



READY TO RESPOND

NEWSLETTER



CITY OF CHARLESTON

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CHARLESTON FIRE DEPT

Tips for Parents

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School & Campus Preparedness

Disasters, weather natural or manmade, don't always happen when you and your family are at home. Disasters can often happen while friends and family are at a school. School officials for both K-12 and higher education should actively prepare for a number of different disaster scenarios. Each disaster has their own unique set of hazards, which should be planned for. Planning for these institutions can be more difficult than for the typical family because of the number and type of student that potentially could be involved

Info. Parents Should Know About School Preparedness

- Does your child's school have a preparedness plan
- How often are there drills
- Where will students go if the school needs evacuated
- What route will they take to reach the evacuation point
- What is the process for parent/student reunification
- Are there certain media outlets that school officials will put out information during a disaster
- Is there a designated phone number that will be used for parents to obtain information during a disaster



Types of Disasters Schools Should Prepare For

- Active Shooter
- Hazardous Materials Spill
- Tornado
- Earthquake
- Fire
- Flood
- Blizzard
- Bus Accidents

Emergency Preparedness Tips for College Students

When you're away at college, immersed in studying, sports, and social activities, disaster planning might seem like the furthest thing from your mind. However, in reality, a crisis can develop anywhere, at anytime. A little advance planning can save you valuable moments later and quite possibly, your life.

Believe it or not-emergency preparedness is relatively simple and easy to fit into your campus lifestyle. Most readiness takes a few minutes of thought and just a little effort.

Here are 6 quick college “prep” tips for emergency readiness and safety:

Find your place of shelter for severe weather and emergency exit routes by asking a person of authority or checking the emergency plans posted on walls. Know at least two exits from your dorm and classrooms. Never take elevators in the event of a fire, even if they appear to be working properly, as you may become trapped between floors or doors may open on a level filled with flames. Don't stay in your dorm or go back for personal items during an emergency evacuation.

Practice by taking the evacuation route a few times in advance. Many dorms have stairways that lead to different levels, rather than a direct path to an exit. These may require several changes on other floors to reach the outdoors. Learn your way to exits before an emergency, when smoke filled passageways can make navigation far more difficult. Determine if your key or campus identification card are required (or will work) to open stairway doors on other floors. If you have to leave in an emergency, you may need these to exit.

Keep security's number posted by your room phone and programmed into your cell phone. Store your family's emergency contact info in your cell under “I.C.E.” (In Case of Emergency). In the event you are unconscious or unable to call, responders will look at your cell for this information.

Identify how you receive campus updates. Does your college use email, radio, television or text alerts to send bulletins regarding violence or crisis situations?

Stash an extra blanket, flashlight and batteries, first aid kit, and a few days of non-perishable food and bottled water handy in your dorm just in case you get stuck without power. Your first aid kit doesn't need to be huge, but should have the essentials- bandages, anti-septic cream, burn spray, non-aspirin pain reliever and gloves.

Make plans with family for contacting them in the event of a widespread disaster, such as a tornado, hurricane or flood. If a large area is affected, phone service (even your cell) may not have any reception. It's possible, both you and your family may not have working phones. Services like the American Red Cross can make calls for you to contact numbers. This is why it's a good idea to pick an out-of-state relative or friend for all family members to connect with. Your family can know your condition and location through an established contact person, which will make a whole lot less stress for them and you.

Keep Calm: No matter what events happen, maintain a level of calm. You're more likely to think clearly when you've got your wits and you'll be a greater help to others.

(Source: <http://oglecounty.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Emergency-Preparedness-Tips-for-College-Students.pdf>)



Illinois Emergency Management Agency
Press Release

**Parents Encouraged to Include Emergency Preparedness in
Back-to-School Plans**

August is School and Campus Preparedness Month in Illinois

SPRINGFIELD – In the next few weeks, students from pre-kindergarten through college will be headed back to school. As parents prepare their students for the new academic year, the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) and local emergency management agencies across the state are encouraging parents to include emergency preparedness in their back-to-school plans.

“Emergencies can occur any time of the day or night, including when children are in school,” said IEMA Director James K. Joseph. “The start of a new school year is the perfect time to make sure you know your school’s plans for keeping students safe during an emergency and then talking to your child about those plans.”

Joseph offered several back-to-school planning tips for parents of school-aged children, including:

- Find out where children will be taken in the event of an evacuation during school hours.
- Ensure your current emergency contact information is on file at your child’s school.
- Pre-authorize a friend or relative to pick up your children in an emergency and make sure the school knows who that designated person is.
- Teach children with cell phones about ‘Text First, Talk Later.’ Short, simple text messages, such as “R U OK?” and “I’m OK,” are more likely to get through than a phone call if phone service is disrupted following an emergency. As phone congestion eases, you can follow up with a phone call to relay more information.

Students headed off to college also need to be prepared for emergencies. Many college campuses offer email and text messages to alert students of potential dangers, such as severe weather and other threats. Encourage your college student to sign-up for such alerts. Some colleges also provide alert messages for parents so they also are aware of potential dangers on campus. In addition, make sure your student knows the emergency plans for their dorm or apartment building.

Additional preparedness information is available on the Ready Illinois website at www.Ready.Illinois.gov.