Preparing Your Evacuation Grab-and-Go Bag

Ann A. Berry, Professor
Christopher T. Sneed, Assistant Professor
Department of Family and Consumer Sciences

Disaster can strike anywhere. Depending on where you live, you may need to prepare to leave your home quickly because of floods, fires, tornadoes, earthquakes or hurricanes. Such man-made disasters as chemical spills and nuclear contamination are also possible. In case you have to leave your home unexpectedly, a little preparation can make a big difference in your ability to recover from the losses you incur.

Items for Your Grab-and-Go Bag

**Personal Needs**
- Cash for several days’ living expenses.
- Rolls of quarters.
- Debit card.
- Checkbook.
- Extra credit card.
- Keys to your autos and home.
- Keys to safe deposit box.
- Medication you or other family members must take on regular basis.
- Sealed snacks for family members and pets.
- Bottled water.
- Blanket.
- Flashlight with batteries.
- Radio.
- Overnight items and fresh clothes for each family member.

**Emergency Phone Numbers**
- Family members and friends.
- Employers.
- Health care providers.
- Insurance agents.
- Lawyers, accountant and financial advisors.
- Repair contractors.
- Clergy.

**Steps to Creating Your Grab-and-Go Bag**

**Step 1**
- Place papers in sealed, waterproof plastic bags.
- Use a backpack or bag with rollers for ease in carrying.

**Step 2**
- Store the bag at home in a secure, easily accessible location.

**Step 3**
- If you must evacuate:
  - Grab the bag and take it with you.
  - Keep the bag with you at all times.
  - Do not leave the bag unattended in your car.
## List of Important Information
- Prescriptions including medication, dosage, pharmacy phone number, prescription number and doctor.
- Driver’s license numbers for all family members.
- Social Security numbers for all family members.
- Account numbers for all bank and investment accounts and safe combinations.
- Credit card account numbers and contact information.
- Account numbers, contact information and due dates for all debts.
- List of service providers (utilities, phone, etc.) and contact information.
- Insurance policies including contact information.
- Logins and passwords for internet accounts.
- Passport or visa numbers.

## Items To Be Stored Away From Home
- Copies of:
  - Durable power of attorney.
  - Titles.
  - Birth, marriage, death, adoption, divorce, baptismal certificates.
  - Children’s immunization records.
  - Social Security cards.
  - Deeds.
  - Wills.
  - Trust documents.
  - Health care directives.
  - Stock, bond or other investment certificates.
  - Recent investment statements.
  - First two pages of previous year’s income tax return.
  - School records including diplomas and certificates.
  - Resumes.
  - Military discharge papers.
  - Most recent credit report.
  - Bankruptcy discharge statement.
  - Rental agreement and contact information for landlord.
  - Videotaped home inventory.
  - Irreplaceable photos.
  - Backup copies of computerized financial records.
  - Completed “W 223 Compiling Your Important Information” forms.

## Other Tips
- Inform friends and family about your evacuation plan ahead of time.
- Prepare an emergency contact card for all family members to keep with them in case of separation or injury. Visit [redcross.org/prepare/ECCard.pdf](http://redcross.org/prepare/ECCard.pdf) for an example.
- In case of a widespread disaster, it’s helpful to have duplicates or digital copies of items stored with an out-of-town relative or friend.