

# When disaster strikes – what you need to do to survive



Responding automatically, without panic or fear, to a disaster alarm can save your life. Reacting automatically can save time, which is crucial in an emergency no matter where you are.

## PLANNING

Wherever you may be, make sure you plan for an emergency. Always make sure you know the location of exits, shelters, or anything else necessary in a disaster so if one happens, you are prepared and can respond automatically. For example, if you are shopping, make sure you know the locations of the exits and how to get to them easily and quickly.

You can also prepare a disaster plan with your family so they know what to do when disaster strikes. For example, you can prepare a plan that covers how to evacuate a building during a fire (locate exits, avoid elevators). This keeps them safe and you can keep calm knowing your family is safe in a disaster or emergency.

## TRAINING

When you have a plan of action, be sure to practice it so the steps become routine. Remember, practicing the plan can save valuable time that helps keep you safe from harm.

Be sure to practice your plan at work, at home, shopping, etc. You can simply review the steps in your head or actually walk through them.

Review and practice the plan with your family as well to help make the plan routine for them. Make sure all of you know:

- How to contact each other in a disaster if you are separated.
- Emergency response procedures and your individual roles in those procedures.
- Evacuation and shelter procedures.
- Procedures for accounting for the members of your family in an evacuation.

Perform practice drills and talk through the steps over a family dinner. You can ask for the proper order, ask what follows step X, ask why the step is important, or why it is important to make your disaster response routine. All of these can help keep you and your family safe and calm during an emergency.

## RESPONDING

Continuously practice and prepare for a disaster so you and your family are confident in your response.

Also, be sure to respond to any emergency notification as a real emergency. This helps reinforce and eliminate the need to verify if the threat is real. This, coupled with your automatic response, can save time and your life.

Finally, make sure your family can respond properly to any emergency notification as well to help keep them safe from harm.

A response based on proper planning and practice helps to reduce panic in a disaster situation. Reducing panic can help keep you and your family calm and allows you and your family to react properly to the disaster.

