

## **Evacuation**

Evacuations are more common than many people realize. Hundreds of times each year, fires, floods, hurricanes, and other disasters force people from their home. When community evacuations become necessary, local officials provide information to the public through the media. Preparation to evacuate is essential, as many disasters offer no time for people to gather even the most basic necessities.

If you are advised to evacuate your home or move to another location temporarily, please remember the following tips:

- Learn your community's evacuation routes and proper evacuation procedures if you must leave town
- If you do not own a car, make transportation arrangements with friends or your local government
- Listen to a battery-powered radio and follow the instructions and advice of local authorities. They will give you information about evacuation routes and locations of emergency shelters
- If the danger is imminent, evacuate immediately
- Keep fuel in your car if an evacuation seems likely. Gas stations may be closed during emergencies
- If there is time, gather water, food, clothing, emergency supplies, and insurance and financial records
- Wear protective clothing and sturdy shoes
- Take your Disaster Supplies Kit
- If instructed to do so, shut off electricity, gas, and water at main switches and valves. Have a pipe or crescent wrench handy to do this
- Secure your home. Close and lock doors and windows
- Unplug appliances
- Take any actions needed to prevent damage to water pipes by freezing weather, if this is a threat
- Let others know when you left and where you are going
- Find out where children will be sent if they are in school when an evacuation is announced
- Plan a place to meet your family in case you are separated from one another in a disaster. Ask a friend outside your state to be the "check-point" so that everyone in the family can call that person to say they are safe
- Use travel evacuation routes that are specified or recommended by local officials. Do not take shortcuts, which may be blocked or washed out
- Do not drive into flooded areas
- Stay away from downed power lines
- As you travel, stay informed by listening to the local radio for additional information and instructions. If told to move to a particular location, do not go to any other location
- Make arrangements for pets, animals may not be allowed in public shelters