



Protective steps to deal with natural disasters

They strike without warning

Natural disasters can happen anytime, anywhere. Events like tornadoes, floods, superstorms and earthquakes make headlines all the time.

We see the physical and emotional harm done to those who live through them. The effects are felt long after the immediate danger has passed.

Planning is key

You might wonder what you can do to deal with disasters that could strike your area. After all, it's not possible to prevent the forces of nature.

You can, however, lessen the risk of injury, damage and distress. Being prepared with a plan is the key.

It's a family affair

When creating this plan, it's wise to include the whole family. Children often are affected as much as adults.

It's best to stick to the facts. Give them realistic information about disasters and how to remain safe. And let them help with readiness activities. Understanding what might happen can help them better handle a real emergency.

In fact, with preparation, everyone will be better equipped to stay in control and handle the crisis.

Where do you start?

Developing a plan seems like a big task. It should include important steps such as:

- Deciding on one or two places to meet after a disaster
- Discussing evacuation routes
- Assembling an emergency supply kit for each family member

More helpful resources

Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA. This group has a useful website at www.fema.gov. It even includes a web page for children.

The Weather Channel. Sign in at www.weather.com to find out about storms affecting your area.

American Red Cross. Visit www.redcross.org. You can get help for before, during and after a disaster.

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