

**MEMA is the state agency** charged with ensuring the state is prepared to withstand, respond to, and recover from all types of emergencies and disasters, including natural hazards, accidents, deliberate attacks, and technological and infrastructure failures. MEMA ensures the Commonwealth's ability to rapidly recover from large and small disasters by assessing and mitigating threats and hazards, enhancing preparedness, ensuring effective response, and strengthening our capacity to rebuild and recover.



### MASSACHUSETTS ALERTS ON YOUR SMARTPHONE

For severe weather alerts & emergency info from MEMA, download the free "Massachusetts Alerts" app.



Go to [mass.gov/MEMA/mobileapp](http://mass.gov/MEMA/mobileapp) or search for "Massachusetts Alerts" in your app store.

### STAY CONNECTED WITH MEMA

- [mass.gov/MEMA](http://mass.gov/MEMA)
- [twitter.com/MassEMA](https://twitter.com/MassEMA)
- [facebook.com/MassachusettsEMA](https://facebook.com/MassachusettsEMA)
- [youtube.com/MassachusettsEMA](https://youtube.com/MassachusettsEMA)

## MASSACHUSETTS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS GUIDE

**BE INFORMED**

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**MAKE A PLAN**

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**BUILD A KIT**

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**GET INVOLVED**

Tips and information to help Massachusetts residents prepare for all types of emergencies.



[www.mass.gov/MEMA](http://www.mass.gov/MEMA)

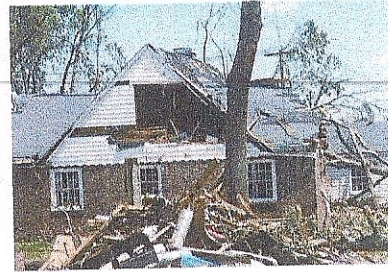
**WHY SHOULD YOU PREPARE FOR AN EMERGENCY?**

# DISASTERS HAPPEN

Anytime...Anywhere

**Are You Ready For the Next Disaster?  
Is Your Family Ready?**

- Severe Weather and Extreme Temperatures
- Hurricanes and Tropical Storms • Flooding
- Earthquakes • Fire • Power Outages
- Terrorism • Cyber Disruptions
- Health Emergencies



### Prepare Now

- Plan for your family's safety
- Protect your property
- Know your neighbors and be ready to help in an emergency
- Build your community's resilience

Visit: [www.mass.gov/MEMA](http://www.mass.gov/MEMA) for more emergency preparedness information

## EMERGENCY KIT SUPPLIES

- Water** - 1 gallon per person per day for 3 days 
- Food** - 3 day supply of nonperishable foods that do not need cooking 
- Tools** 
- Radio** - (battery-powered or hand crank), NOAA Weather Radio and extra batteries 
- Flashlight** and extra batteries 
- First Aid kit** 
- Diapers, wipes, baby food, formula, if needed** 
- Pet food, supplies, tags and crates, if needed** 
- Prescription medications and extra eyeglasses** 
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags, soap, hand sanitizer, and other personal hygiene items** 
- Copies of important documents and IDs (and cash)** 
- Cell phone & charger (auto or solar charger may also be needed if power is out)** 
- Place all items in a portable, watertight bin and store in an easy-to-access location.**

For complete list go to: [www.mass.gov/mema/ready](http://www.mass.gov/mema/ready)

**Know your hazards:**

Learn the types of disasters and emergencies that may occur in your area:



blizzard



flood



fire



tornado



hurricane



hazardous materials

**Receive Emergency Alerts**

- Sign up for your community's emergency alerting system
- Download Massachusetts Alerts: a free app from MEMA that delivers location specific weather warnings and emergency information to your smart phone
- Have a battery operated radio to monitor news broadcasts and weather forecasts
- Call 2-1-1 during a disaster to receive non-emergency information

**Know Your Community's Plans**

- Know your community's evacuation routes and shelter locations
- Know Your Zone. If you live or work in a coastal community, learn whether you live in a hurricane evacuation zone. Visit [www.mass.gov/knowyourzone](http://www.mass.gov/knowyourzone).

**HAVE A PLAN****Develop A Family Disaster Plan:**

Make a plan with your household members: know what you will do, how to find each other, and how to communicate in an emergency.

- Decide where you will meet in an emergency. Choose two locations: one place right outside your home and another outside your neighborhood.
- Identify exit routes from your home and neighborhood.
- Share phone numbers and email addresses with family members, and know how you will communicate. Identify an out-of-state friend or relative that household members can call.
- Plan for everyone's needs, especially people with medical needs or disabilities, seniors, children and pets.
- Know what to do if you must evacuate: know where you will go, what you will take with you, and how you will get there.
- Know what to do if you must shelter-in-place. Locate the safest locations in your home and place of work, and know what supplies you will need to be comfortable for up to 3 days.
- Share your plan with household and family members.

**BUILD A KIT****Build Your Emergency Kit Now.**

Emergencies and disasters sometimes happen without notice.

Use the Emergency Supplies Checklist in this Emergency Preparedness Guide, and consider the following:

- Keep your supplies in an easy-to-carry kit that you can use at home or take with you in case you must evacuate.
- Keep a kit in your car as well.
- Have enough food, water, medicine and other supplies to last for at least 72 hours.
- Include supplies for all members of your household, including seniors, children, people with disabilities, and pets.
- Include supplies in your kit to help you manage without basic services such as electricity, gas, water, sewerage and telephone.
- Collect and safeguard critical documents: financial and personal records, identification papers. See [www.ready.gov/financial-preparedness](http://www.ready.gov/financial-preparedness).

Visit [www.mass.gov/mema](http://www.mass.gov/mema) for a full list of supplies to include in your emergency kit.

**GET INVOLVED IN YOUR COMMUNITY**

**Invest in your community's resilience and help it prepare for the next disaster.**

**Volunteer**

Volunteer with a recognized disaster volunteer organization in your community.

Ask if your community has a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), Citizen Corps program, or other volunteer opportunities.

**Donate**

Make a contribution to one of the many non-profit organizations that are members of the Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD). ([www.massvoad.org](http://www.massvoad.org))

**Know and Help Your Neighbors**

During an emergency or disaster, check on your neighbors, particularly if they are elderly, have medical issues or disabilities, or do not speak English.





## SUGGESTED EMERGENCY KIT CHECKLIST

### **At a minimum your kit should include:**

- Bottled water (one gallon per person/per day for at least three days)
- Food: at least a three-day supply of non-perishable foods that do not need cooking (ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits, vegetables, or juices, protein or granola bars, cereal, peanut butter, dried fruit, nuts, crackers, baby food, comfort foods)
- Manual can opener
- Radio (battery-powered or hand crank), NOAA Weather Radio, and extra batteries
- Flashlight or lantern, with extra batteries
- Cellphone and charger (also an auto, solar, or crank charger in case power is out)
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities and other basic tools
- Prescription medications (two-week supply)
- Garbage bags, soap, sanitizer, and other personal hygiene items
- Extra eyeglasses, contact lenses, and dentures
- Extra batteries for hearing aids, wheelchairs, or other medical equipment
- Change of clothes and sturdy shoes
- Pet collar, leash, harness, crate, food, bowls, current photo, license and medical info
- Copies of insurance policies, bank account records, identification cards (IDs), medical information, and other important documents
- Extra cash and traveler's checks (ATMs may not work during a power outage)
- First-aid kit
- Whistle to signal for help
- Waterproof matches or lighter
- Local area maps
- Diapers, wipes, formula, baby food and supplies, if needed
- Water purification tablets

### **Also consider adding:**

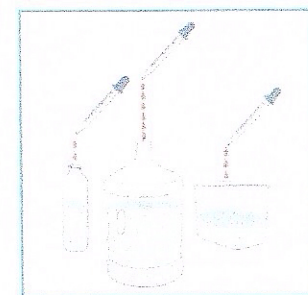
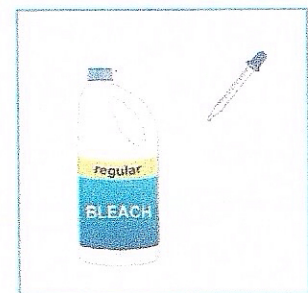
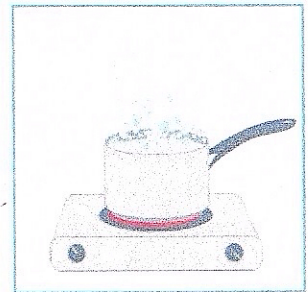
- Watch or battery-operated clock
- Household chlorine bleach, which can disinfect drinking water
- Camp stove or grill with fuel or canned heat, neither of which should be used indoors
- Disposable plates, cups, and utensils
- Duct tape, plastic sheeting, or tarp
- Seasonal items such as warm clothes for winter and sunscreen for summer
- Sleeping bags or blankets
- Books, games, puzzles, and other comfort items

## EMERGENCY DISINFECTION OF DRINKING WATER

In an emergency situation where regular water service has been interrupted – like a hurricane, flood, or water pipe breakage – local authorities may recommend using only bottled water, boiled water, or disinfected water until regular water service is restored. The instructions below show you how to boil and disinfect water to kill most disease-causing microorganisms that may be present in the water. However, boiling or disinfection will not destroy other contaminants, such as heavy metals, salts, and most other chemicals.

**ONLY USE WATER THAT HAS BEEN PROPERLY DISINFECTED FOR DRINKING, COOKING, MAKING ANY PREPARED DRINK, WASHING DISHES, AND FOR BRUSHING TEETH.**

- Use **bottled water** or water you have properly prepared and stored as an emergency water supply.
- Boil water**, if you do not have bottled water. Boiling is sufficient to kill pathogenic bacteria, viruses and protozoa (WHO, 2015).
  - If water is cloudy, let it settle and filter it through a clean cloth, paper towel, or coffee filter.
  - Bring water to a rolling boil for at least one minute. At altitudes above 5,000 feet (1,000 meters), boil water for three minutes.
  - Let water cool naturally and store it in clean containers with covers.
  - To improve the flat taste of boiled water, add one pinch of salt to each quart or liter of water, or pour the water from one clean container to another several times.
- Disinfect water using household bleach**, if you can't boil water. Only use regular, unscented chlorine bleach products that are suitable for disinfection and sanitization as indicated on the label. The label may say that the active ingredient contains 6 or 8.25% of sodium hypochlorite. Do not use scented, color safe, or bleaches with added cleaners.
  - If water is cloudy, let it settle and filter it through a clean cloth, paper towel, or coffee filter.
  - Locate a clean dropper from your medicine cabinet or emergency supply kit.
  - Locate a fresh liquid chlorine bleach or liquid chlorine bleach that is stored at room temperatures for less than one year.
  - Use the table on the next page as a guide to decide how much bleach you should add to the water, for example, add 8 drops of 6 % bleach or 6 drops of 8.25% bleach to each gallon of water. Double the amount of bleach if the water is cloudy, colored, or very cold.
  - Stir and let stand for 30 minutes. The water should have a slight chlorine odor. If it doesn't, repeat the dosage and let stand for another 15 minutes before use.
  - If the chlorine taste is too strong, pour the water from one clean container to another and let it stand for a few hours before use.



Volume of Water	Amount of 6% Bleach to Add†	Amount of 8.25% Bleach to Add†
1 quart/liter	2 drops	2 drops
1 gallon	8 drops	6 drops
2 gallons	16 drops (1/4 tsp)	12 drops (1/8 tsp)
4 gallons	1/3 tsp	1/4 tsp
8 gallons	2/3 tsp	1/2 tsp

† Bleach may contain 6 or 8.25% sodium hypochlorite

### ADDITIONAL WATER GUIDANCE FOR EMERGENCIES

**Prepare and store an emergency water supply.** Visit the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) website [www.ready.gov/managing-water](http://www.ready.gov/managing-water) for additional guidance on preparing and storing an emergency water supply.

**Look for other sources of water in and around your home.** Although bottled water is your best choice, you may be able to find other sources of water by melting ice cubes or draining your hot water tank or pipes.

You can also use river or lake water. It is generally better to use flowing water than still, stagnant water. However, do not use water with floating material in it or water that has a dark color or questionable odor.

Regardless of the source, treat the water by following the instructions on the previous page.

If you have a well on your property that has been flooded, make sure to disinfect and test the well water after the flood. Contact your state or local health department for advice or go to [water.epa.gov/drink/info/well/whatdo.cfm](http://water.epa.gov/drink/info/well/whatdo.cfm).

**Consider how the water looks and how to filter it if needed.** Disinfection does not work as well when



water is cloudy or colored. If water is cloudy, let it settle. Then filter the water through a clean cloth, paper towel, or coffee filter. Store the settled and filtered water in clean containers with covers.

### OTHER DISINFECTION METHODS

If you don't have liquid bleach, you can use one of the other disinfection methods described below.

- **Granular calcium hypochlorite.** The first step is to make a chlorine solution that you will use to disinfect your water. For your safety, do it in a ventilated area and wear eye protection. Add one heaping teaspoon (approximately ¼ ounce) of high-test granular calcium hypochlorite (HTH) to two gallons of water and stir until the particles have dissolved. The mixture will produce a chlorine solution of approximately 500 milligrams per liter. To disinfect water, add one part of the chlorine solution to each 100 parts of water you are treating. This is about the same as adding 1 pint (16 ounces) of the chlorine solution to 12.5 gallons of water. If the chlorine taste is too strong, pour the water from one clean container to another and let it stand for a few hours before use. CAUTION: HTH is a very powerful oxidant. Follow the instructions on the label for safe handling and storage of this chemical.
- **Common household iodine (or "tincture of iodine").** You may have iodine in your medicine cabinet or first aid kit. Add five drops of 2% tincture of iodine to each quart or liter of water that you are disinfecting. If the water is cloudy or colored, add 10 drops of iodine. Stir and let the water stand for at least 30 minutes before use.
- **Water disinfection tablets.** You can disinfect water with tablets that contain chlorine, iodine, chlorine dioxide, or other disinfecting agents. These tablets are available online or at pharmacies and sporting goods stores. Follow the instructions on the product label as each product may have a different strength.

### MORE INFORMATION

World Health Organization (WHO), 2015. *Technical Briefing on Boil Water.*

Safe Drinking Water Hotline 1-800-426-4791  
[water.epa.gov/drink/hotline](http://water.epa.gov/drink/hotline)



# Prepare Your Pets for Disasters

Your pets are important member of your family! This is why they should be included in your family's emergency plan.


To prepare for the unexpected, keep your pets in mind as you follow these tips:

1. Make a plan.
2. Build an emergency kit.
3. Stay informed.

## Make a Plan

If you have a plan in place for you and your pets, you will likely encounter less difficulty, stress and worry when you need to make a decision during an emergency.

### THINGS TO INCLUDE IN YOUR PLAN:

-  Know what to do with your pet during an evacuation . Many public shelters and hotels do not allow pets inside. Know a safe place where you can take your pets before disasters and emergencies happen.
- Develop a buddy system. Plan with neighbors, friends or relatives to make sure that someone is available to care for or evacuate your pets if you are unable to do so.
- Have copies of your pet's vaccination record, and make sure your pet is microchipped. Keep your address and phone number up-to-date and include an emergency contact outside of your immediate area.
- Keep contact information for your local emergency management office or animal control office and shelters on hand in case you become separated from your pet.

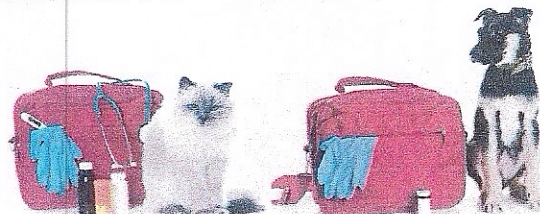
## Build a Kit for your Pet

Just as you do with your family's emergency supply kit, think first about the basics for survival.

Review your kit regularly to ensure that their contents are fresh.




### HERE ARE SOME ITEMS TO INCLUDE IN AN EMERGENCY KIT FOR YOUR PET:

- Food and Water. Keep several days' supply of both.
- Keep food in an airtight, waterproof container, and have a water bowl to use.



Ready. 



- **Medicine.** Keep an extra supply of the medicine your pet takes on a regular basis in a waterproof container.
- **First aid kit.** Include items appropriate for your pet's emergency medical needs.
- **Backup collar with ID tag and a harness or leash.** Have copies of your pet's registration information in a waterproof container and available electronically. 
- **Traveling bag, crate or sturdy carrier** for each pet.
- **Grooming items.** Pet shampoo and other items, in case your pet needs some cleaning up. 
- **A picture of you and your pet together.** If you become separated from your pet, a picture will help you document ownership and allow others to assist you in identifying your pet.
- **Sanitation needs.** Include pet litter and litter box, trash bags and other items to provide for your pet's sanitation needs.
- **Familiar items.** Put favorite toys, treats or bedding in your kit to reduce stress for your pets. 

### Stay Informed

Stay informed of current conditions and know how you will receive emergency alerts and warnings.

Download the FEMA app to get weather alerts for up to five different locations anywhere in the United States.

Always bring your pets indoors at the first sign or warning of a storm. For more information about how to prepare your pets, visit [Ready.gov/pets](https://www.ready.gov/pets).

  
**Ready.**



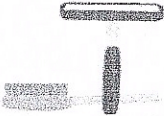

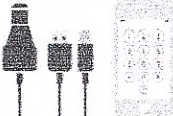








## Winter Emergency Car Kit

Your winter emergency car kit should include:

- Flashlight with extra batteries
- Charged cellphone and automobile charger
- Basic first aid kit
- Necessary medications
- Pocket knife
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Extra clothes (including rain gear, boots, mittens, socks)
- High-calorie non-perishable foods (dried fruits, nuts, canned food)
- Manual can opener
- Container of water
- Windshield scraper and brush
- Fire extinguisher
- Shovel
- Sand, road salt, or cat litter for traction
- Tire chains or traction mats
- Basic tool kit (pliers, wrench, screwdriver)
- Tow rope
- Battery jumper cables
- Road flares/reflectors
- Brightly colored cloth to use as a flag
- Road maps

## WINTER EMERGENCY CAR KIT

<p><b>70%</b> of winter deaths related to snow and ice occur in cars. Assemble an emergency car kit to stay safe during the winter season.</p>	<p>Windshield Scraper</p> 	<p>Shovel</p> 	<p>Phone Charger</p> 	<p>Flashlight &amp; Batteries</p> 
<p>Jumper Cables</p> 	<p>Non-perishable Food</p> 	<p>First-aid Kit</p> 	<p>Grit for Traction</p> 	<p>Blankets &amp; Clothes</p> 



Visit [www.mass.gov/mema](http://www.mass.gov/mema) for a complete winter emergency car kit checklist  
Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA)

Mass.gov



## BEFORE PLAN AHEAD (IF YOU CAN) ...



Freeze **containers of water and gel packs** to help keep food cold if the power goes out.

Put **appliance thermometers** in your refrigerator and freezer.

Keep **freezer 0°F** or below

Refrigerator **40°F** or below

Freeze refrigerated items such as leftovers, milk, and fresh meat and poultry that you do not need immediately.

**Group foods together** in the freezer to help food stay colder longer.

If you think power will be out for more than 4 hours, consider moving food to a cooler with ice. If available, buy dry or block ice to keep the refrigerator or freezer cold.

Store non-perishable foods on higher shelves to avoid flood water.

## DURING WHILE THE POWER IS OUT ...

Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed to maintain cold temperature.

### IF DOORS STAY CLOSED ...

... a full freezer will hold its temperature for **48 HOURS**

**24 HOURS** if half-full

... a fridge will keep food safe for **4 HOURS**

Place perishable foods in a cooler with ice before food starts to go bad

## AFTER ONCE THE POWER IS BACK ON ...



**Check the temperature** inside your refrigerator and freezer. If they're still at safe temperatures, your food should be fine. Discard perishable foods that have been at an unsafe temperature.

Never taste food to **determine its safety!**

### WHAT CAN I KEEP?



### WHAT SHOULD I THROW OUT?



### WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!

# AFTER A FLOOD

### FOLLOW THESE STEPS AFTER A FLOOD:

- DO NOT EAT** any food that may have touched flood water.
- DISCARD FOOD** not in waterproof containers; screw-caps, snap lids, pull tops, and crimped tops are not waterproof.
- DISCARD** cardboard juice/milk/baby formula boxes and home canned foods.
- DISCARD** any damaged cans that have swelling, leakage, punctures, holes, fractures, extensive deep rusting, or crushing/denting severe enough to prevent normal stacking or opening.



Pots, pans, dishes and utensils

Undamaged all-metal cans after removing labels

# Eat Safe Food after a Power Outage

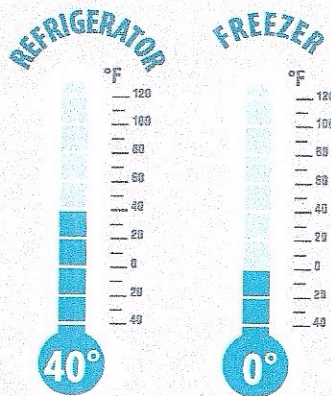
Refrigerated or frozen foods may not be safe to eat after the loss of power. Find out what you can do to keep food safe during a power outage, and when you need to throw away food that could make you sick.

## Before

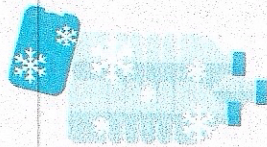
Keep appliance thermometers in your refrigerator and freezer.

The refrigerator should be at 40°F or below.

The freezer should be at 0°F or below.

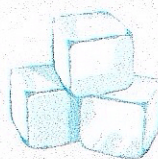
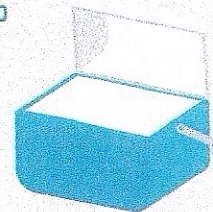


## Prepare for emergencies or natural disasters



Freeze containers of water and gel packs to help keep your food at 40°F or below.

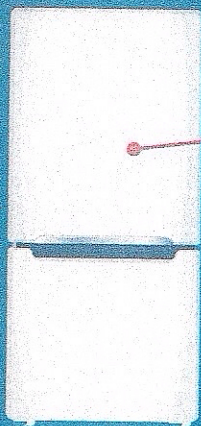
Have a cooler handy.



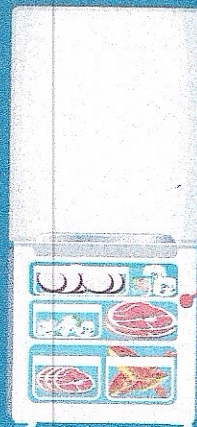
Buy dry ice or block ice to keep food cold in the refrigerator if the power might be out for a long time.

## During

**KEEP**  
Refrigerator  
& Freezer Doors  
**CLOSED**



**4**  
Hours  
in a  
Refrigerator



**48**  
Hours  
in a  
**FULL**  
Freezer



**24**  
Hours  
in a  
**HALF-FULL**  
Freezer

After 4 hours without power, put refrigerated perishable foods in a cooler. Add ice or another cold source to keep them at 40°F or below.

## After

Never taste food to determine if it is safe to eat. **When in doubt, throw it out.**

- Throw out perishable food in your refrigerator (meat, fish, cut fruits and vegetables, eggs, milk, and leftovers) after 4 hours without power or a cold source.
- Throw out any food with an unusual odor, color, or texture.
- Check temperatures of food kept in coolers or your refrigerator with a cold source. Throw out food above 40°F.
- If you have an appliance thermometer in your freezer, check to see if it is still at 40°F or below.
- You can safely refreeze or cook thawed frozen food that still contains ice crystals or is at 40°F or below.



[www.cdc.gov/foodsafety](http://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety)