

Pandemic Planning - For Your Home

Although no one knows for sure when the next pandemic will arrive or how severe it will be, it is important to be prepared. In fact, there are a number of basic steps you can take which will help you and your family to be better prepared for many types of emergencies such as power outages, storms, floods, etc. ... as well as a pandemic.

Start with a plan for you and your family and make plans to be prepared. Below are some general steps you can take.

1. Have an **emergency kit**.
 - o Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada has a web site called "**72 Hours: Is your Family Prepared?**" which will help you prepare a basic kit as well as create a plan. For a pandemic, you may wish to be prepared for a longer period of time such as a week or two but know that some recommendations have extended this time period up to six weeks. This longer time is the estimated length of time for each "wave" of the pandemic.
 - o Add items to your general emergency kit that will be helpful during a pandemic:

Virus Defence

- Regular soap (and water), or hand sanitizers
- Disinfectant wipes/spray
- Tissues

Medicine Cabinet

- Thermometer
- Fever/Pain Relief (e.g. acetaminophen, ibuprofen)
- Cough, Cold and Flu Medicine
- Stomach remedies
- Fluids
- Anti-diarrhea medicine
- Vitamins
- An extra supply of regular prescriptions

2. Track your Emergency contacts
 - o Keep important contact information in one document. Program important phone numbers into your home phone, cell phone, and computer. For close family contacts, you may also want to list their full addresses, all phone numbers, and e-mails.
 - It is a good idea to have at least one contact that lives out-of-town. This person should live far enough away that they will probably not be affected by the same event as you.
 - If you are new to the area and do not know many people, make arrangements with work, or a person at a local cultural or community organization
 - If you live alone, make special arrangements with other family members, friends or neighbours. Ask that they keep in contact with you, or come to check on you. Be sure that any family or friends that live alone have made these arrangements for themselves.

3. Health information and needs
 - Have a current list of medical information for each family member. Talk to your doctor about preparing a short-term supply of medications or necessary medical supplies. Don't forget to include extra prescription orders since pharmacy services may be temporarily unavailable. Make a "grab bag" with a two-week supply, if possible.

4. Pets
 - Don't forget to add extra water for your pets to your emergency kit (about 1 litre/day for a medium sized dog), as well as their food or any medications they may need.
 - Find places that may be able to care for your pets such as other family members or a kennel. If you need to go to a public shelter or a hotel, many will not allow pets.

Additional links:

Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada: *"72 Hours: Is your Family Prepared?"*

Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada: a good general emergency preparedness guide for your family - http://getprepared.ca/_fl/guide/national-eng.pdf

Source: CCOHS, Various government web sites