the better off you will be.

Flood

If there is a “nice thing” about floods, is that in this technological age, most of them are predictable, and there is usually a fair amount of advanced warning. However, not all things are perfect, so there could be some “surprise” flooding in Alpine County. We do have a few reservoirs which could experience some kind of dam failure. There are summer thunder storms which can produce flash floods. There could be some type of failure of a water main causing localized flooding. It would be wise to prepare for a flood situation.

Things you can do to prepare ahead of time.

___ Learn the history of flooding in your area, including areas prone to flooding, what has been done in previous floods to fight them, and what others have done in your area to mitigate future floods. Consider consulting a licensed engineer or contractor to evaluate your property and give recommendations.

___ If you live in a flood prone area, acquire a supply of sandbags, and keep them handy in case they are needed. This will save you a lot of time during an event.

___ Have an Evacuation Plan in place, and practice it.

___ Keep a Disaster Kit ready to grab and go.

During a flood:

___ Listen to the radio, or TV, or online to check for the latest information on weather, road conditions and evacuation notices. (www.weather.gov is the National Weather Service / NOAA website).

___ Get your emergency supplies, and Disaster Kit ready to go.

___ Notify someone outside the affected area and let them know what your plans are.

___ If you are outside the evacuation area, when the order is given to evacuate, do not try to get back inside the area to retrieve your belongings. This only puts you back in danger, and possible puts you in the way of emergency crews.

___ Turn off electricity prior to evacuating.

___ Leave low-lying areas immediately and seek higher ground.

___ Do not attempt to cross areas of flowing water. It may be deeper than you think, or the roadway may be washed out underneath the water.

Earthquake

Unlike severe weather, floods, and in some cases, even fires, earthquakes are not predictable. There is little or no warning at all, and we live in an earthquake prone area. .

Things you can do ahead of time:

On the personal level, there are a few things we can do to try to “be ready” for an earthquake.

___ Bolt down items such as your water heater, china cabinets, entertainment centers, and other large household pieces so they do not fall over during an earthquake. (There are some good instructional sites online for you do-it-yourselfers).

___ Consider having a licensed engineer or contractor who specialized in earthquake readiness come and evaluate your property. They can make recommendations of specific things you can do to be ready, and expose potential weaknesses in your house or property.

___ Have an Evacuation Plan and practice it.

___ Have a Disaster Kit packed and ready to go.

___ The best action may be for you to “shelter in place,” so you should have a good supply of non-perishable food items, and enough water to last for up to a week, (at least 1 gallon per person per day).

During an Earthquake: Stay Calm

___ Duck or drop to the floor, and take cover under a sturdy desk or piece of furniture.

___ Avoid dangerous spots, such as near windows, under hanging items, or near large pieces of furniture that may fall.

___ Be prepared for aftershocks.

___ Listen to the radio, or TV, or online to check for the latest information on conditions.

___ Get your emergency supplies, and Disaster Kit ready to go. See if you need to evacuate. It may be best to “shelter in place.”

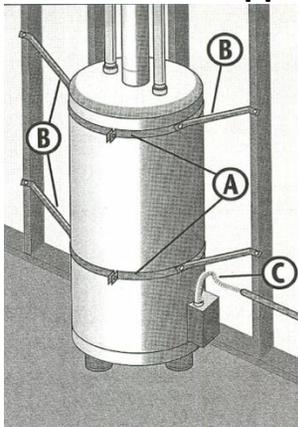
___ Notify someone outside the affected area and let them know what your plans are.

___ If you are outside the evacuation area, and an order is given to evacuate, do not try to get back inside the area to retrieve your belongings. This only puts you back in danger, and possibly puts you in the way of emergency crews.

___ Re-check to be sure all flammable materials are away from your house prior to evacuating.

___ Turn off electricity prior to evacuating.

Strapping Your Water Heater



If you strap your water heater and fit it with a flexible gas supply line, you will reduce the risk of a fire or explosion from a gas leak after an earthquake. If your water heater does not have a flexible gas supply line as shown on the diagram (item "C"), contact a licensed plumber to install one.

Follow these instructions to install a water heater restraint for a water heater on a straight wall.

1. 1. Wrap a 1-1/2" wide, 16-gauge metal strap (A) around the top of the water heater and bolt the ends together.
2. 2. Do the same about 1/3 of the way down the side of the water heater.
3. 3. Take four lengths of EMT electrical conduit, each no longer than 30 inches and flatten the ends.
4. 4. Bolt one end to the metal strap as shown (B). Screw the other end to a 2-inch by 4-inch stud in the wall using a 5/16-inch by 3-inch lag screw.

Using these same principals, it would be wise to strap all your other large pieces in similar fashion. This could include: china cabinets, entertainment centers, large televisions, free-standing shelving units, among other items.

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Resources

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U.S. Department of Homeland Security:

www.ready.gov

Federal Emergency Management Agency, (FEMA):

www.fema.gov

Centers for Disease Control:

www.cdc.gov

American Red Cross:

www.redcross.org

The Salvation Army:

www.salvationarmyusa.org

Alpine County:

www.alpinecountyca.gov

National Weather Service

www.weather.gov

CAL FIRE

(CA Department of Forestry and Fire Protection)

www.fire.ca.gov

