

## **Emergency Preparedness: What to do before and after an emergency**

Expect the unexpected and plan for it. In your day-to-day living, disasters may seem a distant possibility. Yet natural disasters such as floods, tornadoes, technological accidents or environmental accidents can strike any community, including yours, at any time.

### **Know what to do before a disaster**

Emergency Checklist:

- Discuss with your family and friends how to respond to disaster situations
- Draw a floor plan of your home and mark two escape routes
- Learn how to turn off water, gas and electricity at your location
- Teach children how and when to use emergency telephone numbers for help (9-1-1 where available)
- Pick one out-of-area and one local family member or friend to call if you get separated when you evacuate
- Pick a meeting place (and an alternate) outside your home in case of fire
- Keep family records and other important papers in a waterproof and fireproof container
- Make arrangements for pets if you leave or evacuate
- Let others know when you leave, where you are going, and when you expect to arrive

### **Know what to do after a disaster**

During an emergency you may be confused or disoriented. Stay calm and remember to help the injured, listen to the radio and refrain from using the telephone.

Check your home:

- Use a flashlight – don't light matches or turn on the electrical switches if you suspect damage or smell gas
- Check for fires, fire hazards or other household hazards
- Sniff for gas leaks, starting at the water heater and, if you smell gas turn off the main gas valve, open windows and get everyone outside quickly
  - If you do turn off the gas – it should only be turned back on by a professional from the gas company
- Shut off any other damaged utilities
- Clean up spilled medicines, bleaches, gasoline and other flammable liquids immediately
  - Wear protective clothing and for major spills or leaks, call in professional help
- Confine or secure your pets
- Check on your neighbours, especially the elderly or people with disabilities

Being prepared can help to alleviate fear and uncertainty during an emergency.

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*Sources: Minister of Public Works and Government Services and from [www.manitobaemo.ca](http://www.manitobaemo.ca)*