

# get set

An emergency preparedness project kit for high school students from APHA



## Look inside for:

- Project ideas
- How to hold a food drive
- Daily PA announcements
- Ready-to-use news article
- Readiness quiz
- Ideas for teachers
- Emergency preparedness tips



## Welcome to APHA's Get Ready: Get Set Emergency Preparedness Project Kit

Congratulations! By downloading and reading APHA's Get Ready: Get Set Emergency Preparedness Project Kit, you are already on your way to helping your community be more prepared for an emergency. No matter where you live — in a city, a suburb or a small town — we all need to take steps to be better prepared.

Whether it is the threat of a disease outbreak or natural disaster such as a hurricane or flood, everyone is at risk from some type of hazard, which can happen at any time. We all can do our part to help ourselves and our communities become more prepared, and high school students have a unique opportunity to help.



You may be asking, "Why high school students?" Good question. The reason is that every town and city across the country has a high school, and students play an important role in their communities. High school students today are also a growing force for change, with volunteer

time and community service a common commitment for teens.

So to all you high school students thinking of taking on emergency preparedness as a service project, we thank you. APHA is working through its Get Ready campaign to help all Americans prepare themselves, their families and their communities for all health hazards and disasters, including pandemic flu and infectious disease. We appreciate your help!

To aid you in your preparedness work, the APHA Get Ready Team created the APHA Get Ready: Get Set Emergency Preparedness Project Kit. The kit includes materials you can use to plan a preparedness project, or help you come up with your own ideas. We've also included some fact sheets on preparedness and emergency stockpiling to get you started. Before getting started on any projects, check with your school administrator or advisor to find out if there are any restrictions.

We'd love to hear how you use this kit and your emergency preparedness work. Drop us a line at [pandemicflu@apha.org](mailto:pandemicflu@apha.org).

Sincerely,

**APHA Get Ready Team**

For more on APHA's Get Ready campaign, visit [www.getreadyforflu.org](http://www.getreadyforflu.org).

### *Get Ready tips:*

#### >> Web sites with preparedness info

- *APHA's Get Ready campaign*  
[www.getreadyforflu.org](http://www.getreadyforflu.org)
- *Department of Homeland Security readiness site*  
[www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)
- *American Red Cross*  
[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)
- *Federal Emergency Management Agency*  
[www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)
- *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*  
[www.bt.cdc.gov](http://www.bt.cdc.gov)



## Get Ready: Get Set project ideas

Ready to help your school and community be more prepared for a disaster? Here are some activities that your extracurricular group or class can do, courtesy of the APHA Get Ready Team.

### >> Host a Get Ready video contest

Use your favorite commercials as inspiration to create a video demonstrating how or why to prepare for an emergency. Develop creative videos that make preparedness more interesting and relevant to your classmates.



Include some facts about why it's important to have an emergency preparedness kit. (The messages should be creative, but keep the facts in mind.)

Come up with rules and deadlines for the contest, then let your fellow students know about it through posters, your school paper or Web site. The winning video can be shown during a school assembly or other event.

#### Get Ready: Get Set project tips:

- Highlight the importance of emergency preparedness
- Keep the videos to three minutes or less
- Create a student and faculty judging panel
- Judge videos on creativity and delivery of message

### >> Create an emergency preparedness superhero

Picking a student to dress up as a superhero and make appearances on campus is a fun way to spread the emergency preparedness message. Come up with a name for your superhero (such as Ready Freddy or Prepared Peggy) and design a costume. Your superhero can act as a buddy to your school mascot, attending school functions and distributing preparedness info.

Feature your superhero in a video about emergency preparedness and share it on your school's Web site.

#### Get Ready: Get Set project tips:

- Create a name that reflects the importance of preparedness
- Be creative and design a homemade costume
- Develop a tag line or catchphrase
- Come up with stickers or fun materials to hand out

### Get Ready tips:

#### >> Hold a raffle

Help promote the importance of emergency preparedness by holding a raffle.

Ask a local store to donate materials that belong in an emergency preparedness kit that can be raffled off.

Then ask the store if you can have a table at the store selling raffle tickets and demonstrating what should be in an emergency kit. Pass out lists to shoppers of what should be in an emergency kit so they can pick up the items for themselves while they are shopping.

Work with your school's parent group to promote the raffle.

Donate the raffle proceeds to an emergency relief group or local food bank.

## >> Share preparedness materials in the community

Is your community or school holding a carnival or holiday event? How about including a preparedness activity? Set up an emergency preparedness table with materials and a display that shows what everyone would have stored at home for an emergency.

Or host games, such as Get Ready Bowling, that bring together fun and preparedness trivia, and give prizes to participants. (The APHA Get Ready Games Guide, online at [www.getreadyforflu.org](http://www.getreadyforflu.org), can help you come up with games for kids.)

When Halloween rolls around, print out some emergency preparedness materials and ask local shopping malls, grocery stores or community centers to disseminate the materials in the Halloween bags. Alternately, your school can organize a team to volunteer and pass out the info at the local venues.

### **Get Ready: Get Set project tips:**

- Contact local stores and event planners
- Pick a high-traffic location
- Print materials for each location
- Set up a team to cover each location

## >> Decorate a float for your homecoming parade

Want a unique float for this year's homecoming parade? Emergency preparedness is a great focus. Use your imagination to remind your school and community about being prepared. Create a giant float-sized emergency kit, and have students dress up as its contents, such as a life-sized can opener or bandage. Throw emergency-themed prizes to parade-watchers, such as whistles or small flashlights. Pass out emergency supply checklists to the crowd. Come up with a fun preparedness chant or song to sing on the float. (Example: "Don't be scared! Be prepared!")

A parade can attract hundreds of watchers, so it's a great way to spread the importance of preparedness in your community.

### **Get Ready: Get Set project tips:**

- Organize a planning/brainstorming meeting
- Assign tasks for team members
- Be creative in your message/theme
- Gather your tools and supplies
- Ask local suppliers for donations
- Set a timeline to decorate the float

## >> Organize a food drive at your school

A food drive can be a great way to help your community be prepared. During a disaster, many people will turn to food banks for help, so it's important that they have plenty of food year-round. See the food drive how-to guide in this kit for ideas for planning your food drive.

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## *Get Ready tips:*

### >> Create a skit

Work with your fellow drama-oriented students to write and develop a skit on emergency preparedness. Act it out at lunchtime or at an assembly. Or make it into a "radio show" and read it over the morning PA system.

### >> Share your wisdom

Pass on the lessons you've learned to the younger generation. Working with a teacher, create a classroom guide for kids on preparedness, with games or coloring sheets. Tailor your skit toward younger kids, and perform the skit in their classroom (once you have permission).

Use puppets or silly costumes to make it fun for kids. Give them prizes and materials to take home to their parents.



## How to hold a food drive

America has long been called the land of plenty. But even in these times of cheap fast food and rising obesity, millions of Americans are going hungry. In 2006, more than 35 million Americans lived in households that didn't have enough food, including 12.6 million children, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. That's a lot of people — many of whom depend on community food banks to make sure that they have enough to eat.



If that many people need food on a regular basis, what will happen when a disaster strikes? Unfortunately, history has shown that demand on already-strapped food banks increases when the worst happens. That's why it's important that food banks have enough supplies on hand — no one knows when a disaster may occur.

And that's where you come in. High school students and groups have a perfect opportunity to help out by organizing a food drive at their school or in their community. You'll have a chance to help out your neighbors and get your fellow students involved in being more prepared. Ready to take action? Use our tips and ideas.

### >> Getting started on your food drive

- Share your interest in holding a food drive with a teacher or administrator at your school. Find out if there are any restrictions for holding a food drive.
- Locate a food bank in your community. Call your local city or county office and ask where the nearest food bank is located, or use Feeding America's online directory at [www.feedingamerica.org](http://www.feedingamerica.org).
- Call the food bank and let them know you plan to hold a food drive. Ask if they have a list of items that they need.
- Pick the location and dates of the food drive.
- Set a goal for your food drive. How many pounds do you want to collect?
- Select a place where donations will be dropped off and the food can be kept.
- Provide collection boxes that are clearly marked for collecting food.
- After the drive, have volunteers deliver the food to the food bank. Call ahead and let the food bank know when you will be delivering the food.

### *Get Ready tips:*

#### >> Food drive list

(Check with your community food bank to see what is needed.)

- **Non-perishable foods:\***
  - Canned meats, fish
  - Canned fruits, vegetables
  - Canned soups
  - Peanut butter
  - Pasta
  - Rice
  - Cereal
- **Other supplies:**
  - Toilet tissue
  - Laundry, dish detergent
  - Shampoo
  - Deodorant
  - Diapers

*\*Avoid glass containers*

## >> Holding the food drive: Ideas

Now that your food drive plans are set, it's time to get creative. Here are some ideas you can use to ramp up participation and bring in donations that will help your community be more prepared.

- Holding a dance or football game? Ask students to bring a can of food for a discount on their admission ticket.
- Canned foods make great art! Host a competition for the best canned food sculpture. Create categories, such as funniest, scariest or biggest. Leave the sculptures on display.
- Make posters about the food drive and put them up in locations where people can see them. Pass out fliers with a list of nonperishable foods and other items people should donate.
- Get the word out through your school's morning announcements, newsletters, e-mails or Web site.
- Make a poster or sign shaped like a can showing how many pounds of food you plan to gather. Color in the can to mark your progress in meeting your goal.
- Coordinate your food drive with the Stamp Out Hunger campaign, organized each year by the U.S. Postal Service and the National Association of Letter Carriers. The campaign, online at [www.helpstampouthunger.com](http://www.helpstampouthunger.com),



encourages Americans to leave food drive donations by their mailboxes for pick-up by mail carriers.

- Ask your local grocery store if you can hold a food drive outside the store. Pass out food drive shopping lists to customers as they enter the store and let them know you'll be there to accept their donations on the way out. Make sure you have signs that clearly denote who you are and what the food drive is for.
- Write a press release about the food drive and contact your local weekly or community newspaper. Ask them to help promote the food drive, or to come take a picture of the donations as they are delivered to the food bank.
- Offer to volunteer. Community food banks often need help organizing donations or answering the phones. Ask what you can do to help.

*Remember: Food banks need help year-round. So start planning your food drive! Your community will thank you.*

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## Get Ready tips:

### >> Set a challenge

**Make it competitive!** Make your food drive into a challenge among grades, classes or extracurricular groups. If your school administrator or advisor agrees, the winning group can be rewarded with an ice cream party or other prize.

Once the challenge is completed, acknowledge the winning group by running their photo in the school or local newspaper.



# Get Set PA announcements: Using the clock change as a reminder

*Want to help remind your fellow students of the need to be prepared? Take a lesson from APHA's Get Ready: Set Your Clocks, Check Your Stocks campaign, which uses the twice yearly clock change to remind people to check their emergency supplies.*

*In the week leading up to the clock change, keep that message fresh in the minds of your classmates with these public address announcements. Start each announcement with the Get Ready Rap, right. Use our lyrics or come up with your own!*

## Day 1 announcement

“Six days from now, everyone will be moving the hands on their clocks an hour. The American Public Health Association hopes you’ll use the clock change as a reminder to think about emergency preparedness. Disasters — things like earthquakes, disease outbreaks, floods and tornadoes — can happen at any time, anywhere, and staying safe might mean you’ll be stuck in your house for a few days. In an emergency, the electricity might be out and the tap water might not be safe to drink, so you’ll need to have an emergency supply kit tucked away somewhere at home with at least a three-day supply of bottled water and nonperishable foods that don’t need cooking. You’ll also need to pack a lot of other things, like flashlights, extra batteries and a hand-cranked or battery-operated radio. And being prepared means you’ll need to have a communication and evacuation plan. So find a ginormous plastic bin with a tight-fitting lid, and all this week we’ll give you ideas about what to toss into it — because disasters can strike when you least expect, so get prepared and save your neck.”

## Day 2 announcement

“Five days from now, everyone will be moving the hands on their clocks, and the American Public Health Association hopes you’ll use that as a reminder to put together an emergency stockpile of healthy foods. A stockpile is a kit filled with food, water and all the other things you and your family will need if a disaster, like a flood, an earthquake, a disease outbreak or a tornado, strikes our community, and we’re told to stay home to keep safe. You’ll need to store one gallon of water per person per day, but a week’s supply is even better if you have enough space in your place. You’ll also want to go to the grocery store to stock up on nonperishable, low-salt foods that don’t need cooking, like canned fruits and vegetables, canned tuna and chicken, beans, nuts, dried fruit, peanut butter, crackers, cereal, granola bars, energy bars, juice boxes and nonperishable pasteurized milk. Steer clear of salty snacks like potato chips. They’ll make you thirsty and your water will be in short supply. Plan ahead for your pets, too. They’ll

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## >> Get Ready Rap

“Just a few more days ‘til we reset.

Being in the know is the best bet.

Disasters can strike when you least expect.

So get prepared and save your neck.

Think you’ve got no need to hurry?

Just check the news — it’ll make you scurry.

‘Cause earthquakes, floods and diseases like flu.

Can pop up and get the best of you.”



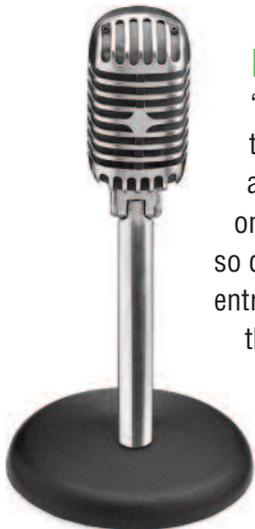
need at least a three-day supply of food and water, too! Tomorrow we're going to tell you about some of the other things you'll want to toss into your kit — because disasters can strike when you least expect, so get prepared and save your neck.”

### Day 3 announcement

“Four days from now, everyone will be moving the hands on their clocks, and the American Public Health Association hopes you'll use that as a reminder to think about emergency preparedness, because disasters — such as hurricanes, tornadoes, floods or disease outbreaks — can happen unexpectedly. Yesterday we told you about why it's important to have an emergency supply kit. Some of the things you need include a manual can opener, flashlights with extra batteries and a battery-operated or hand-cranked radio that can tune to weather channels. And remember: You won't be able to wash dishes, so you'll need to toss in some paper plates and plastic utensils, and hand sanitizer. Already have an emergency supply kit? Great! Spend some time this week going through it and tossing out anything that's expired, leaking or damaged — because disasters can strike when you least expect, so get prepared and save your neck.”

### Day 4 announcement

“Three days from now, everyone will be moving the hands on their clocks. The American Public Health Association reminds you that when it's time to change your clocks, it's also a good time to check the batteries in your flashlights, smoke detectors and radios. This is also a good time to find out where the evacuation routes and emergency shelters are located. And you'll also need to take a look at your first aid supplies. Your emergency supply kit isn't just for storing food, radios and flashlights. You'll also need bandages and antiseptic wipes, medications, blankets, extra diapers for your baby sister, solution for your contact lenses and a couple of changes of clothes. This isn't a complete list, but it can get you started on thinking about how to stay safe in an emergency — because disasters can strike when you least expect, so get prepared and save your neck.”



### Day 5 announcement

“In two days, everyone will be moving the hands on their clocks. The American Public Health Association wants to use this occasion to remind you that disasters, like hurricanes, tsunamis, earthquakes and disease outbreaks can happen at any time. This weekend, call a meeting with your family to decide on a family communications and evacuation plan. In an emergency, your family might have to evacuate, so decide on one or two spots where everyone will meet, like in front of your house or apartment, or at the entrance to your neighborhood. Also, choose a relative or friend who lives outside the area, like a grandfather or an aunt in another state, and make sure everyone in your family knows that person's phone number. If your family gets separated during an emergency, each of you should call that person as soon as it's safe. So talk to your family this weekend about having an emergency plan — because disasters can strike when you least expect, so get prepared and save your neck.”

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## *Get Ready tips:*

### >> Pick your team

- Select a different person to read the Get Set PA announcements each day so that listeners don't get used to hearing the same voice.
- Ask students from your high school chorale group to perform the Get Ready Rap each morning. Bring the performers together beforehand to rehearse.





## Ready-to-use news article

**(DATELINE: YOUR SCHOOL)** Canned food? Check. Flashlight? Check. Fully charged iPod? Check.

Close your eyes and imagine that some case of extreme weather – a hurricane, tornado, snowstorm or whatever – means you're stuck in the house for a few days. There is no electricity, stores aren't open and it's not safe to go outside. So it's just you, your parents and your little brother – stuck inside together – for days! (Cue horror movie scream.)

Okay, open your eyes. Don't worry – it's not really happening. However, it could. As we've seen with hurricanes and floods, it's essential to be prepared for disasters, public health emergencies and any other crisis situations that may occur. And while there is probably nothing you can do to prepare yourself for spending days stuck in the house with your family playing board games, you can ensure that you and your family have the supplies you'll need by putting together an emergency preparedness kit.

An emergency preparedness kit is simply a stockpile of the things you and your family will need in an emergency. If disaster strikes your community, you might not have access to food, water or electricity for some time. By taking time now to create an emergency kit, you can help your family to be prepared.

Start by talking to your parents about whether your family already has a kit. If you do, then offer to make sure it's adequately stocked and that none of the food has expired. If not, then offer to help pull one together. Either way, you're sure to earn points that might come in handy the next time you miss curfew!

You can find a complete list of items to include in your emergency preparedness stockpile at [www.getreadyforflu.org/clocksstocks](http://www.getreadyforflu.org/clocksstocks). However, to get you started, here is a basic list of the items you should stock in your preparedness kit:

- Three days worth of drinking water, with one gallon of water per person per day
- Three-day supply per person of nonperishable foods
- Manual can opener
- Additional water and food for any pets in the home
- Several flashlights and batteries
- A radio
- A first aid kit

Store these items in an easy-to-carry, sealed container. In a situation where your family must leave home in a hurry to find shelter elsewhere, your emergency kit should be able to be easily transported with you.

Being prepared can help ensure that you and your family have everything you need to stay safe in an emergency. But sorry, there is not much you can do about the fact that you might have to stay at home for days with no TV, Internet or Wii. So here's another tip – always keep your iPod fully charged!

###

### >> Spread the word

- Help your classmates learn about emergency preparedness with this entertaining, engaging news article. Run it in your school newspaper or publish it on your blog or Web site.
- You have our permission to copy, paste and publish this article as is, or personalize with other tips and ideas. Add your school name and make it your own.
- For a Word version of this article that you can copy, visit [www.getreadyforflu.org](http://www.getreadyforflu.org).



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## Get Ready: Get Set pop quiz

Take our just-for-fun quiz to find out how ready you are for a disaster. Use this quiz as a way to learn about your own preparedness or share it with your fellow students in your school newspaper or on your Web site.

**Choose as many answers as apply for each question:**

**1. There has been a severe storm or weather event during school hours. You are told to “shelter-in-place” at your school. You:**

- A) Wait until the class ends and hurry home as fast as your skateboard will take you.
- B) Stay where you are or move to a designated safe area within your school until school officials release you.
- C) Call your mom or dad to pick you up, pronto!

**2. Meltdown in chem lab: The kid in the back row forgot to watch his Bunsen burner and a minor explosion occurred. You:**

- A) Check in with the teacher about what to do. If needed, help locate the first aid kit that is kept on hand in case of emergencies.
- B) Make a bee-line for the door. Who knows what that guy had on that burner?
- C) Curl up under the table and wait for the signal to come out.

**3. Fire drill time. When the alarm goes off, you:**

- A) Roll your eyes and space out. You could do this in your sleep.

- B) Pay attention. Although you can certainly find your way in and out of school, you know that there may be others who need assistance.
- C) Pay attention. It’s not just about fire anymore. And you want to make sure you know where to meet up with your friends if you have to evacuate.

**4. The local police have locked down campus because of a crime in the area. You know your parents are going to be freaking out so you:**

- A) Pull out your phone and immediately start calling your mom, dad, great aunt and everyone you can think of to share the drama.
- B) Write a long, detailed text to your friends and family giving them a play-by-play of events. Update every three minutes.
- C) Sit tight. You don’t want to overwhelm the cell phone network and you know that administrators will notify your family according to the school’s communication plan.

**>> Are you ready?**

Think you’re ready for a disaster? Take our quick quiz to find out. Then share this quiz with your friends and family.



**5. After the lockdown, some of your friends are having a hard time feeling safe. Fortunately, you know that:**

- A) Your school offers counseling services and has information about other services in your community.
- B) You can transfer to another school.
- C) You can stay home and hide under the bed.



## >> Get Set pop quiz answers

1. **(B)** Your school should have a plan for what to do if you are required to shelter-in-place. Make sure you know what to do and talk to your teachers about emergency battery-powered radios and other communication needs.
2. **(A)** Make sure you ask your teacher about what to do in any type of emergency or accident. The American Red Cross recommends that schools have first aid, water, sanitation supplies, tools and some food on hand in case of emergencies. Ask if your school offers any training for students such as first aid or CPR so that you can help out when needed.
3. **(B and C)** The Risk Reduction Education for Disasters organization recommends schools have at least twice-yearly emergency drills. Make sure you know what to do. It's also important to remember that some students will need assistance. Do your part to make sure you know how everyone will get out safely. Some things to ask: Where is the evacuation site? Is there a buddy system in place to make sure we're all accounted for?
4. **(C)** Your school should have a plan in place to contact parents and caregivers in the case of an emergency. The Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Education provide guidance for schools. Make sure that your parents know how the school will contact them. Also, make sure you always keep current contact information on file with the school. Check with the front office after any move, if your parents change jobs or if your cell numbers change. Talk to your parents about emergency plans for after school, too.
5. **(A)** Stressful events often have lasting effects that may not go away on their own. Many schools will offer counseling services after an event. Talk to your teachers and counselors about resources that are available.

## >> Score:

**0-1 correct answers:** Time to hit the books! You need to review emergency preparedness guidelines and ask your teachers about your school's plans.

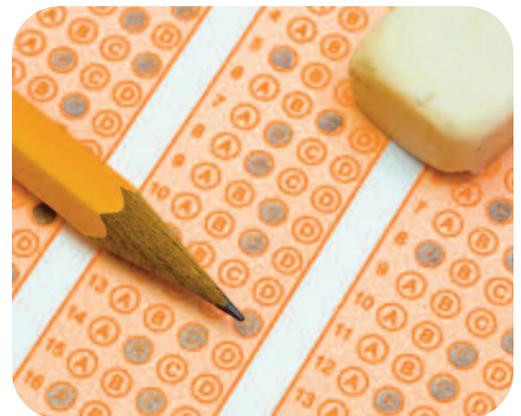
**2-3 correct answers:** Not bad, but let's hope you're not in charge! Make sure to brush up so you are prepared and can help others in an emergency.

**4-5 correct answers:** Brilliant! You are a pillar of preparedness with a wealth of knowledge on what to do in an emergency. Help your pals and family out by testing their readiness, too.

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## >> How'd you do?

Now that you are an expert on disaster preparedness, share your wisdom with others. Plan a Get Ready: Get Set project at your school.



# Teacher tips: Bringing emergency preparedness into the classroom

As APHA's *Get Ready: Get Set* kit shows, emergency preparedness is a great topic for students to use as a focus for school service projects. But it's also an interesting tie-in to classroom lessons and curricula. Here are some ways teachers can incorporate emergency preparedness into the classroom:

## >> Weathering an emergency

- Incorporate preparing for natural disasters into science lessons. When discussing global warming or weather such as hurricanes, floods, droughts or natural disasters, ask students to think about what impact such events could have on them, their families or their communities. How can we better prepare ourselves for a natural disaster?

## Ideas for teachers

### >> 'Ware the pox!

- Link infectious diseases in history to their modern-day implications. Smallpox, pandemic flu and the plague are all examples of infectious diseases that have had a historical impact. When your students learn about these diseases, ask them to think about what would happen if they occurred today. How did people respond to pandemics, and what public health interventions followed such devastating outbreaks?

## >> Words, words, words

- Develop writing assignments with a preparedness focus. Ask your students to write creative stories, blog and journal entries or essays on preparedness and infectious diseases. Use news reports of current events as a tie-in to the assignment.

## >> Say it with art

- Deliver preparedness messages artistically. Have your students create works of art using different media such as clay, paint, pencil or photography depicting various aspects of preparedness. Display the works on the school campus, or hold a competition.

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## Get Ready tips:

### >> Teachers: Donate your time

- Here's one way to help your students and community be more prepared: Offer to serve as an advisor to a student group that wants to hold emergency preparedness activities.

Use the *Get Ready: Get Set* kit for ideas and activities.

If you do carry out a preparedness activity, let APHA know. Send us an e-mail at [pandemicflu@apha.org](mailto:pandemicflu@apha.org)



Photos and art courtesy Microsoft/iStockphoto

## Preparedness: Better to be safe than sorry

By Teddi Dineley Johnson

**D**isaster. The word alone can strike fear in your heart, and these days there are plenty of natural and manmade disasters to fear — earthquakes, extreme cold and heat, hurricanes, power outages, terrorism, tornadoes and tsunamis, to name a few. Of course, if you live in the middle of Kansas, chances are pretty slim that a tsunami will hit your town, but as Dorothy and Toto — two legendary Kansans — learned, tornados

The American Red Cross suggests you hold a family meeting to discuss the kinds of disasters that can happen. In an emergency, your family might be forced to evacuate, so decide on one or two spots where everyone will meet, such as just outside the house or apartment building, or at the entrance to the neighborhood. Also, ask an out-of-state friend or relative to be your family's contact person, and make sure everyone in the family knows the contact person's phone number.



happen, and escaping to Oz is not a practical disaster preparedness plan.

So what should you do to prepare for the worst? For starters, you don't have to prepare for each potential threat individually. The American Red Cross suggests an "all-hazards approach" to preparedness planning, says spokeswoman Tara Lynch, so don't get bogged down in the alphabet threat soup. There are three basic things you can do, she says, that are simple and effective and can apply to any disaster:

- 1 Have an emergency preparedness kit ready
- 2 Create a family communications and evacuation plan
- 3 Be informed

"Get to know the types of disasters that can happen in your community," Lynch says, "and be aware of the risks that could occur in your business, at your child's school, or in your community."



Make sure your family knows where to meet and how to reach one another in an emergency >>

**Safety tip:**  
In the event of a disaster such as a flood or hurricane, tap water may be unsafe to drink, so be sure to keep bottled water on hand.

But whether you're ordered to evacuate or shelter-in-place — a fancy term for "stay put" — you'll need to have some essential supplies on hand, so find an easy-to-carry container, such as a duffel bag or plastic trash can, and start preparing a disaster supply kit today. Just as you wouldn't begin a family trip without some prior planning and packing, you wouldn't want to find yourself in the midst of a disaster situation without an emergency kit!

### What to put in your emergency kit

The thought of packing an emergency supply kit overwhelms many people, Lynch says, but it shouldn't. The American Red Cross recommends doing it in stages rather than all at once.



You can start today by grabbing an extra bottle of water or batteries the next time you go to the grocery store.

"You'll be amazed at how much progress you can make," Lynch says.

But whatever you pack, into the mix must go the "big six," which the American Red Cross says are absolutely imperative: bottled water; non-perishable food; a battery-operated or hand-cranked radio; flashlights (make sure you have extra batteries for both the radio and flashlight); medications, including first aid supplies; and copies of important documents, such as your driver's license and insurance papers, in a resealable plastic bag.

There are many other items you'll think of based on your family's needs, including extra clothes, blankets, diapers, pet food, denture needs, contact lens solution or insulin and other prescription drugs. If you have a condition that requires refrigerated medications, talk to your doctor and plan accordingly.



### Food for thought

**T**o be prepared, you need to store at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food and water. Plan on one gallon of water per person per day.

Remember: The power might be out, so steer clear of foods that require refrigeration or cooking, or foods that require water for preparation. If you're a potato chip or pretzel addict, keep in mind that water will be in short supply, and salty foods will make you thirsty. Still, choose foods you'll want to eat, Lynch says. For example, "If you hated peanut butter anyway, you're not going to want to eat it in the middle of a disaster," she notes.

Here's a shopping list to get you started: Canned food, nuts, dried fruit, peanut butter, crackers, cereal, energy bars, bottled water, juice boxes, and non-perishable pasteurized milk.

And don't forget to put a hand-operated can opener in your emergency food kit!

### Protecting your pets

Just as Dorothy looked out for Toto when she evacuated — tucking him into her basket — you, too, should plan ahead for your pet's needs. Like humans, pets require at least a three-day supply of food and water. Pet food should be stored in an airtight, waterproof container. When packing, consider each pet's needs, such as litter for the cat, or bedding for the bunny. If you must evacuate, take your pets with you. Keep in mind, however, that many disaster shelters don't accept pets, so you'll need to plan ahead for a safe haven. For more information about disaster preparedness for pets, visit the Humane Society of America's Web site at [www.hsus.org](http://www.hsus.org).



>> For more preparedness tips, visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) or [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org).



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# SET YOUR CLOCKS

# CHECK YOUR STOCKS



## Your emergency preparedness stockpile: What you need to know

Emergencies — such as tornadoes, floods, storms, earthquakes or even disease outbreaks — can happen unexpectedly. You may be without electricity, refrigeration, clean tap water or phone service for days or weeks. In some cases, such as during a disease outbreak, you may be asked to stay home to keep safe. That's why having an emergency preparedness stockpile is important.



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### What should I put in my emergency preparedness stockpile?

All Americans should have at least a three-day supply of food and water stored in their homes, with at least one gallon of water per person per day. If you have the space, experts recommend a week's supply of food and water. Choose foods that don't require refrigeration and are not high in salt. Your stockpile should also contain flashlights, a manual can opener, a radio, batteries and copies of important documents. Depending on your family's needs, you may also need medical supplies, pet food, contact lens solution or diapers.

If it's too expensive for you to buy everything for your stockpile at once, pick up one or two items every time you go to the grocery store. Stock up on canned vegetables or batteries when there is a sale. Bulk "club" stores can also help you save money on your supplies, especially if you split a case with a friend, co-worker or neighbor, who can serve as your "preparedness buddy."



vegetables or batteries when there is a sale. Bulk "club" stores can also help you save money on your supplies, especially if you split a case with a friend, co-worker or neighbor, who can serve as your "preparedness buddy."

Once you've assembled your stockpile, put it where you won't be tempted to "borrow" from it the next time you run out of batteries or need beans for a recipe. Remember: Your stockpile is for emergencies!



### How do I store my emergency preparedness stockpile?

#### Get Ready Stockpiling Tip

When it's time to change your clocks for daylight saving time, check your emergency preparedness stockpile. Replace anything that is expired or missing.

It's best to store your stockpile somewhere that is easy to access during an emergency. A cool, dark place is ideal. Be sure not to store your food close to any solvents or cleaners that can leak or transfer fumes, or in an area of the house that is at risk for flooding.

Keep your supplies together in a box or plastic bin that can be kept tightly closed to protect contents from humidity or pests. It's also handy to keep all your supplies together in case you have to evacuate quickly, such as during a hurricane. In a pinch, a laundry basket can make an easy storage container.

If you live in an apartment or small home and are short on space, be creative. Compact wrapping paper bins can be used to store canned food. Risers can make more space under the bed. Many people also have unused space behind or under the sofa. Have a dishwasher but don't use it? Make the most of the empty space by storing your supplies there!

## How often do I need to refresh or rotate my stockpile?

It's best to check your emergency preparedness stockpile once or twice a year. If you need a reminder, take a lesson from APHA's Get Ready: Set Your Clocks, Check Your Stocks campaign. When it's time to change your clocks for daylight saving time, take a look at your emergency preparedness stockpile. Discard anything that has expired or is leaking or damaged. If you've borrowed items from your stockpile, make sure to replenish them. Place the newer items in the back of your stockpile and rotate the older items to the front. You can even use stickers to mark the dates when you added supplies to your stockpile.

Don't forget to check the batteries in your smoke detectors as well when you change your clocks!



## How can I tell if the supplies in my stockpile are still good?



The easiest way to tell if your foods are still usable is expiration dates. Bottled water can go bad eventually, so look for the stamped date on your water containers. Experts recommend rotating your bottled water supply every six months.

Sometimes canned foods don't have expiration dates or have dates that aren't legible. So how to tell if the food is still good? According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, high-acid canned foods such as tomatoes, grapefruit and pineapple can be stored for a year to 18 months. Low-acid canned foods such as meat, poultry, fish and most vegetables will keep two to five years if stored properly.

Beyond expiration dates, you should physically examine the contents of your stockpile to make sure they are still fresh. Check that none of your boxes or food containers have signs of pests or have been crushed or have opened. On cans, look for rust, bulging, punctures, dents or leaks. Never eat any food if its packaging or contents has come into contact with flood water or has been in a fire. Look for leaks or corrosion on batteries and dispose of them carefully, recycling them if possible.

For more tips on creating your emergency preparedness stockpile, visit [www.getreadyforflu.org/clocksstocks](http://www.getreadyforflu.org/clocksstocks)



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# SET YOUR CLOCKS

# CHECK YOUR STOCKS



## My emergency preparedness stockpile checklist

Pack the following items in a clearly labeled, easy-to-carry, sealable container and store them in a place that is easy to access. Check your stockpile once or twice a year. A good rule of thumb is to check your stockpile when you change your clocks for daylight saving time. Replace any supplies that are missing or have expired or have been damaged.



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### Emergency supplies

- Flashlight and batteries
- Manual can opener
- Battery-operated radio (and batteries) or hand-cranked radio
- Matches in waterproof container
- Utility knife
- Paper and pencil
- Cash, traveler's checks and coins
- Paper cups, plates, plastic utensils, paper towels
- Garbage bags
- Pet food
- Whistle
- Small, canister ABC-type fire extinguisher
- Needles, thread
- Plastic sheeting
- Duct tape, scissors
- Extra set of keys and IDs
- Local maps



- Small tent, compass and shovel
- Household chlorine bleach and medicine dropper

*When diluted nine parts water to one part bleach, this can be used as a disinfectant. In an emergency, you can use it to treat water by using 16 drops of regular household liquid bleach per gallon of water. Do not use bleach with added cleaners or bleach that is scented.*

### Food and water



- Three days worth of drinking water, with one gallon of water per person per day. Do not stockpile soda.
- Three-day supply per person of non-perishable foods. Take into consideration special dietary needs. Avoid salty foods that make you thirsty and include canned foods with high liquid content.

## First aid and emergency medical kit

- First aid manual
- Bandages, including gauze and bandage tape
- Germicidal hand wipes or alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Antiseptic wipes
- Non-latex gloves
- Antibacterial ointment
- Scissors (small, personal)
- Tweezers
- CPR breathing barrier, such as a face shield
- Prescription medications (such as heart and blood pressure medications or asthma inhalers) and medical supplies, such as insulin and blood-pressure monitoring equipment, if applicable
- Non-prescription medication, such as acetaminophen, ibuprofen, anti-diarrhea medicine, antacids and laxatives



## Personal items

- Extra prescription eyeglasses, if applicable
- Denture and contact lens supplies, if applicable
- Hearing aid batteries, if applicable
- Diapers and infant supplies, if applicable
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person. Additional bedding if you live in a cold-weather climate.
- Complete change of clothing for each person, including a long-sleeved shirt, long pants and sturdy shoes. If you live in a cold climate, add jacket or coat, hat, mittens and scarf.
- Moist towelettes, feminine hygiene supplies, latex gloves and other items for personal sanitation

## Important documents: Store in waterproof, portable container

- Birth, marriage and death certificates
- Insurance policies and will
- Contracts, deeds, stocks and bonds
- Passports, Social Security cards
- Immunization records
- Bank account numbers, credit card account numbers and company contact information
- Prescription information
- Inventory of valuable household goods
- Veterinary records for pets, as well as pet photos

For more tips on creating your emergency preparedness stockpile, visit [www.getreadyforflu.org](http://www.getreadyforflu.org)

