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7-1-2009

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Recommended Citation
"W224 Preparing Your Evacuation Grab-and-Go Bag," The University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service, W224 07/09 10-0014, http://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_agexfinman/31

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UF Extension
W224

Preparing Your Evacuation Grab-and-Go Bag

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Disaster can strike anywhere. Depending on where you live, you may need to prepare to leave your home quickly because of floods, fires, tornadoes, earthquakes or hurricanes. Such man-made disasters as chemical spills and nuclear contamination are also possible. In case you have to leave your home unexpectedly, a little preparation can make a big difference in your ability to recover from the losses you incur.

Items for Your Grab-and-Go Bag

Personal Needs

- ❑ Cash or travelers' checks for several days' living expenses
- ❑ Rolls of quarters
- ❑ Checkbook
- ❑ Extra credit card
- ❑ Spare keys to your autos and home
- ❑ Keys to safe deposit box
- ❑ Medication you or other family members must take on a regular basis
- ❑ Overnight items and fresh clothes for each family member
- ❑ Sealed snacks for family members and pets
- ❑ Bottled water
- ❑ Blanket
- ❑ Flashlight with batteries
- ❑ Radio

Emergency Phone Numbers

- ❑ Family members & friends
- ❑ Employers
- ❑ Health care providers
- ❑ Insurance agents
- ❑ Lawyers, accountant & financial advisors
- ❑ Repair contractors
- ❑ Clergy

Steps to Creating Your Grab-and-Go Bag

Step 1

- ➢ Place papers in sealed, water-proof plastic bags.
- ➢ Use a backpack or bag with rollers for ease in carrying.

Step 2

- ➢ Store the bag at home in a secure, easily accessible location.

Step 3

If you must evacuate:

- ➢ Grab the bag and take it with you.
- ➢ Keep the bag with you at all times.
- ➢ Do not leave the bag unattended in your car.

Lists of Important Information

- ❑ Prescriptions including medication, dosage, pharmacy phone number, prescription number and doctor
- ❑ Driver's license numbers for all family members
- ❑ Social Security numbers for all family members
- ❑ Account numbers for all bank and investment accounts and safe combinations
- ❑ Credit card account numbers and contact information
- ❑ Account numbers, contact information and due dates for all debts
- ❑ List of service providers (utilities, phone, etc.) and contact information
- ❑ Insurance policies including contact information
- ❑ Logins and passwords for Internet accounts
- ❑ Passport or visa numbers

Items to Be Stored Away from Home

Copies of:

- ❑ Social Security cards
- ❑ Children's immunization records
- ❑ Birth, marriage, death, adoption, divorce, baptismal certificates
- ❑ Deeds
- ❑ Titles
- ❑ Wills
- ❑ Trust documents
- ❑ Durable power of attorney
- ❑ Health care directives
- ❑ Stock, bond or other investment certificates
- ❑ Recent investment statements
- ❑ First two pages of previous year's income tax return
- ❑ School records including diplomas and certificates
- ❑ Resumes
- ❑ Military discharge papers
- ❑ Most recent credit report
- ❑ Bankruptcy discharge statement
- ❑ Rental agreement and contact information for landlord
- ❑ Videotaped home inventory
- ❑ Irreplaceable photos
- ❑ Backup copies of computerized financial records
- ❑ Completed Important Information for Household Documents (UT Extension Publication W223)

Other Tips...

- ✓ Inform friends and family about your evacuation plan ahead of time.
- ✓ Prepare an emergency contact card for all family members to keep with them in case of separation or injury.
  Visit http://www.redcross. org/prepare/ECCard.pdf for an example.
- ✓ In case of a widespread disaster, it's helpful to have duplicates or digital copies of items stored with an out-of-town relative or friend.

References:

"Preparing Your Evacuation 'Grab and Go' Box." Jeanette Tucker, Ph.D. Louisiana State University Agricultural Center. May 2006.
"Securing Your Finances in Times of Disaster." Dena Wise, Ph.D. University of Tennessee Extension. October 2004.

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INSTITUTE of AGRICULTURE

W224 07/09 10-0014

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