Preparing for a Natural Disaster

A toolkit from:

Legal Services Alabama
Most Common Natural Disasters in Alabama

**Severe Thunderstorms:**
Storm that produces a tornado, winds of at least 58 mph, and/or hail at least 1" in diameter.

**Floods:**
An overflow of water onto normally dry land caused by heavy or excessive rainfall.

**Hurricanes:**
A tropical storm with winds that have reached a constant speed of 74 miles per hour or more.

**Tornadoes:**
A violently rotating column of air with circulation reaching the ground. The most destructive of all atmospheric phenomena on a local scale.
Step 1: Make A Home Emergency Plan

- Be familiar with plans from:
  - Work
  - School
  - Community spaces you frequent

- Consider your pets

- Identify shelters

- Different disaster, different plan
  
  Your plan for a hurricane may be different than for a tornado
Step 1 Cont'd

What about my pets?

- If you can’t bring your pet, call local shelters to see if they take pets during natural disasters.
- If you can take your pet, remember to bring:

  - Collar
  - Vaccine & insurance records
  - IDs, tags & leash
  - Medicine for at least 1 week
Step 2: Emergency Contact List

Write down phone numbers, email addresses, and home addresses for your closest contacts.

It's best to have 3 copies:
- On paper
- In your phone
- On your laptop or the cloud
Step 3: Back Up Your Files

Make copies of all important documents to place in a safe location

Any important files, like pictures on your phone, should be backed up:

- On the cloud
- Saved to a USB
Step 4: Your Emergency Supply Kit

Use a fireproof box for documents

- Copies of driver's licenses, social security cards, birth certificates, marriage licenses, immigration papers, credit cards, wills, deeds, titles, & mortgages
- Medical IDs & insurance cards
- Bank account numbers
- Photos of your valuable goods
- Cash
- Medicine
Step 4 Cont'd

Other emergency supplies:

- Canned food/non-perishables
- Manual can opener
- 1st aid kit
- Medicine for at least 1 week
- Wood (for boarding up)
- Water
- Gas
- Flashlight
- Radio
- Soap
Step 5: Identify the Disaster

Different disasters will need different plans after this point.

There are always three options:
- Evacuating
- Sheltering in place
- Using an emergency shelter
Evacuating

Ensure access to reliable transportation
- Try and keep your tank above half full
- Try and keep your oil changes current

Get out as early as possible; do not attempt to leave after the disaster has started
- Let family and friends know where you're going
Sheltering In Place

- Tell your family and friends you're staying home
- Fill up the tub(s) and sink(s) for fresh water
- Get in the safest place in your house
  - This may be different, depending on the disaster
- Keep a radio or other way to hear the news, regardless of internet and electricity
Let your family and friends know

Ensure you bring:

• Food for special dietary needs
• Medicines and a copy of all prescriptions
• Personally identifying information
Step 6: Equipment

Depending on the disaster, you may need to:

- Unplug all small equipment and televisions

- Protect your car under a roofed structure

- Contact your utility company about larger appliances
Warning vs. Watch

**Watch:** Hazardous event is possible within the area

**Warning:** Hazardous event is occurring, imminent, or highly likely

- Poses a threat to life or property