

Emergency Preparedness Guidelines – Springfield Township, Bucks County

Emergency Management

These are some guidelines to follow to help our citizens be better prepared for an emergency affecting Springfield Township.

Protective Actions

Protective actions are steps we can take to protect our family members and ourselves from harm. The two most common forms of emergency protective actions are ‘shelter-in-place’ and ‘evacuation.’ During and after an event, stay tuned to your local emergency radio or television station or listen to emergency personnel to know which protective action you should use.

Shelter-in-Place: This involves simply staying in your house or inside any other location. In the event of an emergency such as the release of hazardous material, it is not always recommended to immediately evacuate. Leaving your house or other location might expose you to harmful agents that may have been dispersed into the air.

Before an Emergency Strikes

It is necessary for you to learn about the things that you can do to be prepared before an emergency occurs. Two actions that will help you do this are to develop an Emergency Plan and an Emergency Go Kit.

Create an Emergency Plan

In the State of Pennsylvania we use the Emergency Alert System (EAS) during emergencies. When the decision has been made to activate the EAS, original programming will be interrupted and an emergency message will be broadcast. In Springfield Township we are currently working on developing a system similar to the one used by Bucks County, known as *Community Alert Network (CAN)*. It is very important that you listen to instructions. Emergencies may strike when family members are away from home, so find out about plans at your workplace, school, or anywhere you and your family spend time. After creating a plan, take the time to review it with your family every six months, and update as necessary.

Steps to creating a household emergency plan include:

1. Meet with family members and discuss the dangers of possible emergency events, including fire, severe weather, hazardous spills, and terrorism.
2. Discuss how you and your family will respond.
3. Discuss what to do in case of power outages or personal injuries.
4. Draw a floor plan of your home. Mark two escape routes from each room.
5. Adults should learn how to turn off the water, gas, and electricity at main switches.
If you do turn off natural gas service to your home, call your gas provider to restore service.
DO NOT ATTEMPT TO RESTORE GAS SERVICE YOURSELF!
6. Post-emergency contact numbers near all telephones; pre-program emergency numbers into phones with autodial capabilities.
7. Teach children how and when to dial 9-1-1 to get emergency assistance.
8. Pick a friend or relative that all family members should call if separated. It is often easier to call out-of-state during an emergency than within the affected area.
9. Instruct family members on how to turn to your local radio or television station for information.
10. Pick two meeting places:
 - a. A place near your home.
 - b. A place outside your neighborhood in case you cannot return home after an emergency.
11. Take a basic first aid and CPR course.
12. Keep family records in a watertight and fireproof safe.

If members of your household have disabilities or are elderly, find out what services may be available to aid in their care or evacuation in the event of an emergency.

Prepare an Emergency Go Kit

During an emergency, electricity, water, heat, air conditioning, or telephone service may not work. Preparing an Emergency Go Kit ahead of time can save precious time in the event you must evacuate. You should consider including the following items in an Emergency Go Kit.

1. At least a 3-5 day supply of water (1 gallon per person per day). Store water in sealed, unbreakable containers. Replace every six months.
2. A 3-5 day supply of non-perishable packaged or canned food and a non-electric can opener.
3. A change of clothing, rain gear, and sturdy shoes.
4. Blankets, bedding, or sleeping bags.
5. A first aid kit and prescription medications (be sure to check the expiration dates).
6. An extra pair of glasses or contact lenses and solution.
7. A list of family physicians, important medication information, and the style and serial number of medical devices, such as pacemakers.
8. Special items for infants, the elderly or family members with disabilities.
9. A battery-powered radio, flashlight, and plenty of extra batteries.
10. Identification, credit cards, cash, and photocopies of important family documents, including home insurance information.
11. An extra set of car and house keys.
12. Tools such as screwdrivers, cutters, and scissors; duct tape; waterproof matches; a fire extinguisher; flares; plastic storage containers; needle and thread; pen and paper; a compass; garbage bags; and regular household beach.

These guidelines are just a start to preparing you and your family in the event of an emergency. Be safe, and be prepared.

Michael Guarino
Emergency Management Coordinator
Springfield Township, Bucks County

Additional Information

www.buckscounty.org/government/departments/Emergency

www.pema.state.pa.us

www.fema.gov

www.redcross.org