

# NEIGHBORHOOD PREPAREDNESS GUIDE

Get **Ready**  **Central Texas**



**JULY 2022**

Information provided in this handbook was taken from City of Austin Plans and the City of Austin Website, Ready Central Texas App, FEMA, Ready.gov, as well as Neighborhood Plans from around the U.S including: the Portland Police Bureau Emergency Preparedness Handbook, North Salt Lake Emergency Preparedness Plan, Personal & Neighborhood Emergency Preparedness Handbook

# THANK YOU TO ALL THOSE WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THIS EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS HANDBOOK

**Carmen Llanes Pulido**, *Executive Director, GAVA*

**Frances Acuña**, *Climate Resilience Lead Organizer, GAVA*

**Dan McCoy**

**Patrick Bixler**, *Assistant Professor, LBJ School of Public Affairs & RGK Center for Philanthropy and Community Service*

**Katherine Lieberknecht**, *Assistant Professor, School of Architecture, UT Austin*

**Nelson Andrade**, *Community Engagement, City of Austin Emergency Management*

**Jessica Jones**, *Graduate Student, School of Architecture & LBJ School of Public Affairs*

**Kiki Miller**, *M.P.A., M.A., Doctoral Candidate in Rhetoric and Political Communication*

**Joelynn Avendano**

## Residents of the Dove Springs Neighborhood

A special thank you to the numerous City of Austin Departments who reviewed and provided key advice and guidance for this handbook.





Image courtesy of GAVA.

## A NOTE FROM GAVA

Dear Neighbor,

Community members of the City of Austin are no strangers to natural disasters. In 1998, and again in 2013 and 2015, Southeast Austin experienced major flooding. Many residents lost their homes, pets, possessions, and even their livelihoods from these traumatic events. Since these events, neighbors have come together to organize and prevent future tragedy with support from grassroots and community organizations.

To support community members, Go Austin Vamos Austin (GAVA) created trainings on how to respond to a disaster. GAVA is a coalition of neighbors and community partners breaking down barriers to healthy living and strengthening neighborhood stability in Austin's Eastern Crescent.

In 2019, GAVA partnered with residents from Dove Springs, researchers from the University of Texas, and the Watershed Protection Department and Homeland Security & Emergency Management departments to create a handbook for community members in the Dove Springs Neighborhood.

Since then this handbook has been adapted for all community members in the Austin area.

Neighbors can use this handbook as a guide to prepare their families, households, and neighborhood for future natural disasters such as flooding, grass fires, or heat waves.

The more we can prepare today, the better we will be able to respond to events and take care of our communities, tomorrow.

**To find out more about GAVA, please visit our website at: [www.goaustinvamosaustin.org](http://www.goaustinvamosaustin.org)**

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# CONTACTS & INFORMATION



# EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS

**For emergencies: 9-1-1**

**Austin Police Department: 512-974-5000**

**City of Austin: 3-1-1 or 512-974-2000**

311 is the non-emergency City of Austin contact center. They can help answer questions related to City of Austin departments and can connect you with the available resources or if you need to make a request for city services. You can report downed power lines, malfunction of city lights, blocked drainage pipes or inlets, and other issues that need to be addressed by the City of Austin. Open 24/7, 365 days per year.

**Texas Department of Health and Human Services: 2-1-1**

211 Texas is a database that can help you find resources in your community. Health, food, housing, and many other services can be found using this resource.

**Power outages: 512-322-9100**

**Utility Call Center (Electric/Water): 512-494-9400**

**TTY for the hearing impaired: 512-972-9848**

## SIGN-UP FOR EMERGENCY ALERTS

### Warn Central Texas

When you register with Warn Central Texas, <https://warncentraltexas.org/>, you can receive emergency warnings by text, email, or phone. The messages are Bilingual (English/Spanish).

### STEAR (State of Texas Emergency Asst. Registry)

If you know elderly or disabled community members, people with limited mobility, people with communication barriers, or people who require transportation assistance, they can sign up with STEAR,

<https://www.tdem.texas.gov/response/state-of-texas-emergency-assistance-registry>.

## CHECK FOR CITY UPDATES

During a disaster or emergency, visit <https://www.austintexas.gov/alerts> to get up to date official information from the City of Austin and Travis County about the hazard impacting our community and immediate actions you should take to keep you and your loved ones safe.



Image courtesy of City of Austin.

## INFORMATION SOURCES

### PHONE APPS

#### **READYCENTRALTX App**

This resource app provides critical guidance and resources to support Central Texans in their efforts to prepare for and respond to emergencies and disasters. Interactive checklists, relevant videos, electronic guides and more ensure users stay informed and proactive about their safety and wellness. Available for iPhones and Androids, see this website, <https://www.austintexas.gov/prepared>, for more information.

#### **FEMA App & FEMA App en Español**

FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) has an app with weather alerts and information on available resources for different kinds of disasters. The app can also help locate emergency shelters. See this website, <https://www.fema.gov/about/news-multimedia/mobile-products>, for more information.

### WEBSITES

#### **Ready.gov**

Provides sample emergency plans. See this website, <https://www.ready.gov/>, for more information.

#### **U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Water Dashboard**

Information on water bodies, water quality, drought and rainfall as well as weather conditions and hazards. See this website, <https://dashboard.waterdata.usgs.gov/app/nwdl?aoi=default>, for more information.

#### **LCRA Hydromet**

Water-related information that is specific to the Austin area and areas upstream and downstream of Austin along the Colorado River. See this website, <https://hydromet.lcra.org/>, for more information.

#### **Emergency Weather Radio Station**

NOAA Weather Radio, NOAA alert frequency for the Austin area is channel 1 on weather alert radios and/or 162.400 for the radio frequency.

## SOCIAL NETWORKS

### Nextdoor

A website and application where community members can keep informed of what is going on in their neighborhood and can share resources online with neighbors.

### GAVA Facebook page

A community Facebook page where GAVA posts information on community events, resources, and local news updates.



Image courtesy of GAVA.

**Consider following these important Facebook pages:**

**City of Austin Facebook Page:** [www.facebook.com/austintexas.gov/](https://www.facebook.com/austintexas.gov/)

**Austin Emergency Management:** [www.facebook.com/AustinHSEM/](https://www.facebook.com/AustinHSEM/)

**Austin Public Health:** [www.facebook.com/austinpublichealth](https://www.facebook.com/austinpublichealth)

**Consider following these important Twitter Feeds:**

**City of Austin:** [www.twitter.com/austintexasgov](https://www.twitter.com/austintexasgov)

**Austin Emergency Management:** [www.twitter.com/austinhsem](https://www.twitter.com/austinhsem)

**Austin Public Health:** [www.twitter.com/AusPublicHealth](https://www.twitter.com/AusPublicHealth)

# PREPAREDNESS





# PLAN FOR ANY DISASTER

You have the power to protect yourself, your loved ones, and our community in an emergency. The source of that super-power? Planning ahead. Preparing for disasters in advance can have big impact on your safety and recovery in a crisis.



**Make a Plan**



**Build a Kit**



**Know Your  
Neighbors**



**Stay Informed**



**Make a Plan**

Discuss how with your family how you will respond, stay informed, and contact one another during emergency situations in which key services like electricity, water, or first responders may not be available. Once your initial plan has been created, make it a point to discuss it at least once a year and make updates as needed. 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



**Build a Kit**

Having basic supplies on hand can make a disaster less stressful, and in some cases, make the difference between life and death. Assemble an emergency supply kit with enough supplies for everyone in your house for seven days. You don't have to do it all at once and it doesn't have to be difficult or expensive.

- Start with the basics (i.e. water, food, first aid and hygiene items,) that can fit in a backpack or other portable container.
- Add to it as you are able (i.e. flashlight, extra batteries, portable charge, blankets, and cash), and consider unique supplies that pertain to different seasons.
- Understand the unique needs of you and your family and take those into account when building your kit.
- Don't forget your pet's needs.



# PLAN FOR ANY DISASTER



## Know Your Neighbors

Neighbors helping neighbors enhances community resilience and ensures that emergency resources will reach those in the greatest need. If you can help one of your neighbors, that could be one less emergency call that needs to be made. Reducing the strain on emergency services by helping each other can add up to make a big difference in a crisis. All this means that knowing your neighbors and identifying those who might need extra help during a disaster is critical to increasing Austin's disaster preparedness.



## Stay Informed

Take the following steps now so you are better informed from reliable sources when disaster strikes:

- Download the Ready Central Texas phone application for iPhone or Android
- Sign up for Warn Central Texas to receive alerts for your neighborhood letting you know when you need to take immediate action to stay safe.
- Sign up [HERE](#) for emergency alerts in American Sign Language, English voice, and text for people who are Deaf, Blind, hard of hearing or Deaf and Blind OR by texting AHAS to (737) 241-3710
- Bookmark [AustinTexas.gov/Alerts](https://www.austintexas.gov/Alerts). This page will post key updates throughout an emergency and during recovery.
- Go to the National Weather Service for weather updates.
- Follow local news media
- Follow the City of Austin and other public safety agencies on social media



## QUICK TIPS

- Assemble emergency contact phone numbers for family members (work, school, cell, etc.), as well as for local emergency management agencies. Keep a copy of this with you and in emergency kits. Gather neighbors phone numbers and their emergency contacts. Assemble emergency kits and "Go-Bags".
- Prepare in advance for how you'll communicate, navigate and keep your data safe if you lose power or internet access during an emergency. How will you communicate if you don't have cell service or your cell phone dies?



Image courtesy of City of Austin.

## KEEPING IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS SAFE

Keep copies of important documents (passport, driver's license, social security card, marriage license, last will and testament, deeds, financial statements, medical records, etc.) in an off-site location such as a safety deposit box.

### Scanning Documents

You can scan documents with your smart phone or at your local library branch, <https://library.austintexas.gov/locations>. Scanning to a USB or via email is available at all library locations using the copy machines. There is no charge for scanning. The library also offers mobile print services and internet access.

### How to Store Documents

Now that you have scanned your materials, you need to decide where to keep your digital copies. You can store documents in the cloud or on external memory devices (USB, DVD).

Hard copies should be kept in water-proof containers, which can be purchased both online and at retail stores. Prices range from a few dollars and go up from there, depending on size and material. Some come with clamps, locks, or padlock capabilities. We recommend containers that are:

- water-proof stowaway utility box
- heavy duty storage containers

OR

- Ziplock bags with Tupperware, and then store it in a 5-gallon bucket with a lid.

## KEEPING YOUR HOME SAFE

- Be sure your home's street number is visible from the street, so emergency vehicles can find you.
- Install a smoke and CO (Carbon Monoxide) detector on each level of your home and outside each bedroom. If hallways are longer than 40 feet between the sleeping and living areas, then use two smoke alarms.
  - Test every six months and replace 9-volt batteries annually.
  - Some smoke alarms use non-replaceable lithium 10-year batteries, these should be tested monthly and replaced per manufacturer's instructions.
  - Hardwired smoke alarms should be tested monthly, and the backup battery should be replaced annually. The entire hardwired smoke alarm unit should be replaced every 8-10 years.
- Keep at least one fire extinguisher on each level of your home. Learn how and when to use them. Check the pressure gauges annually to ensure they are fully charged.
- Keep hallways and exits clear for easy evacuation. Ensure that all window safety bars have emergency releases.
- Store hazardous chemicals (e.g., gasoline, bleach, paint thinners) away from open flames and secure them to prevent spills. Make sure aerosol cans are not stored in places that can reach more than 120 ° F (like a garage or shed). This can cause explosions.
- Post emergency telephone numbers by every phone and near the front door.
- Show responsible family members how and when to shut off water, gas, and electricity at main switches.

## INSURANCE

Keeping a list of valuables with pictures and/or video will help you if you need to claim anything with an insurance company or FEMA.

It is important to get insurance if you live in an area that is at risk for flooding. Remember that some insurances can take up to 30 days for policies to go into effect, so review carefully what is covered when you purchase flood insurance policy.

For more information on flood insurance review FEMA Insurance, [https://www.floodsmart.gov/get-flood-insurance?utm\\_source=google&utm\\_medium=paid\\_search&utm\\_term=brand&utm\\_content=fema\\_phrase&utm\\_campaign=NFIP\\_2022\\_HS\\_6TX](https://www.floodsmart.gov/get-flood-insurance?utm_source=google&utm_medium=paid_search&utm_term=brand&utm_content=fema_phrase&utm_campaign=NFIP_2022_HS_6TX).

**Contact your local fire department to learn about home fire hazards.**



Image courtesy of City of Austin.

## EMERGENCY SUPPLIES

### Consider having multiple Disaster Kits:

- A Household Emergency Kit
- A basic First Aid Kit
- An Emergency Car Kit
- go-bags for each family member and pet!

- Store your Household Emergency Kit in a place that will still be accessible if your home is damaged and unsafe to enter (e.g., a backyard shed). If this is not an option, put it in an easily accessible location inside your home.
- Store your Go-Bags in a location that is easily accessible in the event you must evacuate your home (e.g., each vehicle).
- Store your kits in a convenient place known to all family members.
- Keep a smaller version of a Disaster Supplies Kit in the trunk of your car.
- Keep items in air-tight plastic bags.
- Consult your physician or pharmacist about storing prescription medicines.
- Having 7 days worth of supplies is the general rule of thumb, but local feedback shows that a 14-day supply may be necessary.

## WHAT SHOULD GO IN A HOUSEHOLD EMERGENCY KIT?

- Cellphone, charger
- 7 day supply of medications/medical items
- Sanitation supplies (e.g. towels, washcloths, disinfectant wipes, unscented bleach with an eyedropper, heavy-duty garbage bags)
- Flashlights and battery-operated lanterns (with extra batteries & bulbs)
- Plates, utensils, and paper towels, etc.
- Cooking supplies (manual can opener, camp stove, fuel, lighter, pots, etc.).  
Camping stoves should never be used indoors due to the possibility of poisoning.
- Items to protect you from the elements, (e.g., warm clothing, raincoats, sleeping bags, mats, blankets, sturdy shoes and a tent or heavy-duty sheet plastic)
- Work gloves, goggles, crowbar, hammer, staple gun, adjustable wrench
- Extra cash (suggested \$200 in small bills)
- Spare car/home key
- Family and emergency contact info (phone and email)
- Pet supplies (collar, leash, tags, food, bowl)
- Copies of personal documents in a water-tight bag
- 1 gallon of water per person, per day (7 day supply)
- 7 day supply of nonperishable canned food (canned vegetables, fruit, bags of rice and beans
- Can opener



Re-think and update your kit and family needs at least once a year. Replace dead batteries, update clothes, etc. Individual and family needs, along with the time of the year, will dictate what is really required. Consider your family's specific needs and potential "just in case" items.



## WHAT SHOULD GO IN A FIRST AID KIT?

- 1 First aid handbook
- Assorted cloth bandaids
- 4" X 4" sterile gauze dressing
- 2" X 2" sterile dressing
- 4" X 5 yards Kling bandage
- 2" X 5 yards Kling bandage
- 5" X 9" sterile dressing
- 8" X 10" sterile dressing
- Rolls of Kerlix bandage
- Triangular bandages
- Elastic bandages
- Latex gloves
- Tongue Depressors
- Betadine Preps
- Iodine
- First Aid Spray
- Ipecac
- Activated Charcoal
- Bandage Scissors
- Paramedic Scissors
- Tweezers
- Scissors
- Safety pins
- Needles (sewing)
- Thermometer
- Adhesive, Transpore, or paper tape
- Ice and heat packs
- Neosporin
- Tylenol & baby Tylenol or aspirin
- Diarrhea medication, laxatives and Antacids
- Cleansing agent/soap
- Eye wash
- Sunscreen
- Protective mask

## WHAT SHOULD GO IN AN EMERGENCY CAR KIT?

- Battery/Jumper cables
- Portable tire inflator
- First aid kit and manual
- Class ABC fire extinguisher
- Radio & batteries
- Flashlight & batteries
- Bottled water
- Non-perishable food stored in water resistant container
- Sundry kit (paper & pencil, maps, tissues, pre moistened towelettes, plastic bags, essential medications)
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Reflectors & flares
- Short rubber hose for siphoning
- Try to keep your tank half full with gas



Image courtesy of City of Austin.



# "GO-BAGS"

Each household member should have their own Go-bag as a part of the Household Disaster Kit. Go-bags are helpful for use at home to help you remain in place even without utilities, if you must evacuate your home, or if you cannot return home.

## Items to put in each family member's Go-Bag:

- Food and water
- Small first aid kit
- At least 7-day supply of any medications and a copy of the prescriptions
- Copies of important documents, including: health insurance card, driver's license or identification card, birth certificates, passport
- List of emergency contact phone numbers
- Photos of family members for reunification purposes
- Whistle to alert rescuers of your location
- Personal hygiene supplies (including toilet paper/wipes)
- Emergency lighting (e.g., glow sticks, flashlight, headlamp) and extra batteries
- Large garbage bags and paper towels
- Change of clothing and a hat
- Sleeping bag or blankets
- Cash in small bills
- In children's go-bags, include medical consent forms, a family photo for reunification purposes, and a favorite toy, cards, or a book

## Remember to make a Go-Bag for your pet!

- Sturdy leashes and/or carriers for transport
- A pillowcase is a good option for transporting cats and other small animals
- Muzzles for dogs
- Food, potable water, and medicine for at least two weeks.
- Non-spill bowls, manual can opener, and plastic lid
- Plastic pet waste bags, litter box, and litter
- Current photos of your pet, for reunification purposes
- Names and phone numbers of your emergency contact, local emergency veterinary hospitals, and animal shelters
- Immunization records and information on any medical conditions and/or behavior problems



## ADDITIONAL NOTES ON STORING FOOD

- Store enough food for everyone in your family to last for at least two weeks.
- Ideal foods do not require refrigeration or cooking (e.g., canned fruit, vegetables, peanut butter, jam, low-salt crackers, cookies, cereals, dried fruit, canned soup or meats, juices and non-fat dry milk).
- Mark a date on food and rotate your stored food every six months.
- Change your stored water supply every six months so that it stays fresh
- Include baby food, formula or other special diet items for infants, seniors and those with dietary restrictions.
- Store the food in airtight, pest-resistant containers and keep it in a cool, dark place.
- Most canned foods can safely be stored for at least 18 months. Low acid foods like meat products, fruits, or vegetables will normally last at least 2 years. Use dry products, like boxed cereal, crackers, cookies, dried milk, or dried fruit within six months.
- Do not consume food from cans that show any signs of deterioration (rust or bulging).

## ADDITIONAL NOTES ON STORING WATER

- Store two gallons of water per person, per day. This amount will be adequate for general drinking purposes. Three gallons per person per day will give you enough to cook and for limited personal hygiene. Remember to plan for your pets.
- If you buy commercially bottled “spring” or “drinking” water: Keep water in its original container, and don’t re-store a bottle once it’s been opened. Label bottles with their replacement date, and store them in a cool, dark place. Replace water at least every six months if bottles are not marked with the manufacturer’s expiration date.

# TIPS FOR THOSE LIVING WITH DISABILITIES



Austin and Travis County partner with Deaf Link to provide the Accessible Hazard Alert System (AHAS) which sends accessible alert messages to registered residents who are Deaf, Blind, Hard of Hearing, or Deaf/Blind before, during, and after an emergency or disaster in Austin and Travis County. Subscribers in an area affected by an emergency or disaster will be able to receive an accessible alert message in American Sign Language (ASL) and English voice and text. The alert message could include information about the emergency and what actions to take. Austin and Travis County AHAS will send accessible alert messages to internet and video capable devices such as computers, mobile phones, and tablet computers. AHAS alerts are also Braille reader accessible.

## **Prepare and carry with you an emergency health information card:**

Carrying health information with you will help to communicate to rescuers what they need to know about you if they find you unconscious or incoherent, or if they need to quickly help evacuate you. Include information about your medications, adaptive equipment, blood type, allergies and sensitivities, insurance numbers, immunization dates, communication difficulties and preferred treatment, as well as contact information for your health providers, personal support network and emergency contacts.

## **Personal care assistance:**

If you receive assistance from a home healthcare agency or in-home support provider, find out how the provider will respond in an emergency. Designate backup or alternative providers that you can contact in an emergency. For persons using a wheelchair, plan for how you will evacuate in an emergency and discuss it with your Personal Support Network. If you use a motorized wheelchair, have a manual wheelchair as a backup.

## **For persons who are blind or visually impaired:**

Keep an extra collapsible cane by your bed. Attach a whistle to the cane and use it if you need to attract attention.

## **For persons who are hearing impaired:**

Keep extra batteries for your hearing aids with emergency supplies. Consider storing your hearing aids in a container attached to your nightstand or bedpost, so you can locate them quickly after a disaster.

## **For persons with communication disabilities:**

Determine how you will communicate with emergency personnel if you do not have your communication devices. Store paper, writing materials, copies of a word or letter board and preprinted key phrases specific to anticipated emergencies in all your emergency kits, your wallet, purse, etc.





Image courtesy of City of Austin.

## TIPS FOR SENIORS

### **Prepare and carry with you an emergency health information card.**

Carrying health information with you will help to communicate to rescuers what they need to know about you if they find you unconscious or incoherent, or if they need to quickly help evacuate you. Include information about your medications, adaptive equipment, blood type, allergies and sensitivities, insurance numbers, immunization dates, communication difficulties, and preferred treatment, as well as contact information for your health providers, personal support network, and emergency contacts.

### **Personal care assistance:**

If you receive assistance from a home healthcare agency or in-home support provider, find out how the provider will respond in an emergency. Designate backup or alternative providers that you can contact in an emergency.

## TIPS FOR PARENTS

- Provide your children with emergency contact numbers and teach them how to call 9-1-1.
- Warn your children never to touch wires that are hanging on poles or lying on the ground.
- Tell your children to leave the building if they smell gas.
- Practice skills by including your children in emergency drills and evacuation/reunification planning.
- Make arrangements to have your children picked up from school or daycare if you are unable to do so.
- Regularly update your child's school with current information regarding emergency contacts and persons authorized to pick up your child from school.
- Learn the emergency plans and policies at your child's school or daycare facility.
- You can register for alerts from multiple zip codes with Warn Central Texas - set alerts for the locations of your children's schools and daycares.
- Consider having board games and other non-electronic games on hand to keep children entertained during emergency events.

## TIPS FOR PETS

- Keep a collar, current license, and up-to date ID tags on your pet at all times. Consider having your pet microchipped.
- Keep an updated list of trusted neighbors who could assist your animals in case of an emergency.
- Keep a current picture of your pet
- Keep your pet's microchip information up to date
- If your pet is lost, contact the nearest animal shelter to report your pet missing as soon as possible. When it is safe, return to your neighborhood to search and distribute "Lost Pet" posters.
- In a pet to go bag remember to pack food and water



## CITY OF AUSTIN EMERGENCY PLANNING

### **The City of Austin Emergency Operations Plan:**

The Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is considered an all-hazards plan that establishes the framework for how the City of Austin responds to disasters, regardless of initial cause or hazard. The EOP is not a detailed emergency checklist or "quick action" guide. It is meant to provide the guidance, framework, and insight into City-wide strategic decision making as it relates to emergency operations and disaster situations.

**Link to plan:** [www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/hsem/Basic\\_Plan\\_09-28-2016.pdf](http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/hsem/Basic_Plan_09-28-2016.pdf)

### **The City of Austin Hazard Mitigation Plan:**

The purpose of the Plan is to protect people and structures, and to minimize the costs of disaster response and recovery. The goal of the Plan is to minimize or eliminate long-term risks to human life and property from known hazards by identifying and implementing cost-effective hazard mitigation actions.

### **Link to plan:**

<https://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/HSEM/Basic%20Plan%2003-21-2020.pdf>



# PREPAREDNESS TRAINING

Want to get trained in emergency preparedness? Below are some options in the community.

## Skywarn

Skywarn is sponsored by the National Weather Service and provides free trainings to residents on severe weather and information on how to prepare for these weather events. These trainings start in the Spring and have a primary focus on severe weather conditions in South Central Texas. To learn more about Skywarn, visit:

[www.weather.gov/ewx/skywarn](http://www.weather.gov/ewx/skywarn)

## Learn first aid and CPR

Visit the Austin Travis County EMS website for information about CPR and first aid training. Available trainings focus on adult and pediatric CPR. See the American Red Cross website, <https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class>, for training on first aid care for pets.

## Youth Involvement

Whether you're a kid or teen yourself, a parent or loved one, or work with youth, Ready Kids has tools and information to help before, during and after disasters. [www.Ready.gov/kids](http://www.Ready.gov/kids). For more information on preparedness training please visit [www.ReadyCentralTexas.org](http://www.ReadyCentralTexas.org) and [www.Ready.gov](http://www.Ready.gov)



Image courtesy of GAVA.



## MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, isolation, and panic attacks are some of the experiences that a traumatic natural disaster can bring to families and individuals. Experiencing a natural disaster such as flooding, or fire can make it hard to live everyday life and to recover.

We need to inspire ourselves and others to fight the stigma of mental illness to decrease the risk for chronic disease, like diabetes, cancer, stroke, and heart attacks.

You are not alone, please reach out!

Integral Care

5015 S IH 35 Frontage Rd Ste. 200, Austin, TX 78744

Dawn Handley, Crisis Services

Email: [dawn.handley@integralcare.org](mailto:dawn.handley@integralcare.org)

Phone #: 512.804.3492

# COMMON DISASTER EVENTS





# FLOODING

Flooding is the most serious hazard for the Austin area and is a threat across the entire city year-round. Flooding can occur anywhere in Austin.

## PREPARATION

- Know the elevations of your property in relation to flood plains, streams, and other waterways. Determine if your property may be flooded.
- Make advance plans of what to do and where to go.
- Store food and water and critical medical supplies.
- Fill your car with gas in case you must evacuate.

## RECOVERY

- Listen to authorities for instructions, return to flooded areas or buildings only when told it is safe.
- When returning to a flooded area, be aware of wildlife - wear thick gloves and boots.
- Use an appropriate mask if cleaning mold or other debris. Children and people with certain medical conditions should not take part in disaster cleanup.
- Be aware of the risk of electrocution. Watch for wires and do not touch electrical equipment if it is wet or if you are standing in water. If possible, turn off the electricity.
- Avoid wading in floodwater, which can be contaminated, contain dangerous debris, and underground or downed power lines.
- Use a generator or other gas-powered machinery **ONLY** outdoors and away from windows.
- Check for structural damage before entering a building.
- Use flashlights. Beware of open flames and sparks where there may be broken gas lines.
- Do not eat food that has been contaminated by flood water.

## IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

- Avoid driving except in emergencies.
- If you are asked to evacuate, shut off the main power, gas and water. Follow local evacuation plans and routes.
- If water has entered a garage, do not walk through it.
- Do not walk through moving water. If you must, walk where the water is moving slowest and use a stick to check the firmness of the ground in front of you.
- Stay clear of water that is in contact with downed power lines.
- Stay off bridges, which can collapse without warning.
- Do not allow children to play around high water, storm drains or any flooded areas.
- Do not drive into flooded areas.
- If floodwaters rise around your car, abandon the car and move to higher ground.
- If you are trapped in your vehicle in fast moving water, stay inside.
- If water is rising inside the vehicle, move to the roof of the vehicle and wait for help.

**For more information:**

[www.atxfloodsafety.com](http://www.atxfloodsafety.com)

[www.atxfloods.com](http://www.atxfloods.com)

[www.austintexas.gov/FloodPro](http://www.austintexas.gov/FloodPro)

[www.ready.gov/floods](http://www.ready.gov/floods)

NOAA Weather Emergency Radio

Red Cross Emergency Radio

## PREPARATION

- Ensure your home is free of combustible materials.
- Don't run wires under carpets or rugs.
- Know avenues of escape. HAVE A FAMILY PLAN and hold frequent fire drills.
- PLAN FOR A PLACE TO MEET (so no one tries to go back into a burning building looking for someone).
- Have fire extinguishers in the house and carry a fire extinguisher in your car.
- Have escape ladders for all windows higher than eight feet off the ground.

## RECOVERY

- Do not return home until authorities say it is safe to do so.
- Avoid hot ash, charred trees, smoldering debris, and live embers. The ground may contain heat pockets that can burn you or spark another fire.
- Wear protective clothing, work gloves, face coverings or masks, and sturdy, thick-soled shoes during clean-up efforts.
- Document property damage with photographs. Conduct an inventory and contact your insurance company for assistance.

### Get a Free

### Home Hazard Assessment

You may request a FREE HOME HAZARD ASSESSMENT. Your assessment will be performed by members of the Austin Fire Department after installing your free smoke alarms. You may also opt to follow the HOME HAZARD CHECKLIST provided and perform the assessment yourself.

Important Numbers:

(512) 974-0299 -- Free Smoke Alarm Line  
(512) 974-0290 -- Public Education Main Line

## IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

- Remain calm and get out of harm's way.
- If you see smoke under the door, find another way out.
- Feel the door with the back of your hand before you open it. If it is hot, find another way out.
- Drop to the floor to avoid smoke and fumes, crawl to safety.
- Call 9-1-1 from a safe location.
- If you are trapped in a burning building, stay near a window and close to the floor. If possible, signal for help.
- Do not go back inside a building unless instructed that it is safe to do so.
- If you find someone on fire, use a blanket or similar to smother the flames, not your bare hands.
- Watch to see that children don't go back inside a building to rescue a pet or prized possession.
- Turn off the gas and electricity from the outside of the house, if possible.

For more information about wildfire preparedness in our community, visit:  
[www.atxwildfire.org](http://www.atxwildfire.org)

Find your local fire station:  
[www.austintexas.gov/departments/fire](http://www.austintexas.gov/departments/fire)

# 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 more than one mile wide and 50 miles long.

## PREPARATION

- Know the signs of a tornado, including a rotating, funnel-shaped cloud, an approaching cloud of debris, or a loud roar.
- Pay attention to weather reports.
- Sign up for Warn Central Texas Alerts.
- Identify and practice going to a safe shelter.

## IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

- If under a tornado warning, find safe shelter right away. Safe shelter can include a sturdy building, safe room, basement, or storm cellar.
- Stay away from windows, doors, and outside walls.
- Do not get under an overpass or bridge. You are safer in a low, flat location.
- Use your arms to protect your head and neck. For additional cover shield your head and neck by putting materials such as furniture and blankets around you.

## RECOVERY

- If exposed, cover your mouth with a cloth or mask to avoid breathing in dust.
- If you are trapped, try to send a text, bang on a pipe or wall, or use a whistle to make your location known.
- Stay clear of fallen power lines or broken utility lines.
- Do not enter damaged buildings until told that they are safe.
- Save your phone calls for emergencies. Phone systems are often down or busy after a disaster. Use text messaging or social media to communicate with family and friends.
- Be careful during clean-up. Wear thick-soled shoes, long pants, and work gloves. Use appropriate face coverings or masks if cleaning mold or other debris.

For more information about tornado safety and preparedness visit the Ready.gov Tornado Website: [www.ready.gov/tornadoes](http://www.ready.gov/tornadoes)



# WINTER WEATHER SAFETY

# Winter Weather Safety Tips



## Make your Family Winter Ready

- If you venture outdoors, dress in layered warm clothing. Protect your head, hands, neck, face, and ears. Wear appropriate closed toe footwear, with nonskid or lug soles that will find traction on ice / snow / or wet surfaces
- If you take prescription medications, ensure you have enough of all medication to get you through the cold spell so you don't have to go out to refill a needed medication
- Infants under 1 years old should never sleep in a cold room. Provide warm clothing for infants. In an emergency, keep an infant warm by using your own body heat. For more information visit: [cosleeping.nd.edu](http://cosleeping.nd.edu)
- Check on elderly friends and neighbors to make sure their homes are properly heated
- Keep your cellphone fully charged

**Walking on ice is extremely dangerous; keep steps and walkways free of ice by using rock salt, sand, or kitty litter.**

**Never use a generator, grill, camp stove or other gasoline, propane, natural gas, or charcoal burning device inside the home, garage or any partially enclosed area.**



## Make your Home Winter Ready

- Clear rain gutters
- Repair roof leaks
- Cut away tree branches that could fall on your home during a storm
- Keep fire extinguishers on hand and make sure everyone in the house knows how to use them
- Have heating equipment and chimneys inspected every year



**If you have pets, bring them indoors during extreme weather. If you cannot bring them inside, provide adequate shelter to keep them warm and make sure they access to water.**



- Learn how to shut off water valves in case a pipe bursts
- If weather predictions indicate ice, sleet, or snow leave the mail and newspaper for a later date. Patios, sidewalks and driveways can accumulate hazards that result in trips, slips, slides, and falls
- Protect plants from freezing by covering them with commercial plant-cover fabric, towels, or a light blanket with plastic sheeting on top of it (if available)



## Stay Healthy



- Eating well balanced meals will help you stay warm
- Do not drink alcoholic or caffeinated beverages because they cause your body to lose heat quickly
- Drink warm, sweet beverages or broth to maintain body temperature
- If you have a history of respiratory illness, e.g. Asthma or COPD, increased movement in and out of cold climate can aggravate your medical condition

**Prolonged exposure to the cold can cause frostbite or hypothermia.**

## Make your Car Winter Ready



**Use caution on roadways that are shaded from the sun or rest in low-lying areas. They may contain standing water that has frozen. All may hide "black ice".**

- Make sure battery and ignition system are in top condition
- Check brakes for wear and fluid levels
- Replace fuel and air filters and keep water out of the system
- Make sure the heater and defroster are working properly
- Check lights and flashing hazards lights for serviceability
- Check oil for level and weight
- Ensure the thermostat works properly
- Maintain windshield wipers and fluid



## Stay Informed

**For more tips on how to prepare please visit the City of Austin's Get Prepared website at [www.ReadyCentralTexas.org](http://www.ReadyCentralTexas.org)**

**Sign up for Emergency Alerts via [WarnCentralTexas.org](http://WarnCentralTexas.org) and download the Ready Central Texas App for more preparedness tips available for both iPhones and Androids**

**Listen to local news on your radio and television for the latest updates**



# HEAT WAVE

Heat kills by pushing the human body beyond its limits. In extreme heat and high humidity, evaporation is slowed and the body must work extra hard to maintain a normal temperature. Older adults, young children, and those who are sick or overweight are more likely to succumb to extreme heat.

## HEAT SAFETY TIPS

- If you are experiencing a medical emergency call 9-1-1.
- Look before you lock - ensure children and pets are not left in hot, vehicles.
- Stay hydrated - drink more water than usual and avoid sugary, caffeinated beverages.
- Dress for the weather - wear lightweight, light colored, loose-fitting clothing.
- Protect your skin - apply sunscreen with at least SPF 30.
- Stay out of the sun when possible- find shade and wear a wide-brimmed hat when outdoors.
- Work and play safely - avoid high-energy activities and exercise during extreme heat, especially during the afternoon.
- Protect your pets - provide your pets with plenty of water and shade.
- Check-in on elderly family members, friends and neighbors - make sure they have access to air conditioners and/or fans and clean water for hydration.

For more information on Heat- Related Illness check out the City of Austin's website on Heat Awareness:  
[www.austintexas.gov/page/heat-awareness](http://www.austintexas.gov/page/heat-awareness)

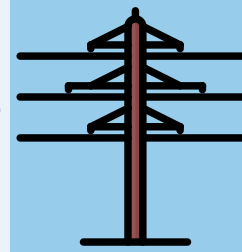
For more information on Heat Safety please visit FEMA's website on heat: [www.ready.gov/heat](http://www.ready.gov/heat)



# POWER OUTAGE

## PREPARATION

- Learn the location of your fuse box and circuit breaker.
- Store flashlights and extra batteries in a handy place.
- Have food and water supplies on hand.
- Keep an adequate supply of fuel on hand.
- Propane, white gas, gasoline, and other fuels should not be stored or used in the house or garage. Only kerosene may be used in the house and stored in direct sunlight.
- Keep your refrigerator and freezer clear of ice build-up, as this works against the appliance's ability to function properly.
- Consider using external power sources for your electronics. Electronic devices like mobile phones and laptops can quickly run out of power.
- Plan how to pass the time. In extreme situations, the outage may last quite a while and you may be housebound. In such cases, a battery-operated AM/FM radio can help to pass the time. Non-electronic board games can help stave off boredom — especially with children.



**Report a Downed Power Line**  
Call Austin Energy at 512-322-9100 to report the location of the line.

## IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

- Turn off and unplug appliances and computers. Leave one light on to indicate when power has been restored.
- Avoid using candles, as they are fire hazards.
- Do not use a gas stove for heating or operate generators indoors (including the garage). Either action could cause carbon monoxide poisoning.
- A major problem during an outage is food thawing in the refrigerator or freezer. Open the door only to take food out and do so as quickly as possible. If you have access to dry ice, place it in a cardboard box and then on top of food.
- Report any downed power lines. Stay at least 35 ft away from downed power lines.
- Do not allow children to carry lanterns, candles, or fuel.
- If a traffic signal is not working, treat it as a stop sign.
- Home refrigerators can keep food cold enough for a day or two without power, if the doors are kept closed.

**Never fuel or run a portable generator in the home, place of business, or garage. Make sure the generator is equipped with a double throw transfer switch that protects your equipment and prevents feedback on power lines.**

## RECOVERY

- When power is restored, plug in appliances one by one, waiting a few minutes in between each one. This can help prevent an overload on the system.
- Be patient, energy is restored based on priority, police and fire departments and hospitals are usually first.
- Examine your frozen food. If it still contains ice crystals, it can be re-frozen.
- If meat is off-color or has an odd odor, throw it away.

### Get Outage Alerts

Go to this link to learn how to sign-up for alerts.  
<https://austinenenergy.com/ae/outages/get-outage-alerts>



### Check Outages with Austin's Outage Map

Go to this for information on current outages.  
<https://outagemap.austinenenergy.com/external/default.html>

# **Appendix**

# EMERGENCY CONTACT LIST

Keep a list of important personal and contact information for your family. Make sure to include information on medical facilities, doctors, schools or service providers. Use a form like this or something similar and keep a copy in each go-bag.

FEMA has a template for a Family Emergency Communication card that can be found on the ready.gov website.

| <b>Personal Information</b><br>(for each family member)  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Name</b>  |  |
| <b>Date of Birth</b>   |  |
| <b>Language(s) spoken</b>  |  |
| <b>Primary Care Doctor</b><br>(name, address, and contact)   |  |
| <b>Specialists or other medical professionals of importance</b><br>(name, address, and contact)  |  |
| <b>Medical Information</b><br>(medications, allergies, equipment or supplies, conditions, anything else emergency personnel should know) |  |
| <b>Work/School/Daycare</b><br>(address and contact name/number)  |  |
| <b>Other important information, contacts, or notes</b>   |  |

### Designated Out of Area Emergency Contact

Name:

Phone Number:

### Local Emergency Contact

Name:

Phone Number:

### Household Emergency Meeting Places

Near Home

Out of Neighborhood

### Insurance Information

|                          | Provider | Phone Number | Policy Number |
|--------------------------|----------|--------------|---------------|
| Medical                  |          |              |               |
| Dental                   |          |              |               |
| Vision                   |          |              |               |
| Prescriptions            |          |              |               |
| Homeowners<br>or Renters |          |              |               |
| Flood<br>Insurance       |          |              |               |



# Neighborhood Response Plan



This is a basic template for a neighborhood response plan. This suggested template is a basis for a neighborhood plan and neighborhoods may decide to build on this depending on their needs.

**THIS PLAN WAS DEVELOPED BY MEMBERS OF THE**  
**(Name neighborhood council, HOA, or other group(s):**

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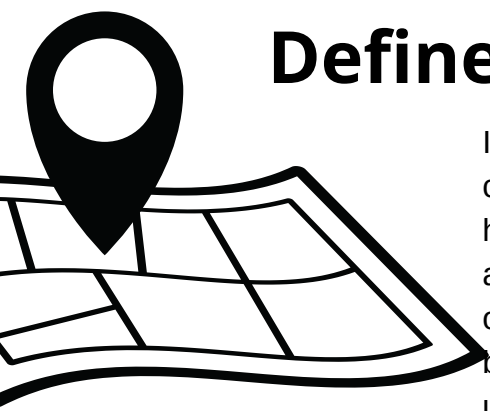
**THE PLAN WAS COMPLETED ON:**

---

**(DATE)**

**(SIGNATURE OF LEAD NEIGHBORHOOD PREPAREDNESS AMBASSADOR)**

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# Define your Neighborhood Area

Include information about your neighborhood area, such as the community name, the major cross streets, or blocks. How many households/people are covered in this plan. List community centers and or significant landmarks as well as information about the location of the nearest fire station, police station, and hospital.. If you are building a plan for units of a multi-story building, list the floors and unit ranges.



**K**

**O**



PHIL

