



**Aware and Prepared**

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**RESIDENTS**

# Household Emergency Plan Toolkit

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## The Template

This document is designed to be used in conjunction with the template which you can access from the Make a Plan button on the Be Prepared Toolbar.

To prepare your plan:

1. Use this toolkit to guide you through the steps required to build a Household Emergency Plan.
2. Once you have decided on your arrangements collect the information you require.
3. Complete all the relevant sections of the template. You can leave sections blank when they are not appropriate.
4. If you have any queries or would like some support, use the [Contact Us](#) screen to let us know.

# Introduction

## What is the purpose of this toolkit?

This document is a step by step guide to help you produce a Household Emergency Plan. It will guide you through the process of thinking about events that might affect your home and family and disrupt normal day to day routines, plus the measures you can take to limit their impact.

Together the toolkit and template are designed for completing a Household Emergency Plan from scratch. However, if you already have one, you could use them to update or validate your existing plan. You can use the template and toolkit as they are, alternatively you might tailor your approach to better reflect the arrangements you decide on.

## Why do you need a Household Emergency Plan?

Emergencies can happen at any time and difficult weather conditions can develop quickly. Families are often separated during working hours and school time so it can be difficult to get everybody (and the pets) safely into one place. The anxiety and distress can make a difficult situation worse, but a pre prepared plan can help you to avoid this.

By thinking ahead and writing a Household Emergency Plan, you can make sure you give yourselves the best possible chance of being prepared, whatever situation arises, and returning to normal afterwards. By including all members of the household in these preparations you can ensure that everybody knows what to do in an emergency.

## Step 1 In Case of Emergency (Stay In)

In some emergencies it is safer to stay inside. In these situations the advice is usually to:

GO IN (go indoors and close all windows and doors – turn off any air conditioning or ventilation)

STAY IN (stay indoors)

TUNE IN (to local radio, TV or internet where public information and advice will be broadcast)

**ACTION** Complete Table 1 in the template with details of your local radio station frequency and local council website. You might know of other public information sources you could use as well.

## Step 2 In Case of Emergency (Stay Away)

In other situations the Emergency Services might need to evacuate homes, schools and workplaces to establish a security cordon around the incident site. In this type of scenario the advice is:

GET OUT

STAY AWAY

TAKE OTHERS WITH YOU

If you identify agreed meeting points with members of your household, you will avoid confusion and anxiety in trying to locate each other if unable to return to your home. You should identify two separate meeting points - one close by for a small cordon, one further away for a wide cordon.

We suggest you choose venues where you could wait comfortably and shelter from bad weather. Examples include a friend's house, libraries, supermarkets, etc.

NOTE: For the further meeting point (2) select a location which is at least one mile distant from home.

**ACTION** Complete Table 2 with the location details of your primary and secondary meeting points.

## Step 3 Emergency Friend

Choose a friend or relative who lives outside the immediate area who you all agree to contact if you are unable to phone each other and cannot get to the meeting point. You can then use this friend for passing messages.

**ACTION** Complete Table 3 with the contact details for your Emergency Friend.

## Step 4 Places to Stay

If you are evacuated from home for a prolonged period of time, the Local Authority will provide shelter and refreshments at a local venue, sometimes in a leisure centre, a community centre or a village hall.

However, many residents prefer to stay with family or friends in these circumstances.

If you have friends or family who live locally, ask whether they could put you up for a day or two in the event of an emergency. It might help to suggest such an arrangement on a mutual basis so that both households are equally prepared.

You should also make appropriate arrangements for your pets. Smaller caged animals and most cats can be left at home for a day or two providing you make sure their food and water is topped up before you go. With regard to other pets check whether they can stay with you and, if not, make suitable alternative arrangements.

NOTE: Select accommodation that is unlikely to be affected by an incident affecting you.

**ACTION** Complete Table 4 with details of family members or friends who have agreed to provide you with a place to stay following an emergency.

## Step 5 Turning Off Utilities

In some circumstances it is advisable to turn off water, gas and electricity supplies to your home. The emergency responders might advise you to do this yourselves or they might request the details from you. As not everybody would know how to do this we suggest you include brief details in your Household Emergency Plan to ensure that all members of your household know where to locate the necessary valves and how to turn them off.

NOTE: If you turn the gas off, a professional must turn it back on again. Do not attempt to do this yourself.

**ACTION** Complete Table 5 of the template with instructions for isolating water, gas and electricity supplies.

## Step 6 Protecting Critical Records

Documents and records can be important for different reasons. There are those that are legally important, those that have intrinsic value and those that have sentimental value.

Items of high sentimental value (for instance photographs and letters) are often irreplaceable. It is therefore wise to make sure that you are not storing them at floor level where they might be particularly vulnerable to threats from flood water and rodents.

Items that have intrinsic value such as stocks, bonds and cash should have safe secure storage, for instance in a fireproof lockable cabinet. If you have such a facility you should also consider storing your passports and registration certificates (birth, marriage, adoption etc) in there too.

There are certain documents you should try to take with you if you have to evacuate. These include passports, driving licences, insurance documents, building society books and a copy of your Household Emergency Plan. It is sensible to keep these altogether so they are easy to locate.

**ACTION** Complete Table 6 of the template to create a list of your critical documents.

## Step 7 Backup Plans

There are many simple things that you can do at home to improve your ability to carry on if utilities (electricity, gas, water, phones) are cut and you can't get to the shops. Giving this a bit of advance thought will help you ensure you have got the things you might need as backup. For instance, candles and torches (with batteries) for lighting, a barbecue or camp stove for cooking, a wind up radio, a stock of essential supplies, etc.

**ACTION** Complete Table 7 with details of the arrangements you have made to ensure you could carry on at home for two or three days without utilities or access to shops.

## Step 8 Emergency Contact List

It might be old fashioned, but keeping a hardcopy listing of the contact details you might need in an emergency will ensure you can get in touch with the right people quickly, even when you haven't got access to your paperwork at home, your laptop or to the numbers in your mobile phone. The template suggests some emergency contacts but you might need to add others too.

**ACTION** Complete Table 8 in the template to create your Emergency Contact List.

## Step 9 Reviewing and Updating Your Plan

Once you have completed your plan and put the necessary arrangements in place, it will be necessary to review them on a periodic basis to ensure that they remain up to date. We suggest you review and update your plan on an annual basis or after any significant change to your arrangements.

**ACTION** Put an annual reminder into your calendar and electronic diaries to review and update your Household Emergency Plan.

## Other advice

### Emergency Kit

Complete your Emergency Kit – visit the [Emergency Kit](#) web page for further details.

### Grab Bag

Print your Grab Bag list – visit the [Grab Bag](#) web page for further details.

### ICE Contact

Decide on an ICE contact (ICE = In Case of Emergency). This is the person (or people) who the Emergency Services should contact on your behalf. Think carefully about who you choose for an ICE contact because that person might need to give consent to medical treatment. Put ICE contacts in your mobile phone and / or on a card for your wallet or purse.

## Home Protection

Does everyone in the household know how to make the home secure – locking windows and doors – and where the keys are kept?

Have you installed smoke detectors and a carbon monoxide detector? When did you last check them? Visit [Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service](#) for advice.

Does anyone in your household have special needs which make them medically reliant on utilities such as electricity and water? If so, speak to your provider about getting onto their Priority Services Register.

## Flood Warnings

Flood warnings can give you time to prepare for flooding. Flood Warnings Direct is a free service operated by the Environment Agency which sends a direct message when coastal or river flooding is expected and could affect your property. To register Call Floodline on 0345 988 1188 or visit <https://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings>.

## Severe Weather Warnings

It is sensible to be aware of severe weather when it is forecast so that you can avoid unnecessary travel, stock up on essential items and make other suitable preparations. The Met Office provides severe weather warnings for the public and for emergency responders. For further information visit [www.metoffice.gov.uk](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk)

## People Who Might Need Your Help

Family members, friends or neighbours who are elderly, disabled or vulnerable might need your help in an emergency, or they might require specialist help from the Emergency Services. Giving advance thought to their specific needs will help ensure that you can request the appropriate support without delay.