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Evacuation “Grab and Go” Box

Often we are not prepared for the unpredictable moments that happen in our lives. Whether it is a natural or man-made disaster, we need to be ready to handle whatever emergency that might arise. We have learned from the past few years how important it is to have an Emergency Preparedness Plan in place.

One important thing to do is to create an Evacuation “Grab and Go” Box. This box will contain numerous important documents that you will need in the event of a major disaster. Your “Grab and Go” Box should include the following items:

- Cash or traveler’s checks for several days living expenses.
- Rolls of quarters.
- Emergency phone numbers: doctors, pharmacy, family, etc.
- Copies of prescriptions.
- Copies of children’s immunization records.
- Copies of health, dental, and/or prescription insurance cards and numbers.
- Copies of car, homeowner, flood, or renter’s insurance policies.
- Insurance companies telephone numbers.
- Copies of: deeds, titles, wills and/or trust documents, durable power of attorney, healthcare directives, stock and bond certificates, recent investment statements, home inventory, birth, death, adoption and marriage certificates, passports and other identity documents, employee benefit documents, and previous year’s federal income tax return.
- Back-up copies of computerized financial records.
- Keys to safe deposit box.
- Combination to safe.
- Negatives for irreplaceable personal photos.
- Computer user names and passwords.
- List of numbers: Social Security, Bank Accounts, Loans, Credit Cards, Driver’s License, and Investment Accounts.
- List of debt obligations, due dates, and contact information.

These items should be stored in sealed, waterproof plastic bags and stored in a durable, sealed box. A portable, fireproof and waterproof box is recommended. Keep in mind these are all very sensitive documents and you should be careful where you store this box in your home, in the event of a burglary. You don’t want this information to get into the hands of other people.

If you must flee your home and take this box with you, remember to never leave it in your car or unattended. Keep it with you at all times.

It is also recommended you keep the original important documents in a safe deposit box located at your local financial institution. This will eliminate stressful situations if you are unable to take your “Grab and Go” Box with you. You should also inform a family member of your box, is beneficial in the event of injury or if families become separated.

For more useful information on this topic, please visit the Texas AgriLife Extension Service website at <http://texashelp.tamu.edu>. Or contact our office for assistance at 903/473-5000, ext. 160.

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