

STORMY WEATHER PREPARATIONS FOR EL NIÑO

1. CREATE AN EMERGENCY FAMILY PLAN
2. EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN (RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL)
3. PREPARE A DISASTER SUPPLY KIT
4. SANDBAG CONSTRUCTION
5. SANDBAG SUPPLIERS
6. WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT FEDERAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE AND FEDERAL FLOOD INSURANCE

7. IF AN EVACUATION IS ADVISED Discuss what to do about power outages and personal injuries.

Draw a floor plan of your home, and mark an escape route from each room.

Locate the main electric fuse box, water service main, and natural gas main. Learn how and when to turn these utilities off. Teach all responsible family members. Keep necessary tools near gas and water shut-off valves.

Remember, turn off the utilities only if you suspect the lines are damaged or if you are instructed to do so. If you turn the gas off, you will need a professional to turn it back on.

Pick one out-of-state and one local friend or relative for family members to call if separated by disaster (it is often easier to call out-of-state than within the affected area).

- Post emergency telephone numbers near telephones.
- Teach children how and when to call 911, police and fire.
- Teach children how to make long distance telephone calls.
- Instruct household members to turn on the radio for emergency information

Pick two meeting places:

- A place near your home in case of a fire.
- A place in your neighborhood in case you cannot return home,
- Learn the safest route from your home or job to high, safe ground in case you have to evacuate in a hurry, and be sure to keep your gas tank full!!
- Take a basic first aid and CPR class.
- Make an itemize list of personal property, including furnishings, clothing and valuables; photograph your home inside and out, which will help settle insurance claims. Keep photos in a safe deposit box.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The federal Emergency Management Agency offers free publications on protecting your home and assembling an emergency kit, 1-800-638-6620. El Niño information is available on the agency's web site: <http://www.fema.gov>

RESIDENTIAL

Losses due to flooding can often be cut dramatically by carrying out an effective pre-planned set of actions. The emergency plan may consist primarily of a checklist of things to be done and a little pre-thinking about where contents will be moved, who's going to help, where things will be stored and so on. Among others, items on the emergency "to do" list might include:

- Moving items to be left in the structure to an upper floor or stacked



on top of each other to put at least some furniture above flood level.

- Throwing curtains and drapes up over rods.
- Pulling up and removing carpets and rugs.
- Motors to be removed from furnace and other equipment located in the low levels of the house.
- Unplug equipment that can't be moved.

• Assemble medicine, heirlooms, valuables and other items to be for taking during evacuation.

COMMERCIAL

Commercial and industrial sites offer the opportunity and need for more detailed planning and sometimes new construction or other preparations to facilitate putting the

plan into action when necessary. This may include such things as:

- Preparing electrical equipment for quick disconnect.
- Preparing equipment for quick evacuation.
- Keeping raw materials and products on pallets for quick removal.
- Providing means for opening all necessary doors manually in the event of a power outage. Arranging for transportation when needed.
- Arranging for storage space when needed.
- Keeping on hand all items needed for rapid cleanup and restoration of production.

EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN PREPARE A DISASTER SUPPLY KIT

- List of important phone numbers (family, physicians, etc.)
- Copy of insurance policy.
- Credit cards and cash.
- An extra set of car keys.
- Inexpensive rabbit-ears television antennas to use when cable goes out.
- Special items for infants, elderly or disabled family members.
- Extra batteries.
- Matches.
- Clock (wind-up or battery-operated).
- Blankets or sleeping bags.
- Scissors.
- Plastic garbage bags.
- Map of the area.
- Clean change of clothes & rain gear.
- A supply of non-perishable packaged or canned food and a non-electric can opener.
- A first aid kit and prescription medications.
- Flashlights and extra bulbs.
- Battery-operated lanterns. (Candles and kerosene lanterns are fire hazards.)
- Working fire extinguishers.
- Battery-operated radio.
- Assemble supplies you might need in an evacuation.

Store them in an easy-to-carry container such as a backpack or duffel bag. Put aside in a special box in garage. Keep heat-sensitive items inside home and rotate stock throughout season. Batteries can go in refrigerator.

WATER

Having an ample supply of clean water is a top priority in an emergency. A normally active person needs to drink at least two quarts of water each day, hot environments can

double that amount. Children, nursing mothers and ill people will need even more. You will also need water for food preparation and hygiene. Store a total of at least one-gallon per person, per day. You should store at least a two-week supply of water for each member of our family. If supplies run low, never ration water. Drink the amount you need today, and try to find more for tomorrow. You can minimize the amount of water your body needs by reducing activity and staying cool. Store water in sealed, unbreakable containers. Identify the storage date and replace every six months

SANDBAGS

The use of sandbags is a simple, but effective, way to prevent or reduce floodwater damage.

Properly filled and placed, sandbags can act as a barrier to divert moving water around instead of through buildings. Sandbag construction does not guarantee a watertight seal, but is satisfactory for use in most situations. Sandbags are also used successfully to prevent overtopping of levied streams and for training current flow to specific areas.

Untied sandbags are recommended for most situations. Tied sandbags should only be used for special situations when pre-filling and stockpiling may be required for specific purposes such as filling holes, holding objects in position or to form barriers backed by supportive planks. Tied sandbags are generally easier to handle and to stockpile, however sandbag filling operations can generally best be accomplished at or near the placement site and tying of bags would waste valuable time and effort. If the bags are pre-filled at a distant location, due consideration must be given to transportation vehicles and placement site access.

The most commonly use bags are untreated burlap sacks available from feed or hardware stores.

Empty bags can be stockpiled for emergency use and will be serviceable for several years if properly stored. Filled bags of earth material will deteriorate quickly.

A heavy bodied or sandy soil is most desirable for filling sandbags, but any usable material at or near the site has definite advantages. Course sand could leak out through the weave of the bag (to prevent this double bag the material). Gravely or rocky soils are generally poor choices because of their permeability characteristics.

Sandbag barriers can easily be constructed by two people, as most individuals have the physical capabilities to carry or drag a sandbag weighing approximately 30 pounds the use of sandbags is a simple, but effective, way to prevent or reduce floodwater damage.

Properly filled and placed, sandbags can act as a barrier to divert moving water around instead of through buildings. Sandbag construction does not guarantee a watertight seal, but is satisfactory for use in most situations. Sandbags are also used successfully to prevent overtopping of levied streams and for training current flow to specific areas.

HOW TO FILL A SANDBAG

Filling sandbags is a two-person operation: One member of the team should place the empty bag between or slightly in front of widespread feet with arms extended. The throat of the bag is folded to form a collar and held with the hands in a position that will enable the other team member

to empty a rounded shovel full of material into the open end. The person holding the sack should be standing with knees slightly flexed and head and face as far away from the action of the shovel as practical.

The shoveler should carefully release the rounded shovel full of soil into the throat of the bag. Haste in this operation can result in undue spillage and added work. The use of safety goggles and gloves is desirable and sometimes necessary.

For large-scale operations, filling sandbags can be expedited by using bag holding racks, metal funnels, and power loading equipment. However, the special equipment required is not always available during an emergency. Bags should not be filled more than half full or less than one-third their capacity.

PLACEMENT

Remove any debris from the area where bags are to be placed.

Place the 1/2-filled bags lengthwise and parallel to the direction of flow. Fold the open end of the unfilled portion of the bag to form a triangle. (If bed bags are used, flatten or fire the tied end.) Place succeeding bags on the folded or fired portion of the previous bag and stamp into place to eliminate voids and form a tight seal.