

In the first half of this year, six natural disasters each caused at least \$1 billion damage and killed 36 people. This came after 2017, the costliest year on record. Yet, as Federal Emergency Management Agency administrator Brock Long observed this year, America lacks a "culture of preparedness."

We mostly don't stock up on batteries, candles and water; we don't prepare a family emergency plan or buy a hand-cranked radio; we don't listen carefully to warnings and often don't understand them when we do. How should we prepare? The American Red Cross recommends having the following items for your family's emergency disaster kit.

What Do You Need In A Kit?

At a minimum, you should have the basic supplies listed below:

1. Water: one gallon per person, per day (3-day supply for evacuation, 2-week supply for home)
2. Food: non-perishable, easy-to-prepare items (3-day supply for evacuation, 2-week supply for home).
3. Flashlight
4. Battery-powered or hand-crank radio (NOAA Weather Radio, if possible)
5. Extra batteries
6. First aid kit
7. Medications (7-day supply) and medical items
8. Multi-purpose tool
9. Sanitation and personal hygiene items
10. Copies of personal documents (medication list and pertinent medical information, proof of address, deed/lease to home, passports, birth certificates, insurance policies)
11. Cell phone with chargers
12. Family and emergency contact information
13. Extra cash
14. Emergency blanket
15. Map(s) of the area
16. Blankets or sleeping bag (per person)
17. Extra set of car keys and house keys
18. Infant (bottles, formula, baby food, diapers)
19. Pet supplies
20. Extra change of clothes and shoes (per person)

Consider additional supplies to keep at home or in your survival kit:

- Medical supplies (hearing aids with extra batteries, glasses, contact lenses, syringes, etc)
- Games and activities for children
- Two-way radios
- Manual can opener
- Whistle
- N95 or surgical masks
- Matches
- Rain gear
- Towels
- Work gloves
- Tools/supplies for securing your home
- Plastic sheeting
- Duct tape
- Scissors
- Household liquid bleach