



Emergency Preparedness

As unlikely as catastrophic events like earthquakes and tornados may be, they do happen, and it makes sense to be prepared for these worst-case scenarios. General precautions as simple as a handy list of phone numbers and a basic plan of escape can truly mean the difference between life and death. As they say, “Expect the best, plan for the worst!”

An [excellent document for disaster preparedness](#), written by seniors for seniors, is available through the [Red Cross Association website](#). It was inspired after a two-week power outage in the greater Rochester, New York area—an unforeseen event that took the three authors completely by surprise, but would have been easy to prepare for.

“What would I do if my basic services— water, gas, electricity or communications— were cut off?” is a good question to start with. What is the plan if temporary isolation happened as a result of an ice storm, a flood or another natural disaster?

One simple step of preparation is to assemble an emergency disaster kit with enough supplies to last at least three days. The brochure linked above has an extensive list of essential or possible supplies, a few of which are:

- Water (one gallon per person, per day)
- Food (canned/dried is best. **Do not** forget a can opener!)
- Flashlight (with extra batteries)
- First aid kit
- Medications
- Cell phone (with extra batteries/chargers)
- Cash

For those with service animals, it’s important that adequate preparations are made for them, too.

One last essential step to remember: Support items, like a wheelchair or walker, should remain in a designated place so they can be found quickly.