

General

This brochure outlines the most basic steps you should take to prepare for an evacuation. Depending on the disasters that are likely to occur in your area, you can do much to protect your home and your family. To obtain additional information on how you can minimize the effects of specific types of disasters, contact your base or local emergency management office. If you are having problems finding information or are unsure about what type of information you need contact your Airman & Family Readiness Center.

We are all aware of the constantly changing world situation and the potential for the mobilization/deployment of our armed forces; however, we often neglect to consider the possibility of disasters striking right here at home. Planning for these eventualities is a necessary part of modern life--a toxic spill, a blizzard or other natural or man-made disaster can reap as many casualties as any battlefield event. Severe weather conditions CAN and often DO create "Natural Disasters". One of the much neglected part of "Personal Readiness" deals with our ability to protect ourselves against Natural and man-made Disasters. The tips included in this guide are not intended to be all inclusive and are certainly no substitute for the specific guidance available through your base and community Disaster Preparedness agencies.

One aspect of disaster is the evacuation or displacement of Air Force service members and families. No matter how small in scope, an evacuation may seem, it is a crisis time for the affected families and communities. All individuals have some problems with evacuation. The majority of individuals possess coping skills that enable them to adapt and successfully survive the evacuation, but some may find it harder to confront the difficulties they encounter during this time. The information in this brochure is based on the experiences of families and service providers in previous evacuations and from disaster research findings. The information and suggestions provided can help you ensure that an evacuation does not adversely effect the overall health and well-being of Air Force Service members and their families.

What to expect during a disaster:

- Confusion: Many people are unprepared for an evacuation and do not know what to bring. Children will not want to evacuate without the family pets.
- Need for credible and timely information: Without reliable information, rumors about looting and the status of the evacuated base can easily begin. Lack of information escalates fear, stress, and erodes confidence in leadership charged with protecting the evacuees and their property.
- Evacuees with multiple needs: In addition to material assistance evacuees need financial and emotional assistance. Support services are essential at each stage of an evacuation. An efficient support structure that addresses both physical and emotional needs will alleviate the stress that is associated with displacement and evacuation.

Why is preparation the key to successful evacuation?

While the Air Force and other disaster relief agencies can provide some assistance during an evacuation they can not replace items you may forget or leave undone when you evacuate. "If only I had been prepared" is a statement that no one should have to make. Families have learned that being prepared makes evacuation easier and much less stressful. They also found that your outlook on evacuation is very important. If you can look at evacuation as a challenge, coping will be easier. Preparing ahead of time will help you adopt this outlook. You will be able to avoid many obstacles and you will gain confidence in your ability to cope with an evacuation. Prepare now to make evacuation easier later. This booklet will help you prepare for an evacuation. It discusses actions you and your family should take to be prepared in case of disaster or evacuation:

- Get Information
- Prepare a Disaster Supplies Kit

- Create an Emergency Plan
- Store your Disaster Supplies Kit
- Know how to turn off utilities
- Choose places to meet and a non-local contact

Evacuation Checklist

1. Find out which disasters are likely to occur in your area.
2. Ask how you would be warned of an emergency:

On duty:

Off duty:

3. Learn your community's evacuation routes and your installation's evacuation procedures.
4. Find where your local shelters are located.
5. Ask about assistance for elderly family members or family members with special needs.

PREPARE A DISASTER SUPPLIES KIT

1. Assemble supplies you might need in an evacuation.
2. Disaster Kit Prepared:

Location of Kit:

- a. Water. One gallon per person per day. Store in sealed unbreakable containers and replace every six months. Store at least a three day supply of water.
- b. Food. Store non-perishable foods that need little preparation or cooking. Include foods for family members with special diets. Store at least a three day supply of food.
- c. First Aid Kit. Assemble a basic first aid kit with the following items:
 - Band-Aids in assorted sizes
 - Sterile gauze pads and rolls
 - Scissors, tweezers, and a needle
 - Antiseptic and cleansing agent
 - Thermometer and tongue blades
 - Sunscreen
 - Safety pins
 - Non-prescription Drugs, aspirin, laxative, antacid, anti-diarrhea
- d. Tools and Supplies:
 - Eating utensils
 - Battery powered radio and extra batteries
 - Flashlight and extra batteries
 - Can opener, utility knife
 - Personal hygiene items
 - Toilet paper and towelettes

e. Clothing:

- Sturdy shoes
- Rain gear
- One complete change of clothing per person

f. Special Items:

- Cash or traveler's checks and change
- Items for infants, diapers, formula, medication, and bottles
- Prescription drugs
- Eyeglasses, contact lens supplies
- Pet care items: food, shot records, a carrying case

g. Important Family Documents:

(In a fire and water proof container)

- Will, insurance policies, contracts, deeds stocks and bonds
- Passports, social security cards, military ID cards, immunization record
- Bank account numbers
- Credit card numbers
- Inventory of valuable household goods
- Important telephone numbers
- Family Records (birth, marriage, death certificates)

3. Depending on the amount of time you have and policies for the evacuation you may consider bringing:

- Irreplaceable items, photos, heirlooms, etc.
- Entertaining games and books
- Blankets or sleeping bags

CREATE AN EMERGENCY PLAN

Meet with household members and discuss each disaster that could occur and how to respond:

1. Discuss evacuation warnings and procedures.
2. Make sure each family member knows where the disaster supplies kit is.
3. Learn how to turn off gas, electricity, and water in your home.
4. Know where to find emergency phone numbers and non-local contact phone numbers.
5. If children are alone, find a neighbor or friend they should go to.

STORE YOUR DISASTER SUPPLIES KIT

1. Store your kit in a convenient place known by all family members.
2. Store your kit in easy to carry container such as a duffel bag, backpack, or covered trash container.
3. Keep items that can get wet in airtight plastic bags.
4. Change your water and food supplies every six months.

KNOW HOW AND WHERE TO SHUT OFF UTILITIES

Write the location of each and instructions for shutting off:

1. Main water valve
2. Circuit Breaker
3. Gas Valve

CHOOSE PLACES TO MEET AND A NON-LOCAL CONTACT

Write down places to meet and a non-local contact in case your family is separated.

1. Within home meeting Place:
2. Outside home meeting Place:
3. Neighbor/friend if children are alone:

Non-local relative or friend for check-in

Name:

City:

Phone # Day

Phone # Evening:

IF YOU NEED TO EVACUATE

1. Listen to your radio for location and instructions to emergency shelters.
2. Follow instructions of local Disaster Preparedness officials/installation commander.
3. If you can go home before evacuating:
 - Wear protective clothing and sturdy shoes
 - Take your disaster supplies kit
 - Lock your home
 - Use travel routes specified by local officials/installation commander
4. If you are sure you have time:
 - Shut off your utilities
 - Let others know when you left and where you are going
 - Make arrangements for pets
5. If you have problems at any time during an evacuation, call your Airman & Family Readiness Center or the Airman & Family Readiness Center at any military installations.

Emotional Support and Stress Management

Counseling: During an evacuation you or members of your family may experience difficulties coping or be overwhelmed by grief and loss. You may want to talk to a professional, or you may want tips on how you can give support to a family member who is having a difficult time. In either case, the A&FRC can provide you with information and/or referrals.

Medical Care: Stress and grieving often affect physical health. If you are experiencing eating or stomach disorders, headaches, sleeping disorders or any health problems the installation clinic or hospital can help you.

Support Groups: Mutual support groups help survivors share experiences and work through the stages of grief and

loss. If you are interested in joining an existing support group the Airman & Family Readiness Center can help you find one that suits your needs.

Issues for Children: As a parent, you should pay special attention to your children during an evacuation. Children will feel many of the same things you do. Their normal routines have been disrupted. They will look to you for guidance and to see how you are coping with the evacuation. Each child will respond differently to the disaster. Some may exhibit reactions quickly and others may not show feelings for weeks or even months after the disaster occurred. In any case, it is very normal for children to express their feelings about what has happened in one way or another. It is natural for your child to display some behavior changes after an evacuation. Some children may try to escape or deny the situation while others will want to draw attention to themselves. Children need help getting over a traumatic situation because they may feel scared and insecure. They will need you to give them reassurance that everything is OK. They will also need special attention and a lot of love during this period.

Some ways you can help:

- Answer your child's questions. Discuss in simple terms what is going on.
- Tell your child how you feel.
- Reassure your child often that they are loved and will be taken care of.
- Hold your child and comfort him or her.
- Continue as many regular routines with your child as you can. Read stories, play games, and eat meals together.

When you have reached a final destination do not expect your child to immediately resume their past behavior. They will also need time to adjust. Things you can do at the final destination are:

- Stay in touch with your child's teacher. They can give you updates on your child's behavior and coping.
- Plan special family events. The best place for a child to overcome a traumatic situation is within the family.
- Involve your child in rebuilding your new lives. Have them help with home projects and clean up.

If you need outside help at any time for your child, contact the Airman & Family Readiness Center, your doctor or a religious leader. They can help you find family-centered emotional support for your child.

If you need information or any other help for yourself or a family member, do not hesitate to contact the Airman & Family Readiness Center. Evacuations are stressful and it is natural to experience many strong new feelings. To assist you, the A&FRC can provide information and referrals to military and/or local agencies to help you manage stress.

Additional Assistance

American Red Cross: Provides a variety of disaster relief services for Air Force Families. The Red Cross can help you locate family members during an evacuation.

Legal Assistance: The base legal office can help you file claims for property damage. Information on civilian attorneys is available through this office.

Respite Child Care: During this hectic time, child care may be provided for your children on a priority basis.

Medical Care: The base hospital, clinic or mental health clinic can help you and your family with any illness or physical discomfort.

Transportation Assistance: Transportation on base as well as transportation from temporary lodging to the base may be arranged for evacuees that do not have transportation.

Chapel: The base chapel program offers religious services and programs. Chaplains and religious leaders are also available for counseling.

Airman & Family Readiness Center: Offers a wide range of services and support programs as well as information and referral.

For more information on location and phone numbers of these agencies and for any other needs, contact the Airman & Family Readiness Center.

WHEN YOU RETURN TO YOUR HOME

Care should be taken when you return home so that your health is not endangered. The water supply may have become contaminated from lack of use or minimal treatment. Until you have been advised that the water is safe, foil any that is to be used for human consumption. It may be necessary to take extra precautions with waste material until the area has re-established the sewer system. Food will probably be carried back in your car. Before eating it, be sure that the food is fresh, particularly raw meat. Wash all fresh vegetables and clean all utensils prior to use.

Casualty Situations

Military air disasters, natural disasters, terrorist activities, and wartime situations are potential casualty situations. Any casualty situation is a tragedy and can be a byproduct of modern technology and the military mission.

There are many places where you can find help. Counseling, mental health, and religious services are available through on and off base sources. Financial assistance, legal assistance, and other material assistance are also available. Do not hesitate to seek outside help. See your Airman & Family Readiness Center for assistance and guidance.

GENERAL

Check with your Airman & Family Readiness Center to obtain a copy of your base's Disaster Preparedness Instructions.

TALKING PAPER ON CASUALTY NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

Purpose of Initial Notification

- To provide dignified and compassionate notification of death, duty status whereabouts unknown (DUSTWUN), missing, or captured to family members as promptly as possible on behalf of the Air Force Chief of Staff.
- To inform the Primary next of kin (PNOK) of the circumstances, as appropriate.
- To advise PNOK they will be contacted by the casualty assistance representative (and a mortuary officer in death cases) within 24 hours to arrange a follow-up assistance visit at the family's convenience.
- To ask the PNOK if they wish other family members to be notified by the Air Force, or if they wish to make the notification themselves.

Composition of Notification Team

- Member's commander or a designated representative (whenever possible, a field grade officer of equal or higher grade than the deceased).
 - Chaplain and medical representative (doctor, nurse, or medical technician), if available.
 - Must be sensitive to the timeliness of effecting notification when organizing the team.
 - Don't delay making notification if there is difficulty locating a chaplain or medical representative.

- Average notification time is 4 hours; however, locality of NOK and accuracy of the member's emergency information play a significant role in length of time involved with notification.
- Commander may ask a close friend of the member's family to accompany him or her, or the team, provided it does not delay the notification.

Latitude of Notification Officer

- The commander has reasonable latitude based on his or her judgment of the circumstances.
- Considerations by commanders when determining the appropriate method of notification.
 - Circumstances of death.
 - Realities of modern media communications; provide "Contacts with the Media" Information Paper to NOK on all hostile DUSTWUN, Missing, & Captured notifications.
 - Family relationships of the deceased.
 - Difficulties imposed by large metropolitan areas or bad weather.
- Exceptions provided for cases where a family is notified by a source other than the Air Force.
 - Normally, the unit commander will follow up with a personal visit (if in local area of NOK), but a team is not required.
- To refer the NOK to the Air Force Casualty Services Branch for additional information on overseas casualties, or the home installation commander for information on CONUS casualties.

Casualties are reported by the base level Casualty Assistance Representative to Casualty Services, applicable MAJCOM, mortuary, DFAS, AF Safety Center, AF Institute of Pathology, OSGLI and other agencies depending on the member's duty status:

- Casualty Services immediately notifies AF Operations after confirmation of an active duty death.
- Casualty Services reports all casualties daily to AF/CVE, AF/DP, HQ OSI/XOGS, HQ JSSA/SACY, and AFPC/CC/CD; casualties are reported monthly to WHS/DIOR.

Mass Casualties

- Objective the same as an individual casualty; dignified and compassionate notification to family members as promptly as possible with follow-on casualty assistance provided by base-level Casualty Assistance Representative.
- Method of notification depends on circumstance of the casualty event, but would involve commanders at assigned bases and notification officers tasked by Casualty Services for those servicemembers with families not near the member's home station.
- Casualty Services Branch has the capability of augmenting staff with trained READY Program augmentees to assist with sustained casualty operations.
- Casualty Services Branch has 1 Individual Mobilization Augmentee officer assigned for wartime contingencies.

Dealing with the News Media

Reporters often will try to contact family members and friends to get their reactions about the service member. National and local news media can be expected to carry news of American casualties, including missing and

captured personnel. Even though the Air Force does not release family information, some reporters may determine your name, address or telephone number based on information from other sources.

When deciding if you want to talk with reporters, you should consider the following:

- It's your choice. The decision on whether to cooperate with news media is entirely up to you and other family members. However, before you agree to be interviewed or to release information, you should carefully consider several factors relating to your privacy and your loved one's casualty status.
- You can discuss the alternatives with an Air Force Public Affairs Officer (PAO). They can advise and help you keep reporters at a distance or help you with interviews. Your notification officer or an Air Force Casualty Assistance officer will provide you with the name of the public affairs person assigned to you.
- The pressure on you to cooperate may be intense but your right to privacy always takes precedence. You are under no obligation to accept media requests for information or interviews. In some cases, media may "camp out" outside your house or contact you at your work place or while you're out in the local area. In the past, some reporters have cited the public's "right to know" and "freedom of the press" to convince family members to cooperate. Remember, it's your choice.

Things to consider when deciding whether to talk with the news media:

- Generally it is better not to provide any personal details or family information on missing or captured service members because the enemy may be able to use such information to cause emotional or psychological harm to them. Unfortunately, this was a method used by the enemy during past wars.
- Photographs or videotape of your loved one could help the enemy identify them if they are trying to evade and escape capture.
- If you choose to cooperate with one reporter, you can expect contact from several other news media once the story is "out." Also, you may receive many other contacts, ranging from well-meaning to harassing, from other people as a result of media coverage.
- You can change your mind later. You can talk with some reporters and not others, depending on who you feel comfortable with. You can decide on a spokesperson for your family, or prepare a statement for release. Whatever your choice, the PAO can support you and screen or convey requests from news media.
- Consider using an answering machine in your home to screen incoming telephone calls.
- It's also a good idea to contact other relatives, friends or acquaintances who are likely to be reached by the media or public, and share these considerations with them.

If you choose to talk with reporters:

- If you desire, you can offer a prepared statement expressing your family's feelings. This statement may be as long or as short as you want. You may want to consult with other close family members and the public affairs person as you compose the statement.
- You can designate a spokesperson for the family. This may be a family member, neighbor, minister or close friend, or the public affairs person assigned to support you.
- If you consent to an interview, plan in advance what you would like to say, and what you want to avoid. Also consider how your interview might be received by your loved one.
- Before the interview begins, tell the reporter if there are subject areas that you don't want to discuss. Explain that you cannot share sensitive information the Air Force has passed to you in confidence. You should avoid any comment reports about what your loved one may have said or done since they were last with their unit. We also suggest that you not share details of any messages you may eventually receive from your loved one.

- Assume that everything you will say is "on the record" and available for publication or broadcast in the U.S. and worldwide.
- In the course of an interview, you can answer or decline to answer questions as you wish, and you can end the interview if you have said all that you want to say. Don't let yourself be led into a subject area you want to avoid, and don't let yourself be drawn into speculation, guesses, political statements or other comments that could be misunderstood or taken out of context later.

Information released by the Department of Defense and the Air Force:

- The Department of Defense normally releases the names of deceased, missing and captured personnel to news media because of the high level of public interest. However, several ground rules are carefully observed by to safeguard the privacy of service members and their families.
- Names are not released to the media until official notification to next of kin.
- Release of names to media and the public may be delayed for several days if operational commanders judge that such release could affect ongoing search and rescue efforts or other operations.
- Information released to the news media on missing or captured service members is restricted to name, service, rank and age. Other information normally released on casualties, including military unit and home of record, are withheld because those details may be of value to the enemy. This policy is consistent with provisions of the Geneva Convention on treatment of POWs.
- Under no circumstances will the Air Force release the names, addresses or telephone numbers of next of kin to the media unless family members specifically agree.
- A good way to help protect your privacy is to use an automatic answering machine in your home to screen incoming telephone calls.