**Be Prepared: Have a Family Emergency Plan**

When disasters occur, being prepared will make a big difference in what happens when a crisis occurs. Depending on where you are at the time of a disaster, whether it is a flood, tornado, ice storms or fire, and whether you are staying where you are or are evacuating, it is important to be ready and prepared. At some point, we are all going to face something as inconvenient as a few hours without electricity or as devastating as Hurricane Harvey.

Organizations and churches and after school programs can create basic emergency supply kits. Members along with their family can personalize the kits with specific information. These groups and programs can discuss how to support families and communities when catastrophic events occur.

A family emergency kit can sustain your family for 72 hours. These can be assembled in an accessible plastic bin or water proof duffle bag. As you build your kit, place items in labeled, easy-to-seal plastic bags. A basic family emergency kit can include the following items.

* One gallon of water per person for at least three days – this is both for drinking and for sanitation.
* Medications and non-prescription medications such as pain relievers, anti-diarrhea, contact lens solution, personal hygiene items, etc.
* Towels, sleeping bag or blanket for each person.
* Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation.
* Items such as infant formula, diapers or special items family members may need.
* Non-perishable food and a manual can opener for food.
* Paper cups, plastic utensils, paper towels.
* Basic home tools such as a wrench or pliers for turning off utilities, scissors, duct tape for sealing windows and doors, flashlight with batteries, a large plastic sheet or tablecloth.
* Extra batteries of various sizes.
* A portable radio.
* Whistle to notify location and signal for help.
* House hold chlorine bleach and medicine dropper to disinfect water.
* Paper, pencils, games, cards, puzzles and other activities.
* Multiple charging devices and a backup battery for mobile devices.
* Dust masks for family members.
* Important family documents, such as insurance policies and cards, identification, save electronically or in a water proof portfolio or envelope.

Pets are often overlooked when creating a family emergency plan. Since over 50 percent of all homes have at least one pet, you should consider all family members. Having a pet preparedness kit includes the following:

* Your pet’s regular food in water-proof, clear plastic bags.
* Water
* Leash and collar
* Non-breakable, plastic or light weight bowls.

Additionally in a plastic water proof bag include:

* Photo of your pet or identification, and a photo of you with your pet.
* Information if your pet has been “chipped.”
* Medications your pet needs.
* Immunization and vet records (keep both updated)
* First aid kit.
* Contact list of pet-friendly hotels, veterinarians and out-of-town friends and family.
* Toys, rope and sanitation bags.
* Pet carrier.

For more resources about Disaster Preparedness and Recover visit this website: <https://texashelp.tamu.edu/browse/disaster-recovery-information>