



## Countryside Public Health

1-800-657-3291

Big Stone, Chippewa Lac-qui-Parle, Swift and  
Yellow Medicine Counties

# Preparing for Emergencies

Preparedness is everyone's job. Every individual or family should have a plan for how they will respond to emergencies, just as government agencies, business, schools, and other service groups have been working on their emergency plans. Each person must be ready to act on their own. One of the keys for the safety of your family is to be prepared for the first 24 to 72 hours of an emergency. Start today to prepare for an emergency.

### **Make an Emergency Plan:**

Plan in advance what you will do in an emergency.

- Discuss with your family the types of emergencies that may occur. Plan what to do in each case.
- Identify places for your family to meet: One in the home, one outside the home for things like fire and one place outside of the neighborhood if you must evacuate the area.
- Find out your employer, school and day care provider emergency procedures.
- Ask a relative or friend who lives out of the area to be your family's contact person. In an emergency, all family members should contact this person and tell them where they are.
- Talk with family members and loved ones about how they would be cared for if they got sick, or what will be needed to care for them in your home.
- Have a list of current family health information: allergies, medications, children's weights, ages/birthdates
- Make plans for the care of your pets.
- Volunteer with local groups to prepare and assist with emergency response.

### **Make an Emergency Kit:**

- Store a supply of water and food. During an emergency, if you cannot get to a store, or if stores are out of supplies, it will be important for you to have extra supplies on hand.
- Ask your doctor and insurance company if you can get an extra supply of your regular prescription drugs.
- Have any nonprescription drugs and other health supplies on hand, including pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, fluids with electrolytes, and vitamins.
- Store the emergency kit in a backpack or sturdy bag that you may grab if you need to leave your home in an emergency.

**To limit the spread of germs and prevent infection:**

- Teach your family to wash hands frequently with soap and water, and model the correct behavior.
- Teach your family to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues, and be sure to model that behavior.
- Stay away from others as much as possible if you are sick. Stay home from work and school if sick.

**Be Informed About What to Do in an Emergency**

Listen to the radio and television for current information and instructions.

**Learn about emergencies/disasters and how to be prepared:**

**Websites**

- **U.S. Dept of Homeland Security:** [www.ready.gov/get-informed.html](http://www.ready.gov/get-informed.html)
- **The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) :** [www.bt.cdc.gov](http://www.bt.cdc.gov)
- **Minnesota Department of Health:** [www.health.state.mn.us](http://www.health.state.mn.us),
- **ECHO-Emergency and Community Health Outreach (multilingual):**  
[www.echominnesota.org](http://www.echominnesota.org)
- **American Red Cross, Disaster Services:** [www.redcross.org/services.disaster](http://www.redcross.org/services.disaster)

Locally: Contact Countryside Public Health for more information: 1-800-657-3291

or

Big Stone County	320-839-6135
Chippewa County	320-269-2174
Lac qui Parle County	320-598-7313
Swift County	320-843-4546
Yellow Medicine County	320-564-3010

## **Your Family Emergency Kit:**

**The Family Emergency Kit needs to include enough supplies for your family for least 3 days. The items listed below could be gathered at the time of impending emergency.**

- Water-nine gallons per person( replace every six months for freshness)
- Three day supply of food: ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits, vegetables, soups, protein or fruit bars, dry cereal, granola, peanut butter, nuts, dried fruits, crackers, canned juices, baby food, formula ( replace every six months for freshness)
- Battery powered radio or TV
- Batteries
- Flashlights
- Candles and matches/lighter
- Paper, pencils/pens
- Personal hygiene items
- One complete change of clothing and footwear for each person
- Medical Supplies:
  - ❖ Thermometer
  - ❖ Medicines for fever, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen
  - ❖ Anti-diarrheal medication
  - ❖ Soap and alcohol-based hand wash
  - ❖ Fluids with electrolytes
  - ❖ Prescribed medications
  - ❖ Band-aids, antibiotic ointment, gauze and tape
- Manual can opener and other basic kitchen accessories
- Garbage bags
- Tissues, toilet paper
- Special items for infants, elderly or disabled
- ID cards and photos for everyone in the family
- Cash, Credit Cards, Social Security numbers, Health Insurance Card
- Books, games and toys for entertainment
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Whistle to signal for help