

Disasters

Prepare and Respond



Part 3 Individual and Family Preparedness

Individual and family preparedness

Previous sections of this manual addressed activities necessary to guard the corporate life of the parish. Using this section, response team members can function as role models in the congregation by planning for the protection of their own family members, and by helping other parishioners to do so as well.

This section of the preparedness manual also offers information for families and individuals to consider in the event of an evacuation. In addition to the areas noted below, it discusses issues related to food, water, pets, safety and post-disaster cleanup. It also highlights concerns about disaster-related stress.

Five ways to prepare

The American Red Cross has identified five ways families and individuals can prepare for disasters and other emergencies:

Make a plan: Meet with family members to discuss possible threats to the residence and the neighborhood. Designate a place to meet if evacuation is necessary, and designate an out-of-town contact family members would call if the household is separated. Learn how to use a fire extinguisher and how to shut off home utilities. Consider how pets will be cared for, because most shelters cannot accept animals. Practice emergency drills.

Build ‘go’ kits: Include enough supplies on which all family members can survive for at least three days. Kits should contain non-perishable food, bottled water, first aid supplies, medications and pet supplies. Especially important are flashlights and a battery-operated radio, plus extra batteries for both. Keep supplies in backpacks so they will be quickly available if the family should need to evacuate. See the next page for suggested kit contents, and for other considerations.

Get trained: The Red Cross offers many courses for emergency preparedness, including CPR/First Aid for adults, children and infants. Visit the Red Cross web site (www.redcross.org) for a list of courses, or contact your local chapter. Other organizations listed in Part 5 of this manual may also offer training, or you may know of other opportunities within your community.

Volunteer: The Red Cross and other service organizations rely on volunteers, particularly following a disaster, and those who have received special training are especially valuable. This section of the manual includes information about volunteering in the wake of a disaster, including individual safety considerations and sample forms.

Give blood: The Red Cross always needs blood, but the need grows especially acute following a disaster. Check your local phone book for regional blood centers to make a donation of whole blood, plasma or other blood components. Be aware that donors who have rare blood types will be desperately needed in the event of a disaster.

'Ready-to-go' kits:

Each kit outlined on this page and the next one may be contained in a standard backpack; quality packs constructed of 600-denier polyester with water-repellent vinyl backing and padded back straps are advised.



Each kit list represents a starting point; individuals may want to adjust kit contents depending on the size and projected needs of their own households.

Several types of kits are identified here. The smaller ones may be contained in fanny packs and then stored together within a larger household kit, or each family member may be responsible for his or her own kit.

Feel free to adapt these lists to what will work best given the geographical location and its anticipated disaster types, as well as the needs of individual household members.

Safety Kit

- Waterproof flashlight with extended shelf life
- Non-perishable food such as energy bars and canned goods with pop-tops
- Emergency drinking water, such as bottles of still spring water
- Signal whistle
- disposable respirators
- protective waterproofed or rubberized gloves
- Cotton/leather industrial gloves with elasticized cuffs
- Heavy plastic sheeting for constructing a makeshift shelter
- Rain poncho with drawstring and hood visor
- Mylar blankets
- Hand-warmer packets
- Ice pack
- Safety vests
- Reflective arm bands
- Multi-function tool (pliers, knife, screwdrivers, saw, bottle opener)
- Radio/flashlight/compass on lanyard
- Extra radio batteries
- Disposable carbon monoxide detector
- Duct tape
- WD-40 or similar lubricating spray

NOTE: Fanny packs keep essentials such as cash, ID and keys close at hand but out also of your way.

First Aid Kit

- Guide to performing basic first aid
- Tweezers
- Bandage strips
- Gauze pads
- Adhesive tape
- Safety pins
- Antiseptic wipes
- Waterless sanitizing wipes
- Alcohol wipes
- Ice pack
- Acetaminophen pain reliever tablets or capsules
- Antihistamines
- Chewable digestive aids
- Mylar blanket

Vital Information Kit

- Photocopies of bank, insurance and employment information
- Medical records and current prescriptions
- Family birth certificates
- Extended family contact information
- Photographs of individual family members
- Passports or other ID cards
- Note pad with vinyl cover
- Mechanical pencil
- Waterproof pen
- Disposable digital camera

Personal Kit

Complete change of clothing including:
long trousers
long-sleeved shirt
T-shirts to layer
athletic socks
heavy shoes or boots, comfortable for walking, with extra shoe/boot laces
hat or baseball cap
rain poncho
light jacket
bandana or cloth handkerchief
laundry bag
shower shoes
Extra eyeglasses/contacts
Prescription medications
Bible, small Book of Common Prayer
Cash
Particle mask

Toiletry kit

Insect repellent
Sunscreen
Sewing kit with safety pins
Waterless sanitizing wipes
Toilet paper
Toothbrush and toothpaste
Travel-sized tissue pack
Anti-perspirant
Feminine hygiene products
Soap and container
Comb/brush
Razor
Nail clippers
Foot powder

When evacuation becomes necessary

A disaster can strike with little or no warning, providing local authorities scant time to issue an evacuation order. In the absence of evacuation instructions from local authorities, evacuate if danger threatens. Use pre-designated evacuation routes and let others know the final destination.

- **Listen to a battery-powered radio** and follow local instructions. If instructions are to evacuate immediately, gather the household and go. If instructions are for staggered evacuation – as preparation for a hurricane, for example – there will be time to gather water, food, clothing, emergency supplies, insurance and financial records.
- **Change into sturdy shoes** and clothing that provides some protection, such as long pants, long-sleeved shirt, jacket and a cap.
- **Turn off** the house's main water valve and electricity if instructed to do so.
- **Take one car** per household when evacuating to keep household members together and reduce traffic congestion and delay. Leave early enough to avoid being trapped by severe weather.
- **Follow evacuation routes** as recommended. Do not take shortcuts; they may be blocked. Be alert for washed-out roads and bridges. Do not drive into flooded areas. Stay away from downed power lines.
- **Let others know** the final destination.



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Emergencies in high-rise buildings

- **Plan in advance** – know several routes out of the building in case the first exit choice is blocked.
- **Listen for instructions** from authorities, and do as they say.
- **Do not use elevators.** Stay to the right while going down stairwells to allow emergency workers to come up the stairs.
- **Take an emergency supply kit**, unless there is reason to believe it has been contaminated.
- **Move away from exterior walls** if unable to exit. Shelter under a desk or near other sturdy furniture and away from windows and glass, file cabinets, bookshelves or other things that might shatter or fall.

Taking care of animals

Disaster disrupts and affects everything in its path, including pets, livestock and wildlife. For more information, contact the Humane Society of the United States at 2100 L Street, NW, Washington, DC, 20037, Attn: Disaster Services Program or by phone at 202-452-1100 or online at www.hsus.org/disaster.

Family pets

Pets should be included in any household disaster plan, because they depend on their owners for their safety and well-being. If evacuation becomes necessary, do not leave pets behind; they may not survive, or they may wander away and become lost.

- **Find out which hotels and motels** allow pets. With the exception of service animals, pets typically are not permitted in emergency shelters for health reasons.

- **Some animal shelters** will provide care for pets during emergency and disaster situations, but they should be used as a last resort. Ask friends and family to help, or keep pets nearby. Most boarding facilities require veterinary records to prove vaccinations are current. Contact several in the area to check requirements and services, and note a few that are farther away in case local facilities are closed.



- **Pets should have identification tags** securely fastened to their collars. Keep a current photo of a pet with family papers; it will assist in identification if needed.

- **Make a pet disaster kit.** Include food, water, medications, veterinary records, litter box, can opener, food dishes, first aid kit and other needed supplies. Tuck in an information sheet noting each pet's name and any behavior problems, and give the kit to someone who agrees to take on responsibility for a pet during a disaster.

- **In case a pet should become agitated** during a tense emergency situation, have available a secure carrier or leash to restrain it.

- **Call the local emergency management office** or animal shelter for further information.

Large animals

If large animals such as horses or cattle are on the property, be sure to make preparations before a disaster strikes.

- **Some form of identification** is needed for all animals.
- **Evacuate animals** whenever possible. Map out primary and secondary routes to evacuation destinations in advance; these locations should be prepared with, or ready to obtain, food, water, veterinary care and handling equipment. Vehicles and trailers needed for transporting and supporting each type of animal should be available along with experienced handlers and drivers. Allow animals a chance to become accustomed to vehicular travel so they are less frightened during an emergency and are easier to move.

- **The decision** to shelter or turn large animals outside should be based on the disaster type, quality and location of shelter and the risks of harm or injury that might occur if they are permitted to run free.



Evacuate animals whenever possible.

Wildlife

Disaster and life-threatening situations will exacerbate the unpredictable nature of wild animals. To protect household members, learn how to deal with wildlife.

- **Do not approach** or attempt to help a stranded or injured wild animal. Do not corner it. Wild animals will feel threatened and may endanger themselves by dashing off into floodwaters, fire or another unsafe area. Contact the local animal control office or animal shelter.

- **Secure all food supplies** from rats and other wildlife.
- **Animal carcasses** can present serious health risks. Contact local animal control authorities to remove any animal carcasses or contact the local emergency management office or health department for other specific help and instructions.

- **If an animal bites** a family member, seek immediate medical attention. Health departments can provide information on the types of local wildlife that may carry rabies.

- **For a snake bite**, try to accurately identify the type of snake so that, if poisonous, the correct anti-venom can be administered. Do not cut the wound or attempt to suck the venom out. See page 10 of this section for more information.



Food, water and first aid

Safety should be the highest priority if unable to leave a disaster zone. But personal safety isn't limited to avoidance of obvious hazards such as downed power lines; contaminated water and increased insect populations bring their own dangers. General concerns are noted in the next few pages. For additional hazards specific to particular types of disasters, see Part 4 of this manual.

Personal safety

- **Drink lots of clean water** and take frequent breaks from activity. Set a manageable pace – stress is wearing, and it's easy to overdo without realizing it.

- **Debris-filled streets are dangerous.** Walk or drive cautiously. Snakes and rodents may be a hazard. Washouts may weaken road and bridge structures, which could collapse under a vehicle's weight.

- **Before entering a building,** be certain it's not in danger of collapsing. Turn off any outside gas lines, open windows and allow any gas to escape before spending time inside. Use a battery-operated flashlight instead of an open flame as a light source.

- **Wear protective clothing** on legs, arms, feet and hands while cleaning up debris. Heavy socks and at least ankle-high waterproof boots with steel toes will provide a high level of safety. Wear rubber gloves while scrubbing flood-damaged interiors and furniture. Shower after each workday. Do not store laundered clothing with clothing that has been worn.

- **Always wash hands** with soap and water that has been boiled and cooled or disinfected. Wash hands before preparing or eating food, after using the bathroom or changing a diaper, after handling uncooked food, after handling garbage, after tending to someone who is sick or injured, after participating in flood cleanup activities and after handling articles contaminated with floodwaters or sewage. Keep hands and fingers away from the face and ears. Cut fingernails short; use a stiff brush to clean them. Keep any cuts or open sores as clean and dry as possible and apply antibiotic ointment to reduce the risk of infection.

Food safety

Storm-damaged foods may not be safe to eat. If there is a question about the safety of any item, dispose of it. Otherwise, keep the following points in mind:

- **Destroy foods** if they have been covered by floodwaters.

- **Foods in sealed cans** not fouled by industrial waste may be safe to eat if the cans don't have bulges or leaks, but first disinfect the cans before opening them: Remove labels and wash the containers with soap or detergent; rinse in a chlorine bleach solution using two tablespoons of household laundry bleach to each gallon of water; then rinse containers in clean water, dry and re-label them. The cans also may be sterilized by covering them with water and boiling for at least 10 minutes. Save liquids from canned vegetables to substitute for water in cooked dishes. Juices from canned fruits can be used as salad dressing or as a beverage.

- **In the event of a power failure,** frozen or refrigerated foods warmed to above 40° F for two to three hours may not be safe to eat. Once-frozen foods which have thawed completely should be cooked and eaten immediately or discarded. After cooking, items may be refrozen. Frozen foods that have partially thawed and still have ice crystals may be safely refrozen. Breads can be

refrozen as well as fruits and vegetables that are still at or below 40° F. Do not refreeze frozen dinners that have thawed. Foods in a freezer without power may stay frozen from one to three days if the freezer door has remained closed; the freezer is large, mostly full and well insulated; and the outdoor temperature is moderate.

- **Dry ice** may be placed in a top-opening freezer on boards or heavy paper atop packages. Plan for 2 1/2 to three pounds of dry ice per cubic foot of space. More will be needed in an upright freezer, because dry ice should be placed on each shelf. Don't handle dry ice with bare hands; it can cause burns.

- **Get food safety information** from the local health department or County Extension Office, or call the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline, (800-535-4555, 10 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. EST weekdays). Protect household members by cordially refusing donations of home-cooked foods during this uncertain time.

Water safety

After a major storm producing widespread damage such as a hurricane or a tornado, assume that water sources are contaminated until proven safe. Purify all water used for drinking, cooking and for washing dishes. Also purify the water used for washing hands, body and any kitchen and bathroom surfaces. Always use clean or purified water to wash any parts of the body that have come in contact with surfaces contaminated by flood waters.

- **Water in pipes** is safe to drink if the valve on the main water line was closed before flood conditions occurred.

- **Do not use water** that has a dark color, an odor or contains floating material.

- **Use chlorine or iodine** in tablet, crystal or drop form to disinfect water. It may be found in stores catering to hikers and campers, or in drugstores. Follow product directions carefully or use *one* of the following methods:

1. Boil at a rolling boil for 10 minutes *or*
2. Add eight drops of liquid chlorine bleach (such as Clorox) per gallon of water (about 1/8 tsp – this would make a puddle the size of a dime). Make sure the bleach has no active ingredient other than 4 percent to 6 percent sodium hypochlorite. (Household bleach is acceptable, as long as it is a pure bleach product, without additives such as soap, detergent, or perfumes.) Mix the bleach and water thoroughly. Let it stand for 30 minutes. The water should still have a slight chlorine odor. If it does not, add another dose of chlorine and let stand for another 15 minutes *or*
3. Add 20 drops of 2 percent iodine per gallon of clear water or 40 drops per gallon of cloudy water. Household iodine used for first aid purposes may be used to purify water, though it can cause the water to have an off-taste. Let the water stand for 20 to 30 minutes. If the water is below 50 degrees Fahrenheit, wait at least an hour to use it *or*
4. Add water purification tablets according to directions on the package. These tablets can be bought at most drug and sporting goods stores.

Purify all water used for drinking, cooking and for washing dishes.



Basic first aid

When encountering someone who is injured, make sure it is safe to approach, then check the victim for unconsciousness and life-threatening conditions, such as not breathing or severe bleeding. Such conditions require immediate care by trained responders. Call 911 or shout for help.



If an injured person is bleeding, apply a dressing and press firmly against the wound.

If there is no other immediate source of assistance, wash hands with soap and water before and after giving care; use disposable gloves and breathing barriers; and avoid direct contact with blood and other body fluids.

- **If the injured person is bleeding**, apply a dressing and press firmly against the wound. If bleeding is extreme, squeeze the artery against bone at a pressure point – for a hand, the inside of the wrist; for an arm, the inside of the upper arm; for a leg, the crease in the groin. If blood soaks through a dressing, do not remove it but instead add another and continue applying pressure. Elevate the injured area above the level of the heart only if no broken bones are apparent.

- **Treat a burn** with large amounts of water, then cover it with a dry, clean dressing or cloth.

- **To control swelling** and reduce pain, apply ice or a cold pack.

- **To treat shock**, cover the injured person against a chill or try to prevent overheating, but do not give food or drink.

- **If it is necessary to move the victim** because the scene is unsafe, try to immobilize the body part that is injured.

Insect bites: Though public health authorities will work to control the spread of any diseases transmitted by mosquitoes, including West Nile virus, the presence of excess water will encourage mosquito breeding.

- **Avoid being outdoors** when mosquitoes are feeding, mostly at dusk and dawn.

- **When outdoors**, wear clothing that covers most of the skin.

- **Use insect repellants** containing the chemical DEET, picaridin or oil lemon eucalyptus.

DEET is a powerful substance that will dissolve plastics and similar materials, and its use is not recommended on children under 2 months of age.

- **Keep infants indoors** or under mosquito netting.

Snake bites: Learn to identify nonpoisonous and poisonous snakes native to the area. Information on snake identification can be obtained from the County Extension Office or from the state wildlife department.

- **Never step over logs** or other obstacles unless you can see the other side. Watch for snakes sunning on fallen trees, limbs and other debris. When encountering a snake, step back and allow the animal to proceed on its way. Snakes are usually not fast-moving animals, and a person can easily retreat from the snake's path.

- **When removing debris**, wear snake-proof boots at least 10 inches high and/or snake

leggings. Be cautious about placement of hands and feet, and if possible, don't slide fingers under debris to move it. Do remove debris from around a house as soon as possible; it attracts rodents that snakes feed on and also provides shelter for the snakes. Vegetation should be kept closely mowed.

- **Openings 1/4 inch and larger** should be sealed to block out snakes. Check corners of doors and windows, around water pipes and electrical service. Holes in masonry foundations should be sealed with mortar, and holes in wooden buildings can be sealed with fine 1/8-inch mesh hardware cloth and/or sheet metal.

- **If a snake is found indoors**, try to isolate it. To remove a nonpoisonous snake, pin it down behind the head with a long forked stick, and then scoop it up with a shovel or flat-blade shovel and take it outdoors. If uncomfortable about removing the snake, seek someone within the community, such as a wildlife conservation officer, to do it.

- **Never attempt to kill a poisonous snake** with an instrument that presents a target within the snake's striking range – no more than one-half its length. If it's necessary to kill a snake, club it with a long stick, rod or other tool. If bitten by a poisonous snake, don't try to treat the bite. Note the snake's identifying characteristics and go immediately to the nearest hospital for treatment.

Disaster-related stress

The emotional toll that disaster brings can sometimes be even more devastating than the financial strains of damage and loss of home, business, or personal property.

Everyone who sees or experiences a disaster is affected by it in some way. It is normal to feel anxious about personal safety and that of family members and close friends.

People have different needs and different ways of coping. Profound sadness, grief and anger are normal reactions to an abnormal event. Acknowledging feelings helps speed recovery, and focusing on strengths and abilities aids in healing.

Children and older adults are of special concern in the aftermath of disasters. Even individuals who experience a disaster "secondhand" through exposure to extensive media coverage may be affected.

Contact local faith-based organizations, voluntary agencies or professional counselors for counseling. Additionally, FEMA and state and local governments of the affected area may provide crisis counseling assistance. Accepting help from community programs and resources is healthy.

The Episcopal Church's Office of the Bishop Suffragan for Chaplaincies – on the web at www.ecusa-chaplain.org – prepared a DVD following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, "What to Do Next When a Disaster Strikes." It includes video segments and other resources that may help a parish team to understand how people react to a disaster and to consider appropriate responses and helping behaviors.



Recognize the signs

When adults exhibit the following symptoms during a disaster, they may need crisis counseling or stress management assistance:

- Difficulty concentrating or communicating thoughts.
- Difficulty sleeping.
- Difficulty maintaining balance in their lives.
- Low threshold of frustration.
- Increased use of drugs/alcohol.
- Limited attention span.
- Poor work performance.
- Headaches/stomach problems.
- Tunnel vision/muffled hearing.
- Disorientation or confusion.
- Reluctance to leave home.
- Depression, sadness.
- Feelings of hopelessness.
- Mood swings and bouts of crying.
- Overwhelming guilt and self-doubt.
- Fear of crowds, strangers or being alone.

Ways to ease the pain

Don't expect normalcy to be instantly restored. Realize that emotions and moods may change unexpectedly, and accept that restoration of emotional equilibrium, much like the damaged surroundings, will take time.

- Determine what's really important, keeping in mind that one person's top priority may be different from that of friends, neighbors and loved ones.
- Talk with someone about feelings, perhaps a professional counselor who deals with post-disaster stress.
- Take steps to promote healing: eat healthy, rest, exercise, relax and meditate. Be aware of the tendency to resort to bad habits when stress is present.
- Refocus on the big picture, instead of the little details and the little problems, to gain a sense of competency and help keep the situation in perspective.
- Try to have extra patience with those who are most valued. Although they're going through the same trauma, each person will show the stress differently and will heal at his or her own pace.
- Maintain a normal family and daily routine, limiting demanding responsibilities on self and family.
- Spend time with family and friends.
- Participate in memorials.
- Use existing support networks of family, friends and faith communities.
- Ensure readiness for future events by restocking disaster supply kits and updating the family disaster plan. Performing these positive actions can provide a measure of comfort.

Help children cope

Disasters can leave children feeling frightened, confused, and insecure. Whether a child has experienced trauma, has seen coverage of a disaster on television or has heard it discussed by adults, it is important for parents and teachers to be informed and ready to help if stress reactions occur.

Children may respond to disaster by demonstrating fears, sadness or behavioral problems. Younger children may return to earlier behavior patterns, such as bedwetting, sleep problems and separation anxiety. Older children may display anger, aggression or withdrawal, or they may begin to have problems in school.

News coverage related to a disaster may elicit fear, confusion and anxiety in children. This is particularly true for large-scale disasters or a terrorist event where significant property damage and loss of life has occurred. Younger children who see repeated images of an event may believe the event is recurring over and over. If parents allow children to watch television or use the Internet where images or news about the disaster are shown, the parents should be with them to encourage communication and provide explanations.

How a child copes with disaster or emergencies is often tied to the way parents cope, because a child can detect an adult's emotional state. Parents and adults can make disasters less traumatic for children by taking steps to manage their own feelings and ways of coping.

In most cases, symptoms usually diminish over time. For those who experienced disaster, reminders such as high winds, smoke, cloudy skies, sirens or other reminders may cause distress. Any prior history with a traumatic event or other severe stress may contribute to these feelings.

Most children share some common reactions to a disaster or traumatic event, according to their age:

Birth through 2 years – When children are pre-verbal and experience a trauma, they do not have the words to describe the event or their feelings. However, they can retain memories of particular sights, sounds or smells. Infants may react to trauma by being irritable, crying more than usual or wanting to be held and cuddled. The biggest influence on children of this age is how their parents cope. As children get older, their play may involve acting out elements of the traumatic event that was seemingly forgotten.

Preschool (3 through 6 years) – Preschool children often feel helpless and powerless in the face of an overwhelming event. Because they lack the ability to protect themselves or others, they feel intense fear and insecurity about being separated from caregivers. Preschoolers cannot grasp the concept of permanent loss. In weeks following a traumatic event, their play activities may re-enact the incident repeatedly.

School age (7 through 10 years) – The school-age child can understand the permanence of loss. Some children become intensely preoccupied with the details of a traumatic event and want

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to talk about it often. Children may hear inaccurate information from peers at school, and their preoccupation with the event can interfere with their ability to concentrate on schoolwork. They may display sadness, generalized fear or specific fears of the disaster happening again, guilt over action or inaction during the disaster, anger that the event was not prevented or fantasies of being a rescuer.

Pre-adolescence to adolescence (11 through 18 years) – Older children have a more sophisticated understanding of disasters, and their responses are similar to those seen in adults. Teenagers may become involved in dangerous, risk-taking behaviors, such as reckless driving, or alcohol or drug use. They may become fearful of leaving home and avoid previous levels of activities. Much of adolescence is focused on moving out into the world. After a trauma, the view of the world can seem more dangerous and unsafe. A teenager may feel overwhelmed by intense emotions and yet feel unable to discuss them with others.



Children's reactions are influenced by the behavior, thoughts and feelings of adults. Adults should encourage children and adolescents to share thoughts and feelings, and they should attempt to clarify any misunderstandings about risk and danger. Maintain a sense of calm by listening to children's concerns and answering questions and by discussing concrete plans for future safety.

Decide what level of information a particular child needs, given his or her age and level of maturity. If a younger child has difficulty expressing feelings, encourage him or her to draw a picture or tell a story of what happened. Ways to reassure a child include:

- **Personal contact** – hug and soothe children with touch. Spend time with them. The presence of an adult that is important in his or her life will be a comfort to a child.
- **Factual information** – calmly talk about the disaster and describe recovery plans and plans for ensuring future safety.
- **Listen** – encourage children to talk about their feelings. Understand that children, like adults, will have a range of reactions to disasters.
- **Re-establish routines** – schedules for work, school, play, meals and rest are familiar and can be soothing. Assigning them specific chores will help them feel they are contributing to the restoration of family and community life. Encourage children to help update a family disaster plan. Praise and recognize responsible behavior.

If a child continues to exhibit stress, if the reactions worsen over time or if they cause interference with daily behavior at school, at home or with other relationships, seek professional help from the child's primary care physician, a mental health provider specializing in children's needs or a member of the clergy.

Post-disaster programs for children

- **Camp Noah** is a weeklong, faith-based day camp offered for elementary school-aged children (grades K-6) who experienced a disaster at least one year ago. It is staffed by trained camp counselors and is supported by mental health professionals. Camp Noah combines disaster recovery support for children with fun-filled recreation to form a unique and healing experience.

For more information from Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota about setting up a

Camp Noah in your area or assembling a volunteer team to serve disaster-impacted children, contact Cindy Johnson (cindy.johnson@lssmn.org or 651-969-2368) director of Camp Noah, or Kara VerHage (kara.verhage@lssmn.org or 651-969-2345), program manager of Camp Noah.

- **God's Can Do Kids!** is a four-session program designed to help K-8 youth who have been affected by a disaster to connect with God, deal with their fears, find relief from stress and build practical skills. Each session includes a skit, a Bible story lesson and an art activity.

- **Gearing up – Renew U!** has the same purpose as “God's Can Do Kids!,” but “Gearing Up” is designed for ages 14-18 (grades nine through 12), and it is presented in a daylong format.

For more information about God's Can Do Kids! or Gearing Up – Renew U!, contact Hal Shope (atnm@allthingsnewministry.org or 404.680-6860); he is director of All Things New Ministry.

Safely cleaning up after a disaster



Electrical safety

Beware of electrical hazards. Stay away from loose or dangling power lines, and report them immediately to proper authorities. If a residential service wire is connected to a downed feeder line at the road, it must be considered live and dangerous at the box.

- **Be sure all electric and gas services are turned off** at the main before entering buildings for the first time following a disaster.
- **Don't turn on** any lights or appliances until an electrician has checked the system for short circuits.
- **Electric motors** in appliances that have been in floodwaters should be thoroughly cleaned and reconditioned before they are put back into service.

Generator safety

Never use a generator indoors, including in homes, garages, basements, crawl spaces and other enclosed or partially enclosed areas, even with ventilation. Always locate a generator unit outdoors, on a dry surface, away from any vents or doors that will allow carbon monoxide to seep indoors.

- **Carbon monoxide** is an invisible, odorless, tasteless gas, and it is highly poisonous. Opening doors and windows or using fans will not prevent carbon monoxide build-up. Be aware of these CO poisoning symptoms: fatigue, weakness, chest pains (especially in those with heart disease), shortness of breath upon exertion, nausea, vomiting, headaches, confusion, lack of coordination, impaired vision, loss of consciousness. If any of these symptoms are present, get to fresh air *right away*. Neglecting treatment can be deadly.

- **If there is a poisoning emergency**, call your local Poison Center. If a victim has collapsed or is not breathing, call 911 or find other qualified emergency assistance immediately.

Sewage contamination

Flood waters may be contaminated with sewage, and when they recede, the contamination remains. Proper cleaning and disinfecting procedures are recommended to prevent illness:

- **Wear protective clothing** such as rubber boots and waterproof gloves.
- **Clean household surfaces** such as walls and hard-surfaced floors with soap and water and disinfect with a solution of 1/4 cup of bleach in one gallon of water. Do not mix ammonia cleansers with bleach as toxic vapors will form.
- **Wash all linens and clothing** in hot water, or dry clean them.
- **Discard items** that cannot be washed or dry cleaned, including mattresses, carpeting, wall coverings and upholstered furniture.
- **When cleanup is finished**, thoroughly dry all items to prevent the growth of mold.

Chain saw safety

Chain saws can be great labor-saving tools, especially for brush cleanup after a major storm. But a chain saw is a highly dangerous tool! Read the owner's manual before operating one for the first time. Note especially how to check and adjust chain tension, which is vital for safe operation. Get more information about specific operations from a saw dealer, a book or video or from an experienced operator.



- **Never allow a child** to use a chain saw.
- **To clear small branches**, use a hand saw or axe.
- **Wear protective equipment:** safety glasses or goggles; heavy-duty, non-slip gloves; sturdy non-slip shoes; hearing protection; close-fitting, long-sleeved shirt and pants (nothing loose or ragged); and a hardhat.
- **Engage the chain guard** when the saw is not in use.
- **Carry the saw** alongside with the cutting bar and chain to the rear and to the outside. Never carry a chain saw in the passenger area of a vehicle. Keep the chain sharp; dull chains can bind and cause accidents.
- **Mix fuel and oil** as recommended by the manufacturer, and fuel the chain saw only when cool to the touch. Always fuel in a clear area away from debris. If the fuel can has no spout, use a funnel, and wipe the saw clean of any spilled fuel. Never smoke while fueling.
- **Start the saw** while holding it firmly on the ground 10 feet or more away from the fueling area. In a clear, debris-free area, brace the saw with a foot through the rear handle and one hand on the top handle. Pull the starter cord with the other hand.
- **Keep both hands on the saw** when cutting. Saw with the lower part of the bar close to the bumper, not on the top near the nose. Maintain high saw speed when entering or leaving a cut. If the nose of the saw contacts an obstruction, be aware that it may kick back. Do not reach above shoulder-height or beyond the center of balance to cut. Do not cut from a ladder.
- **Take frequent breaks** and stay hydrated when using a chain saw; accidents are more likely to occur when an operator tires.

Ladder safety

When purchasing a ladder consider getting the highest rating of 1A or 300 lbs. limit. The most versatile material for a ladder is fiberglass. Wood deteriorates when used outdoors.

- **Inspect a ladder** every time it is set up for use. Check for any visible defects or wear and that it is correctly anchored and properly positioned.
- **The proper angle** for an extension ladder is achieved when the ladder base is one-quarter the height of the wall away from the wall.
- **Never over-reach** to either side while on a ladder. A good rule is to keep a belt buckle between a ladder's vertical rails.
- **If electrical hazards** including power lines are in the vicinity, do not use a ladder, even if it is thought to be constructed of a non-conductive material.

Roof safety

Wait to make roof repairs until its surface is dry – a wet roof may be slippery.

- **Wear rubber-soled shoes** or boots, which provide better traction than leather-soled boots.
- **Wear a safety harness** on a steeply pitched roof, and be sure to tie it securely to a fall-resistant device.
- **Install temporary wood cleats** for toe-holds by nailing 2"x 4" wood cleats or adjustable roof jacks to the roof. Remove the cleats or roof jacks when the work is complete.
- **Keep the work area clean** by frequently sweeping up sawdust, wood, shingle particles and other kinds of dirt.
- **Be aware of tripping hazards.** Look for and remove any tools, electric cords and other loose items that might cause a fall.

Stocking a tool trailer

At least two dioceses in Province IV have purchased and stocked tool trailers or vans, and they are kept ready to travel to the scene of a disaster.

The Diocese of Mississippi joined with the Lutheran churches in its area to stock two trailers, which were used following hurricane Katrina.

The Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast specifies that its trailer travel with a convoy of volunteers to do the work and to hold church for disaster victims, reaffirming God's presence even in turmoil. The diocese recommends volunteers receive at least a three-hour training course in crisis management, which is designed to enable the volunteers to care for both disaster victims and first responders.

Kee a belt buckle between a ladder's vertical rails.



Both dioceses recommend that a tool trailer include a detailed inventory of its contents. A checklist of approved procedures is helpful for keeping the trailer in ready condition. Some of the requirements: check the inventory before and after use and note broken or lost items; replace used items, including supplies of gas and oil; and drain gas and oil from tools after use. Also helpful is a description of how individuals can donate items for the trailer.

The following list gives categories of items stocked in the Mississippi and/or Central Gulf Coast trailers. Quantities of items in any trailer will of course depend on the size of trailer being stocked. The actual items will vary depending on the most frequent type of disaster response.

Tool trailer inventory suggestions:

Generator	Sanders and sandpaper to fit
Air compressor with hoses, attachments	Trowels
Pressure washer	Hand files
Water hoses with nozzles and sprayers	Levels in various lengths
Wet/dry shop vacuum	String level, water level
Heavy-duty extension cords and electrical outlet strips	Snap string with chalk
Saw horses	Tape measures
Wheelbarrow and hand truck, with spare tires	Stud finder
Ladders	Wood chisels
Submersible sump pump, with hoses	Putty knives
Heat gun	Scrapers
Come-along	Wire and metal cutters
Sledge hammer	Wall board panel carry
Hammers	Steel cable
Drills	Climbing rope
Sets of drill bits, paddle bits, and screwdriver bits	String trimmer
Door hardware set kit	Lawn mower
Hand screwdrivers, Phillips and slotted	Straw and push brooms
Screw setters	Leaf and lawn rakes
Screw and nail guns	Flat and rounded shovels
Staple gun	Pick axe
Set of wrenches	Lopping shears
Pipe wrench	Extension tree pruner
Bar clamps	Padlocks
Bolt cutter	Safety cones
Crow bars, pry bars, wrecking bars	Fire extinguisher
Hand saws, including hacksaws and wallboard saws	First aid kits
Circular, reciprocating, sabre and mitre saws, with extra blades	Eye and ear protection
Chain saw, with sharpener and extra chain	Dust masks
Work lights and extra bulbs	Knee pads
Squeegees	Knit work gloves
T-squares and framing squares	Waterproofed heavy work gloves
Utility knives	Rubber gloves
	Water cooler and cups
	Cleaning supplies
	Stock of clean rags

Volunteering for relief efforts

The American Red Cross describes itself as “a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.” Indeed, volunteers are said to make up 96 percent of the work force of this organization that responds annually to more than 70,000 disasters.

Volunteers are the lifeblood of any humanitarian organization, whether secular or faith-based. In the case of disaster relief, volunteers give their time and energy to help strangers return to some semblance of a normal life. Episcopal Relief and Development (www.er-d.org) describes how disaster victims around the world have been helped by Episcopalians.

Here in Province IV, hurricane Katrina pounded the Gulf Coast in August 2005, and disaster-relief volunteers continue to do good work on victims’ behalf in the dioceses of Louisiana and Mississippi:

- For information about volunteer needs in Louisiana, go online to www.odr.edola.org/ or contact Pete Nunnally (504-259-1417 or pnunnally@edola.org).
- To volunteer in Mississippi, visit www.campcoastcare.com or contact Michael Magargel (228-452-1217 or mmagargel@lesm.org).



Useful forms

Dioceses have created a variety of forms to give information to volunteers and to help keep them safe as they venture into areas turned upside down by disaster. Those that follow are based on forms in use in the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast; they may be adapted as needed.

Episcopal Diocese of _____

Disaster Response Team

POWER TOOL INFORMATION AND DISCLAIMER FORM

The Episcopal Disaster Response Team is happy to loan you this power equipment so you do not have to purchase it during these difficult times. We hope it will be useful to you during your rebuilding.

However, we want you to understand the conditions for the use of the equipment. We will assume that the individuals using this equipment know how to operate it; therefore Episcopal Disaster Response Team assumes no responsibility for any injury or accident which may occur during the operation of this equipment.

I have read and fully understand the above information.

Signature of Recipient _____

Date _____

Address _____

City / State / Zip _____

Telephone _____

Episcopal Diocese of _____

Disaster Response Team

RELEASE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

I, _____, hereby authorize Episcopal Disaster Response (EDR) to release to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and its representatives any information maintained by said agency or agencies relevant for the purposes of providing assistance for my needs caused by _____ of _____ Federal Disaster Declaration for the State of _____, designated FEMA____-DR. The authorization includes the release of information deemed confidential under any Federal or State Privacy Acts.

I, _____, hereby authorize FEMA to release to EDR and its representatives any information maintained by said agency or agencies relevant for the purposes of providing assistance for my needs caused by the Federal Disaster Declaration for the designated FEMA____-DR. The authorization includes the release of information deemed confidential under any Federal or State Privacy Acts.

I further understand that the release of this information does not guarantee that assistance will be provided, but that without the information my case cannot be presented to the committee for consideration.

I have read and fully understand the above information.

Signature of client _____
Head of household

Signature of client _____
Spouse

Date _____

FEMA Control Number and Verification _____

Pre-disaster address _____

City / State / Zip _____

Current address _____

Current telephone _____

Episcopal Diocese of _____

**Disaster Response Team
EQUIPMENT CHECKOUT**

Date _____

Name of borrower _____

Address _____

Telephones - mark (home) (cell) _____

Items loaned by inventory name _____

Staff authorization _____

City _____

Date due back _____

NOTES _____

Date returned _____

Episcopal Diocese of _____

Disaster Response Team

INFORMATION/PHOTO CONSENT TO RELEASE OF INFORMATION

I, _____, of _____,
Name

Address

give permission to the Episcopal Diocese Disaster Response Team to release _____ photo and/or
_____ information regarding: _____

This photo/information will be released to: _____
Organization and name of representative

_____ for the purpose of

The receiving party may not release this photo/information to third parties or use the information or photos other than for the above expressed purposes. This consent expires on

_____, unless otherwise revoked by me in writing
Date
prior to that time.

I have read and fully understand the above information.

Signature of Recipient _____

Date _____

Address _____

City / State / Zip _____

Telephone _____

Episcopal Diocese of _____

**Disaster Response Team
VOLUNTEER SKILLS FORM**

Date _____

Volunteer name _____

Address _____

Telephones - mark (home) (cell) _____

To use your time and talents to the greatest benefit while you are volunteering, please mark your skills by number according to your level of skill/interest in each area:

SKILL/INTEREST LEVEL:

0 = I am unable to do or am not interested in this skill

1 = I don't know how but am willing to learn/try

2 = I have done it before but still need help to do it

3 = I can do a good job by myself

4 = I can do a good job and can guide/teach others

SKILLS:

_____ Architecture

_____ Carpentry

_____ Clean up

_____ Concrete

_____ Construction layout

_____ Drywall Hanging

_____ Drywall Finishing

_____ Egress window installation

_____ Flooring (carpet)

_____ Flooring (underlay)

_____ Flooring (vinyl)

_____ Flooring (other) _____

Type

_____ Engineering

_____ Framing

_____ Heating/cooling

_____ Insulation installation

_____ Masonry

_____ Painting

_____ Roofing

Other (please describe): _____

Heavy equipment operation _____
Type of equipment

I am a licensed contractor in the State of _____

I am a licensed electrician in the State of _____

I am a licensed plumber in the State of _____

Episcopal Diocese of _____

Disaster Response Team

INDIVIDUAL VOLUNTEER INTAKE FORM

Date _____

Group and primary contact _____

Group origin address _____

Group origin telephone and fax _____

Arrival date _____ Departure date _____

Volunteer name _____

Volunteer home address _____

Volunteer telephones - mark (home) (cell) _____

Volunteer e-mail _____

Volunteer birthdate _____ Male _____ Female _____

Previous disaster relief experience? No _____ Yes _____ Where? _____

Health issues? Please describe _____

Emergency contact name _____

Emergency contact telephone _____

OFFICE USE (please initial):

_____ Volunteer liability form signed

_____ Skills form returned

Episcopal Diocese of _____

Disaster Response Team

PARTICIPANT LIABILITY RELEASE FORM

I acknowledge and state the following: I have chosen to to perform clean-up/construct work designed to repair _____ damage.

I understand that this work entails a risk of physical injury and often involves hard physical labor, heavy lifting and other strenuous activity, and that some activities may take place on ladders and building framing other than ground level. I certify that I am in good health and physically able to perform this type of work.

I understand that I am engaging in this project at my own risk. I assume all risk and responsibility as well as related costs and expenses for any damage or injury to my property or any personal injury, which I may sustain while involved in this project.

In the event that the supervising disaster organization arranges accommodations, I am aware that I must assume responsibility for payment of said accommodations for myself. In addition, I am responsible for my own food expense. I understand that that the supervising disaster organization is not responsible or liable for my personal effects and property and that its representatives will not provide lock up or security for any items. I will hold the that the supervising disaster organization harmless in the event of theft, or for loss resulting from any source or cause. I further understand that I am to abide by whatever rules and regulations may be in effect for the accommodations at that time.

By my signature, for myself, my estate, and my heirs, I release, discharge, indemnify and forever hold Episcopal Diocese of _____ Disaster Response team members with their officers, agents, servants and employees, harmless from any and all causes of action arising from my participation in this project, including travel or lodging associated therewith, or any damages which may be caused by their own negligence.

Please read before signing, as this constitutes the agreement as a volunteer and the understanding of your working relationship as a volunteer with the Episcopal Diocese of _____ Disaster Response Team.

Volunteer printed name and signature _____

Volunteer home address _____

Volunteer telephones - mark (home) (cell) _____

Volunteer e-mail _____

Emergency contact name _____

Emergency contact telephone _____

Episcopal Diocese of _____

Disaster Response Team

TRIP EVALUATION FORM

Trip location _____

Organization name _____

Work dates _____

Number of people in group _____ Approximate number of hours worked _____

The trip preparation information you received from the Disaster Response Team was:

Excellent _____ Fair _____ Poor _____

Comments (please number your responses by question below):

- 1. How was your overall experience?
- 2. How well were the volunteer skills you identified on your intake form put to use?
- 3. What type of work did you do?
- 4. What was the best or most meaningful part of your trip?
- 5. What was the most difficult part of your trip?
- 6. Does your group plan to share a report of your trip with your sponsoring organization?
- 7. Would you volunteer for disaster relief work again, and why or why not?
- 8. If yes, in what season over the next year would you plan to go, and what type of work would you prefer to do?

*Thank you for all of your efforts to help those in need.
God's blessings to you!*