



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Emergency Preparedness

July 2015

Genesee County Health Department

For more emergency preparedness information, visit the Genesee County Health Department on the web at www.gchd.us.

Resources for Emergency Preparedness Information

www.ready.gov
www.flu.gov
www.do1thing.com
www.redcross.org
www.michigan.gov/flu/
www.cdc.gov



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Vacation Preparedness

Summer is a popular time for vacations and road trips. The Michigan State Police and the Office of Homeland Security recommend the following tips to prepare for an emergency or disaster while on vacation.

- Know all weather-related emergencies and disasters that are common to your vacation destination. And learn how weather warnings are communicated.
- Monitor the weather forecast along highway routes. Delay the trip if severe weather is possible.
- Know safe shelter locations and evacuation routes at the campgrounds, hotels or resorts.
- Pack a travel-size emergency preparedness kit that includes water, snacks, first aid kit, and hand-crank flashlight and radio. Don't forget to include prescription medications and baby formula, if needed.
- Download American Red Cross mobile apps to your smart phone. For more information, go to [http://](http://www.redcross.org/prepare/mobile-apps)

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- Have someone check on or take care of your pets in case severe weather or a disaster strikes while away.
- Always keep your vehicle's fuel tank above half full. Power outages or severe weather may prevent you from refueling.
- Have a map and familiarize yourself with the area of your destination. Do not rely on cell phones or computers as your only navigation source.

Weather Watches Versus Warnings

Do you know the difference between a watch and a warning? These are terms that the National Weather Service uses to alert us to potentially dangerous weather. It is important to understand the difference so you can respond accordingly.

- A Severe Thunderstorm Watch is issued when severe thunderstorms are possible in and near the watch area. It does not mean that they will

occur. It only means they are possible.

- A Severe Thunderstorm Warning is issued when severe thunderstorms are occurring or imminent in the warning area.
- A Tornado Watch is issued when severe thunderstorms and tornadoes are possible in and near the watch area. It does not mean that they will occur. It only means they are possible.

- A Tornado Warning is issued when a tornado is imminent. When a tornado warning is issued, seek safe shelter immediately.

Know where you would go to have the highest level of protection for everyplace that you spend a lot of time, like home, school, work, or house of worship. To learn more about preparing, visit www.ready.gov.

Stay Safe and Healthy When Interacting with Animals



The Red Cross has a program to help families to keep in touch during a disaster. Make the website address www.safeandwell.org part of the emergency info every family member carries.

During the summer months many people enjoy local fair exhibits and petting zoos. This is a great learning experience for children but it is important to remember to take precautions. The CDC recommends the following steps to prevent illness.

- Find out where hand washing stations are located.
- Always wash your hands right after petting animals or touching the animal enclosure.
- Always wash hands upon exiting animal areas even if you did

- not touch an animal, after going to the toilet, before eating and drinking, before preparing food or drinks, and after removing soiled clothes or shoes.
- Running water and soap are best. Use hand sanitizers if running water and soap are not available. Be sure to wash your hands with soap and water as soon as a sink is available.
- Children younger than 5 years old always need adult supervision in animal areas.
- Never allow children to put their thumbs, fingers, or objects (for

example: pacifiers) in their mouth while interacting with animals.

- Hand washing should be supervised.
- Do not take or use strollers, bottles, pacifiers, spill-proof cups, or toys in animal areas.
- Children younger than 5 years old, elderly persons, and persons with weakened immune systems should use special precautions when around animal exhibits. Learn more by visiting [CDC's Healthy Pets Healthy People](http://www.cdc.gov/healthy pets) site.

Do 1 Thing - Family Emergency Plan

Do 1 Thing is a non-profit organization that promotes doing one thing a month to get yourself prepared. The goal for July is to have the ability to communicate with family members during a disaster.

During a disaster, power outages and overloaded cell towers can make it difficult to communicate. If you still have a land line make sure you have a phone with a cord for emergencies. Have a car charger for your cell phone standing by in case of a power failure. If you are having difficulty making a cell phone call

remember that a text may get through when a phone call doesn't. Make sure all family members know how to text.

Program in case of emergency (ICE) numbers into all family cell phones. If you are hurt and cannot talk, responders may not know how to contact your family right away. Programming ICE in your phone contacts provides those numbers. Enter all of the phone numbers for the person you want notified.

Develop a Family Emergency Plan. An emergency or disaster can force you either to

evacuate or not be able to leave your home. Your family may not be together when disaster strikes so it is important to think about how you will contact each other and how you will communicate in different situations. When creating your plan identify an out-of-town contact. It may be easier to make a long distance call than to call across town.

The GCHD has a household emergency plan template that can be found in the Emergency Preparedness section of our website www.gchd.us under Personal and Family Preparedness.

