



By Anne Prince

With severe weather events occurring more frequently, now more than ever, it makes sense to be prepared. During a prolonged power outage or other emergency, this means having enough food, water, and supplies to last.

In honor of National Preparedness Month in September, I want to remind community members about the power of preparation. While you don't have to achieve a "doomsday prepper" level of preparedness, there are several practical steps you can take to keep you and your family safe.

Even at a modest level, preparation can help reduce stress, anxiety, and lessen the impact of an emergency event. We recommend starting with the basics.

Here are general guidelines recommended by the Federal Emergency Management Agency:

- Assemble a grab-and-go disaster kit; include items like nonperishable food, water (one gallon per person, per day), diapers, batteries, flashlights, prescription medications, first-aid kit, battery-powered radio, and phone chargers
- Develop a plan for communicating with family and friends (i.e., via text, social media, third party, etc.)
- Have some extra cash available; during a power outage, electronic card readers and cash machines may not work
- Keep neighbors and coworkers apprised of your emergency plans
- Fill your car with gas
- Organize supplies so they are together in an easily accessible location that family members know about

Caring for vulnerable family members

If you have older family members or those with special needs, make sure they have enough medication and supplies for a few days. If they don't live with you, arrange for a neighbor to check in on them. If a severe weather event is expected, consider having your relative stay with you if feasible, otherwise call them daily.

If you have an infant or young children, make certain you have ample formula, diapers, medication and other supplies on hand to weather an outage lasting several days or more.

Keeping four-legged family members safe

For families with pets, having a plan in place in the event of a prolonged outage or an emergency will help reduce worry and stress especially if you need to make a decision during an emergency.

- Bring pets indoors at the first sign of a storm or other emergency; they can become disoriented and frightened during severe weather and may wander off during an emergency
- Microchip your pet and ensure the contact information is up to date
- Store pet medical records on a USB drive or in an easy-to-remember location
- Create an emergency kit for pets (include shelf-safe food, bottled water, medications, and other supplies)

Copper Valley Electric cares about your safety. Planning for an emergency situation today can give you more confidence to deal with severe weather and potential outages in the future. For more tips, visit cvea.org or ready.gov. ■

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS FOR OLDER AMERICANS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



Plan how you will communicate if you have a communication need.



Plan for your transportation if you need help evacuating.



Plan how you will evacuate with any assistive devices.



Plan for food, water, and essentials for you and pets or service animals.



Include medicines, medical supplies, batteries, and chargers.



Make copies of Medicaid, Medicare, and other insurance cards.

WHAT TO INCLUDE IN AN EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS KIT

- ✓ Contact information for important people and care providers.
- ✓ A list of medicines you need, dosage instructions, and any allergies.
- ✓ Contact information for your durable medical provider.
- ✓ Need-to-know information for first responders and others who might need to help you.



ready.gov/disability