

City of El Monte Office of Emergency Services

Emergency Preparedness

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Disaster Supplies Kits

In the event of a natural or man-made major emergency or disaster, you and your family may need to survive on your own for three (3) days or even more. Prepare now by assembling an emergency supply kit. Water, food and other necessary supplies should be stored in an easily accessible location, and should be updated on a regular basis. Keep an inventory of the items inside your container or cabinet listing the expiration dates, replace items prior to their expiration dates. The City of El Monte Office of Emergency Service offers free brochures that have more comprehensive information. Information is available by calling (626) 580-2065.

Here are some of the recommended supplies:

- Flashlight with batteries (store batteries outside flashlight)
- Portable radio with batteries
- Manual can opener
- Whistle
- Eyeglasses
- Heavy shoes, clothing, gloves
- Blankets
- Plastic garbage bags
- Crescent wrench
- Cash
- Blankets
- Empty 5 gallon plastic buckets with lids (2 minimum)

Monitor the expiration dates on the following items

- Three gallons of water per person and pets
- Non-perishable foods
- First aid kit
- Prescribed medications
- Personal hygiene items
- Pet food

Optional, but nice to have:

- Portable gas/diesel generator with fuel
- Small television
- Games and toys
- Tents
- Day or back pack with supplies in your vehicle
- Rain gear
- Pet carriers

Pet emergency kit: Leash, collars and/or harness, toys, medication, bedding, waterless pet shampoo and treats.

Remember: Many families may have individual needs so be sure to take these into consideration as you prepare for their safety and comfort following a disaster.

Earthquakes - General Information

An earthquake is the sudden release of energy when pieces of the earth's crust move against on another. This often occurs along fault lines, which reflect zones of weakness in the earth's crust. Movement along these fault lines is horizontal, vertical, or a combination of both ways.

Earthquakes can cause buildings and bridges to collapse, down telephone and power lines, and result in fires, explosions, and landslides. Earthquakes can also cause huge ocean waves, called tsunamis, which travel long distances over water until they crash into coastal areas. Earthquakes are measured on the Richter scale, a measurement system that measures the intensity and strength of an earthquake on a scale from 0 to 10. For more information about earthquakes, feel free to call (626) 580-2065.

Emergency Broadcast Stations

The Emergency Broadcast System, known as EBS, is a network of commercial radio and television stations that have agreed to broadcast emergency announcements in case of an emergency or disaster. These announcements keep you aware of the nature and immediacy of the emergency, as well as providing instructions regarding evacuation routes, shelter locations, and the like. The majority of area television and radio stations participate in EBS. Including the City of El Monte's website and El Monte Community Television (cable) Channel 3. For more information about disaster and emergency planning and relief, call the City of El Monte Office of Emergency Services at (626) 580-2065.

City of El Monte's Office of Emergency Services - General Information

The Office of Emergency Services is responsible for the overall preparation, coordination and management of any potential/actual major emergency or disaster within the City of El Monte. The functions of Emergency Services include Planning/Preparation, Training, Education, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery. The following information will provide a general outline of each of these functions:

1. Planning/Preparation--Updating the City's Emergency Management Plan, overseeing the maintenance and upkeep of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), and networking with other local agencies and the Los Angeles County Emergency Operations Center and other County Operational Areas.

Training--Conducting and scheduling disaster-related training and exercises within the City and in cooperation with other agencies.

Education--Providing emergency awareness and disaster preparedness information to the general public, businesses and schools.

2. Mitigation--Overseeing the implementation of the City's Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan.
Response--Activating the Emergency Operations Center during emergencies, acting as liaison with outside agencies, assisting the Emergency Operations Director as needed.

Recovery--Assisting in the procurement of needed documentation for State and Federal disaster-related reimbursement, participating in evaluation of the infrastructure, arranging for emotional recovery programs as needed.

3. For more information about The City of El Monte Office of Emergency Services, call (626) 580-2065.
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Emergency Planning Checklist

When disaster strikes, you may not have much time to act. Citizens need to prepare to be on their own for the first 72 hours after a disaster. Emergency preparedness is important to ensure the safety of yourself, your pets and the rest of your family.

Prepare a checklist as the first step in identifying the information you will need to be prepared. Post the list where everyone will see it. Explain how to respond and stay safe during an emergency situation. Plan escape routes from your home and set up a meeting place outside. Show responsible family members how to turn off the main water, gas, and electrical switches. Post emergency telephone numbers near telephones. Choose one out-of-state and one local contact for family members to call if separated during a disaster (it is often easier to call out-of-state than within the affected area). Teach children how and when to call these numbers. Assemble disaster supplies kits that include a battery-powered radio, flashlight, family records and valuables, food, water, and clothing. Take a basic first aid and CPR class.

Make arrangements for your pets, as they may not be welcomed in public shelters or motels. Talk with employers and school officials about their emergency response plans.

Elderly or disabled persons checklist

Additionally, if you are or live with elderly or disabled persons, there may be other considerations. You might wish to register with Community and Senior Services at the Jack Crippen Senior Center located at 3120 Tyler Avenue, (626) 580-2210 for special needs assistance. Create a network of neighbors, relatives, and friends to aid you in an emergency. Discuss with them your needs, and make sure they know how to operate any necessary equipment. If you live in an apartment building, ask the management to mark accessible exits clearly and to make arrangements to help you evacuate the building. Keep extra wheelchair batteries, oxygen, catheters, medication, etc., available. Also, keep a list of the type and serial numbers of medical devices you need.

Pets checklist

Have enough pet supplies to last at least one week. Have copies of you pet's records with your other personal records. A picture of you and your pets will help in identification if you lose your pet and it is located. Micro chipping you dog and/or cat is the best method of identification.

Community Emergency Response Team (C.E.R.T.)

The City of El Monte with the assistance of the Los Angeles Fire Department is in the planning stage of our own Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program. This eight week course covers: Disaster Operations, Disaster Psychology and Team Organization, First Aid, Fire Suppression, Light Search and Rescue. This course cumulates with an exercise where students can test the skills they have learned. CERT graduates are trained to care for their families and their neighbors in the event of a local disaster. For further information feel free to contact Angel Ralph Nuñez at (626) 580-2065 or email rnunez@elmonteca.gov.

Floods - General Information

Floods are the most common and widespread of all natural hazards. Some floods develop over a period of days, but flash floods can result in raging waters in just a few minutes. Flash floods carry a deadly cargo of rocks, mud, and other debris, and can occur without any visible sign of rainfall. Mudslides are another danger created by flooding. Be aware of flood hazards, especially if you live in a low-lying area, near water, or downstream from a dam. Most areas in Southern California are at risk from the hazards of flooding, especially during El Niño rainstorm events.

Hazardous Materials Incidents - General Information

From industrial chemicals and toxic waste to household detergents and air fresheners, hazardous materials are part of our everyday lives. Hazardous materials are substances, which because of their chemical, physical, or biological nature pose a potential risk to life, health, or property if they are handled improperly. Chemical plants are one source of hazardous materials, but there are many others.

Service stations store gasoline and diesel fuel, hospitals use a wide range of radioactive and flammable materials, and hazardous materials waste sites process thousands of different materials every day. Accidents involving hazardous materials can happen anytime, and range from a chemical spill on a highway, to groundwater contamination by naturally occurring methane gas, to ingesting a household cleaner at home. Hazardous materials incidents are accidents, which affect a large number of people. While fairly uncommon, these incidents can happen anytime, anywhere.

For more information about hazardous materials incidents, call the City of El Monte Office of Emergency Services at (626) 580-2065, and for Hazardous Materials collection dates and schedule in the City of El Monte please call Public Works Services at (626) 580-2058.

Heat Alert

When the daytime temperature All Californians living in or planning to visit areas where daytime temperatures are expected to surpass the 90- and 100-degree marks during the day and remain in the 70s overnight, should prepare for the hot weather and use caution in their activities. To avoid heat exhaustion, heat stroke and other heat-related complications, we recommend the following:

- If heat alerts are issued stay indoors as much as possible.
- Avoid physical activities during periods of peak temperatures.
- Drink plenty of water, especially when taking medication.
- Avoid alcoholic beverages.
- Keep you pets as cool as possible. If it is hot to you, it is hot to your pets.
- If your home is not air-conditioned, spend time in public facilities that are.
- Create a cooler environment by making sure that window air conditioners are installed snugly, making sure that window air conditioners and air conditioning ducts are properly insulated, weather stripping doors and sills, and placing window reflectors made of cardboard covered with aluminum foil between windows and drapes.
- Wear lightweight and light-colored clothing.
- Check-on neighbors, family members (especially if they have difficulties, due to a disability or medical condition) and pets.
- Too much exposure to the sun and/or heat may cause heat injuries, sunburn, heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke.
- Watch for signs of heat-related illness, including fatigue, nausea, headache and vomiting.
- Visit malls, theaters and other public places that are air-conditioned if they don't have their own air conditioning.

The City of El Monte has designated Cooling Stations- call the City of El Monte Office of Emergency Services at (626) 580-2065 for locations and hours of operations. Stay hydrated as much as possible!

For more information about Stage 3 Emergencies and rotating outages and home weatherproofing assistance and/or rebates, visit the Southern California Edison and the Gas Company websites at www.sce.com and www.socalgas.com.

California Office of Emergency Services and the California Department of Public Health are increasing efforts to inform the public of the forecasted high temperatures and steps individuals can take to protect themselves. More information can be found at www.oes.ca.gov or www.cdph.ca.gov.

Cal/OSHA is actively enforcing the heat illness prevention regulations making sure employers are complying. Cal/OSHA is also actively working to inform employees and employer groups about ways to prevent heat illness and be safe in their outdoor work environments during times of extreme heat. For more information, please visit our website at www.dir.ca.gov/heatillness.

How Will I Be Notified About Outages

As soon as a Stage 3 Emergency is declared, Southern California Edison (SCE) will contact the news media, especially radio and television stations, which are encouraged to broadcast the news immediately. SCE may have as little as 10 minutes after a Stage 3 Emergency is declared before it begins rotating outages. Obviously, that is not enough time to allow individual notifications for the affected customers. Customers can contact SCE at 1-800-611-1911 to find out whether their neighborhood is part of a current controlled outage.

For more information about Stage 3 Emergencies and rotating outages, check out the SCE website at www.sce.com.

National Security Emergencies-Terrorism General Information

The City of El Monte Office of Emergency Services recommends that citizens be prepared for all emergencies, whether national security emergencies related to terrorism, or other man-made or natural disasters. The threat of terrorism may prompt some to take precautionary steps, but the reality is that in Southern California, a large-scale earthquake has the potential to exceed the destruction presented through terrorist acts. Therefore, it is prudent to prepare for the disruption of services that may occur during any major emergency or disaster. Prepare to deal with a terrorist incident by adapting many of the same techniques used to prepare for other crises.

- Be alert and aware of the surrounding area. The very nature of terrorism suggests that there may be little or no warning.
- Take precautions when traveling. Be aware of conspicuous or unusual behavior. Do not accept packages from strangers. Do not leave luggage unattended.
- Learn where emergency exits are located. Think ahead about how to evacuate a building, subway or congested public area in a hurry. Learn where staircases are located.

Notice your immediate surroundings. Be aware of heavy or breakable objects that could move, fall or break in an explosion. For more information regarding terrorism, contact the Office of Emergency Services at (626) 580-2065.

Public Disaster Shelters

In extreme emergencies, the City of El Monte may advise you by means of emergency broadcast radio or television to evacuate your home and seek shelter. When this happens your first choice for shelter should always be a friend or relative's house in a safe and accessible area. When conditions prevent this, you should try to take refuge in a public disaster shelter operated by emergency management agencies. The City of El Monte has designated a number of buildings, primarily public buildings and schools, as possible public shelters. The exact number and location of shelters opened will be determined based upon the emergency. Listen for local radio and television announcements on shelter locations and opening times. Do not go to a shelter before it is scheduled to open. Public shelters are little more than basic survival facilities, so when going to a shelter be prepared to bear the inconveniences of shelter life and to cooperate with the officials in charge. For more information on shelters, call the El Monte Office of Emergency Services at (626) 580-2065.

Water Purification

Three Ways to Treat Water

In addition to having a bad odor and taste, contaminated water can contain microorganisms that cause diseases such as dysentery, typhoid and hepatitis. You should treat all water of uncertain purity before using it for drinking, food preparation or hygiene. There are many ways to treat water. None is perfect. Often the best solution is a combination of methods.

Two easy treatment methods are boiling and disinfection. These measures will kill most microbes but will not remove other contaminants such as heavy metals, salts and most other chemicals. Before treating, let any suspended particles settle to the bottom, or strain them through layers of paper towel or clean cloth.

Boiling is the safest method of treating water. Bring water to a rolling boil for 3-5 minutes, keeping in mind that some water will evaporate. Let the water cool before drinking. Boiled water will taste better if you put oxygen back into it by pouring the water back and forth between two clean containers. This will also improve the taste of stored water.

Disinfection uses household liquid bleach to kill microorganisms. Use only regular household liquid bleach that contains 5.25 percent sodium hypochlorite. Do not use scented bleaches, color-safe bleaches or bleaches with added cleaners. Add 16 drops of bleach per gallon of water stir and let stand for 30 minutes. If the water does not have a slight bleach odor, repeat the dosage and let stand another 15 minutes.

The only agent used to treat water should be household liquid bleach. Other chemicals, such as iodine or water treatment products sold in camping or surplus stores that do not contain 5.25 percent sodium hypochlorite as the only active ingredient, are not recommended and should not be used.

While the two methods just described will kill most microbes in water, distillation will remove microbes that resist these methods, and heavy metals, salts and most other chemicals.

Distillation involves boiling water and then collecting the vapor that condenses back to water. The condensed vapor will not include salt and other impurities. To distill, fill a pot halfway with water. Tie a cup to the handle on the pot's lid so that the cup will hang right side up when the lid is upside-down (make sure the cup is not dangling into the water) and boil the water for 20 minutes. The water that drips from the lid into the cup is distilled. And remember to maintain fresh drinking water for your pets!

This information regarding water purification is provided on the American Red Cross website. For further information visit their website at www.redcross.org.

It is hard preparing for an emergency, but harder explaining why you weren't.