

Building an Emergency Kit

We at Arrowhead Gardens are no strangers to power and water outages. They have lasted a few hours to a few days, but do you know what to do if the disaster lasts longer? The best thing you can do is plan ahead. One way to do that is to create a Disaster Kit. The American Red Cross advises us to plan to be on our own for as many as seven days to two weeks in case professional help can't reach us. Remember, if it's a widespread disaster, our Disaster Personnel will be affected too.

Have available, preferably in easy roll containers or suitcases with handles and wheels:

- A gallon of water per day.
- Nonperishable food items, and a manual can opener.
- A First Aid kit.
- Medications:
 - Collect a couple days' worth out of each refill until you have two weeks' worth, then trade out the old for the new every refill.
 - Keep in mind that during a long-term power outage, the coldest place to keep your insulin is in a waterproof baggy in your toilet tank.
 - Whatever medical equipment you regularly need, such as

blood pressure cuffs, test strips, syringes, extra hearing aid batteries, spare eyeglasses if you have them, etc.

- A radio, *flashlight and extra batteries*.
- A change of seasonally appropriate clothing, sturdy shoes and work gloves.
- Personal hygiene items, such as hand sanitizers, tooth brushes, combs, diapers, etc.
- Toilet paper, large plastic garbage bags and bleach. See the following website for instructions:
 - <http://www.redcross.org/content/dam/redcross/uncategorized/11/redcrossprepareguide.pdf>
- Tools, such as a "multipurpose" tool that acts as several tools and folds up compactly.
- An emergency or "space" blanket.
- Money in small bills (ATMs may not be operational). It's recommended you have about \$100.
- Identification and copies of important documents.
- An extra cell phone charger and charged battery.
- An out-of-area contact person and an easily accessible list of emergency contact numbers.
- Extra apartment and car keys.

- A whistle to draw the attention of Emergency Personnel to you.
- Pet supplies (remember they'll need food and water too), including copies of vaccination records, leashes and carriers.
- Photos of household members and pets in case of separation.

Be sure your kit, cane, walker and wheelchair are all legibly labeled with your name, address and phone number.

Texts are more likely to go through than phone calls in a widespread disaster.

Learn the location of your building's designated meeting place should evacuation become necessary.

Keep your kit supplies up to date. Review the contents and replace them at least every six months. This includes not just food and medications, but water and batteries too.

Being prepared for a disaster beforehand lets us do what needs to be done to take care of ourselves and our neighbors in a calm manner. Do you have a Vial of Life? If you need one check with your Building Guide. Now is the time to start planning.