

Your Best Protection is Preparation

There are many types of emergencies. This Guide offers information about those that are large-scale disasters, specifically power outage and acts of terrorism involving radiological, biological, and chemical agents.

If such a disaster occurs, you may be asked by authorities to take one of two different actions: **SHELTER IN PLACE** (remain in your home or workplace), or **EVACUATE** (leave your home or workplace). In either case, it is important that you and your family have an **EMERGENCY PREPARATION PLAN**.

The American Red Cross provides all the information you need to make your Emergency Preparation plan. You can call the Red Cross at (781) 665-1351 or visit their Web site at www.redcross.org. In the meantime, it makes good sense to put together some emergency supplies for your home, workplace, and car.

YOUR EMERGENCY SUPPLIES SHOULD INCLUDE:

- Water – one gallon per person per day in plastic containers, 3 days supply 
- Food - A one week supply that doesn't need refrigeration, cooking & little or no water; a manual can opener, and eating utensils 
- Change of clothes and footwear, toiletries, sleeping bag for each person
- A battery powered or wind-up radio 
- Flashlights with fresh batteries
- A first aid kit, including emergency medications
- A cell phone (make sure it's charged)
- Trash bags, duct tape, sheets of plastic, disposable gloves, wrench to turn off household gas and water, whistle 
- Cash, change, list of credit cards
- Important family documents in waterproof container
- Add a shovel, booster cables, fix-a-flat and flares for your car

When Your Child is at School

Every school has an emergency plan that includes evacuation destinations. Call your child's school now to find the location and write it down here:

Also, find out what you or a designated person will need to provide in order to pick up your child.

In the event of an evacuation, you will be notified by school officials where and when your child can be picked up, so make certain the school has a way of reaching you. Radio or television stations may also carry instructions.

Finally, make sure your child has identification and phone numbers to reach family or friends.



Shelter in Place: Protecting Yourself at Home or Work

In the event of a radiological, chemical, or biological emergency, authorities may direct you to **SHELTER IN PLACE** or **EVACUATE**. The term "Shelter In Place" means remaining inside your home or place of work and protecting yourself there.

If emergency officials advise you to Shelter In Place:

- 1 Stay calm and patient.
- 2 Bring children and pets indoors immediately.
- 3 Close and lock all windows and outside doors.
- 4 Turn off all fans, heating and air conditioning systems.
- 5 If you have a fireplace, close the damper.
- 6 Gather your disaster supplies and battery powered radio.
- 7 Go to a small interior room, ideally without windows and with a hard-wired telephone. In case of a chemical threat, a room above ground is preferable because some chemicals are heavier than air and may seep into the basement even if the windows are closed.
- 8 Use duct tape (wet towels if you are out of duct tape) to seal doors, exhaust fans, vents, and windows.
- 9 Listen to the radio or TV for emergency instructions and Shelter In Place until you are told all is safe.



Evacuation: Prepare a "Grab and Go"

EMERGENCY KIT

In some emergencies, you may be asked to evacuate. You'll want an easy-to-carry container (backpack, small suitcase) with adequate emergency supplies kept in a convenient location. Include prescriptions, personal hygiene items, cash, personal & financial documents and a change of clothes. Be sure that everyone has a list of important phone numbers. Decide on two alternative places to meet in case you become separated.



Important PUBLIC HEALTH AND PUBLIC SAFETY PHONE NUMBERS

The following are numbers for disaster and emergency related help and information.

Police – Fire – EMS.....	911
American Red Cross Melrose.....	(781) 665-1351
Region:.....	(978) 531-2280
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.....	(404) 639-3311
Massachusetts Emergency Management.....	(508) 820-2000
Melrose Emergency Management.....	(781) 979-4111
Melrose Health Department.....	(781) 979-4130
Regional Poison Control Center.....	(800) 222-1222 TTY (888) 244-5313

Contact Melrose Emergency Management about our Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).

Your Own Important Numbers

Write down important numbers and keep them close. These include friends and family home and cellular numbers, your doctor or clinic, and your child's school.



Where to Find Emergency Medical Care

HOSPITALS

Lawrence Memorial Hospital
(781) 306-6000
170 Governors Ave.
Medford, MA 02155
www.hallmarkhealth.org

Whidden Hospital
(617) 381-7200
103 Garland Street
Everett, MA 02149
www.challiance.org

Melrose-Wakefield Hospital
(781) 979-3000
585 Lebanon Street
Melrose, MA 02176
www.hallmarkhealth.org

Winchester Hospital
(781) 729-9000
41 Highland Ave.
Winchester, MA 01890
www.winchesterhospital.com

Call 9-1-1 in the event of a serious, life-threatening emergency.



West Nile Virus Fighting the Bite



West Nile virus (WNV) is an illness that can be spread to humans through mosquito bites. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the best way to avoid WNV is to prevent mosquito bites.

Checklist for fighting the bite:

- Use insect repellent. Read and follow product instructions. Do not apply DEET containing repellents on infants.
- Avoid going outside at dusk & dawn when mosquitoes are most active.



- Wear long sleeve shirts and long pants when you must be outside during hours of the day that mosquitoes are active.

- Drain standing water around the house including gutters, flower pots, tires, containers, and wheelbarrows to prevent mosquito breeding areas. Maintain swimming pools.



- Repair tears in screens on windows and doors.

Symptoms of WNV are similar to flu symptoms and can include fever, severe headache, and body aches. Seek medical attention if symptoms exist. For additional information on WNV visit the CDC website at: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm>



PETS AND DISASTER: BE PREPARED

Pets are part of your family. It is important to make plans for them before an emergency.

- ◆ Include pet supplies in your Emergency Kit including medical records, medications, leash and/carrier, current photo in case they get lost, food, additional potable water, cat litter/pan, manual can opener.
- ◆ If you must evacuate, evacuate your pet too!!! **NOTE: RED CROSS SHELTERS CANNOT ACCEPT PETS!!!** Contact hotels outside your immediate area to check policies on pet restrictions such as numbers, size, etc. Ask if "no pet" policies are waived in an emergency. Call emergency shelters in advance to confirm arrangements. Ask friends and family outside your area if they could shelter your pet.
- ◆ Have written information on feeding schedules, medical conditions, and name/phone number of your veterinarian in case you need to foster or board your pets.
- ◆ Make sure all pets have secure collars with up-to-date identification.
- ◆ Remember that animals react differently under stress. Pets may panic, hide or bite. Keep dogs leashed and cats in carriers.



In the event of a

POWER OUTAGE

Power outages can be caused by weather, accidents, circuit overloads or other emergency situations. They can happen at any time. Planning ahead will help you and your family to stay safe.

Ways to Prepare:

- ▶ Know the location of your fuse box or circuit board.
- ▶ Know how to reset a circuit or change a fuse.
- ▶ Know how to manually override your garage door opener.
- ▶ Be sure that you have all the items listed in the **EMERGENCY SUPPLIES** kit section.
- ▶ Know the number for the local power utility company.

(Look up the number now and write it here.)

Response During an Outage:

- ▶ Determine if the outage is widespread by checking with neighbors.
- ▶ Do not call 911 to ask about the power outage. Listen to local radio stations on your battery operated radio for updates and instructions. You can also call the power utility number listed above for instructions.
- ▶ Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible.
- ▶ Unplug major appliances and electronic equipment to prevent damage by "power surge" when power is restored.
- ▶ Protect computers and other electronic items with battery back up surge protectors.
- ▶ If it is cold, dress in layers and wear a hat.

In the event of a Radiological Emergency



A nuclear blast or an accident in a nuclear power plant can cause the spread of radiation. A terrorist attack with a "dirty bomb" can also spread radiation into the air. A "dirty bomb" is a standard bomb with radioactive materials added. In most cases, the explosion itself would cause more immediate harm than the radioactive material in the dirty bomb.

To limit the amount of radiation you are exposed to:

1. Minimize the amount of time you spend near the source of radiation.
2. Maximize your distance from the source.
3. Increase the shielding between you and the radiation. Shielding is a protective barrier between a person and the source of radiation. Shielding could range from a plate glass window to several feet of concrete.

SELF-DECONTAMINATION: If you have been in contact with radiation, remove your clothes as quickly as possible. Put the clothes in a sealed plastic bag. Take a shower and wash thoroughly with lukewarm water.

IN THE EVENT OF A BIOLOGICAL EMERGENCY

A biological agent is a bacteria, virus or toxin that makes people sick.



Bioterrorism is the intentional use of (or threat to use) biological agents to hurt people, create fear, and/or disrupt society.

There are many types of biological agents. There are also many ways that you can protect yourself.

Some agents can spread from person to person (smallpox); others affect only the person exposed (anthrax, botulism). Some are treated with antibiotics (tularemia, anthrax); some have approved vaccines (smallpox). People with symptoms may be **ISOLATED** in their home; those exposed to the agent may be **QUARANTINED** in their home.

In the event of a

Chemical Emergency

Chemical agents are poisonous gases, liquids or solids that can cause injury, illness and death. Chemical emergencies can be caused by industrial accidents, or through the intentional release of harmful chemicals.

Protection from chemical agents varies. Either **SHELTER IN PLACE** or **EVACUATION** orders may be given to provide protection. They will also give instructions about securing your home that are specific to the chemical. Neither the Centers for Disease Control nor the MA Dept of Public Health recommend the purchase of gas masks. If you see signs of chemical attack, find clean air quickly. If you think you have been exposed to a chemical, strip immediately, wash with soap, and seek medical attention.



How to Get Information in an Emergency

Local radio and television stations will provide information in the event of a major emergency. In some instances, the Emergency Alert System may be activated. Specific emergency instructions will be broadcast by:



Television

- WGBH Ch. 2
- WBZ Ch. 4
- WCVB Ch. 5
- WHDH Ch. 7
- WSBK Ch. 38
- WPX Ch. 68
- WFXT Ch. 25
- WGBY Ch. 44
- WLVI Ch. 56
- MMTV Ch. 16



Radio

- WBZ 1030 AM
- WXKS 1430 AM

Emergency instructions will provide information on whether it is safer to **EVACUATE** your home/workplace or whether you will be better protected by **SHELTER IN PLACE**.

If you are ordered to evacuate, the radio announcements will also advise you on the safest place to go.

HELPFUL WEB SITES

- U.S. Dept of Homeland Security www.ready.gov
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention www.cdc.gov
- American Red Cross www.redcross.org
- State Health Department www.state.ma.us/dph
- MA Emergency Management Agency www.mass.gov/mema

What Not to Do in an Emergency

- Do NOT** go to the hospital except in the case of an actual medical emergency or unless instructed by authorities.
- Do NOT** light matches or turn electrical switches on or off if you smell gas or think there may be a leak. It is safe to use a flashlight. Also, do NOT use a regular phone. Cell phones are safe to use.
- Do NOT** turn off any utilities unless instructed to by emergency authorities or unless you know there has been some damage to gas pipes, water pipes or electrical lines.
- Do NOT** drive your vehicle unless you have been advised to evacuate or you have a medical emergency. Be sure to check on road conditions or travel restrictions.
- Do NOT** call 9-1-1 except in the case of a life-threatening situation. It is very important to keep these lines open for true emergencies.

Emergency Preparedness

The Pocket Guide to

Your safety. That's why public health is working.

We're working around the clock to protect your health and safety. Our work includes health promotion, disease prevention, and serving as one of the front line team of agencies responding in the event of terrorism. To learn more, visit us at www.cityofmelrose.org or call (781) 979-4130.



This document was supported by funding from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

This guide can help you in the event of a major emergency. It has information on how to plan for and respond to natural and man-made disasters. Helpful web sites and phone numbers are also included. Please read your guide carefully and keep it close at hand.