



# **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS GUIDE**

**Prepared by:  
Westport Fire Department**

**EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS ADVICE  
FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY**

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# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS ADVICE FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

Emergency preparedness is as simple as planning ahead. It's easy and inexpensive for anyone. Go over the checklists below with your household to determine how you can take control of an emergency. Check and update your kits when you change your clocks during daylight-saving times. Make sure they are complete and ready to go. Realize that relief workers will be on the scene after a disaster, but they may not reach everyone immediately. Help and repair to damaged utilities, may take hours or days to reach your home. Remember, your household will cope best by preparing for a disaster before one strikes.

## **Household Disaster Plan Checklist**

### **What to Have in Your Head**

Consider developing a disaster plan with your household members that outlines what to do, how to find each other, and how to communicate in an emergency.

- Decide where your household will reunite after a disaster. Identify two places to meet: one right outside your home and another outside your neighborhood, such as a library, fire station, community center, or place of worship.
- Make sure everyone knows the address and phone number of your second meeting place.
- Know and practice all possible exit routes from your home and neighborhood.
- Designate an out-of-state friend or relative that household members can call if separated during a disaster.
- If phone circuits are busy, this out-of-state contact can be an important way of communicating between household members. When local phone circuits are busy, long-distance calls may be easier to make.
- Account for everybody's needs, especially seniors, people with disabilities, and non-English speakers.
- Practice your plan with all household members.
- Ensure that household members have a copy of your household disaster plan.
- Familiarize yourself with emergency plans for your workplace, school, child's school or daycare, and other relevant institutions.

## **Go Bag Checklist**

### **What to Have in Your Hand**

Every household should consider assembling a Go Bag – a collection of items you may need in the event of an evacuation. Each household member's Go Bag should be packed in a sturdy, easy-to-carry container such as a backpack or suitcase on wheels. A Go Bag should be easily accessible if you have to leave your home in a hurry. Make sure it is ready to go at all times of the year

- Copies of your important documents in a waterproof and portable container (insurance cards, birth certificates, deeds, photo IDs, proof of address, list of allergies, children's height and weight, etc.)
- Extra set of car and house keys.
- Credit and ATM cards, and cash, especially in small denominations. We recommend you keep at least \$50-\$100 on hand.
- Bottled water and non-perishable food such as energy or granola bars.

- Flashlight, battery-operated AM/FM radio, and extra batteries. You can also buy wind-up radios that do not require batteries at retail stores.
- Medication for at least one week and other essential personal items. Be sure to refill medications before they expire. Keep a list of the medications each member of your household takes, their dosages or copies of all your prescription slips, and your doctor's name and phone number.
- First-aid kit.
- Sturdy, comfortable shoes, lightweight raingear, and a Mylar blanket.
- Contact and meeting place information for your household, and a small regional map.
- Child care supplies or other special care items.

## **Emergency Supply Kit Checklist**

### **What to Have in Your Home**

Keep enough supplies in your home to survive on your own for at least three days. If possible, keep these materials in an easily accessible, separate container or special cupboard. You should indicate to your household members that these supplies are for emergencies only. The following supplies should be part of stored supplies:

- One gallon of drinking water per person per day ( 3 day minimum).
- Non-perishable, ready-to-eat canned food, and manual can opener.
- First-aid kit, medications, prescriptions and vitamins
- Flashlight, battery-operated AM/FM radio, and extra batteries.
- Whistle.
- Iodine tablets or one quart of unscented bleach (for disinfecting water ONLY if directed to do so by health officials) and eyedropper (for adding bleach to water)
- Personal hygiene items: soap, feminine hygiene products, toothbrush, and toothpaste, etc.
- Sturdy shoes, heavy gloves, warm clothes, a Mylar blanket, and lightweight rain gear
- Extra fire extinguisher, smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors
- Phone that does not rely on electricity
- Child care supplies or other special care items.
- Other supplies and tools.

## **First Aid Kit**

**Assemble a first aid kit for you home and one for each car. A first aid kit should include:**

- Sterile adhesive bandages in assorted sizes
- 2-inch sterile gauze pads (4-6)
- 4-inch sterile gauze pads (4-6)
- hypoallergenic adhesive tape
- Triangular bandages (3)
- 2-inch sterile roller bandages (3 rolls)
- 3-inch sterile roller bandages (3 rolls)
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Needle
- Moistened towelettes
- Antiseptic
- Thermometer
- Tongue blades (2)
- Tube of petroleum jelly or other lubricant
- Assorted sizes of safety pins
- Cleansing agent/soap
- Latex gloves (2 pair)
- Sunscreen

### **Non-prescription drugs**

- Aspirin or non-aspirin pain reliever
- Anti-diarrhea medication
- Antacid (for stomach upset)
- Syrup of Ipecac (use to induce vomiting if advised by the Poison Control Center)
- Laxative
- Activated charcoal (use if advised by the Poison Control Center).

## **GENERAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE EVACUATION**

**In some cases, it may be necessary to evacuate your home or neighborhood. Town officials will tell you when to evacuate through the media and direct warnings. Evacuation is used as a last resort when a serious threat to public safety exists.**

### **EVACUATE IMMEDIATELY WHEN YOU:**

- Are directed to do so by an emergency official.
- Are in immediate danger.

**BE PREPARED TO EVACUATE:** - If there is time, secure your home: close and lock windows and doors, and unplug appliances before you leave. Teach all responsible family members how and when to turn off the water, gas and electricity at the main switches or valves. Authorities will instruct you if it is necessary to turn off utilities.

- Wear sturdy shoes and comfortable, protective clothing such as long pants and long-sleeved shirts.
- Bring your Go Bag with you.
- Know your workplace, school, and child's school evacuation plan.
- Remember, evacuation routes change based on the emergency so stay tuned to the local news access for the latest information. Responding to an emergency can be easier if you plan ahead.

## **SHELTER IN PLACE**

**When evacuation to shelters is neither appropriate nor possible, you may be asked to stay where you are. Sheltering in place is an effective way to protect yourself in many emergencies involving contaminated air. However, you should only do so if directed by emergency officials. The appropriate steps to take depend entirely on the emergency situation. For instance, during a tornado warning, you should go to an underground room, if available. During a chemical release, on the other hand, you should seek shelter in a room above ground level; listen carefully to emergency warnings and official instructions.**

### **IF YOU ARE ASKED TO SHELTER IN PLACE:**

- Go inside your home or the nearest appropriate facility (school, library, place of worship, etc.).
- Take shelter in a room that has few doors or windows. Ideally, a room to shelter in place should allow at least 10 square feet per person.
- Seal all doors and windows.
- Turn off all ventilation systems.
- Do not use the phone — keep the phone line available for emergency calls.
- Stay tuned to your radio or television for emergency information and updates.
- Make use of your Go Bag and Emergency Supply Kit.

## **DISASTER SHELTERING**

**Some emergencies may require that you leave your home and travel to an emergency shelter. Local officials will inform you when sheltering is necessary.**

### **DISASTER SHELTERING GUIDELINES:**

- If you can, try to seek shelter with friends or relatives outside the affected area.
- Evacuation shelters can be set up in schools, municipal buildings and places of worship. They provide basic food and water. If possible, bring clothing, bedding, bathing and sanitary supplies, special food and pre-filled prescriptions and other medications to shelters.
- Alcoholic beverages, firearms and illegal substances are not allowed in emergency shelters.
- You cannot bring pets to shelters. Only service animals are allowed. See TIPS FOR PET OWNERS if you have pets.
- Take your Go Bag to the shelter with you.
- Cooperate with shelter managers and other people in order to make a difficult situation less stressful.
- Remember, shelter sites change based on the emergency so stay tuned to the local news.

## **UTILITIES DISRUPTIONS**

**Utilities disruptions are an occasional inconvenience of the modern age.**

### **IF YOU LOSE PHONE SERVICE:**

- Use your cell phone, or borrow one from a friend or neighbor if possible, and call your provider to report the outage. Depending on the severity of a storm cell phone service may also be affected.
- If you have a cordless phone, keep in mind you may lose service during a power outage. It is a good idea to have a phone that does not rely on electricity.

### **IF YOU SMELL GAS:**

- Do NOT smoke or light lighters or matches. If odor is very strong, do not use your phone or operate any light switches or electrical devices - any spark could cause a fire.
- Open windows.
- Evacuate immediately and call 911.

### **IF THERE IS A POWER OUTAGE:**

- **CL&P** (Northeast Utilities) 24-hour line: **1-800-268-2000**. For the hearing or speech-impaired call at **1-800-842-0010** using a TTY/TDD telephone.
- For Power Outage Updates: **22POWER (227-6937)**.
- Disconnect or turn off all appliances that would otherwise go on automatically when service is restored. If several appliances start up at once, they may overload the electric circuits.
- In order to prevent food spoilage, keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible. Each time the door is opened, heat enters and speeds up the thawing process.
- Stay indoors if possible. Never touch or go near downed power lines, even if you think they are safe.
- Keep a battery-operated radio on for updates on the restoration process.
- Do not burn charcoal indoors and do not use your kitchen gas range or gas grill to heat rooms as this can lead to fire or a hazardous smoke condition.

- Do not use generators indoors. Without proper ventilation they can create deadly carbon monoxide.

### **WATER AND SEWER-RELATED PROBLEMS:**

It is always a good idea to have a supply of bottled water in the house.

- If you see water coming up from the ground or roadway, or suspect a water main break, call the Aquarion at **1-203-445-7310**.  
Be prepared to provide the following information on the phone: a description of the condition, what is being affected (street, cellar, basement, etc.), the exact location of the problem, and your name, address and telephone number.
- If you have no water or very low water pressure, call Aquarion at **1-203-445-7310**. If authorities determine that there is a concern about drinking water quality, you will be advised of what actions to take. In some cases, you may be told not to use the water for cooking or drinking purposes unless it is boiled, treated with bleach or iodine, or disinfected by other means. In an extreme case, you may be told not to use the water for cooking, drinking, hand-washing or bathing purposes.
- If there is a drought, authorities will advise you to conserve water. Please restrict your water use as much as possible. If the drought worsens, mandatory drought restrictions can be imposed. Conservation measures can slow the depletion rate of the stored water and potentially postpone or eliminate the threat of serious water shortages.

## **HAZARD-SPECIFIC INFORMATION WEATHER DISASTERS**

**Weather is monitored closely by various government agencies. Severe weather should be taken seriously – it can be dangerous and harm both you and your property.**

### **SEVERE WEATHER: THUNDERSTORMS, FLASH FLOODING & TORNADOES**

#### **IN A THUNDERSTORM:**

- Avoid handling metal, electrical equipment, telephones, bathtubs, water faucets and sinks because lightning can follow the wires and pipes. Be especially careful with televisions.
- If there is a severe thunderstorm, take cover immediately in a stable facility, but avoid trees.

#### **IN A FLASH FLOOD:**

- Seek high ground. Never attempt to drive your vehicle through standing water.

#### **IN A TORNADO:**

- Go to your basement or the lowest point of your residence, or an interior room or hallway without windows. If you cannot find shelter, take cover in a ditch or other recessed area.

**If you are asked to evacuate, do so immediately.**

### **NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE TERMS:**

#### **Severe Thunderstorm Watch:**

There is potential for thunderstorms to form that can produce wind gusts greater than 58 mph and/or hail greater than ¾ of an inch in diameter.

#### **Severe Thunderstorm Warning:**

A severe thunderstorm is occurring.

#### **Tornado Watch:**

A tornado could form in the next few hours.

#### **Tornado Warning:**

A tornado has been reported and/or the National Weather Service radar has detected a tornado or tornadic signature.

#### **Flash Flood Watch:**

Localized flooding due to heavy rainfall is possible.

#### **Flash Flood Warning:**

Localized flooding due to heavy rainfall is imminent.

**Freezing Rain Advisory:**

Minor accumulation of ice due to freezing rain is expected.

**Winter Weather Advisory:**

A minor accumulation of snow, sleet and freezing rain is expected.

**Snow Advisory:**

Accumulations of one to four inches expected within a 12-hour period.

**Blizzard Warning:**

Strong winds, blinding driven snow and dangerous wind chill are expected in the next several hours.

**Winter Storm Watch:**

Significant accumulation of snow and/or ice is possible within 36 hours.

**Winter Storm Warning:**

A storm with six or more inches of snow/sleet/freezing rain within a 24-hour period is expected. See the National Weather Service website at [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov) for more information.

**DURING SEVERE WEATHER:**

- Dress appropriately for weather conditions.
- Stay updated by watching TV or listening to the radio. The National Weather Service broadcasts forecasts, warnings and other information 24 hours a day. Special weather radios are available at local retail stores.

**SOME MEASURES TO HELP YOU WEATHER MAJOR STORMS:**

- Shutter or board windows.
- Secure outdoor objects such as lawn furniture or garbage cans that could blow away and cause damage or injury.
- Never touch or go near downed power lines, even if you think they are safe.
- In extreme conditions, consider shutting off power and gas appliance switches to prevent damage to your appliances.
- Tie down/secure propane tanks so as to avoid damage or keep from floating away.

## **Winter Weather**

**Dangerous winter weather includes winter storms and blizzards. These can involve a combination of heavy snow, ice accumulation and dangerous wind chills.**

**DRESS WARMLY AND STAY DRY:**

- Wear hats, scarves, layers and water-repellent coats. Wear mittens instead of gloves; they are warmer.
- Make sure small children – especially babies – stay warm, as infants can easily become hypothermic under conditions that would not necessarily be as dangerous for adults.

**COVER YOUR MOUTH:**

Protect your lungs from extremely cold air by covering your mouth when outdoors.

**AVOID OVEREXERTION:**

Take your time while shoveling snow or pushing a car. Stretch before you go out and drink plenty of non-alcoholic, non-caffeinated fluids.

**CAR SAFETY:**

Be sure to clear snow from your tail pipe before you start your car to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning. Also see CARBON MONOXIDE section .

**SAFE HEATING:**

Many fires and emergencies are caused every year from unsafe heating. Call 341-5020 for a fire inspection if you are unsure whether your heat source is safe. House fires occur more frequently in winter due to lack of proper safety precautions when using alternate heating sources.

- Fuel-burning items (such as furnaces, boilers, hot water heaters and clothes dryers) should be working, ventilated and inspected by a professional regularly in order to prevent unintentional carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Electric heaters should be used with extreme caution to prevent shock, fire and burns.
- Materials near heaters should be kept at least three feet from the heat source to prevent fire.
- Gas ovens and burners should never be used to heat your home.
- Disposal of fire ashes too soon can cause fires.

## **Coastal Storms**

**Coastal storms can cause severe damage and hazardous conditions in the Town, especially in low-lying areas where flooding is more likely to occur. Keep in mind that if you live within 10 blocks of a coastal area, it is more likely that you will be directed to evacuate before a severe coastal storm or hurricane.**

Pay attention to local weather forecasts and bulletins issued by the National Weather Service on local radio and television stations. To find out if you live in a hurricane evacuation zone before a hurricane, stay tuned to the local news for the latest information.

**There are three types of coastal storms that typically affect Westport:**

### **Nor'easters**

Nor'easters are extra tropical cyclones that can cause heavy rain/snow, strong winds and coastal flooding.

- Nor'easters may occur at any time of the year but are most common during fall and winter months (September through April).
- Evacuations are unlikely for nor'easters but the Town may open shelters during severe storms to offer people relief.

### **Tropical Storms**

A tropical storm is a tropical cyclone with sustained winds between 39 and 73 mph.

- **Tropical Storm Watch:** Issued when there is a threat of tropical storm conditions in 24-36 hours.
- **Tropical Storm Warning:** Tropical storm expected within 24 hours.

### **Hurricanes**

A hurricane is a tropical cyclone with sustained winds of 74 mph or greater.

- Hurricane season is the time of year when hurricanes are expected to form in the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico. It lasts from June through November.
- During hurricanes, residents in hurricane evacuation zones may be asked to evacuate. The Town will communicate specific evacuation and sheltering information to the public through local media.
- **Hurricane Watch:** Issued when there is a threat of hurricane conditions in 24-36 hours.
- **Hurricane Warning:** Issued when dangerously high water and rough seas are expected in 24 hours or less.

## **Extreme Heat**

**During the summer months, Westporters are especially vulnerable to the hazards created by hot weather.**

Heat waves are particularly dangerous for children and people with special needs. Please check on your neighbors and offer them assistance. The terms listed below describe the illnesses that

extreme heat can cause. Heat-related illnesses can become medical emergencies – call 911, especially in the case of heat stroke.

### **HEAT CRAMPS:**

Heat cramps are muscular pains and spasms resulting from heavy exertion. Although heat cramps are the least severe heat-related illness, they are an early signal that the body is having trouble coping with heat and should be treated immediately with rest and fluids. Stretching or direct pressure can also reduce cramps. Unless very severe, heat cramps do not require emergency medical attention.

### **HEAT EXHAUSTION:**

Heat exhaustion occurs when body fluids are lost through heavy sweating due to vigorous exercise or working in a hot, humid place. Symptoms include: sweating; pale, clammy skin; fatigue; headache; dizziness; shallow breaths; and a weak or rapid pulse. Victims of heat exhaustion are tired, but not confused. The condition should be treated with rest in a cool area, drinking water or electrolyte solutions, elevating the feet 12 inches, and further medical treatment in severe cases. If not treated, the victim's condition may escalate to heat stroke. If the victim does not respond to basic treatment, seek medical attention.

### **HEAT STROKE:**

Also called "sunstroke." The victim's temperature control system, which produces sweat to cool the body, stops working. The skin is flushed, hot and dry, and body temperature may be elevated. The victim may also be confused, develop seizures, breathe shallowly and have a weak or rapid pulse. This is the most serious heat-related illness and people exhibiting these symptoms should seek emergency medical attention.

### **FOLLOW THESE TIPS TO STAY COOL:**

- Stay out of the sun. When in the sun, wear sunscreen (at least SPF 15).
- Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothes that cover as much skin as possible to prevent sunburn. Give your body a chance to adjust to extreme temperature changes.
- Drink plenty of non-alcoholic, non-caffeinated fluids.
- Use shades or awnings.
- Consider going to public pools and air-conditioned stores and malls.
- Never leave children, pets, or those who require special care in a parked car during periods of intense summer heat.
- Find a cooling center.

### **HEAT TERMS:**

**Heat Wave:** Prolonged period of excessive heat often combined with excessive humidity.

**Heat Index:** Number of degrees Fahrenheit that indicates how it feels when relative humidity is factored into air temperature.

**Heat Advisory:** When the heat index exceeds 100°F for less than three hours a day for two consecutive days.

### **Excessive Heat Warning:**

When the heat index is expected to exceed 115°F or when it exceeds 100°F for three or more hours for two consecutive days.

### **Excessive Heat Watch:**

A long-term alert for excessive heat.

**Ozone Advisory:** Issued when ozone levels are expected to exceed 0.08 parts per million of ozone over an eight-hour period. People should limit their outdoor activity and those with respiratory problems (such as asthma) should be especially careful and avoid strenuous activity.

## **EARTHQUAKES**

**Although earthquakes are uncommon in Westport, tremors occasionally occur and residents should be prepared. Note that after an earthquake your utilities may be disrupted. In the event of an earthquake:**

- Drop to the floor.
- Take cover under a solid piece of furniture or next to an interior wall. Cover your head and neck with your arms.
- Hold on to a sturdy piece of furniture and be prepared to move with it. Stay where you are until the shaking stops.
- If outdoors get away from buildings, trees, streetlights and power lines. Drop to the ground and stay there until the shaking stops.
- Be prepared for aftershocks, which often follow an earthquake.

## **BUILDING COLLAPSES OR EXPLOSIONS**

**Building collapses or explosions can be the result of structural damage or sabotage. Fires often occur after a building explosion.**

**IF YOU ARE IN A BUILDING COLLAPSE OR EXPLOSION:**

- Get out as quickly and calmly as possible.
- If you can't get out of the building, get under a sturdy table or desk.

**IF YOU ARE TRAPPED BY DEBRIS:**

- Cover your nose and mouth with a cloth or clothing.
- Move around as little as possible to avoid kicking up dust, which is harmful to inhale.
- If possible, use a flashlight so that you can see your surroundings.
- Tap on a pipe or wall so rescuers can hear where you are. Use a whistle if one is available. Shout only as a last resort as shouting can cause you to inhale dangerous amounts of dust.

**IF YOU CLEAN UP DEBRIS:**

- Wear gloves and sturdy shoes.
- Sort debris by type (wood, appliances, etc.).
- Do not touch debris that contains utility wires.
- Do not move large or heavy debris. Ask for help from neighbors, friends and recovery workers.

## **CARBON MONOXIDE**

**Dangerous levels of carbon monoxide – a colorless and odorless gas – can be produced from improperly vented furnaces, plugged or cracked chimneys, water heaters, fireplaces, stoves and tail pipes.**

**IF YOU SUSPECT CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING:**

- Dangerous levels of carbon monoxide can injure or kill. Symptoms of CO poisoning, besides tightness across the chest, are flue like, and may include headache, dizziness, drowsiness and/or nausea.
- Call 911 immediately.
- Open windows.
- Leave your home.

**CARBON MONOXIDE SAFETY TIPS:**

- Since CO has no color, taste or smell, CO Detectors are the only way to alert you to increasingly dangerous levels of CO before tragedy strikes.

- Consider installing CO detectors in your home, apartment, boat or RV.
- Make sure all fuel-burning items – furnaces, boilers, hot water heaters, and clothes dryers – are properly ventilated.
- If you have a working fireplace, keep chimneys clean and clear of debris.
- Never turn on your oven to heat your kitchen, or operate gas or charcoal barbecue grills, kerosene or oil-burning heaters in an enclosed space.

## **POISON**

**If you think someone has been poisoned:**

- Act fast **CALL 911**. Don't wait to see what happens!
- National Capital Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222.

## **FIRE**

**If your smoke detector goes off or if you notice a fire, remain calm and call 911. Do not try to fight a major fire.**

- If your clothes catch on fire, **Stop** where you are, **Drop** to the ground, and **Roll** over and over to smother the flames.
- Feel doors with the back of your hand before you open them. If they are hot, find another way out. Stay as close to the floor as possible – smoke and heat rise and the air is clearer and cooler near the floor. **Close doors behind you.**
- If you are unable to get out for any reason, stay near a window and close to the floor. Close the door and stuff the bottom with a towel to avoid smoke. If possible, signal for help by waving a cloth or sheet outside the window.
- **Call 911** from a safe place such as a neighbor's house.
- **Do not stop to get anything.**
- **Do not use elevators.**

**To prevent fires:**

- Keep an ABC fire extinguisher and working smoke detectors in the house. Check batteries twice a year at daylight-saving times.
- For more fire safety information: Call the Westport Fire Marshal's Office at 341-5020.

## **DISEASE OUTBREAKS**

**Westport has plans for responding to potential situations involving disease outbreaks and biological events in cooperation with State and Federal agencies.**

- The Westport Weston Health District has established plans for responding to potential situations involving disease outbreaks and biological events in cooperation with State and Federal agencies.
- The Westport Weston Health District may distribute medicine or vaccine to those who are at risk. This course of action will be decided based on the specific health hazard.
- The type of therapy or treatment used, if any, for a specific infection or disease may vary depending on each person's unique physiology, lifestyle and general health.
- To distribute treatment or vaccines, the Westport Weston Health District may open Points of Dispensing (POD) locations where treatment will be provided. In the event that POD's are activated, listen to 90.3 FM (WWPT) or visit the Health District's website at [www.wwhd.org](http://www.wwhd.org) or the Town of Westport website at [www.westportct.gov](http://www.westportct.gov).

## **RADIATION EXPOSURE**

**Small amounts of radiation – such as from X-rays – are considered safe. In the exposed to unsafe levels of radiation, there are ways to minimize exposure.**

**ADDITIONAL STEPS TO REDUCE YOUR EXPOSURE INCLUDE:**

- If you are outside, get inside. Remove all clothing and wash thoroughly.
- Cover your nose and mouth to avoid ingesting dust.
- If there is an event indoors, try to get out of the building without passing through the contaminated area. If you cannot escape, it may be better to shelter in place.
- **SHELTER IN PLACE.**
- Potassium Iodide (known as KI) is a kind of salt that can prevent damage to your thyroid gland ONLY if you are exposed to radioactive iodine. It will not help you in other radioactive environments, and must be administered within a few hours of exposure to be effective. KI is generally only recommended for children, adolescents, pregnant women and others with growing thyroids. In the unlikely event of radiation exposure, the Town may distribute KI.

**THESE GENERAL GUIDELINES WILL MINIMIZE YOUR EXPOSURE TO RADIATION:**

- Time: Radioactive materials become less radioactive over time. Stay inside until authorities alert you that the threat has passed.
- Distance: The greater the distance between you and the source of the radiation the better. Authorities may call for an evacuation of people from areas close to the release.
- Shielding: Put as much heavy, dense material between you and the source of the radiation as possible. Authorities may advise you to stay indoors or underground for this reason. Close and seal your windows and turn off any ventilation.
- If outdoors get inside. Remove all clothing and wash yourself thoroughly to remove radioactive particles as soon as possible. Bag clothing.

## **HAZARDOUS MATERIALS OR CHEMICAL SPILLS**

**We use hazardous materials in our homes and businesses every day. Small spills occasionally occur, but these incidents generally cause the public little difficulty other than traffic delays. In the event of a major spill authorities will instruct you on the best course of action; however, you should heed the precautions listed below.**

**GENERAL GUIDELINES:**

- Stay upwind of the material if possible.
- Seek medical attention as soon as possible if needed.
- If there's an event indoors, try to get out of the building without passing through the contaminated area. Otherwise, it may be better to move as far away from the event as possible and shelter in place. See SHELTER IN PLACE.
- If exposed, remove outer layer of clothes, separate yourself from them, and wash yourself.
- In some circumstances, after being exposed to hazardous materials, it may be necessary to be "decontaminated." Specially trained emergency personnel will perform decontamination procedures, which may include the removal of personal items and cleansing of exposed areas of the body. They will provide for medical attention if necessary.

## **COUNTERING TERRORISM**

**A terrorist's primary objective is to create fear. With accurate information and basic emergency preparedness, you can fight back. Keep in mind that accidents can sometimes appear to be terrorist events and vice versa. Your response should be similar in either case.**

**KNOW THE FACTS AND BE RESPONSIBLE:**

- Know the facts of a situation and think critically. Confirm reports using a variety of reliable sources of information, such as the government or media.
- Do not spread rumors.
- Do not accept packages from strangers and do not leave luggage or bags unattended in public areas.

#### **EXPLOSIONS:**

- See BUILDING COLLAPSES or EXPLOSIONS.

#### **BIOLOGICAL ATTACKS:**

- A biological attack occurs when a terrorist intentionally causes a disease epidemic.
- See DISEASE OUTBREAKS & BIOLOGICAL EVENTS section for specific information on this type of emergency.

#### **CHEMICAL ATTACKS:**

- The intentional release of hazardous materials constitutes an act of terrorism, however, accidents involving hazardous materials may also occur. Your course of action should be the same in either case.
- See HAZARDOUS MATERIALS or CHEMICAL SPILLS section for specific information on this type of emergency.

#### **RADIOLOGICAL ATTACKS:**

- Radiological attacks occur when radioactive material is intentionally released.
- **Radiological Dispersion Device (RDD):** An RDD is designed to scatter amounts of radioactive material over a wide area. The further the material disperses, the less harmful it is. In most cases, the amount of material is unlikely to be lethal.
- **“Dirty Bomb”:** A Dirty Bomb is a kind of RDD that combines conventional explosives and radioactive material. The explosive is intended to scatter the radioactive material. More damage and casualties may result from the explosion than from the radiation itself.
- See the RADIATION EXPOSURE section for more information.

#### **A PARCEL OR LETTER MAY BE CONSIDERED SUSPICIOUS WHEN IT HAS MORE THAN ONE OF THE FOLLOWING CHARACTERISTICS:**

- Handwritten or poorly typed address, incorrect titles or titles with no name, or misspellings of common words.
- Addressed to someone no longer with your organization or not addressed to a specific person.
- Strange return address or no return address marked with restrictions, such as “Personal,” “Confidential” or “Do not X-ray.”
- Excessive postage.
- Powdery substance on the outside.
- Unusual weight given its size, lopsided, or oddly shaped.
- Unusual amount of tape on it.
- Odors, discolorations or oily stains.

#### **IF YOU RECEIVE A SUSPICIOUS PACKAGE OR ENVELOPE:**

- **PUT IT DOWN** – preferably on a stable surface. Cover it with an airtight container like a trash can or plastic bag.
- **Call 911** and alert others in the building to the presence of the package and evacuate the area.
- Wash your hands with soap and water if you have handled the package.
- Make a list of the people who were in the room or area where the suspicious package was recognized, and give it to authorities.
- Do not stray far from the area if you believe you have been exposed.

## **IF YOU RECEIVE A BOMB THREAT:**

- Ask the caller as many of the following questions as possible:
  - 1) When is the bomb going to explode?
  - 2) Where is the bomb right now?
  - 3) What does the bomb look like?
  - 4) What kind of bomb is it?
  - 5) Where are you calling from?
  - 6) Why did you place the bomb?
- Keep the caller on the line for as long as possible and try to write down or record the conversation. Listen carefully to the caller's voice and background noise.
- Write down the exact time and length of call.
- After you hang up, call 911 IMMEDIATELY.

## **INFORMATION FOR YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES**

### **Parents & Families**

**Include your children in planning for an emergency. Teach them how to get help and what to do in different situations. Practice your family emergency plan with your children and quiz them about preparedness information.**

#### **EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW:**

- Family contact information for use in an emergency.
- Never to touch wires lying on the ground or hanging from poles.
- How to identify the smell of gas. Tell them that if they smell it, they should tell a grown-up or leave the building.
- How and when to call 911.

#### **INFORMATION TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL OR DAY CARE FACILITY:**

- Find out what your child's school does in the event of an emergency and know the school's emergency plans.
- Find out where you can pick up your child during an evacuation.
- Ensure that the school has up-to-date contact information for you and at least one other relative or friend.
- Find out if you can authorize a friend or relative to pick up your children in an emergency if you cannot.

#### **GO BAG:**

- Pack child care supplies as well as games and small toys in your family's Go Bag.

#### **REASSURANCE:**

- Children are particularly vulnerable to emotional stress after a disaster and may exhibit excessive fear of the dark, crying, fear of being alone and constant worry. Reassure children that they are safe. Encourage them to talk about their fears, emphasize that they are not responsible for what happened, and comfort them.

#### **NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS: Non-English speakers should consider their special needs in an emergency.**

- Make special preparations to get the information and special assistance you may need in advance.

## **SENIORS & PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

**Seniors and people with disabilities may need to take additional steps to prepare for emergencies. If you or someone in your household has special needs, consider the following tips when preparing your disaster plans.**

- Keep a 7-14 day supply of necessary medications on hand at all times.
- Develop a personal emergency plan for each place where you spend time – at home, work, and school and in the community.
- Evaluate your capabilities, limitations, needs and surroundings to determine what type of support you may need in an emergency.
- Include your home care attendant and other people in your network in your planning process.
- If you are dependent on electricity for your wheelchair, breathing machine or any other life-sustaining device, plan for a loss of power. Consult your power provider. Also contact the Westport Weston Health District to place your name on their emergency call list.
- The hearing impaired may need to make special arrangements to make sure they receive emergency warnings.
- Mobility impaired people may need assistance to get to a shelter or to evacuate from buildings. Keep in mind, elevators will not work in a power outage. Technologically dependent people should check in with 911 or their doctors.
- People with special dietary needs should have an adequate emergency food supply.
- It is a good idea to write down your support needs and numbers. Medical conditions, medications and dosages, allergies, special equipment, medical insurance, Medicare insurance cards as well as personal and medical contact details are important to have available. Keep this list with you in emergencies and supply a friend with a copy.
- If you have a service animal, make sure that it is registered for a service tag.

## **MENTAL HEALTH**

**The emotional toll resulting from a disaster can sometimes be even more devastating than the physical damage. Discussing emergencies that result from disasters will help reduce fear and anxiety. Disaster victims are likely to experience at least one of several emotional responses: anger, fatigue, loss of appetite, sleeplessness, nightmares, depression, inability to concentrate, hyperactivity, or increased alcohol or drug use.**

### **MENTAL HEALTH EXPERTS SUGGEST A NUMBER OF WAYS TO RELIEVE THE SYMPTOMS OF EMOTIONAL DISTRESS:**

- Talk about your feelings with family, friends and neighbors. These people are good medicine, and sharing common experiences helps people overcome anxiety and feelings of helplessness.
- Get back into daily routines as soon as you can. Try to maintain a healthy diet and get plenty of sleep.
- Get some physical exercise every day.
- If you continue to have the symptoms described above for an extended period of time, think about consulting a mental health professional.

## **What Else You Can Do to Prepare Your Household For Emergencies**

- Use the websites and phone numbers listed in EMERGENCY INFORMATION section.
- Take a first-aid or Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) class to learn how to help family and neighbors if they are injured. More than one person in your household should be trained in CPR and First Aid.
- Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in all areas of your home and check them regularly to make sure they are working.
- Install fire extinguishers in your home and make sure all household members know where they are and how to use them.
- Change batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and check on emergency supplies twice a year during daylight-saving times.

## **TIPS FOR PET OWNERS**

**Pet owners should include provisions for their pet in a household disaster plan. Please note that pets are not allowed in shelters (only service animals are allowed in shelters).**

**Therefore, it is important that you have a plan for your pet in the case of emergencies.**

### **PET EMERGENCY PLANNING TIPS:**

- Contact friends or relatives outside your area to see if they would be willing to accommodate you and your pets in an emergency. Also, ask a neighbor, friend or family member if they will look after your pet if you cannot return home due to a disaster.
- See if your veterinarian or groomer provides shelter for animals during an emergency.
- Transport your pets in a carrier for the duration of the disaster. This makes pets feel safer and more secure.
- Know your pets' hiding places so that you can easily find them in times of stress.
- Make sure each pet has a license and ID tag.
- If you absolutely must leave your pets behind, prepare an emergency pen in the home that includes a three-day supply of dry food and a large container of fresh water.
- See the Office of Emergency Management's brochure, "Disaster Preparedness for Animals."

**ASSEMBLE A "PET SURVIVAL KIT" THAT CAN BE READY TO GO IF YOU ARE EVACUATING YOUR PET TO A KENNEL OR TO FRIENDS OR FAMILY. YOU SHOULD INCLUDE:**

- Pet food, water and medications plus can opener and food dishes in an easy-to-carry container.
- Cat litter box and litter. Plastic bags for pick-up.
- A leash/muzzle/harness.
- A copy of all current vaccination and health records, license numbers and microchip numbers.
- A current photo of your pet. This will assist identification should it become necessary.
- A pet carrier or cage (a luggage carrier can be used to wheel the carrier around).

## **BUSINESS PREPAREDNESS**

**The following are some basic steps that businesses should be taken to prepare for an emergency:**

- **Prepare backups and store offsite all computer records, such as payroll, inventory, etc.**

- **Develop and display an evacuation plan and test this plan regularly. Identify employees that can be leaders. Team leaders should be trained to assist fellow employees in an emergency.**
- **Prepare employee rosters with emergency contact information.**
- **Maintain sufficient insurance coverage for your business.**
- **Identify critical business functions that absolutely must continue and develop a process to ensure they continue.**

## **EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

### **EMERGENCY (Fire, Police, EMS): Dial 911**

- If you are in **immediate danger**.
- If you witness a **crime in progress**.
- For **serious injury or medical condition**.
- For any situation needing **urgent attention**.

### **When You Call 911.....**

#### **State:**

1. Your Name
2. Address of the emergency
3. Nature of the emergency (fire, medical or police)
4. Age and sex of the injured/patient
5. Then be prepared to answer questions.
6. Do not hang up until you are told to.

### **ROUTINE CALLS**

**Town Hall:** 341-1000  
**Fire (24/7 Dispatch Center):** 341-5010  
**Police (24/7 Dispatch Center):** 341-6000  
**Westport/Weston Health District:** 227-9571

**American Red Cross:** (800) 319-9935  
**Human Services:** 341-1050  
**Emergency Management:** 341-5000

### **EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

**Radio:** Staples Radio WWPT – 90.3 FM  
**TV:** Cablevision 12  
**TV:** Town of Westport Channel 79

### **RECORDED INFORMATION**

**School Emergency Information:** 341-1766  
**Power Outage Updates:** 22 POWER (227-6937)  
**Disaster Information :** 454-6199  
**Town of Westport Website:** [www.westportct.gov](http://www.westportct.gov)

## **RESOURCE INFORMATION**

Learn more about emergency preparedness and emergency management:  
**STATE OF CONNECTICUT:**

- **State of Connecticut Office of Emergency Management:** at [www.ct.gov/oem](http://www.ct.gov/oem).

### **UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT:**

- **U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention:** at 1-800-311-3435 or [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).
- **U.S. Department of Energy:** 1-800-DIAL DOE, 1-800-342-5363 or [www.energy.gov](http://www.energy.gov).
- **U.S. Departmental Protection Agency:** 1-800-424-8802 or [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov).
- **Federal Emergency Management Office (FEMA):** FEMA publishes a longer, detailed guide to emergency preparedness, "Are You Ready? A Guide to Citizen Preparedness." To order, call FEMA Distribution Center at 1-800-480-2520 or [www.fema.gov/library](http://www.fema.gov/library).
- **U.S. Department of Homeland Security:** at 1-800-BE Ready 1-800-237-3239 or [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)
- **National Weather Service:** at [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov)

### **NOTABLE:**

- **Aquarion** at 1-203-445-7310 or 1-800-732-9678.
- **American Red Cross** at 1-877-733-2767 or Local Chapter at 1-800-319-9935  
**Disaster Safety Tips** (Red Cross): [www.midfairfieldredcross.org](http://www.midfairfieldredcross.org).
- **CL&P** (Northeast Utilities) at (800) 286-2000 or [www.cl-p.com](http://www.cl-p.com)
- **National Capital Poison Center** at (800) 222-1222 or [www.Poison.org](http://www.Poison.org).
- **Staples Radio WWPT** – 90.3 FM.

### **FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES**

- **FEMA:** at [www.fema.gov/kids](http://www.fema.gov/kids)
- **American Red Cross:** at [www.prepare.org/parents/solutions/safety](http://www.prepare.org/parents/solutions/safety).
- **The Sesame Workshop's** safety page: [www.seasmeworkshop.org/parents/solutions/safety](http://www.seasmeworkshop.org/parents/solutions/safety).
- **American Academy of Pediatrics** at [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)

**EMERGENCY REFERENCE CARD**

**Household Emergency Information Contact information for household members. Please complete this form for each person in your household and keep it up to date.**

Name:

Date of Birth: Social Security Number:

Business or School Evacuation Location:

Medical Information:

Work, School or Other Address

& Telephone Numbers:

Name:

Name:

Date of Birth: Social Security Number:

Business or School Evacuation Location:

Medical Information:

Work, School or Other Address

& Telephone Numbers:

Fire House #: Fire House Phone #:

Police Precinct #: Police Precinct Phone #:

Name:

Medical Information Name: Telephone # Policy #

Doctor(s):

Other:

Pharmacist:

Medical Insurance:

Allergies:

Current list of medications:

Children's weight:

Home Owners/Rental Insurance:

Home Meeting Address:

Home Meeting Phone #:

Neighborhood Meeting Address:

Neighborhood Meeting Phone #:

Home Meeting Address:

Home Meeting Phone #:

Neighborhood Meeting Address:

Neighborhood Meeting Phone #:

**more on back more on back**

Out of State Contact Name:

Contact Address:

Contact Phone #:

Other Information:

Out of State Contact Name:

Contact Address:

Contact Phone #:

Other Information: