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# Ready Together

The Basics of Emergency Preparedness  
for You, Your Family & Your Neighborhood





# Today's **Agenda**

## **Ready Together**

Welcome

## **Make a Plan** – HSEM Staff

## **Build a Kit** – Seton

## **Know Your Neighbors** – HSEM

Loteria Activity

## **Stay Informed** – HSEM

## **Mental Health** – GAVA

Shake It Out Exercise

## **Break**

10 Minutes

## **Fire** - Austin Fire Department

## **Winter Weather** - Austin Energy





Welcome and **Thank you!**



We thank you for taking the time to participate and thank you to all our partners!



Ascension







# Neighborhood Preparedness Guide

## This guide covers:

- Planning for hazards: floods, winter storms, and wildfires
- Building an emergency kit
- Creating a family emergency plan
- Templates for neighborhood emergency planning
- And more





When facing challenges, **everyone** has a part to play.

- You
- City & County Government
- Organizations
- Community Groups
- Businesses





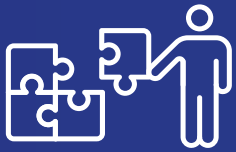


## The **Four Steps** to Preparedness

You have the **power** to **protect** yourself, your loved ones, and our community in an emergency. Preparing for disasters has a big impact on safety and recovery in a crisis.

In this lesson you'll learn how to:

- Use the four steps to preparedness
- Make a plan to support individual and household preparedness



# The **Four Steps** to Preparedness

It's critical to have enough supplies and resources to be self-sufficient for seven days.

FEMA recommends having supplies for at least 3 days. City of Austin recommends 7 days, because winter storms in Central Texas can take longer to recover from.



**Make a Plan**



**Build a Kit**



**Know your  
Neighbors**



**Stay Informed**







## Make a **Plan**

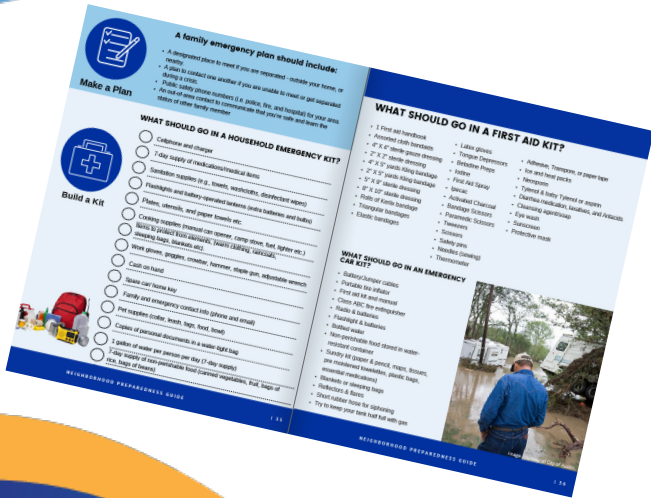
In this lesson, you'll learn:

- Why it's important to start making a plan for you, your family, and your neighborhood
- Where to start



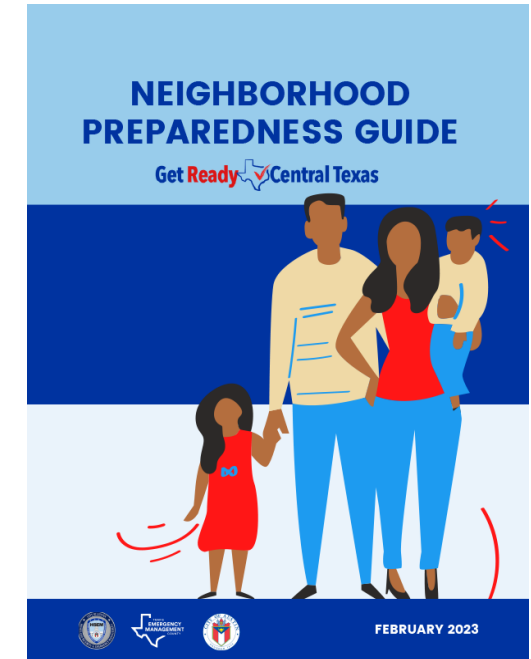


# Make a Plan



## A family emergency plan should include:

- A designated place to meet if you are separated - outside your home, or nearby.
- A plan to contact one another if you are unable to meet or get separated during a crisis.
- Public safety phone numbers (i.e. police, fire, and hospital) for your area.
- An out-of-area contact to communicate that you're safe and learn the status of other family member.
- **Practice before an emergency!**





## Make a **Plan**

### Easy ways to start your plan:

- **Build a Contact List:**

- Transfer your important phone numbers to paper.
- Start collecting emergency resource numbers.

- **Evaluate your needs:**

- Plans for fire evacuations, shelter at home incidents, and finalize a meeting spot. Then do this with your neighbors.
- Do you know how to shut off your utilities?



## Contact List



Name:
Phone:
Email:

Name:
Phone:
Email:

Name:
Phone:
Email:

Name:
Phone:
Email:

Name:
Phone:
Email:

Name:
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**PG. 45**

**NEIGHBORHOOD  
PREPAREDNESS GUIDE**





# Shutting Off **Utilities**

## Why It's Important:

- Prevents leaks and potential damage.
- Reduces risk of fire from gas leaks.
- Ensures safety during and after emergencies.

## Water Shut-Off:

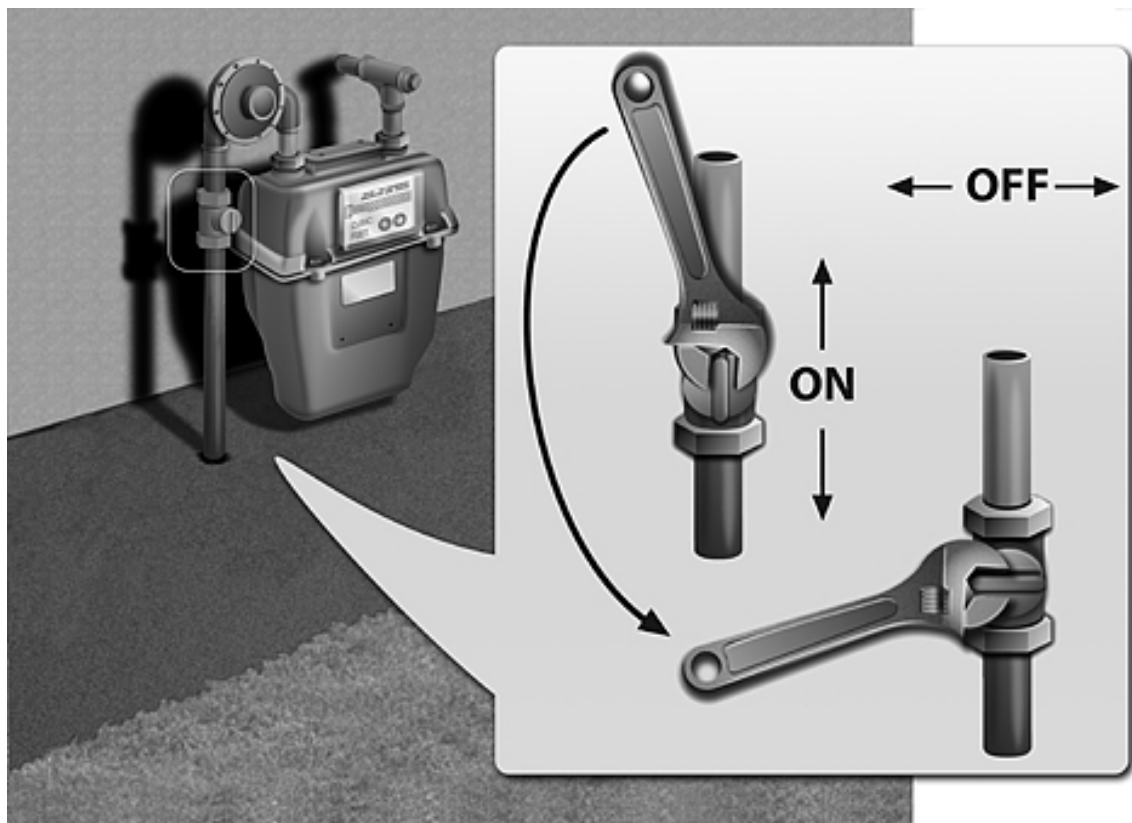
1. Locate the Main Valve: Typically found where the water line enters your home.
2. Turn Clockwise (right): Until the valve is completely closed. Water flow should stop.







# Shutting Off Utilities



## Gas Shut-Off:

1. Locate Gas Meter: Outside the house in a ventilated area.
2. Turn Off Valve: Use a wrench to turn the valve sideways, make a "T" with the pipe
3. Safety First: Only turn gas back on when it's safe or instructed by professionals.

**!** **Note:** Familiarize yourself with these locations and procedures **before** an emergency arises.



## Build a **Kit**

In this lesson, you'll learn:

- Why we should have a kit
- Suggestions for building our kits







# Building a Go Bag on **Your Budget**



## Recommended **First Priority** Items:

3 gallons of water | Manual can opener  
3 cans of nonperishable food  
First aid kit | Mini handheld flashlight

## Other Recommended **Priority** Items:

Candles | Matches & lighter | Multi-tool  
Extra Batteries | Rain poncho

## Other Recommended **Priority** Items:

NOAA weather radio | Whistle  
Dust mask | Local maps  
Moist towelettes for sanitation





# The Importance of **Building a Kit**



**Note:** Familiarize yourself with these locations and procedures before an emergency arises.

- **Be Prepared:** You never know when disaster might strike.
- **Peace of Mind:** Feel safer knowing you're ready.
- **Self-sufficiency:** Can support yourself/family for days.
- **Helps First Responders:** Frees up resources for those in dire need.
- **Save Time:** No last-minute rush to buy supplies.
- **Protect Loved Ones:** Ensure safety of family and pets.





## Building a Kit: **Suggested Items**

### **Communication and Information:**

- ☐ Map(s) of the area
- ☐ Family and emergency contact info (phone and email)
- ☐ Battery-powered or hand-crank radio (NOAA Weather Radio, if possible)
- ☐ Cell phone and charger(s)

### **Personal Essentials:**

- ☐ Extra cash (in small bills)
- ☐ Spare change of clothes
- ☐ Spare car/home key
- ☐ Copies of personal documents in a water-tight bag

### **Food and Water:**

- ☐ 1 gallon of water per person, per day (7-day supply)
- ☐ 7-day supply of non-perishable food
- ☐ Can opener

### **Medical Supplies:**

- ☐ Basic first aid kit
- ☐ 7-day supply of medications/medical items

### **Pet Essentials:**

- ☐ Pet supplies (collar, leash, tags, food, bowl)

### **Tools and Equipment:**

- ☐ Flashlight and extra batteries
- ☐ Wrench or plyer
- ☐ Other tools or equipment you may need

### **Hygiene and Comfort:**

- ☐ Sanitation and personal hygiene items
- ☐ Blankets
- ☐ Games for kids
- ☐ Comfort snacks





## Building a Kit: **First Aid Kit Essentials**

### Essentials Supplies:

- **Wound Care:** Antiseptic wipes, band-aids, gauze, tape.
- **Burns:** Aloe gel or burn cream.
- **Swelling:** Cold packs.
- **Bleeding:** Pressure, sterile bandages.
- **Tools:** Tweezers, scissors.
- **Protection:** Disposable gloves.
- **Pain Relief:** Over-the-counter pain relievers.
- **Guide:** First aid manual.



**Remember:** Always seek professional medical attention for serious injuries. Familiarize yourself with the kit and its contents.





# Kickstart Your Emergency Kit

Begin building your kit today! Bags are provided for everyone to start collecting essential items. These bags and items are yours to take home (based on household size).

## Activity Steps:

- 1. Grab a Bag:** Pick up a starter bag at the front.
- 2. Check the List:** We've got a checklist of suggested items. What do you think you'd need in an emergency?
- 3. Fill Your Bag:** Some basic supplies are available. Add them to your bag and check them off the list.
- 4. Personalize It:** Think about your specific needs. Any medications? Baby items? Special food?

Make a note and work on it at home with your family.

- 5. Reflect & Discuss:** Chat with your neighbor. Did they consider something you missed?

**Reminder:** This is just the beginning. Keep adding to your kit at home, considering all your personal and family needs!







# Building a Kit for **Pets**

## Go-bags for Pets

Remember to make a Go-Bag for your pet!

### Transport Essentials:

- ☐ Sturdy leashes and/or carriers for transport
- ☐ A pillowcase (great for transporting cats and other small animals)
- ☐ Muzzles for dogs

### Food and Water Supplies:

- ☐ Food, potable water, and medicine for at least two weeks
- ☐ Non-spill bowls
- ☐ Manual can opener and plastic lid

### Hygiene and Waste Management:

- ☐ Plastic pet waste bags
- ☐ Litter box and litter

### Identification and Records:

- ☐ Current photos of your pet (for reunification purposes)
- ☐ Names and phone numbers of emergency contacts, emergency veterinary hospitals, and animal shelters
- ☐ Immunization records
- ☐ Information on any medical conditions and/or behavior problem







## Know Your Neighbors

In this lesson, you'll learn:

- Ways to engage your neighbors in emergency preparedness







# Know Your Neighbors: **Neighborhood Emergency Plans**

**Put together a neighborhood emergency plan.**

***Homework: Use Your Neighborhood Preparedness Guide***

Think about including:

- Neighborhood boundaries
- Hazards that are likely to impact you
- An updated contact list
- Communication plan (family and neighbors)
- Define rally point(s)

Next Steps:

- Distribute your plan to everyone in your contact list
- Practice a Scenario (flooding, wildfire, biohazard)
- Get more neighbors involved!







# Know Your Neighbors: **Activity**

Getting to know your neighbors *before* an emergency is **crucial** but can be difficult.

How do you break the ice and start that conversation?

This Lotería networking game will help you get that conversation going.





# How to Play: **Know Your Neighbor Lotería**

## **Step 1:** *Grab a Card*

Everyone grab your Lotería card

## **Step 2:** *Introductions*

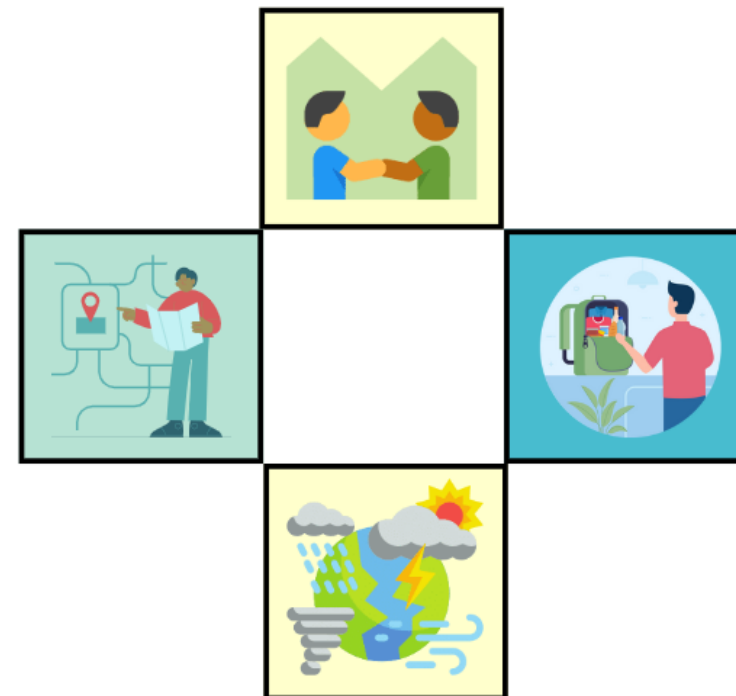
Get connected. Go around the room and find a partner(s) and introduce yourself.

## **Step 3:** *Start Playing*

Example: John, it was great meeting you. I didn't realize I needed more flashlights. How many do you have?

## **Step 4:** *Declare "Lotería!"*

Fill your card horizontally, vertically, and diagonal. Shout "Lotería!"





## Discussion: **Know Your Neighbor Lotería**

### **Discussion:**

- Was this guided conversation helpful?
- How prepared are you and your “neighbors”?







## Stay Informed

In this lesson, you'll learn:

- How to navigate helpful phone numbers
- Where to find information on emergency events
- Resources to support preparedness and response





## Stay Informed: **Who to Call**

### **When to call 9-1-1, 3-1-1, 2-1-1, 9-8-8** *What are the differences between the numbers?*



**9-1-1**

Universal emergency number for life threatening - Police, Fire, EMS, Mental Health Services.



**3-1-1**

Local public hotline to find information, ask about services, or file service request.  
512-974-2000



**2-1-1**

Hotline for information on local health and human service resources and recovery.



**9-8-8**

Suicide prevention hotline available to anyone in a suicidal crisis or emotional distress.





## Stay Informed: **Community Events**

### Look out for our events in the community:

- Monthly Pop-Up Emergency Preparedness Events  
January thru December
- Get Ready Central Texas Emergency Preparedness Fair  
September
- Ready Together: Basic Emergency Preparedness Training  
Quarterly

We're dedicated to ensuring that everyone, especially the most vulnerable and people with disabilities, who are often hardest to reach, are well prepared and informed.



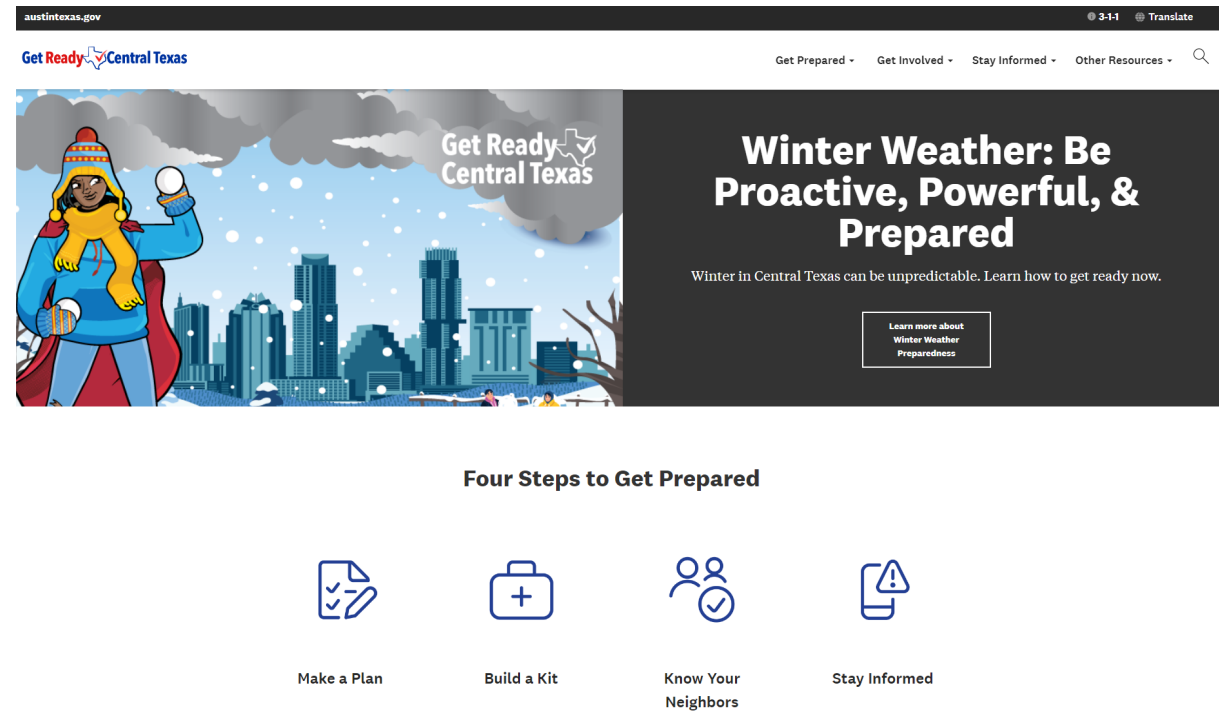




# Stay Informed: **ReadyCentralTexas.org**

## ReadyCentralTexas.org

- Covers emergencies for every season.
- Central hub for all your preparedness needs.
- Easy-to-use and informative for proactive action.





# Stay Informed: **Accessible Hazard Alert System**

## Accessible Hazard Alert System (AHAS):

Sign up at <https://atc.ahasalerts.com> for emergency alerts in American Sign Language, English voice, and text for people who are Deaf, hard of hearing, Blind, or Deaf and Blind, OR by texting AHAS to (737) 241-3710.

For quick SMS Registration text **AHAS** to (737) 241-3710.



**AUSTIN / TRAVIS COUNTY**  
Accessible Hazard Alert System

[Home](#)

[Active Alerts](#)

[COVID-19](#)

[FAQs](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Sign Up!](#)

Sign Up to Receive Accessible Alert Notifications



For quick SMS Registration text **AHAS** to (737) 241-3710.





# State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR)

**The State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR) provides local emergency planners and emergency responders with additional information on the needs members of our community may have.**

**People who should register for STEAR are those who:**

- have disabilities,
- are medically fragile,
- have access and functional needs such as:
  - limited mobility,
  - communication barriers,
  - require additional medical assistance during an emergency event,
  - require transportation assistance,
  - require personal care assistance.

*\*Registering in STEAR is voluntary and DOES NOT guarantee you will receive specific service during an emergency because available services may vary by community or the severity of the emergency.*



**TDEM**  
THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM



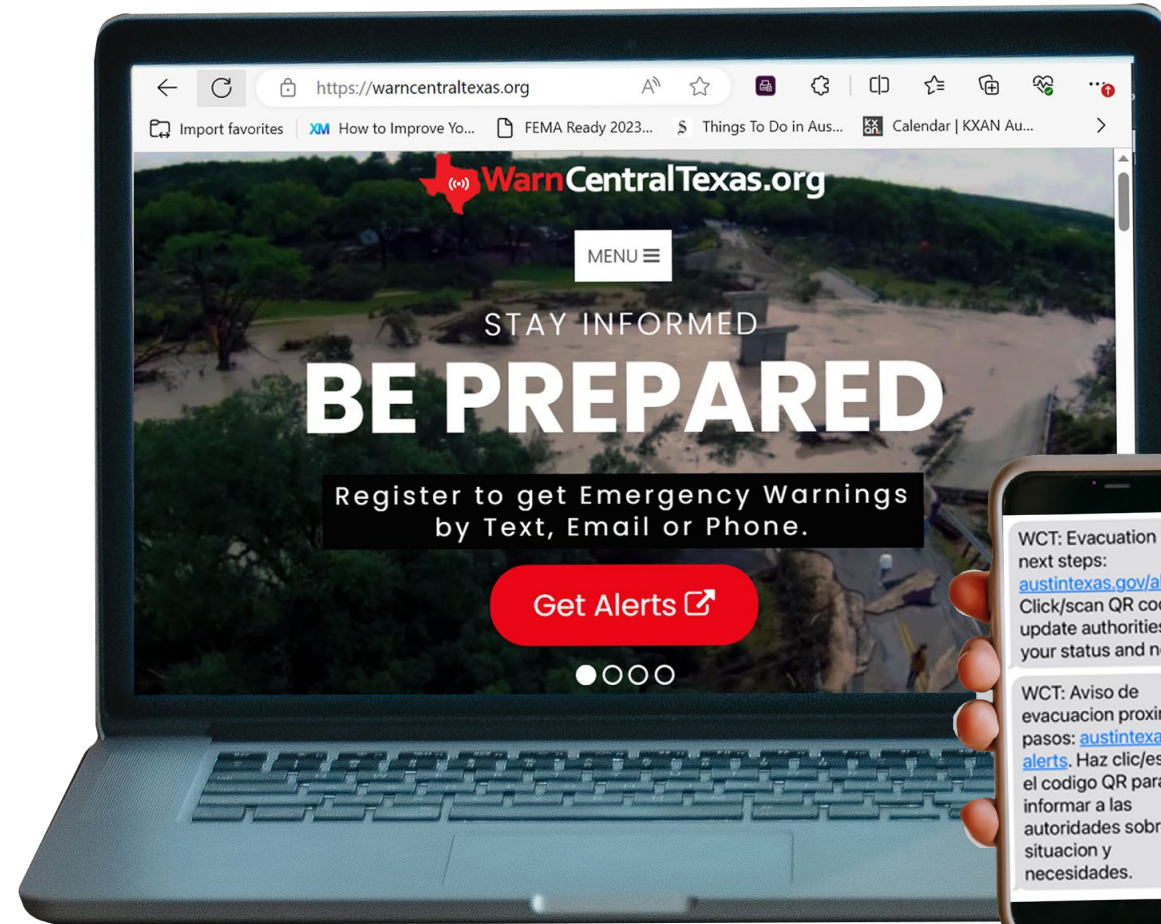




# Stay Informed: **WarnCentralTexas.org**

## Sign up for Emergency Alerts

- Get alerts through text, email, or phone.
- Receive timely notifications about hazards.
- Customize alerts based on your location.



WCT: Evacuation notice next steps: [austintexas.gov/alerts](https://austintexas.gov/alerts). Click/scan QR code to update authorities on your status and needs.

WCT: Aviso de evacuación próximos pasos: [austintexas.gov/alerts](https://austintexas.gov/alerts). Haz clic/escanea el código QR para informar a las autoridades sobre tu situación y necesidades.

Example Text Alert



## Stay Informed: **Local News**

In an emergency, local news stations will work to keep the public informed.

News outlets often get information from government agencies, helping distribute information to viewers.

Follow Austin HSEM on social media:

**Facebook:** Austin Emergency Management

**X/Twitter:** @AustinHSEM





# Stay Informed: **Weather Radio**

## Purpose and Simple Setup:

- Local alerts for severe weather and emergencies.
- Tune to local station and keep on for constant monitoring.
- Use batteries and/or plug-in



### OVER 60 TYPES OF ALERTS



TORNADOS



FLOODS



HURRICANES



FIRES



EARTHQUAKES

When an alert is issued by the National Weather Service a weather radio automatically alerts you.





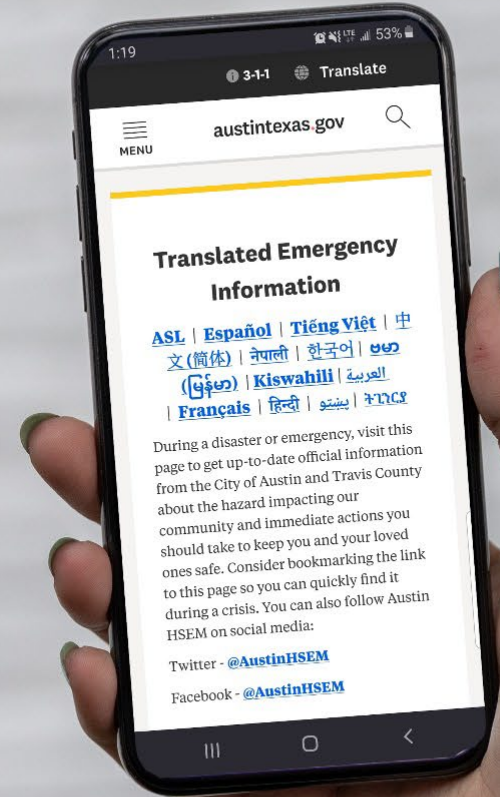


## Stay Informed: **Alerts Page**

[austintexas.gov/alerts](https://austintexas.gov/alerts)

The Alerts Page is the official hub for up-to-date information in 14 languages from the City of Austin about the hazard impacting our community, and actions you should take.

Bookmark this page so you can easily find it when you need it.





## Stay Informed: **ReadyCentralTexas App**



- The **Ready Central Texas app** is available for free in the Apple Store for iPhone, and in the Google Play store for Android.
- Using the app, you can get timely updates and warnings, and push notifications for when emergencies happen.
- Our phone app also has informational videos, emergency plan checklists, and a document library.





# Coping with Emergencies and Disasters

## Mental Health

In this lesson you'll learn how to:

- Understand the signs of mental distress and ways to seek help



**Trigger Warning:** The upcoming content discusses disaster scenarios and effects on mental health. It might be distressing for some.





## Coping with Emergencies and Disasters



### **Why mental health first aid is an important tool in emergency preparedness**

Disasters can occur naturally (e.g., tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, wildfires) or be human-caused (e.g., mass shootings, chemical spills, or terrorist attacks). Preparing for, responding to, and recovering from disasters and traumatic events is essential to the behavioral health of individuals and communities.

By understanding the individual effects and ways to seek help and support we can be better prepared to help others after an event.



## **Coping** with Emergencies and Disasters



### **Trauma can be caused by disasters or emergencies**

Natural or manmade disasters can have a major impact on mental health and emotional well-being.

Experiencing a natural disaster like a flood or tornado can cause anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress.

For many, these feelings can continue for years and certain things may take people back to the event or cause them to fear that it's about to happen again.



# Coping with Emergencies and Disasters

## Recognize the Signs of Disaster Related Stress

- Difficulty communicating thoughts.
- Difficulty sleeping.
- Difficulty maintaining balance in their lives.
- Low threshold of frustration.
- Increased use of drugs/alcohol.
- Limited attention span.
- Poor work performance.
- Headaches/stomach problems.
- Tunnel vision/muffled hearing.
- Colds or flu-like symptoms.
- Disorientation or confusion.
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Reluctance to leave home.
- Depression, sadness.
- Feelings of hopelessness.
- Mood-swings and easy bouts of crying.
- Overwhelming guilt and self-doubt.
- Fear of crowds, strangers, or being alone.







# Coping with Emergencies and Disasters

## Tools to relieve Disaster Related Stress

- Discuss your emotions, even if it's challenging.
- Seek help from post-disaster counselors.
- Don't blame yourself for the disaster or feel guilty for not aiding in rescues.
- Prioritize your well-being with a balanced diet, rest, exercise, and relaxation.
- Connect with family and friends.
- Utilize your existing support networks.
- Take breaks to unwind and remember intense feelings will lessen.
- Breathe deeply and engage in activities you love.
- Stay informed through trustworthy sources.
- Avoid rumors, especially on social media, and rely on official updates.



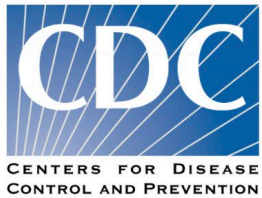


# Coping with Emergencies and Disasters: Mental Health Resources



## [Red Cross: Recovering Emotionally After a Disaster \(en español\)](#)

Disasters are upsetting experiences for everyone involved. Children, senior citizens, people with disabilities and people for whom English is not their first language are especially at risk and are likely to need extra care and help. But everyone, even the people that others look up to for guidance and assistance, is entitled to their feelings and deserves support throughout the recovery process.



## [CDC: Coping with a Disaster or Traumatic Event \(en español\)](#)

During and after a disaster, it is natural to experience different and strong emotions. Coping with these feelings and getting help when you need it will help you, your family, and your community recover from a disaster.



## [SAMHSA: Disaster Distress Helpline \(en español\)](#)

SAMHSA's Disaster Distress Helpline provides 24/7, 365-day-a-year crisis counseling and support to people experiencing emotional distress related to natural or human-caused disasters.



## [NAMI: Crisis Information and Resources \(en español\)](#)

Use this checklist to assist you in making your call. Ask for the Crisis Intervention Team or request an officer trained in handling mental health cases.



## [Integral Care: Crisis Services \(en español\)](#)

Like a storm that knocks a house from its foundation, a mental health crisis can knock someone off their feet. Integral Care offers mental health crisis support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week on the phone and in the community.



# Coping with Emergencies and Disasters

## ACTIVITY: Shake It Out

Stand up and “shake out” your muscles from head to toe. Pause, rest. Then do it again.







Break

10

Minute  
Break





## Know Your **Risk**

- You have learned how to work through a stressful situation.
- Now, let's talk about understanding what those situations might be.





# Know Your Risk: **Central Texas Disasters**

**All Hazards Approach:** Being prepared for a multitude of scenarios, not just natural disasters.

- **Flooding:** Austin is in Flash Flood Alley
- **Wildfire:** Dry zones, especially during droughts.
- **Severe Weather:** Includes tornadoes, which can strike at any time
- **Extreme Heat:** Soaring temperatures pose health threats
- **Winter Weather:** Icy conditions, freezing temperatures, and snow
- **Hurricanes:** Coast can bring in storms and heavy rainfall

## Other Risks

- **Biological:** Outbreak of diseases or bio-terrorism threats
- **Chemical:** Exposure to toxic substances or chemical attacks
- **Terrorist Threats:** Acts of extremism or targeted violence







## Fire Safety

In this lesson you'll learn:

- The common causes of fires
- Tips on how to prevent fires
- Facts on Alarms, Sprinklers and Fire Extinguishers







## Fire Facts

- Fires kill more Americans each year than all natural disasters combined.
- Fire moves fast! A blaze can double in size in less than 60 seconds.
- Most fire tragedies are **preventable**.



*Photo Courtesy of Austin Fire Department*



## Common Causes of Fires

The three most common causes of fires in Austin are: unattended cooking, improperly discarded smoking materials, and electrical fires.



Unattended cooking



Improperly discarded  
smoking materials



Electrical

These regularly switch order from year to year in terms of which occurs most often.





# Kitchen Fires



**The kitchen is the most common area** for a fire to start.

They're usually caused by:

- Unattended cooking;
- Flammable material too close to the stove (towels, potholders, etc.)
- Grease buildup
- Improper disposal of ignitable materials.

## DO:

- Cover with a lid;
- Use an extinguisher; or
- Turn off the heat, if safe.

## DON'T:

- Use water;
- Use flour;
- Use a towel to cover fire; or
- Move a hot or burning pot/pan.

**!** *And if the fire is in the oven, keep the oven door closed!*



*Photo Courtesy of Austin Fire Department*





# Improperly Discarded **Smoking** Materials



*Photo Courtesy of Austin Fire Department*



Another common cause of fire is **improperly discarded smoking materials**. To prevent these types of fires from occurring:

- Ensure cigarettes, cigars, charcoal, etc., are completely out before disposal (soaking them in water is a great way to be sure!);
- Don't discard smoking materials in the trash, potted plants, etc.;
- Don't toss cigarettes out of car windows;
- Use deep, sturdy, non-combustible containers in designated areas; and
- Designated smoking areas should be clear of all flammable materials.

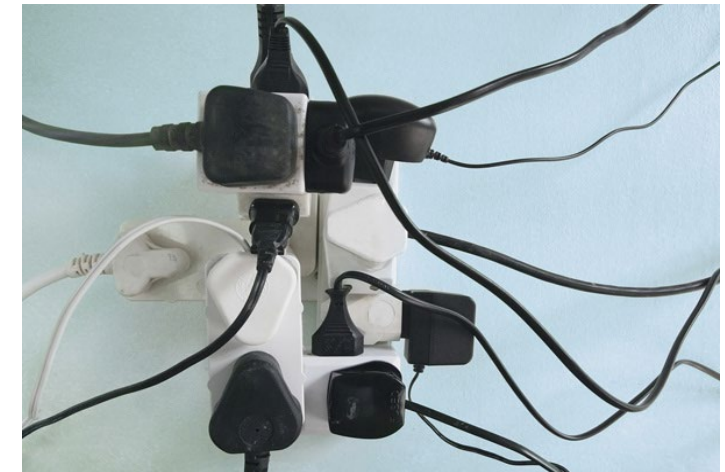
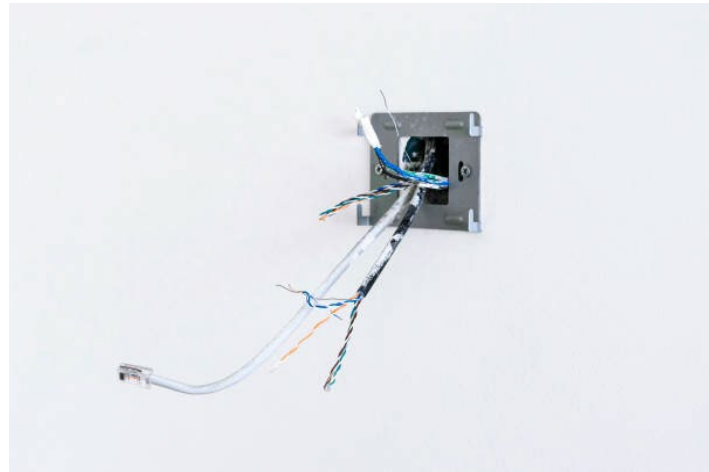
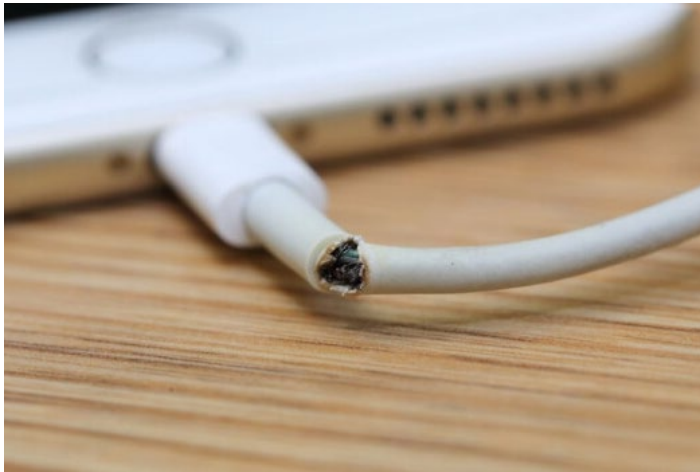


# Electrical Fires



## Electrical fires are usually caused by:

- Defective electronics (faulty cables, bad splicing, cut/torn cords, damaged cables, loose wires);
- Accidental damage; and/or
- Electrical negligence (overloading outlets or extension cords).







# Early Warning **Devices** & Sprinkler **Systems**

- Smoke alarms
- Carbon Monoxide (CO) alarms
- Sprinkler systems



**!** *If you or someone you know doesn't have working smoke alarms in their home, call us at (512) 974-0299, and we'll provide and install them FOR FREE! (Must reside in City of Austin)*



### Smoke Alarms

- Place in each bedroom, near sleeping areas, and on every home level.
- Test monthly; change batteries when low.
- Replace the unit about every 10 years.
- NEVER take out the battery!



### Carbon Monoxide Alarms

- Install outside sleeping areas and on every home level.
- Test monthly; follow manufacturer's replacement advice.
- If the alarm rings:
  1. Go outside or near an open window.
  2. Count everyone.
  3. Call for help and wait.



### Sprinkler Systems

- Activated by specific temperatures.
- Indoors, they release water instantly when triggered.
- Activating one sets off the alarm.
- Keep items away from heads for proper function.
- Have a pro check systems often.



# Fire Extinguishers



## Types of extinguishers:

- ABC: Combination Extinguishers
- A: Ordinary combustibles
- B: Flammable liquids
- C: Electrical
- D: Combustible metals
- K: Commercial cooking oils and greases

## When to use them:

- You have a clear escape route not blocked by fire;
- The extinguisher is within easy reach and in proper working order;
- The extinguisher is the correct type for the fire you are fighting;
- The extinguisher is large enough to put out the fire; and
- You know how to operate one.





# Using Fire Extinguishers: **PASS**

To operate a fire extinguisher, remember the word **PASS**:



**P**ull the pin



**A**im at the base of the fire



**S**queeze the handle/trigger



**S**weep the base of the fire

- Keep your back to an unobstructed exit and maintain six to eight feet between you and the fire.

- If the extinguisher fails to put out the fire, close the door and get out.

- Don't try to extinguish a fire bigger than you.

- Don't be afraid to call 911 and leave it to the professionals



# Evacuation Plan Essentials

## Preparation & Awareness:

- Always know multiple exits.
- Post a building diagram with exit routes.
- Plan for individuals with special needs.

## During a Fire:

Check doors for heat before opening.

- If there's smoke, stay low ("stay low and go").
- Avoid elevators; always use stairwells.

## After Evacuating:

- Gather at the designated meeting spot.
- NEVER re-enter the building.
- Account for everyone; report any missing persons to first responders.





# Winter Weather

In this lesson, you'll  
learn how to:

- Prepare for,  
Respond to, and  
Recover from  
Winter Storms





## Winter Weather: **Where do your Utilities come from?**

- **Austin Energy**
- **Austin Water**
- **Austin Resource Recovery**
- **Austin Watershed Protection**
- **Transportation and Public Works**
- **Development Services Department**

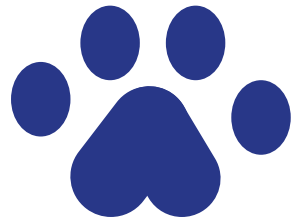




# Winter Weather: **the 4 Ps**



**People**



**Pets**



**Pipes**



**Plants**





# Winter Weather: People

- Check on your neighbors, especially if they are elderly, disabled, or – have other needs.
- Dress in multiple warm layers.
- If your power goes out:
  - Close curtains and cover windows and doors with blankets.
  - Try to stay together in one room, with the door closed, to keep in body heat.
- Know the signs of hypothermia.
  - Confusion
  - Shivering
  - Difficulty speaking
  - Sleepiness
  - Stiff muscles
- Know you and your family's needs—including any medications you take, medical conditions, or other considerations.







## Winter Weather: **Pets**

- **Bring them inside.**
  - All pets are vulnerable to extreme cold.
- **Provide shelter** (*if there is no way to bring your pet inside*).
- **Knock on the hood of your car.**
  - Cats may seek warmth under the hood.
- **Keep walks short.**
- **Know the signs of distress.**
- Hypothermia: shivering, lethargy, weakness, shallow breathing
- Frostbite: red and swollen or pale and white areas on ears or tails





## Winter Weather: **Plants**

- Bring any plants inside that can be carried.
- For plants that cannot be brought inside, cover them to protect them from the weather.





# Winter Weather: Pipes

## Insulate pipes and Unheated Areas

- Examples: Insulation Sleeves, Pipe Wrap, Pipe Warmers

## Faucets

- Drip your faucet if you feel like it is going to freeze
- Outside faucets should be turned off and wrapped or covered with a Styrofoam insulator







# Winter Weather: **Weatherize Your Home**



## Utilities

- Familiarize yourself with utility shut offs and contact information

## Keeping the Cold Out

- Find and Seal drafty areas.
  - Doors, Windows, Basements





# Winter Weather: **Weatherize Your Home**

## **Stay Safe and Sound with Code/Development Services Department**

- Test your gas service lines annually for possible leaks.
- Check if your furnace is operating correctly.
- Check if the boilers are working as intended.
- Check if you have smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors.

Tenants who experience unresolved code violations can request a Code Inspector by calling Austin 3-1-1 or 512-974-2000.



Visit the Austin Code Safe and Sound webpage at: [austintexas.gov/safeandsound](https://austintexas.gov/safeandsound) for more property maintenance winter tips.



# Winter Weather: **Safety Tips**

## **Staying Warm**

- Keep up with your annual fireplace inspections
- Keep heat sources away from flammable items (curtains, fabric items, and furniture)
- Use an automatic shut-off heater
- Don't fuel generators in your home
- Gas powered generators should be outside at least 20 feet from window, door, or vents
- Have working smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Never run your vehicle inside your garage to keep warm.

## **Electric Safety**

- Don't touch power lines or try to prune around them
  - Only use outdoor extension cords for outside
  - Don't overload power strips
- Keep electrical appliances away from water







# Winter Weather: **Driving Safety**

## **Plan Your Route Ahead of Time**

- ✓ Check the weather, road conditions, and traffic. Plan to leave early.
- ✓ Review directions and maps before you go. Let others know your route and arrival time.

## **Know Your Car**

- ✓ Clean snow, ice or dirt from the windows, the forward sensors, headlights, taillights and backup camera.
- ✓ Know where your hazard lights are.
- ✓ For electric or hybrid-electric vehicles, make sure your vehicle is plugged in whenever it is not in use.

## **Driving In Winter Conditions**

- ✓ Drive slowly. Increase your following distance.
- ✓ Stay calm in a skid.





## Winter Weather: **Driving Safety cont'd.**

### **Stock Your Vehicle**

- Keep the following on hand for an emergency:
  - ✓ Ice scraper for your windshield and abrasive material.
  - ✓ Jumper cables, flashlight, and warning devices.
  - ✓ A cell phone, cell phone charger and blankets for longer trips or when driving in lightly populated areas.

### **Get Your Car Serviced Now**

- ✓ Visit your mechanic for a tune-up and other routine maintenance.
- ✓ Inspect your tires at least once a month and always before setting out on a long road trip.





# Winter Weather: **Power Outages**

## Report an outage

- **Text Outage Alerts**
  - To Sign Up – Text **REGISTER** or **REG** to **287846**
  - To Report – Text **OUT** or **OUTAGE** to **287846**
- Use [outagemap.austinenergy.com](https://outagemap.austinenergy.com)
- **Save 512-322-9100** in your phone to report an outage
- **Visit and bookmark** these websites before an emergency
  - [AustinTexas.gov/alerts](https://AustinTexas.gov/alerts)
  - [AustinEnergy.com/outage](https://AustinEnergy.com/outage)
  - [WarnCentralTexas.org](https://WarnCentralTexas.org)
  - [ReadyCentralTexas.org](https://ReadyCentralTexas.org)
  - [ATXFloods.com](https://ATXFloods.com)
- **Consider** getting a weather radio. Austin Energy works with local news stations on radio, TV or online to keep customers informed







# Winter Weather: **Power Outages**

## **During a Power Outage**

- **Call 9-1-1** if you have a medical emergency or your life is at risk during a power outage, especially if you are connected to medical equipment that needs power, such as dialysis or breathing machines. Do not wait for your power to be turned back on to seek help.
- Avoid downed power lines.
- Be aware that limbs, fences, hoses, playsets, and other structures near you can become energized by a downed power line.



### Text Message Outage Alerts



To Sign Up – Text **REGISTER** or **REG** to **287846**

To Report – Text **OUT** or **OUTAGE** to **287846**



## Winter Weather: **Power Outages** cont'd.

### **Power Outage Tips**

- Use flashlights or battery-operated lanterns during an outage.
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed during an outage. Food could last up to a day.
- When in doubt, throw it out. Visit FDA for guidelines on food safety during outages.

### **Appliances During an Outage**

- Turn off major appliances (air conditioners and heat pumps). They could overload electric lines once power is restored, causing a second outage.
- Be aware that gas appliances may not work due to power outages.

### **Life Saving Advice During an Outage**

- Do NOT attempt to assist or approach emergency and utility crews.
- To avoid carbon monoxide poisoning, **never** run a car or truck inside a garage attached to your house, even if you leave the garage door open.





# Winter Weather: **Power Outages** cont'd.

## Resources

- Follow the Austin Energy Facebook and X/Twitter accounts to stay updated on the latest conditions impacting power to your home and community.
  - Facebook: Austin Energy
  - X/Twitter: @austinenergy
- Monitor ERCOT grid conditions and public notices for information impacting local and statewide electricity service.
  - [www.ercot.com/gridinfo](http://www.ercot.com/gridinfo)
  - [https://www.ercot.com/services/comm/mkt\\_notices/notices](https://www.ercot.com/services/comm/mkt_notices/notices)







# Winter Weather: Power Outages for the Medically Vulnerable

- **Austin Energy:** Outages for the medically vulnerable can be life threatening. The City of Austin has created a registry for customers. It is designed for customers who need critical care or have chronic conditions; this registry provides personal case management from the City of Austin and partnering social service agencies.  
*\*Being on the registry does not guarantee uninterrupted power or priority of restoration.*
- **STEAR:** The State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR) provides local emergency planners and emergency responders with additional information on the needs members of our community may have.





## Winter Weather: **After a Storm**

### **Mental Health**

- It helps to acknowledge how you feel.
- Remember your strengths & abilities.
- It's healthy to get help.
- Everyone's needs and coping are different.
- Disasters affect everyone.
- Anxiety about safety is normal after an event.
- It's normal to feel angry or sad.

**Frozen Pipes (from Austin Water):** As things begin to thaw, please take time to check your pipes for areas that may be frozen and thaw them properly and slowly. If these steps do not work, contact a licensed plumber or your property manager. For assistance with water shut off or issues with a suspected damaged meter, call the Austin Water 24/7 emergency line at 512-972-1000.

*Source/more information:*

[www.AustinTexas.gov/content/austin-water](http://www.AustinTexas.gov/content/austin-water)





# Winter Weather: **Resources After a Storm**



## Code Compliance

Common weather-related violations may include:

- no hot water
- burst pipes
- cracks in the ceiling or walls. Residents experiencing a possible code violation should first notify their landlord.

Visit the Report a Code Violation page to learn how to report a possible code violation at:

[www.AustinTexas.gov/service/report-code-violation](http://www.AustinTexas.gov/service/report-code-violation)







# Winter Weather: Resources After a Storm



## Repairs & Permits

The City's Development Services Department will work with homeowners, business owners, and contractors to permit and inspect emergency repairs to ensure work was completed safely. That means that if your home or business needs emergency repairs for your safety, work can begin immediately. Types of repairs that will require permits include:

- Ruptured or damaged water lines
- Main electrical service
- Structural damage

Visit the Permits for Emergency Repairs page for more information:

[www.AustinTexas.gov/emergency-permits](http://www.AustinTexas.gov/emergency-permits)

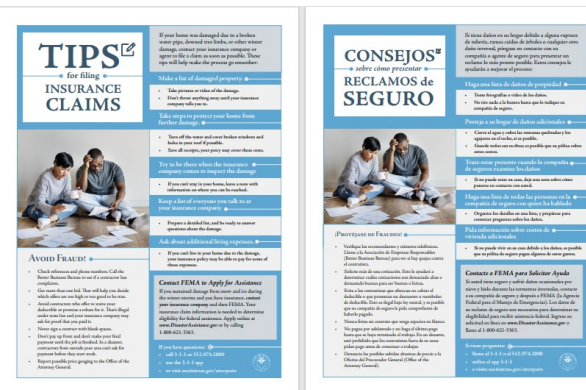




# Winter Weather: Resources After a Storm

## Homeowners Assistance

- The Austin Housing and Planning Department's home repair program can assist eligible homeowners who need repairs: [AustinTexas.gov/HomeRepairs](https://www.austintexas.gov/development-services/home-repairs)
- Call 512-974-3100, or
- email the Austin Housing and Planning Department with questions about these services at [hpdcs@austintexas.gov](mailto:hpdcs@austintexas.gov).
- View Tips for Filing Insurance Claims (PDF): [https://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Development\\_Services/2021\\_insurance\\_claims\\_tips\\_bilingual.pdf](https://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Development_Services/2021_insurance_claims_tips_bilingual.pdf)





# Winter Weather: **Resources After a Storm**

## **Tenant Resources**

Visit Resources for Renters to see if you qualify for tenant resources, including legal consultation, residential rental assistance, utility bill assistance, and more.

Visit: <https://www.AustinTexas.gov/page/resources-renters>

## **Housing Assistance:**

- Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid – [888-988-9996](tel:888-988-9996)
- Volunteer Legal Services of Central Texas – [512-476-5550](tel:512-476-5550)
- Building and Strengthening Tenant Action (BASTA) – [512-522-9984](tel:512-522-9984)
- Austin Tenants Council – [512-474-1961](tel:512-474-1961)







# Winter Weather: **Resources After a Storm**

## **State and Federal Resources and Assistance**

Disaster recovery resources may be available from the federal government when there is a large-scale emergency or disaster.

Examples of large-scale emergencies include Hurricane Harvey and the winter storms of February 2021 and 2023 in Austin.

To learn more, go to [www.ReadyCentralTexas.org](http://www.ReadyCentralTexas.org) and go to Other Resources > More Resources.





We greatly appreciate you and all our partners. Thank you!



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