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Create A Plan

No matter where you are, you should know what to do, who to call and where to go in the event of an emergency. During and directly following a major event, emergency personnel may not be able to reach you for some time and you may not be able to access essential services. It is important to create and review regularly (at least two to three times a year) an emergency plan for you and your family at home and for work or school. Following, are some tips on beginning to develop such a plan.

For Your Home

A home emergency plan for you and your family should include a communication system, disaster supply kits and a meeting place. It is recommended that you identify a friend or family member outside of the state you live in as an emergency contact. Should local communications systems malfunction as a result of a disaster, the out-of-town contact can serve as the primary communication source for your family. Everyone in the family should have the contact number of the point person.

At times, disasters strike when most family members are not at home. For this reason, you should establish a meeting place and procedure. Be sure all family members know the address and how to get there. A meeting place outside of your home is necessary in case your home or neighborhood has been affected and you can't immediately return. Keep in mind that Nassau County has limited roadways. Allow time for reunions to occur.

Where You Work

Every workplace should have an evacuation plan and emergency procedures. Ask your employer for information on evacuation routes, company and building policies and if they are aware of certain standards. For example, the National Fire Protection Association (businesses) and the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (hospitals) have set work place standards.

Become familiar with your workplace evacuation plan and practice it. In addition, you may want to have a few essential items with you in the event you have to either remain at work for a period of time or are evacuated to a shelter. Essential items may include extra medications, toiletries, small flashlight, extra batteries, etc.

School

Like work, every school should have an emergency evacuation plan in place; the State Board of Education has standards for school emergency plans as well. Establish a communication system with your child(ren) that takes into account school emergency plans and evacuation procedures. Form a parental/teacher emergency preparedness task force at your local school to improve school plans and better coordinate efforts and communications during a disaster. If you have children with special needs in school, become familiar with the plan considering additional accommodations you or your child may require. Work with your school to ensure they understand your child's special needs and develop an emergency response system that makes sense.