

Sheltering

Sheltering is often the most critical element in protecting you and your family in times of disaster. There are two basic forms of sheltering, **emergency (mass care) and in-place sheltering**. Sheltering can be either short or long term depending on the emergency.

For additional information on how to prepare yourself and your family to respond properly in an emergency refer to the "Evacuation" section.

Before an Emergency

- † Prepare an emergency supply kit and a family disaster plan. (see "General Preparedness" section)
- † Identify a plan for your pets in the event evacuations to an emergency shelter are required. (see "Pet Preparedness" section)
- † Stay tuned to your local media for weather and emergency updates.
- † Identify a pre-designated location within your home to be utilized for sheltering-in-place procedures.
- † Learn about your community's plans for sheltering and evacuation during emergencies or disasters.
- † Make sure your designated room has access to a battery-operated radio or corded phone to keep updated to emergency instructions.
- † Learn how to turn off utility services, such as ventilation and air conditioning systems.
- † Identify and map your evacuation routes and alternate routes, if evacuation is necessary. (see "Evacuation" section)

During an Emergency

- † Stay alert to the local media for emergency alerts and updates on what protective actions to take (**see sheltering definitions, boxed, right**)
- † If ordered to seek shelter, do so immediately.
- † If evacuating to an emergency shelter bring your disaster supplies kit with you.

After an Emergency

- † If evacuated from your home, do not return until authorities say it is safe.
- † If alerted to shelter-in-place or lock down, remain in the room until authorities advise you to leave your shelter.
- † See "Recovering from Disaster" for additional information.

Sheltering Definitions

Emergency Sheltering: In some instances sheltering may be required for extended periods of time due to major storms or utility disruptions. Emergency shelters are designed to provide a place to stay, along with sleeping quarters, food, water and shower facilities.

When evacuated to an emergency shelter the following applies:

- † Bring your emergency supplies kit.
- † Cooperate with shelter managers and others staying in the shelter. Living with many people in a confined space can be difficult and unpleasant.
- † Restrict smoking to designated areas and ensure that smoking materials are disposed of safely.
- † Alcoholic beverages and weapons are prohibited in shelters.
- † Pets, except for service animals, are not allowed in emergency shelters. (See "Pet Preparedness" section)

Sheltering-in-place: A protective action issued by officials alerting residents that conditions outside preclude immediate evacuations and sheltering should take place within the home. The following should take place:

- † Get household members and pets inside immediately.
- † Close all doors, windows, vents, fireplace dampers and as many interior doors as possible.
- † Turn off air conditioners and ventilation systems.
- † Stay in a pre-designated room with the fewest openings to the outside, if possible, above ground.
- † Make sure this room has access to a battery-operated radio or corded phone to keep updated to emergency instructions.
- † Remain in this room until authorities advise you to leave your shelter.