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Most of us don’t spend a lot of time thinking about preparing for a fire, flood, or other kind of emergency. We count on our first responders to swoop in and save the day. And that’s what they do. But there are steps we can all take to make ourselves better prepared.

Being prepared can reduce the fear, anxiety, and losses that can be part of a disaster. Communities, families, and individuals should know what to do in an emergency. Emergency preparedness refers to the preventive measures taken to reduce the effects of a disaster on your property, family, and life. The goal of being prepared is to lessen the impact when something bad happens.

It starts with having a plan that includes actions and items that your family need to take no matter where they are; home, school, work, or elsewhere.

Knowing what to do in an emergency is just as important as recovering and returning to your everyday life.

This Preparedness Guide is designed to help you be resilient and self-reliant until emergency responders can arrive, whether you are sheltering-in-place, in your home or having to evacuate.

We hope you never find yourself in that type of situation, but just in case, please take the time to review this information.

Thank you,

Josh Maxwell  
Chair

Marian Moskowitz  
Vice Chair

Eric Roe  
Commissioner
Most of the U.S. is at risk for severe weather, which can cause dangerous and sometimes life-threatening conditions. Snowstorms, extreme cold, high intensity winds, torrential rains, flooding, and lightning can all wreak havoc on our daily schedules. Preparing before a disaster strikes and knowing what to do during and after a storm will help ensure you and your family greatly reduce your risk for injury and damage to your home.

1. Check your emergency kit and replenish any items missing or in short supply, especially medications or other medical supplies. Keep it nearby.

2. Turn Around, Don’t Drown! Just 6 inches of moving water can knock you down, and one foot of moving water can sweep your vehicle away.

3. Secure items outside - like trash cans and patio furniture.

4. Check on your neighbors and family to make sure they’re okay.

5. Listen to local officials by radio, TV, or Social Media.

6. Know what to do before, during, and after severe weather. Find out more at ready.gov

7. Develop and practice an evacuation and communications plan in case of a severe weather event. Include a plan for pets and add any transportation routes and destinations in the plan.

8. Be prepared to evacuate when authorities tell you to do so.

9. Always assume fallen power lines are energized. Stay away from the area and report any downed lines to authorities immediately.

10. If not plugged into surge protectors, unplug appliances and other electrical items, such as computers and televisions, to prevent damage from surges caused by lightning strikes.

11. If you evacuated, do not return to your home until local authorities say it is safe.

12. Plan two ways out of the home in case of an emergency. Clear driveway and front walk of ice and snow. This will provide easy access to and from your home.

13. Make sure your house number can be seen from the street. This will make it easier for first responders to find you if you need help.
1. Propane, Ethane, and Butane are highly flammable products. They can be ignited by heat, sparks or flames under the right circumstances.

2. Vapors from these products are initially heavier than air and can spread along the ground. The vapors can travel to a source of ignition and flashing back.

3. At high enough concentrations, vapors from these products can cause dizziness or asphyxiation without warning.

4. The material being carried through the pipelines is unrefined product. While an odorant, such as mercaptan, is not being added to the products, there is a possibility there will be a petroleum odor from the product in the event of a leak.

More reliable signs of a leak include:
1. Dead vegetation;
2. Liquid or fire on the ground near the pipeline;
3. Continuous bubbling in wet or flooded areas;
4. Dense white cloud or fog; and
5. Hissing, gurgling, or roaring sounds.

If residents see evidence of a pipeline leak, they should:
1. Move away from the area and call or text 9-1-1, immediately.
2. If possible, while moving away from the area, alert neighbors.
3. Where possible, move uphill and upwind as far as possible and await instructions from emergency responders.

For Additional Chester County pipeline information, visit the Chester County Pipeline Information Center at www.chescoplanning.org/pic
What is the Pipeline Information Center?

The Pipeline Information Center is a website that keeps residents, pipeline operators, and other county stakeholders informed about pipeline locations, projects, and safety issues in Chester County.

Pipelines in Chester County

There are nearly 600 linear miles of pipeline corridors crossing Chester County.

What you can find on the website:

- Active pipeline projects
- Pipeline events and important dates
- Pipelines in the news
- Landowners’ right-of-way resources
- Pipeline safety information
- Regulatory process
- Contacts for agencies and pipeline operators

Interactive pipeline mapping

An interactive map allows users to search for their location relative to nearby pipelines. A pop-up box provides additional information on the pipeline product type and operator.
Weather Terms to Know

**Watch**
Let's you know that weather conditions are favorable for a hazard to occur. It means “be on guard!” During a weather watch, gather awareness of the specific threat and prepare for action.

**Warning**
Requires immediate action. This means a weather hazard is imminent - it is either occurring or it is about to occur at any moment. Both watches and warnings are important, but a warning is used for conditions posing a threat to life or property.

**Winter Storm Warning**
Hazardous winter weather conditions that pose a threat to life and/or property are occurring, imminent or likely. The generic term is used for a combination of two or more of the following winter weather events - heavy snow, freezing rain, sleet, and strong winds.

**Tornado Warning**
A warning that indicates a tornado is possible. It is the most destructive of all storm-scale atmospheric phenomena and can occur anywhere given the right conditions. They are usually issued for a duration of around 30 minutes.

**Hurricane Warning**
A warning that sustained winds 74 mph or higher associated with a hurricane are expected in a specified area in 24 hours or less.

**Flash Flood Warning**
Signifies a dangerous situation in which rapid flooding is imminent or already occurring. Very heavy rainfall in a short period can lead to flash flooding.

Why is my phone alerting me?

Wireless alert messages are emergency messages sent by government authorities to your mobile carrier, based on your location. Messages received can help you keep safe during an emergency and are automatically sent to your mobile device when you may be in harm’s way or in an area to receive critical information. Government partners include the local and state agencies, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the Department of Homeland Security and the National Weather Service.

The Integrated Public Alert & Warning System (IPAWS) is the FEMA national system for local alerts that provide authenticated emergency and life-saving information to the public through mobile phones using Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA), to radio and television via the Emergency Alert System (EAS), and on the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Weather Radio (NWR).

The message you receive will show the type and time of the alert, any action you should take, and the issuing agency. Users can turn off the wireless alert messages, but it is not recommended. Although it may wake you up in the middle of the night, it is important that you be made aware of dangerous situations.

The wireless alert messages are a different service than ReadyChesCo. ReadyChesCo provides more local information for the subscriber. You can sign up for ReadyChesCo and manage your alert preferences at ReadyChesCo.org.
In a normal 24-hour period, Chester County’s 9-1-1 Center handles about 1,000 calls. We realize that in an emergency a few seconds can seem like an eternity, and while our exceptional staff is trained to handle any situation, call volumes can increase exponentially during a large-scale emergency or weather event.

Your call is in a queue and will be answered by the next available telecommunicator. Often, people hang up and call 9-1-1 again, being placed at the end of the queue.

However, your first call (now considered a 9-1-1 hang-up) is still received by a telecommunicator.

If you stay on the line, you will be answered faster than if you hang up and call back.

Please share this information with your family, friends, neighbors, and strangers.
SCHOOL PLANNING

The Chester County Department of Emergency Services, in conjunction with the Chester County Intermediate Unit, works closely with public and non-public schools to assist them in developing their emergency preparedness plans. Creating an environment for safety and security in schools can be challenging and should be at the top of every school’s list of priorities. Making children feel safe is critical to their well-being and sense of security. Since they spend a major part of their young lives within the walls of the school, it is crucial that school administrators do all they can to protect students and prepare for any emergency that might arise.

Discussions are held on emergency operations plans in coordination with local first responders regarding staff and student actions during an incident that may impact their daily routine. The process begins with an assessment of the school buildings, which helps the school prioritize areas for improvement or ways to help enhance school safety. In addition to emergency planning, we support and help coordinate trainings for the staff and students. During these trainings, topics include how first responders can work with school administration to understand what kind of emergency response occurs during different emergency situations in and around a school facility.

Maintaining a partnership addressing and understanding school safety can be very beneficial, and you can do your part by knowing your school’s safety procedures. For example, do you follow all school safety procedures such as checking in to receive a visitor identification badge or parking in designated areas? Keep in mind that sometimes doing your part may also mean letting your school’s administration do theirs. Once you know that your school has emergency procedures in place, don’t waste valuable time making multiple calls or visits to the school during a potential crisis. Trust the administration to implement the plans they have in place to keep your children safe at school.
WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY

Depending upon the emergency, there are different actions and precautions you will need to take. Every emergency is different. Therefore, the course of action will vary.

During an emergency, officials will provide life-saving information quickly. They use many different systems to provide this information. Which system or systems they use depends on the size, scope, and magnitude of the emergency and may use any one or a combination of these systems:

**Emergency Alert System (EAS)**
The EAS may be used by state and local authorities to deliver important emergency information, such as Amber alerts and weather information targeted to specific areas. You do not need to sign up to receive these messages. You cannot opt out of receiving EAS alerts. Listen carefully to a portable radio or television for instructions from emergency officials.

**Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA)**
This method broadcasts emergency messages to cell phones and other mobile devices in a geographically targeted area. You do not need to sign up to receive these messages but can opt out (although this is discouraged for safety reasons).

**NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards (NWR)**
NOAA Weather Radio (NWR) is a nationwide network of radio stations broadcasting continuous weather information directly from the nearest National Weather Service office. NWR broadcasts official warnings, watches, forecasts, and other hazard information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. NWR requires a special radio receiver or scanner capable of picking up the signal.

Every county has a unique Specific Area Message Encoding (S.A.M.E.) code number. You must program your specific code into your weather radio:

Chester County S.A.M.E. Code 042029

**ReadyChesCo**
During an emergency, police, emergency responders, medical personnel, and community officials will help ensure your safety. Chester County residents have an enhanced notification system called ReadyChesCo.

ReadyChesCo is an information and warning system that provides emergency notifications via phone, email, or text message. All residents are urged to register and receive alerts regarding a variety of notices from severe weather, public health concerns, or Amber alerts. These messages can be delivered to you wherever you may be with your wireless devices.

Registration for ReadyChesCo is simple and FREE! To sign up, residents can go to readychesco.org and check on the yellow Enroll Today icon. You can register for the alerts that you are most interested in, and the devices that you want to include in the notification process. Subscribers can opt-in or out at any time for the types of alerts they want to receive.
YOUR EMERGENCY PLAN

Talk to your family or other household members ahead of time about emergencies - what to do, how to find each other, and how to stay in contact with one another. Be prepared to either evacuate or shelter-in-place if directed to do so. Checklists for each course of action are found on the following pages. You should have enough supplies to be self-sufficient for a minimum of 72 hours if you are asked to shelter-in-place.

Practice getting out of your house from different exit points and gather at a designated meeting place. Ideally, each family should have two such places; one right out of, or close to your home and a second one away from the immediate neighborhood.

Ask an out-of-state friend or relative to be an emergency contact so you and your family members can call to tell them you are ok.

Be sure to make any special plans for seniors, non-English speakers, or disabled individuals in the home. Make sure that you have copies of everyone’s personal information (birth certificates, passports, etc.) in a secure location.

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program educates volunteers about disaster preparedness for the hazards that may impact their area, and trains them in basic disaster response skills such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. CERT offers a consistent, nationwide approach to volunteer training and organization that professional responders can rely on during disaster situations, allowing them to focus on more complex tasks.

For more information on class dates and how to register, visit www.chesco.org/cert
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

A hazardous material is any item which has the potential to cause harm to humans, animals, or the environment. This can include chemicals, radiation, and biological agents. Most of the chemicals you use at home aren’t dangerous if you use them properly. However, some chemicals need more careful handling than others.

Cleaning products such as bleaches, oven sprays, and toilet cleaners are chemicals. So are paints, glues, oils, pesticides, and medicines. More is not better. Use all chemicals sparingly in the home and do not buy chemicals until you need them. Labels can help you identify the hazards, tell you the dangers and advise how to use them safely. Properly dispose of containers with unreadable labels, that are leaking, expired, or are in poor condition. Do not combine household cleaners. It can be dangerous.

These words identify household hazardous waste (HHW):

- Caution
- Corrosive
- Explosive
- Hazardous
- Combustible
- Poisonous
- Flammable
- Danger

If someone in your home ingests a chemical which you believe to be hazardous, immediately contact the Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222.

There are various methods to reduce, reuse and recycle your HHW and specific ways to dispose of HHW. Some HHW must be disposed of at a special facility. Chester County Solid Waste Authority provides special collections for qualifying HHW.

Please visit www.chestercountyswa.org to learn how to handle and manage HHW as well as dates to dispose of Household Hazardous Waste at a county collection site.
EMERGENCY PLANNING: FAMILIES

Create and practice a Family Emergency Plan. Decide how you will communicate with each other if you are separated before an emergency happens. What actions will you take? Where will you go if an emergency/disaster occurs? **At minimum, the Plan will include:**

1. Personal information: names, date of birth, and medical information including a list of prescription medications for each family member.
2. Policy numbers for medical insurance and homeowners insurance, copies of driver’s licenses, passports.
3. Names and contact information for doctors, pharmacy, and veterinarian.
4. Emergency contact information for your specific location that includes police and firehouse location. They may be safe meeting places.
5. Location of exits in your home.
6. Primary and secondary locations for the family to meet, both inside and outside the house.
7. Distances between home, work, and school, including a plan for how to communicate and take action to reunite.

Need help building an Emergency Plan Sheet? Contact Chester County Local Emergency Preparedness Committee (LEPC) via their website, chesco.org/des. The Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act enables LEPC to provide public education and develop emergency plans.

EMERGENCY PLANNING: ELDERLY, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND PEOPLE WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS

1. Plan your support network to help in an emergency.
2. Give a member of the support network a key to your home.
3. Sign up on ReadyChesco [www.readychesco.org] and register as elderly or a person with disability so they can locate you quickly.
4. Wear medical alert tags/bracelets to help identify your disability.
5. Prepare to bring at least 7 days of essential medications.
6. Rotate medications to keep them current.
7. Include Medicare and operational information for medical devices or other life-sustaining devices, names and numbers of your support network.
8. If you have a communication disability make sure to highlight that in your emergency information along with the best way to communicate with you.
9. Label your wheelchair with size, weight, and collapsibility in case you need to be transported.
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS KIT

There are basics supplies that you should stock for your emergency supply kit: water, food, clothing and bedding, first aid supplies, tools, and special items. Keep these items in a waterproof container that can be easily transported from your home to your car and your safe place. Assemble your kit now to allow for immediate action during an emergency. Your kit should include at least a three-day supply of:

1. Water - One to three gallons of water per person per day
2. Non-perishable food - Select food items that are compact and lightweight
   - Canned juices
   - High energy foods
   - Vitamins
   - Comfort foods
   - Condiments
3. Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits & vegetables
4. Food for an infant
5. Tools and emergency supplies
6. Mess kits, paper cups, plates & plastic utensils
7. Emergency preparedness manual
8. Battery-operated radio and extra batteries
9. Flashlight and extra batteries
10. Cash or traveler’s checks, change
11. Non-electric can opener, utility knife
12. Fire extinguisher: small canister ABC-type
13. Small tent
14. Shut-off wrench (to turn off household gas and water), pliers, tape, paper & pencil
15. Compass
16. Matches in a waterproof container
17. Aluminum foil and plastic sheeting
18. Plastic storage containers
19. Whistle
20. Needles, thread
21. Medicine dropper
22. Sanitation supplies
23. PennDot travel map
24. First aid supplies - Assemble a first aid kit for your home and one for each car
25. Clothing and bedding; include at least one complete change of clothing and footwear per person and the following weather-appropriate items:
   - Sturdy shoes or work boots
   - Rain gear
   - Blankets or sleeping bags
   - Hat and gloves
   - Thermal underwear
   - Sunglasses

Other Things to consider
26. Infant and medical supplies: Remember supplies for family members with special requirements, such as infants, elderly or disabled persons, and persons taking medications
27. Entertainment; games, and books
28. Wills, insurance policies, contracts, deeds, stocks, and bonds
29. Passports, social security cards, and immunization records
30. Bank account numbers
31. Credit & ATM card account numbers
When a disaster strikes Chester County, the first step to providing disaster recovery funds is to conduct a thorough damage assessment. The importance of the initial local assessment of damages cannot be over-emphasized. This process is essential to residents, landlords and emergency managers in determining:

- What happened and how is it affecting individuals and communities?
- How has residential, business, and infrastructure property been affected?
- Which areas were hardest hit?
- Which situations must be given immediate priority for First Responders?
- What types of assistance are needed (e.g., local, state, or federal)?

Residents should survey damages to their property as soon as it is safe to do so and report those damages to their local municipality. Residential damages will be classified in one of the following categories:

- Destroyed: Structure damaged beyond repair;
- Major Damage: Structure damaged enough to be uninhabitable;
- Minor Damage: Structure minimally damaged but inhabitable and able to be repaired;
- Affected: Structure inhabitable but property damaged leaving it inaccessible.

Restoring property is important and may begin if it is safe to do so but documenting initial damage and any subsequent damage that occurs during restoration needs to be done. Insurance coverage of damages will be an important consideration and will be required. Any financial assistance may take the form of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grants or low-interest loans. Accurate and timely damage reporting is crucial to successfully receive this financial assistance to recover from a disaster as thresholds must be met to participate.

The recovery process begins with the identification of damages at the local level, and the expeditious reporting of those damages to your local municipality. The process is outlined below:

Elected officials, individuals, and businesses report damages to the municipality’s Local Emergency Management Coordinator through their municipal contact methods. Local Emergency Management Coordinators report damages to the County Emergency Management Agency for consolidation into a county report that is then sent on to the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency and, potentially, to FEMA if certain thresholds are met.
EVACUATE OR SHELTER-IN-PLACE

Should an emergency arise, emergency personnel may instruct the community to either evacuate the area or shelter-in-place (remain indoors).

As a precautionary action, an evacuation will allow residents to travel away from danger. Residents who have special transportation needs should make arrangements with neighbors or inform their local emergency personnel. In most hazardous material emergencies, it is best to shelter-in-place.

EVACUATE
In an emergency, emergency officials may ask you to evacuate to protect yourself and your family. Evacuating means leaving the area that is affected by the potential hazard. If asked to evacuate, do the following:

1. Remain calm.
2. Listen carefully to the instructions and be sure you are being asked to evacuate.
3. If told to evacuate, do so!
4. Take a disaster supply kit.
5. DO NOT use the phone except to dial 9-1-1 in a life threatening situation.
6. Secure your home as you would for a three-day trip.
7. Close and lock windows and doors.
8. Turn off all fans, heating & cooling units.
9. Unplug electrical equipment such as radios, televisions and small appliances. Leave freezers and refrigerators plugged in unless there is a risk of flooding. If there is damage to your home and you are instructed to do so, shut off water, gas and electricity before leaving.
10. Take your pets with you but understand that only service animals may be allowed in public shelters.
11. Keep vehicle windows and vents closed while evacuating.
12. DO NOT go to your children’s school. They will probably be evacuated by the time you get there.
13. Follow instructions of emergency personnel along evacuation routes.
14. Be alert for road hazards such as washed-out roads or bridges and downed power lines. Do not drive into flooded areas.
15. Listen carefully to a portable radio or television for instructions from emergency officials.
16. Leave contact info in your home; cell phone number, destination, and the number of people leaving.

SHELTER-IN-PLACE
A sudden emergency will force emergency officials to ask you to shelter in-place, which means protecting yourself where you are and remaining in place until given further instructions or emergency officials give the all-clear. If you are asked to shelter-in-place, do the following:

1. Remain calm.
2. Go inside if you are outdoors.
3. Do not call 9-1-1 unless you are reporting an immediate life-threatening situation.
4. Children in schools or daycare centers will take shelter where they are located and will stay indoors.
5. Close all windows and doors. Tape cracks for extra protection.
6. “Sealing a room” is considered a temporary protective measure to create a barrier between you and potentially contaminated air outside. This type of sheltering-in-place requires pre-planning.
7. Close all vents on cooling, heating, or ventilating systems.
8. Cover cracks under doors with damp towels or masking tape.
9. If you have a fireplace, put out the fire and close the damper.
10. Move to an interior room or hallway with no openings to the outside.
11. Keep pets indoors.
12. Listen carefully to a portable radio or television for instructions from emergency officials.
13. If you are in a car, close windows, and vents.
14. Do not drive through barricades or offlimit areas.
15. Don’t leave your home unless told to do so by radio, TV, news, or emergency officials.
Smart911 is a service available in Chester County to help you when you call 9-1-1. Once a user signs up, first responders will be aware of important information provided to them that will help address the emergency. This information, including medical issues, current location and even pets can help Police, Fire and EMS locate and help you.

When you sign up at Smart911.com, you will be able to provide information such as access and functional needs information, medical history, medications and emergency contact information*. The information is available when a registered number dials 9-1-1 and when you opt to share your information. Smart911 is a national system, so your profile will be available to any center that uses Smart911.

There is an app available also - you can create your profile right on your phone! If you are interested in this service, download the app and create your profile from your phone or go to Smart911.com.

* All information provided to Smart911 remains confidential.

PulsePoint

Chester County has taken steps to improve the chance of survival for people who suffer from a sudden cardiac arrest.

PulsePoint Response is an app that alerts registered users who have indicated that they are CPR trained of a cardiac arrest in a public place near them. This app is for anyone who is CPR trained. It also gives CPR and AED (automated external defibrillator) instructions. You can download the app from your app store.

PUBLIC PREPAREDNESS GUIDE 2024

Chester County offers a text to 9-1-1 service to provide equal access to emergency services for our deaf and hearing-impaired citizens, as well as a safe way for someone to communicate with 9-1-1 when it is impossible for them to make a voice call.

Tips to Text to 9-1-1:

- You must have a data plan to text.
- Please remember to call if you can, text if you must.
- Do not use abbreviations or emojis.
- Answer the questions as quickly and briefly as possible.
- If the situation changes and you can make a voice call, dial 9-1-1, and let the Telecommunicator know that you were previously texting with 9-1-1.
- Text calls do not have the same location accuracy as voice calls.
CONNECT WITH
CHESTER COUNTY DEPARTMENT
OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

Stay in the know by following us on social media and by visiting our website:

www.chesco.org/des

@ccdes

@ccdes

@chescodes

Chester County
Department of Emergency Services
601 Westtown Road, Suite 012
West Chester, PA 19380

610-344-5000
Prepare for Times When You Can’t Get Home

For your pet, an emergency can be something much less dramatic than a hurricane or earthquake. For them, anything that keeps you from getting to them could create a problem. Icy roads or a sudden health emergency can leave your pet stranded. If you are prepared for these simple emergencies, you will also be prepared if a large disaster strikes.

An evacuation order may come, or a natural disaster may strike when you’re at work or out of the house for any reason. We recommend the following actions to make sure your pets are taken care of when you can’t be there:

1. Find a trusted neighbor and give them a key to your house. Make sure this person is comfortable and familiar with your pets.
2. Make sure the neighbor knows your pets’ whereabouts so time won’t be wasted trying to find or catch them.
3. Create a pet emergency/disaster kit and place it in a prominent place where your neighbor can find it.
4. If the emergency involves evacuation, make arrangements well in advance for your neighbor to take your pets and meet you at a predetermined location.
5. Ask if your pet sitting service will be available to help, but discuss this well in advance.

Pet Disaster Supply Checklist

Every member of your family should know what they need to take with them in the event of an evacuation. You also need to prepare supplies for your pet. Stock up on non-perishables well ahead of time and have everything ready to go at a moment’s notice. Keep everything accessible, stored in sturdy containers, such as a duffel bag or covered storage container, that can be carried easily.

If you reside in an area prone to seasonal disasters, such as flooding or hurricanes that might require evacuation, create a kit to keep in your car.

In your pet disaster kit, you should include:

- Food and water for at least 3 days for each pet.
- Bowls and a manual can opener if you are packing canned pet food.
- Pet medications and medical records, stored in a waterproof container, and a first aid kit.
- Cat litter box, litter, garbage bags to collect all pets’ waste and litter scoop.
- Harnesses, sturdy leashes, and carriers to transport pets safely and to ensure that
Take Your Pets When You Evacuate

Always take your pets when evacuating. Even if you think you may only be evacuating for a few hours, take your pets. Once you’re gone, you may have no way of knowing how long you’ll be away, and you may not be able to go back for your pets.

Animals left behind in a disaster can easily be injured or lost. Left inside your home, a pet can escape through storm-damaged areas, such as broken windows. Animals turned loose to fend for themselves are likely to become victims of exposure, starvation, predators, contaminated food or water, or accidents.

Leaving a pet tied outside during a disaster is a potential death sentence.

Find a Safe Place Ahead of Time

Because evacuation shelters generally don’t accept pets, except for service animals, you must plan to make certain your family and pets will have a safe place to stay. Don’t wait until disaster strikes to do your research.

- Check with friends, relatives, or others outside your immediate area. Ask if they would be able to shelter you and your animals or just your animals, if necessary. You may need to house multiple pets at separate locations.
- Make a list of boarding facilities, hotels, and veterinary offices that might be able to shelter animals in disaster emergencies; include 24-hour telephone numbers. List your primary care veterinarian as well.
- Contact hotels and motels outside your immediate area to check policies on accepting type and number of pets. Many places waive their no pet policies in an emergency. Call ahead for a reservation as soon as you think you might have to leave your home.

You May Have to Shelter-In-Place

If your family and pets must wait out an emergency at home, identify a safe area of your home where you can all stay. Close your windows and doors.

Bring pets inside as soon as local authorities signal an emergency. Keep pets under your direct control; if you must evacuate, you won’t have to spend time trying to find them. Keep dogs and cats on leashes or in carriers. Make sure they are wearing identification.

Once you designate a safe area in your home, store your personal and pet emergency supplies in that area. Include your pet’s crate. Remember to use watertight containers.

Keep Your Pet’s ID Updated

Your pet should be always wearing up-to-date identification. Add your current cell phone number to your pet’s tag. It may also be a good idea to include the phone number of a friend or relative outside your immediate area. If your pet is lost, you will want to provide a number on the tag that will be answered even if you are away. Consider signing up for a Smart911 Safety Profile and add your pet’s picture and information to the profile.
SMART PHONE APPS TO HELP YOU BE PREPARED

**FEMA**
The FEMA App is the best option to receive emergency alerts and information so that you and your loved ones know what to do before, during and after disasters. This simple and easy-to-use app provides safety notifications, emergency preparedness tips, and disaster resources.

**Everbridge**
Is the mobile app for ReadyChesCo, Chester County’s notification system. With full control over privacy settings, you decide what information is shared and when including your location images and videos. This information will not be shared outside of Everbridge or the organization with which you have intentionally connected.

**Smart 911**
By signing up, you can share lifesaving information about your household with 9-1-1. You can provide as much or as little information as you like. When you call 9-1-1, your Smart911 Safety Profile displays on the 9-1-1 screen. The 9-1-1 telecommunicator can view your address, medical information, home information, pets and vehicles, and emergency contacts. This additional information enables 9-1-1 and first responders to send help fast. Your information will not be shared outside of Smart911.

**PulsePoint Respond**
Empowers individuals in Chester County with the ability to provide lifesaving assistance to victims of cardiac arrest. Users who have indicated they are trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) are notified if someone nearby is having a cardiac emergency and may require CPR. The application uses location-based services to alert trained individuals in the immediate vicinity of the need for CPR. The application also directs these off-duty and lay rescuers to the exact location of the closest public access automated external defibrillator (AED).

**PulsePoint AED**
Lets you report and update AED locations so that emergency responders, including nearby citizens trained in CPR and off-duty professionals such as firefighters, police officers and nurses, can find an AED close to them when a cardiac emergency occurs.
ACTIVE SHOOTER/THREAT – HOW TO RESPOND

HOW TO RESPOND
WHEN AN ACTIVE SHOOTER IS IN YOUR VICINITY

1. Evacuate
• Have an escape route and plan in mind
• Leave your belongings behind
• Keep your hands visible

2. Hide Out
• Hide in an area out of the shooter’s view
• Block entry to your hiding place and lock the doors
• Silence your cell phone and/or pager

3. Take Action
• As a last resort and only when your life is in imminent danger
• Attempt to incapacitate the shooter
• Act with physical aggression and throw items at the active shooter

CALL 911 WHEN IT IS SAFE TO DO SO

HOW TO RESPOND
WHEN LAW ENFORCEMENT ARRIVES

• Remain calm and follow instructions
• Put down any items in your hands (i.e., bags, jackets)
• Raise hands and spread fingers
• Keep hands visible at all times
• Avoid quick movements toward officers such as holding on to them for safety
• Avoid pointing, screaming or yelling
• Do not stop to ask officers for help or direction when evacuating

INFORMATION
YOU SHOULD PROVIDE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT OR 911 OPERATOR

• Location of the active shooter
• Number of shooters
• Physical description of shooters
• Number and type of weapons held by shooters
• Number of potential victims at the location

Graphics provided by: United States Department of Homeland Security
Protect your every day.

RECOGNIZE THE SIGNS OF TERRORISM-RELATED SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

EXPRESSED OR IMPLIED THREAT
Threatening to commit a crime that could harm or kill people or damage a facility, infrastructure, or secured site

SURVEILLANCE
A prolonged interest in or taking pictures/videos of personnel, facilities, security features, or infrastructure in an unusual or covert manner

THEFT/LOSS/DIVERSION
Stealing or diverting items—such as equipment, uniforms, or badges—that belong to a facility or secured site

TESTING OR PROBING OF SECURITY
Investigating or testing a facility’s security or IT systems to assess the strength or weakness of the target

AVIATION ACTIVITY
Operating or interfering with the operation of an aircraft that poses a threat of harm to people and property

BREACH/ATTEMPTED INTRUSION
Unauthorized people trying to enter a restricted area or impersonating authorized personnel

ACQUISITION OF EXPERTISE
Gaining skills or knowledge on a specific topic, such as facility security, military tactics, or flying an aircraft

ELICITING INFORMATION
Questioning personnel beyond mere curiosity about an event, facility, or operations

MISREPRESENTATION
Presenting false information or misusing documents to conceal possible illegal activity

CYBERATTACK
Disrupting or compromising an organization’s information technology systems

RECRUITING/FINANCING
Funding suspicious or criminal activity or recruiting people to participate in criminal or terrorist activity

SABOTAGE/TAMPERING/VANDALISM
Damaging or destroying part of a facility, infrastructure, or secured site

MATERIALS ACQUISITION/STORAGE
Acquisition and/or storage of unusual materials such as cell phones, radio controllers, or toxic materials

WEAPONS COLLECTION/STORAGE
Collection or discovery of unusual amounts of weapons including explosives, chemicals, or other destructive materials

SECTOR-SPECIFIC INCIDENT
Actions which raise concern to specific sectors, (e.g., power plant) with regard to their personnel, facilities, systems, or functions

If you see something, say something.
REPORT SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES OR CALL 9-1-1 IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

dhs.gov/see-something-say-something

“If You See Something, Say Something®” used with permission of the NY Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

PUBLIC PREPAREDNESS GUIDE 2024
DO YOU KNOW THE INFORMATION HOTLINES?

Call 211 for
211 will provide free quick and easy access to information about health and human services.
• 211 Helps Access: Basic Human Needs Resources, Health and Mental Health Resources, Employment Support, Support for Older Americans and Persons with Disabilities, Support for Children, Youth and Families, Military and Family Support, and Volunteer Opportunities and Donations. 211 is also used following large-scale emergencies to collect and communicate information.

To access 211, call 2-1-1 from 8am to 8pm, 7 days per week, or call 1-866-964-7922 if you use Relay Service

Call 411 for
411 is the nationwide information system available any time day or night to get a phone number by utilizing a name of the person or business. This service may or may not be free depending on your provider.
• 411 Helps Access: An individual, group, or business telephone number. Provides access to a physical operator for more challenging phone directory inquiries.

Call 511 for
511 is a free nationwide telephone number for traveler information, including any traffic delay and tourism information, as well as weather and transit information.
• 511 Helps Access: Travel information regardless of the location in order to give you the best choice of time, choice of mode of transportation, choice of route - which saves lives, time and money.

Call 611 for
611 is a free service to everyone using a wireless phone that quickly connects you with your provider.
• 611 Helps Access: The easiest way to contact your wireless carrier. Whether you have issues with your cell phone, questions about your bill or any other cell phone needs. 611 ensures that you can quickly connect to your service provider anytime, anywhere.

Call 711 for
711 is the dialing code for access to Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS). It allows persons with a hearing or speech disability to use the telephone system via a text telephone (TTY) or other device to call persons with or without such disabilities.
• 711 Helps Access: A calling system for someone using TRS, use your TTY, and you will automatically be connected to a TRS operator. If you’re traveling out of state and want to make a call, just dial 711. It’s fast, functional, free, and not just for use by persons with disabilities.

Call 811 for
811 is a free national number designated to protect landscapers/contractors from unintentionally hitting underground utility lines while working on digging projects.
• 811 Helps Access: Locator services in order to mark the approximate location of underground lines, pipes and cables, in order to dig safely.

Call 911 for
911 is the free Emergency number that provides the fastest access to Police, Fire, and Medical services.
• 911 Helps Access: immediate response of Police, Fire, and Ambulance services. Do NOT call 911 for road/ travel and severe weather information, to report power outages or other non-emergencies.
# MUNICIPALITIES

Keep your township, borough, or city’s number handy.

## Township Listing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Township Name</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
<th>Website Link</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham Township</td>
<td>610-793-2600</td>
<td><a href="http://www.birminghamtownship.org">www.birminghamtownship.org</a></td>
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<td>Caln Township</td>
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<td>Charlestown Township</td>
<td>610-240-0362</td>
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<td>East Bradford Township</td>
<td>610-436-5108</td>
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<tr>
<td>East Brandywine Township</td>
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<td>East Coventry Township</td>
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<td>East Fallowfield Township</td>
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<td>East Marlborough Township</td>
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<td>East Vincent Township</td>
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<td>London Britain Township</td>
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## Borough Listings

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<tr>
<th>Borough Name</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
<th>Website Link</th>
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<td>Atglen Borough</td>
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## City Listing

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<tr>
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<td>Coatesville City</td>
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AREA HOSPITALS

Chester County Hospital
701 East Marshall Street
West Chester, PA 19380
610-431-5000

Paoli Memorial Hospital
255 West Lancaster Avenue
Paoli, PA 19301
484-565-1000

Phoenixville Hospital
140 Nutt Road
Phoenixville, PA 19460
610-983-1000

ABOUT US

Chester County Department of Emergency Services administers and provides for emergency services communications; hazardous materials spill response; disaster planning; fire, rescue, and emergency medical services training; law enforcement training; Fire Marshal investigations; the Superfund Amendment and Reauthorization Act; and Public Education programs.

The Department of Emergency Services includes the Public Safety Training Campus (PSTC). This training campus provides quality training and education to the Fire, EMS, and Police professionals and organizations that serve our communities. It is our continued goal to provide the emergency responder with the most current training and education possible so that all responder organizations will be prepared to serve the community.

The Department serves over 525,000 citizens in 73 municipalities.

The mission of the Department of Emergency Services is to promote and assist in providing safety and security to Chester County citizens so they can work, live, and grow in a healthy and safe community.