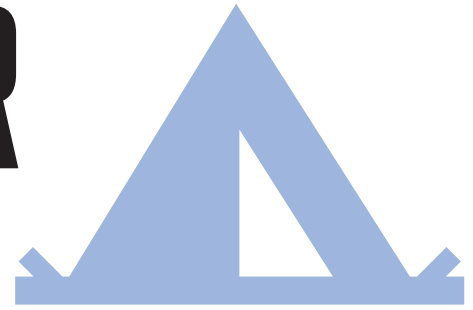


# 6

# SHELTER PLAN



A shelter plan helps you prepare for a variety of safe locations following a disaster. Whether you shelter inside or outside your home, in a community shelter, or with family and friends, you need to be prepared to shelter for up to two weeks following a disaster.

## QUICK-START STEPS

- How to Make Your Place Safer
- Sheltering in Place
- Sheltering Away from Home
- Pet Evacuation Checklist
- Safety Measures

## HOW TO MAKE YOUR PLACE SAFER

Be aware of any hazards in your place. Once you know your hazards, you can take steps to make your place safer. For example, to reduce risk during an earthquake you should secure items such as bookcases and dressers to the wall and lock the rollers of any large appliances or pieces of furniture. It's easiest to break up your projects into three categories:

1. Things you can do right away.
2. Things you can do with a little more time and resources, such as money or equipment.
3. Things that will take even more time and resources, such as working with your landlord or a contractor.

## SHELTERING IN PLACE

Sheltering in place means you shelter where you normally live and severely restrict or eliminate outside travel. You may be urged to shelter in place in the event of a pandemic, hazardous material spill or radiological incident. Many of the things you've already learned in the previous units come together in the shelter plan.



In addition to supplies outlined in Your Emergency Plan, Food Plan, Water Plan, and Waste and Hygiene Plan, you'll want to gather the following:

### Options to light your way:



- Flashlights with fully charged batteries and backup batteries.
- Headlamps with fully charged batteries and backup batteries for a hands-free option.
- Solar or hand-cranked lanterns that don't require batteries.

### First-aid kit:



- Assemble your own or buy one pre-made.

### Maps:



- Have both a map of the area where you live and areas where you'll evacuate if you need to leave. Downed trees or flooded streets may force you to find a different way across town.
- Have an option that's not battery-dependent.



### Adjustable pipe or crescent wrench:

- These will be needed to shut off utilities.



### Multi-tool:

- A good multi-tool, such as a Swiss Army Knife, includes a knife blade, screwdrivers, scissors and a can opener, providing countless uses during an emergency.

### Radio:



- If the power grid goes down, you might not be able to get the latest news on your smartphone. A simple battery-powered weather radio that picks up AM, FM and NOAA radio bands can help you stay updated on the current weather and emergency conditions.
- There are solar-powered and hand-crank options available that don't need batteries.

### Duct tape:



- This multi-purpose tape can be very useful.

### Dust masks:



- These may help filter contaminated air and guard against airborne diseases.

### Fire extinguisher:



- Some extinguishers are only good for certain types of fires, such as electrical, grease or gas. ABC extinguishers are designed for safe use on any type of fire, but they can only put out small fires (like a small trashcan).
- Have one on each floor of your dwelling and one in a weather-protected area outside.
- Teach everyone in the household how to use them properly.
- Your local fire department can show you how to properly use an extinguisher.



### **Sleeping bags and blankets:**

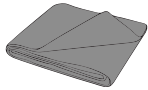
- Insulated sleeping bags are an ideal option but will likely cost more than blankets.

### **Personal needs items:**



- Keep a supply of special needs items, such as medications, extra eyeglasses, contact lens solutions, hearing aid batteries, menstrual hygiene products, items for infants (formula, diapers, bottles, pacifiers), toys, games, books, your children's favorite stuffed animal and any other items unique to your household.
- Buckets for emergency toilets.

### **Plastic sheeting:**



- These can be used to provide privacy for drying clothes or using the toilet.
- Plastic sheeting with a thickness of 4 to 6 millimeters (0.004 to 0.006 inches) or greater is recommended to seal around doors and windows, heating vents or any opening that could let in air.

### **Go-bag:**



- All members of a dwelling should have a go-bag of minimal essential items within easy reach in case you must evacuate quickly. Many items that should be in your go-bag are listed above.
- Be careful not to make these too heavy to carry.
- Having quick access to your go-bag will make evacuation and sheltering elsewhere a bit easier.
- Refer to page 81 for more information on how to build a go-bag.

Sometimes it's not safe for you to stay indoors following a disaster, and you may need to camp in your backyard or nearby outdoor community space. You'll need everything outlined above, plus the following supplies:

### **Tents or tarps:**



- A tent or tarp tied between trees, fences, etc., will help shield you from wind and weather, no matter if it's raining, snowing or hot.

### **Rope:**



- Clotheslines can be useful for many purposes, including setting up outdoor shelters.
- Rope should never be used near outdoor flames.

### **Matches in a waterproof container:**



- These will help limit your dependence on potentially volatile liquid or gas fuel sources for cooking or making an outdoor campfire.

If you look around your place, you'll find you most likely already have many of these items.

## SHELTERING AWAY FROM HOME

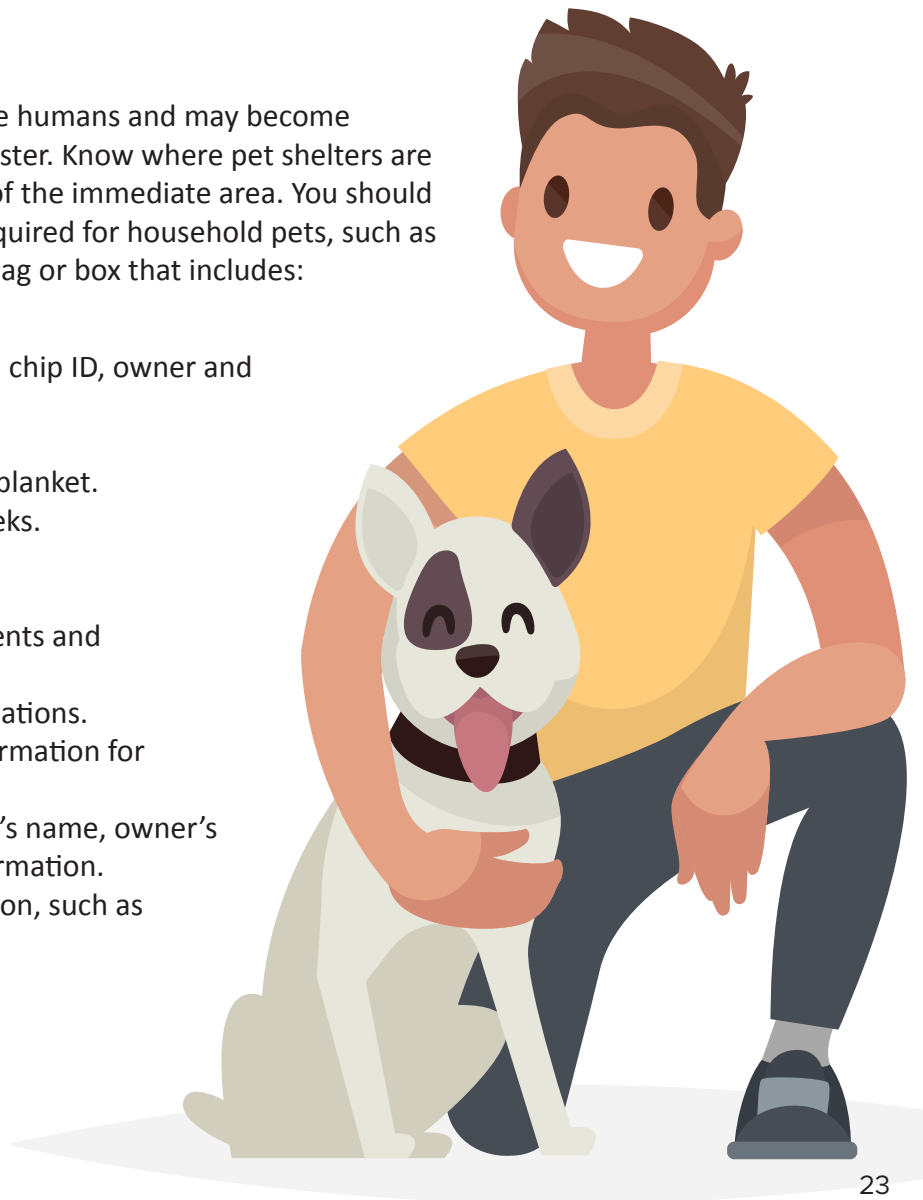
While staying in or close to your own living space is always preferable, disasters may require you to shelter in a safe environment elsewhere. This might include a community shelter or the home of a family member or friend. You should have a variety of options identified to be ready for almost any situation. Here's what you need to do if you must shelter away from home:

- Know the locations of several community shelters.
- Discuss in advance the possible need for sheltering with family and friends who live elsewhere.
- Take only the minimal essentials. Shelters will have food and water supplies, as well as toilet facilities, but you'll want personal items. This is true of children and those with special needs.
- Sign up with your county or tribal emergency management office to receive local emergency alerts in your area: Visit [www.oralert.gov](http://www.oralert.gov).
- Turn on Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) on your cell phone.
- Know where you and your household will go and how you'd get there.
- Identify evacuation routes from home, work, school and the surrounding neighborhood.
- Print out a map and highlight at least two alternate routes to your work, school, daycare and home, and keep it in your go-bag.

## PET EVACUATION CHECKLIST

Animals often sense danger before humans and may become nervous before an impending disaster. Know where pet shelters are in both your community and out of the immediate area. You should also consider any special items required for household pets, such as reptiles or birds. Create a pet go-bag or box that includes:

- Crate (if applicable).
- Collar with pet's name, chip ID, owner and phone number.
- Leash.
- Favorite toy and small blanket.
- Food for up to two weeks.
- Feeding dishes.
- Pet waste bags.
- Medications, supplements and all instructions.
- Written proof of vaccinations.
- Name and contact information for your veterinarian.
- Photo labeled with pet's name, owner's name and contact information.
- Any essential information, such as allergies or phobias.



## SAFETY MEASURES

Assume there's been an earthquake and people in your household have taken protective actions such as *Drop, Cover and Hold On*, or alternate measures for people with access and functional needs. Once the shaking has stopped, you need to make sure it's safe for you to stay inside and shelter in place. Here are the safety measures you should take:

### Check on everyone in your home and respond to injuries:

- Find where the people in your household may be. Let each other know if you're safe or need immediate help.
- If anyone has stopped breathing, follow the American Red Cross' guidelines on CPR at [www.redcross.org/take-a-class/cpr/performing-cpr/cpr-steps](http://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/cpr/performing-cpr/cpr-steps).
- Stop any bleeding injury by applying direct pressure to the wound.
- Do not move seriously injured people unless they are in immediate danger of further injury.
- Cover injured people with blankets to keep them warm.

### Listen for emergency updates and news reports:

- Your emergency radio will notify you of blocked roads (in case you need to evacuate), boil water advisories (in case area water supplies may be contaminated), and other important facilities that may not be available due to damage, such as hospitals, food stores, etc.



### Be aware of other dangers, such as aftershocks and tsunamis:

- **Aftershocks** are likely to occur after a major earthquake. These secondary earthquakes are usually less violent than the initial earthquake, but they can be strong enough to cause additional damage. It may be aftershocks that make it unsafe for you to shelter inside, even if you determined it was safe at first.
- **Tsunamis** are possible if you live in a coastal area. If you feel the ground shake, assume that a series of dangerous waves is on the way. If you're near the coastline, move inland to higher ground as quickly as possible.

### Wear shoes:

- This will help you avoid injuries you could get from stepping on sharp objects that have fallen and broken. Put on shoes before checking for safety issues (both inside and out).
- Keep a pair of shoes under your bed that you can reach during a disaster.

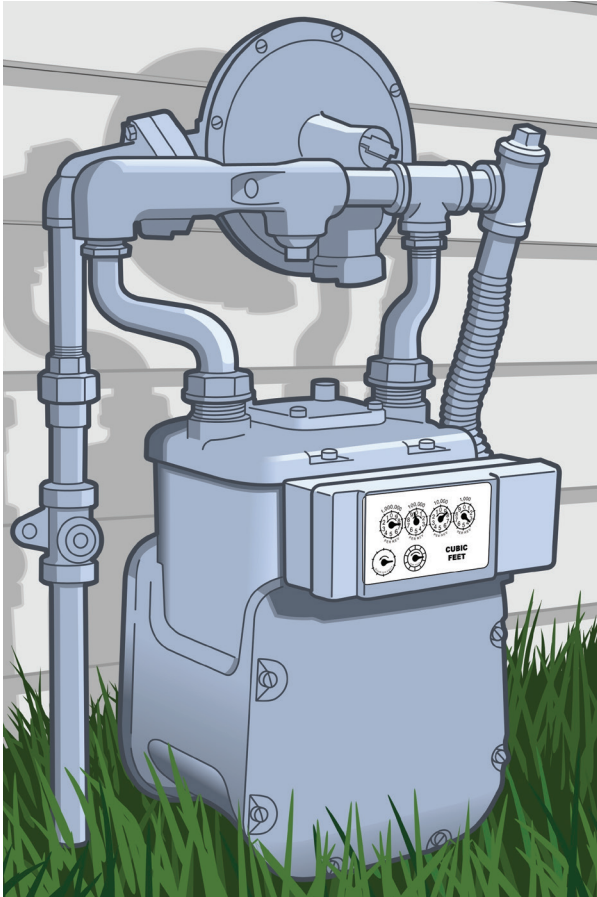


### Extinguish small fires or evacuate to safety:

- If it's not possible to extinguish a fire, you must evacuate immediately.
- Try to contact the fire department but understand they may not be able to get to you in time during widespread disasters.
- Warn your neighbors of the fire, especially if there are gas supplies or lines nearby.

## Turn flashlights on **ONLY WHEN OUTSIDE:**

- Batteries can produce a spark that could ignite leaking gas inside your dwelling.



## Shut off utility services:

- In the event of an earthquake, you may be told to shut off utility services. Teach capable, responsible members of your household how to turn off the gas, electricity, and water at valves and main switches.
- If you smell gas or see a broken line, shut off the main valve from outside. Do not switch on the electricity again until the power company has first checked your home.
- If the gas is turned off, a professional must turn it back on.
- Never search for gas leaks with a lighted match.
- Plug bathtub and sink drains to prevent sewage backup.
- Contact your local utility company if you need more information **BEFORE** a disaster, since you may not be able to reach them during a disaster.
- Refer to page 80 for steps on how to shut off your utilities.

## Check for structural cracks and damage:

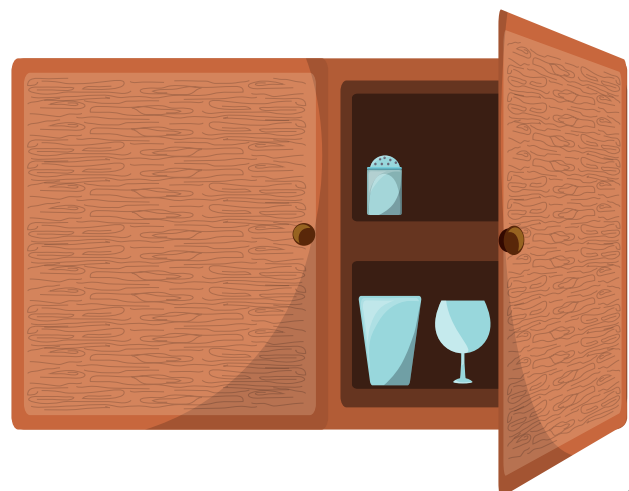
- Look around chimneys and brick walls.
- Leave immediately if it looks like the structure might collapse.
- Be aware of broken glass.

## Check water and food supplies and appliances for damage:

- Throw away all food that may be spoiled. Prioritize what should be consumed first, such as dairy products.
- Do not use any appliances that are damaged, even if you still have electricity, as this can present fire hazards.

## Check closets and cupboards:

- Open doors cautiously, as objects can fall off shelves.



**Clean up spilled medicines, bleach, gasoline and other flammable liquids:**

- Do not put gasoline-soaked rags in a tightly closed container, as it could catch fire.
- You can add soiled rags with undrinkable water in a metal can, such as a coffee can. If you don't have water to spare, you can use a screwdriver to punch holes in the bottom and sides of the can for ventilation. Put the rags inside and attach the lid.
- This can should be stored outside, away from children, pets and anywhere you may cook.
- No one who smokes should be near these cans to avoid fire.
- Do not place these cans near campfires.
- Do not mix different types of soiled rags in the same container.
- Do not bury spilled medicines or put them in the toilet or sink for later disposal. This can contaminate water supplies. Put them in a disposable container or bag for disposal at a safe drop-off location later.



**Do not use your car unless you must evacuate:**

- Do not go sightseeing through damaged areas, as this will interfere with relief efforts.
- Keep streets clear for emergency vehicles.

There's a lot to know about making a shelter plan. Take it one step at a time and do what you can when you can. You'll get there!

**ACTIVITIES: Pages 79-82**

