

DISASTER PLANNING GUIDE

Official Guide for Camden County

8 Ways to Prepare Now!

1. Make your Family/Business Disaster Plan
2. Pull Together Disaster Supplies
3. Camden County Hazards
4. Discuss Your Options
5. Help Your Neighbor
6. Keep Your Pets Safe
7. Know Your Disaster Safety Tips
8. Know What to Expect After a Disaster

Planning for Emergencies

If a disaster struck, would your family or business be ready? simple steps today could save lives and prevent suffering later. Follow the tips and checklists in this guide to protect your loved ones, your home, and your business.

This guide was developed by your county emergency management agency to help you make your family and business plans. It also directs you to additional resources where you can get more information and assistance.

It takes the “whole community” to effectively prepare for, respond to, and recover from a disaster. This includes our neighborhood associations, faith-based, volunteer and civic organizations, schools, and the business community, as well as residents. Camden County has a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), whose purpose is to train people living in the community to take care of themselves, their families and their neighbors in the event of a disaster.

We need to ensure that our plans include the needs of our children, seniors, the disabled, and those who face poor health, mentally or physically. So, get involved and spread the word at your school, work, club, or place of worship. This is what it takes to make our community safer and more resilient.

Read about the American Red Cross mobile app: <http://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/mobile-apps>



1 Your Disaster Plan

Prevent panic and confusion by making sure everyone knows where to go and what to do in an emergency, whether at home or at work.



- **KNOW YOUR RISK.** Learn what disasters might affect your area. Camden County has a Hazard Mitigation Plan, which identifies the county's hazard priorities (nj4hmp.com/Camden-county).

- **PICK TWO MEETING PLACES.** One should be just outside your home or business for sudden events, such as a fire. The second should be outside your neighborhood in case you can't get home or family members get separated.
- **CHOOSE A CONTACT PERSON.** Ask someone out of the area to coordinate communications in a disaster. Family members should call this person to report their locations.
- **KEEP YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION UP-TO-DATE.** Include contact information in your phones and make emergency contact cards to carry with you.

- **THINK AHEAD ABOUT EVACUATION.** Determine if and when you would have to evacuate, where you would go, and how you will get there. Ask friends or family if you could stay with them. If you are in a safe area, invite them to stay with you.

For more disaster planning information, contact the Camden County Office of Emergency Management, the local chapter of the American Red Cross, or go online at www.ready.nj.gov/plan-prepare/ or www.ready.gov

4 Know Your Options

If You Can Stay Home, Shelter-in-place

If you live in a sound structure outside the evacuation area and do not live in a mobile home or an RV, stay home and take these precautions:

- Check your Disaster Supplies. Make sure you have at least a seven-day supply of non-perishable foods. Don't forget a non-electric can opener.
- Wait for official word that the danger is over.
- If flooding threatens your home, turn off electricity at the main breaker.
- If you lose power, turn off major appliances, such as the air conditioner and water heater to reduce damage from surge when power is restored.
- Monitor your battery-operated radio, NOAA weather radio, or TV for the latest advisories and other emergency information.
- Stay inside and away from windows, skylights, and glass doors during a severe storm.
- Find a Safe Room in your home, usually an interior, windowless, reinforced room such as a closet or bathroom on the lower floor.
- Offer your home as shelter to friends or relatives who live in vulnerable areas or mobile homes.
- Do not travel until you are told it is safe to do so.

If You Must Evacuate

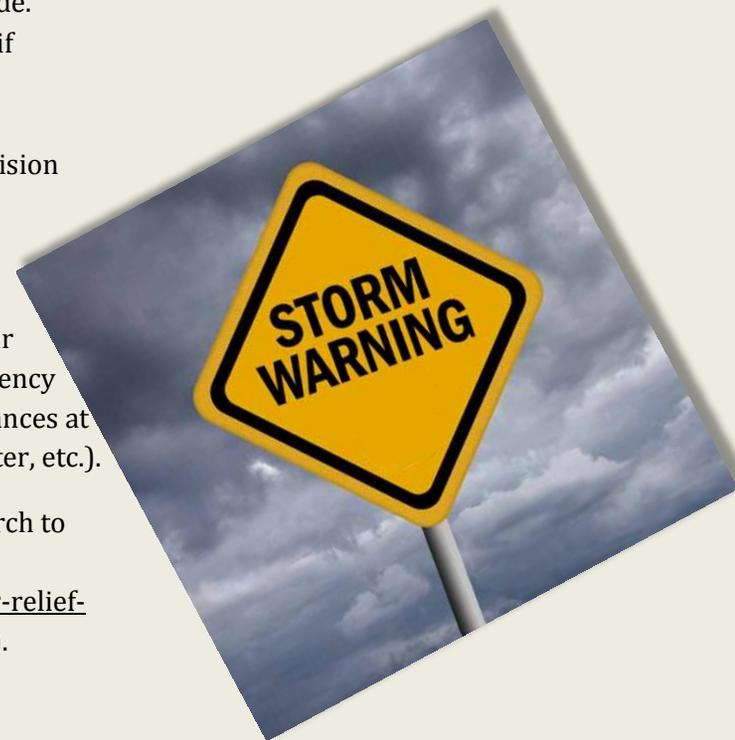
If you live in an evacuation area or a mobile home or RV, when an evacuation order is given, don't panic. Move at a steady pace and ensure you leave enough time to get to where you will weather the storm. DO NOT take chances with your life by staying at home waiting until it's too late!

- Make sure your destination is not within zone that has been ordered to evacuate.
- Take enough supplies for your family.
- Take your pets. Don't forget their supplies.
- Take important papers, including your driver's license, special medical information, insurance policies and your insurance agent's name and number and property inventories.
- Take irreplaceable items, such as photos or keepsakes.
- Let friends and relatives know where you're going.
- Make sure your neighbors have a safe ride.
- Turn off your electricity, water, and gas if officials tell you to do so.
- Lock your windows and doors.
- Stay tuned for your local radio and television station for emergency broadcasts.

Finding a Shelter

Listen for notifications and updates from your local and county Emergency Management Agency regarding sheltering locations and the allowances at each shelter (pet-friendly, special needs shelter, etc.).

The American Red Cross offers an online search to find current open shelters (<http://www.redcross.org/get-help/disaster-relief-and-recovery-services/find-an-open-shelter>).





- People who are disabled or in poor health (either mentally or physically) or those who are without the support of family or friends should plan ahead for an emergency. They may need special assistance from family members, friends, neighbors, or social agencies. Please ask for help if you need it and volunteer to help those who do.
- Remember, too, that older adults who are also caregivers may require outside assistance. Excessive stress and anxiety can contribute to increased episodes of illness, particularly for persons with heart disease and other illnesses.
- If an older adult lives in a nursing home, assisted living facility (ALF) or residential facility, the administrator should be contacted to learn about the disaster plan for that facility.

Home Healthcare and Homebound Patients:

- Tell your health agency and oxygen company where you will be during a disaster. Ask them about their plans to provide care.
- If you are homebound, but not under the care of a home health agency, contact your physician to determine your best plan of action.

- If you require respirators or other electric-dependent medical equipment, you should make medical arrangements with your physician. You should also register with your local power company.
- If you need to evacuate, remember to take medications, written instructions regarding your care, special equipment and bedding with you.
- If you will need assistance in an evacuation or need to go to a special needs shelter, please register with your County Emergency Management Agency.
- Special needs shelters do not provide hands-on medical care, only medical monitoring. Bring one caregiver with you.
- If you require hospitalization, you must make prior arrangements through your physician.

6 Keep Your Pets Safe

Don't leave your pet and don't use your pet as an excuse not to evacuate. Don't put yourself, your family, and your pet at risk! You are responsible for planning for your pet.

If you are ordered to evacuate, take your **Pet Disaster Supplies** if you go to friends, relatives, or a hotel.

After the storm has passed, be careful allowing your pet outdoors. Familiar scents and landmarks may be altered, and your pet could be confused and become lost. Take care not to allow your pet to consume food or water which may have become contaminated.

PET DISASTER SUPPLIES

- Proper ID collar and rabies tag/license
- Vaccination paperwork*
- Carrier or cage
- Leash
- Ample food supply (at least two weeks)
- Water (minimum 7 days)
- Water/food bowls
- Any necessary medication(s)
- Specific care instruction
- Newspaper, cat litter, scoops, plastic trash bags for handling waste
- Proper ID on all belongings
- A comfort item, such as a toy or blanket
- Microchipping your pet is strongly recommended.

* **Make sure your pets have had all their shots within the past 12 months. Pet-friendly shelters and boarding facilities will require proof of vaccinations.**

Know Your Safety Tips

1. **The safest place to during high winds is indoors;** postpone outdoor activities if a wind advisory or high wind warning has been issued.
2. **If you are caught outside during high winds,** take cover next to a building or under a secure shelter; stand clear of roadways or train tracks; use handrails where available and avoid elevated.
3. **In the event of a downed power line,** report downed lines to your local utility emergency center and to the police; avoid anything that may be touching downed lines; if a line falls on your car, stay inside the vehicle and call the police; do not exit the car until help arrives.
4. **If you are driving,** Keep hands on the wheel and slow down; watch for objects blowing across the roadway and into your path; keep a safe distance from cars in adjacent lanes; if winds are severe enough to prevent safe driving, safely pull over onto the shoulder of the road and stop, making sure you are away from trees or other tall objects that could fall onto your vehicle.

Severe Weather - Winter

1. **Stay indoors** during the storm.
2. **Drive only if it is absolutely necessary.** If you must drive: travel in the day; don't travel alone; keep others informed of your schedule and your route; stay on main roads and avoid back road shortcuts.
3. **Walk carefully** on snowy, icy, walkways.
4. **Avoid overexertion when shoveling snow.** Use caution, take breaks, push the snow instead of lifting it when possible, and lift lighter loads.
5. **Keep dry.** Change wet clothing frequently to prevent a loss of body heat.
6. **If you must go outside,** wear several layers of loose-fitting, lightweight, warm clothing rather than one layer of heavy clothing.

Floods

1. **If flooding threatens,** get to higher ground. Stay away from flood-prone areas, including low spots, ditches, etc. Take dry clothing, a flashlight, and a portable radio with you.
2. **Do not allow children to play in or near high water,** storm drains or ditches. Flood waters may be contaminated with oil, gasoline, or raw sewage.

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Keep a Paper Trail

Keep important documents in a fireproof safe or box and copy in a secure location away from your home or business. Inventory your property and possessions and take a video survey of your property.

- Proof of Residence/Ownership
- Birth and Marriage Certificates
- Passports
- Social Security Cards
- Bank and Credit Card Information
- Wills, Deeds, and copies of recent tax returns
- Stock and Bonds
- Copy of Driver's license
- Special medical information
- Insurance policies
- Property inventories or photos of your home or business
- Business Tax License
- Business Supply/Vendor Lists

3. **TURN AROUND, DON'T DROWN.** Avoid flooded areas or those with rapid water flow. Do not attempt to cross a flowing stream or drive in water. The depth is not always obvious. It takes only six inches of fast flowing water to sweep you off your feet.
4. **Purchase Flood Insurance**

Severe Weather - Summer

1. **Stay indoors** as much as possible and limit exposure to the sun.
2. **Drink plenty of fluids** and replace salts and minerals in your body; limit intake of alcoholic beverages.
3. **Closely monitor** a local radio station, TV station or NOAA Weather Radio for the latest information.
4. **Dress** in loose-fitting, lightweight, and light-colored clothes that cover as much skin as possible. Protect face and head by wearing a wide-brimmed hat.
5. **Spend time** in air-conditioned places.
6. **Stay on the lowest floor,** out of the sunshine if air conditioning is not available.
7. **Check on family, friends, and neighbors** who do not have air conditioning and who spend much of their time alone.
8. **Never** leave children or pets alone in closed vehicles.
9. **Avoid** strenuous work during the warmest part of the day. Use a buddy system when working in extreme heat and take frequent breaks.

For more safety tips, please speak to your local or county Emergency Management Agency or visit <https://www.ready.gov/be-informed>.

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What to Expect After a Disaster



After a disaster, you may be without power and many of the other services you rely on (water, sewer, phone, cell phone, and business). Immediate response may not be possible, so you must be prepared to be self-reliant.

Re-entry

BE PATIENT. You won't be able to return to your home or business until search and rescue operations are complete and safety hazards are cleared. It may take some time for emergency crews to reach your neighborhood.

- Residents – have valid ID with your current address.
- Businesses – have a valid picture ID, documents showing proof of ownership/rental.
- Avoid driving. Roads may have debris.

Once you arrive back, walk around your home or business from the outside first to survey damage and enter with caution.

- Open windows and doors to ventilate and dry your home and business.
- If you suspect a natural gas leak, leave immediately and call 9-1-1 or your natural gas provider from a safe location.
- If your home or business has been flooded, have a licensed electrician inspect the electrical system and appliances before turning them back on.
- Be extremely careful with fire.
- Let your out-of-town contact know you are alright.

Post-Storm Safety Precautions

- Keep grills and generators outdoors in a well-ventilated area.

- Avoid candles. Use battery-operated flashlights instead.
- Stay tuned to your local media for up-to-date emergency information.
- Avoid driving and phone use. Keep lanes and lines open for emergency workers.
- Avoid downed or dangling power lines.
- Always supervise children – **DO NOT WADE IN FLOOD WATERS.**
- Call professionals to remove large, uprooted trees, etc.
- Always use proper safety equipment.
- Drink plenty of fluids and rest.

Clean-up and Repairs

- Know what your insurance policy covers and what you will need to submit to make a claim.
- Contact your local building department for information on required building permits.

Protect Yourself from Contractor Fraud

- Hire only licensed contractors.
- Obtain a written estimate or contract
- Do not pay in full before work begins and do not pay the final balance until the work is completed to your satisfaction.
- Do not pull permits for the contractor.
- If you suspect a contractor of fraud, contact the New Jersey Office of Consumer Protection at (973) 504-6200

Generators

Generators can provide power to your home or business in case of power outage or shortage.

1. Determine the appliances or equipment you want to use.
 2. Determine if a portable or stationary generator is required.
 3. Determine if you will need multiple types of outlets on your generator.
- NEVER connect a portable generator to building wiring.
 - Place generators outdoors and away from doors, windows, and vents that could allow carbon monoxide to come indoors. Exhaust fumes are deadly.
 - Before refueling your generator, turn it off and let it cool. Don't forget to check the oil every time you add gas. Keep generator dry.
 - Conserve fuel by alternating appliances.
 - Store fuel safely outside in labeled approved storage containers.
 - Station, or whole house, generators run off gas utility lines or an LP tank and supply electrical power to pre-selected circuits. They **MUST** be professionally installed by a licensed electrician.