



Disaster Checklist

Every day we see news about severe storms and wildfires. Is your family prepared? How about your business? You need supplies for all the possible people you will have to shelter. Make sure you have enough.

Please share this with your family and business associates.

___ Family / Business Communications Plan

- ✓ Write down critical cell and landline numbers in case your phone dies
- ✓ Know where your family members or business colleagues will meet if cell towers and landline phones go out
- ✓ Designate an out-of-area relative everyone should contact if they can't reach each other
- ✓ For your business, complete a contact sheet for all workforce members, including their personal e-mail address, their spouse/partner contact info, and an out-of-area contact you can call if you can't reach your employee

___ Water - Water systems may be contaminated and unsafe for 3 or more days

- ✓ Buy cases of water or fill pots and pitchers with drinking water – 1 gallon per day per person
- ✓ Store 10 gallons of clean water for cooking
- ✓ Use food-grade water containers from camping stores
- ✓ Replace the water every six months if not using commercially bottled water
- ✓ Never use water from toilet flush tanks or bowls, radiators, waterbeds, or swimming pools/spas.
- ✓ Purchase LifeStraw water purifiers to filter contaminated water

___ Food

- ✓ Store non-perishable food you don't have to cook
- ✓ Include food needed for special diets
- ✓ Store non-perishable food for your pets

___ Utilities

- ✓ Know how to turn off your electric, water, and gas services
- ✓ Keep tools near your shutoffs for quick action
- ✓ Never turn on your utilities until authorized
- ✓ Always have a professional turn your gas back on

___ Cash - Credit cards won't work if power and communications go down.

- ✓ Withdraw \$ 200 - \$ 300 in small bills so you can make cash purchases

___ Automobile - gas pumps won't work if power fails

- ✓ Fill your gas tank when you first hear a warning
- ✓ Don't drain your car battery charging cell phones or other devices
- ✓ Keep an emergency kit in your car in case you are stranded away from home

___ Cell phones

- ✓ Register your cell phone to receive calls from your county's emergency management system
- ✓ Install weather and disaster preparedness apps and configure for alert notifications
- ✓ Text messages use less battery and get through when calls can't
- ✓ Photograph the contents of your house or business now and every 6 months (or after major changes)
- ✓ Store emergency contact info for family members and employees, including alternate e-mail contacts and phone numbers for their close friends and relatives in case you can't reach them directly
- ✓ Charge and bring all your external batteries to keep your cell phone powered– keep them charged
- ✓ Pack your car charger and home charger if you evacuate
- ✓ Extend your battery by turning off wi-fi and other services you aren't using
- ✓ Solar chargers will work when power is out for extended periods
- ✓ Learn how to set up your cell phone as a personal Internet hotspot

____ **Computers**

- ✓ Back up critical data onto external hard drives or the cloud
- ✓ If you have to evacuate take critical equipment with you, or seal it in garbage bags and store it in a high spot to protect against water damage
- ✓ Pack your laptop charger if you evacuate
- ✓ For businesses, do a test-restore of your backup files every quarter to ensure that (a) the backups will work during an emergency and (b) all critical data is backed up. Don't just move files- make sure your business functions will work in the backup environment

____ **Generators** - can use 7 – 10 gallons of gasoline PER DAY

- ✓ Use gasoline or propane generators - communities may turn off natural gas service prior to a disaster
- ✓ Plan your needs to be sure you can power heating, refrigerators, lights, and television for 7 days
- ✓ Store gasoline in safe containers with fuel stabilizer. Replace stored gas every 6 – 10 months
- ✓ During disaster turn generator off for maximum use but enough to keep food cold
- ✓ Buy a siphon to 'borrow' fuel for your generator from cars and mowers

____ **Evacuation**

- ✓ Have a backpack or overnight bag pre-packed with clothes, medications, sweatshirt and sweatpants; energy/meal replacement bars; emergency blankets (look in the camping supply areas of sporting goods or department store;) sanitation and hygiene items (hand sanitizer, moist towelettes, and toilet paper;) photocopies of identification and credit cards; special needs items such as prescription medications, eye glasses, contact lens solution, and hearing aid batteries; items for infants, such as formula, diapers, bottles, and pacifiers.
- ✓ Follow instructions to shut off water, gas, and electricity before you leave
- ✓ Know your evacuation routes before you go. Print out directions from your county emergency mgt. website

____ **Hand-crank weather radio**

- ✓ Purchase one at Lowes, Home Depot, Sam's, Costco, or Walmart
- ✓ Make sure the radio has SAME alerting so you will only receive alerts for your local area.
- ✓ These also charge cell phones through a USB cable

____ **Batteries**

- ✓ Enough for flashlights, lanterns, radios for 1 week

____ **Flashlights/LED lanterns**

- ✓ No need for fuel or mantles; safer than candles
- ✓ Some lanterns come with removable LED flashlights

____ **Common Sense**

- ✓ Evacuate if your local government issues an order
- ✓ Don't drive through flooded streets
- ✓ Stay away from downed wires

____ **Don't panic**

- ✓ Practice your disaster response so everyone knows what to expect
- ✓ Keep your cool for your own safety and your family's



Mike Semel is a Certified Business Continuity Professional. Semel Consulting has helped hundreds of businesses create effective Business Continuity plans that have helped them survive SuperStorm Sandy, the Joplin tornado, and many small disasters and business interruptions you never heard of. For help creating your plan, or if you have questions about disaster preparedness for your family or business, visit www.semelconsulting.com.