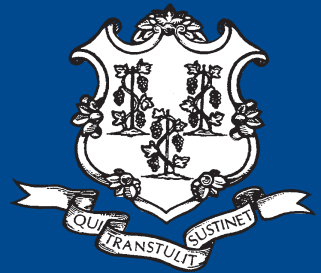


# Connecticut Guide to Emergency Preparedness



BE AWARE  
BE PREPARED



After reading this guide, please  
keep it in a safe place so you will  
always know where to find it.

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# A Message from Governor M. Jodi Rell



**W**e have always known about the need to keep our families safe from the hazards of natural disasters. Unfortunately, the events of September 11, 2001 showed us that we must prepare to deal with other threats as well. The State of Connecticut has made homeland security a priority – and we are asking you to do the same.

Whether natural or man-made, the impact of a disaster can be reduced if we are prepared. That is what this guide is all about. State agencies, including the Connecticut Departments of Public Health and Emergency Management and Homeland Security, are always working to be ready for a crisis.

Inside you will find steps you and your family can take now to prepare for a wide variety of emergencies. After reading this guide, create a family emergency plan and consider putting together an emergency supply kit. Then save this guide – put it somewhere easily accessible for you and your family.

Together, we can be prepared for any emergency that might affect our state.

*Sincerely,*

*Governor M. Jodi Rell*

## **A Message from the Commissioners of Public Health and Emergency Management and Homeland Security**

While we can't control natural disasters, emergencies or unexpected attacks, we can be prepared, and we can protect ourselves and our families. In this guide, you'll learn some of the fundamentals of being prepared if an emergency strikes, including:

- The different types of emergencies that may affect you and your community, how you'll be notified of an event and what plans are in place to deal with these events.
- How to create an emergency plan.
- How to prepare an emergency kit.
- How Connecticut's emergency broadcast warning system is utilized in the event of an emergency.

For further information on how to be prepared for an emergency, please visit [www.ct.gov/demhs](http://www.ct.gov/demhs) or [www.dph.state.ct.us/ready.htm](http://www.dph.state.ct.us/ready.htm).

Sincerely,

**J. Robert Galvin, M. D., M. P. H.**

*Commissioner, Department of Public Health*

**James M. Thomas, Commissioner, Department of  
Emergency Management and Homeland Security**

# It's time to prepare

## Educate Yourself and Your Family

- Identify and understand your surroundings, including potentially dangerous weather conditions, flood plains, chemical facilities, nuclear plants, etc.
- Have a place to go – a home of a family member or friend, motel, or shelter in case you are asked to evacuate your home or your community.
- Learn the disaster plans at your place of work and your child's school or daycare center.

## Create An Emergency Communication Plan

- Identify safe places in your home in case you must SHELTER IN PLACE.
- Identify two different routes to get out of the house in case you must EVACUATE.
- Identify a place for your family to meet in case you are separated at the time of a disaster or emergency.
- Pick one place in your neighborhood that can be a meeting point for your family.
- Pick one place outside of your neighborhood that can be a meeting point for your family. Identify two contacts (one local, one out-of-state) that the members of your family can contact in case of separation.
- Include information to keep your pets safe in the event of a disaster or emergency.
- Know how to turn off electricity, gas, and water within your home.
- Make sure everyone knows the plan.

## Make An Emergency Supply Kit

A disaster of any kind may interfere with normal supplies of food, water, heat and day-to-day necessities. It is important to keep a stock of emergency supplies on hand sufficient to meet your family's needs for a three-day period. Although you may not be in an area directly impacted by a disaster,

utilities and other services may be affected. This kit may be used if you are advised to stay at home during an emergency or advised to evacuate.

### An emergency supply kit should include:

- A three-day supply of water. Have available at least one gallon per person per day – more for children and nursing mothers, as well as during hot summer months.
- Food for at least three days – canned/sealed packaged foods and juices that do not require refrigeration or cooking. Foods for infants or the elderly.
- Non-electric can opener, cooking tools and fuel, paper plates and plastic utensils.
- Paper towels, toilet paper, soap.
- Battery-powered radio, flashlights and cell phone, with extra batteries.
- Blanket/sleeping bag, pillows for each member of the family, a change of clothing.
- Baby and children's items (diapers, games, toys and books).
- First-aid kit. Prescription and non-prescription medications your family needs, eye glasses and contact lens supplies. List of family physicians.
- Pet care items – picture of your pet, immunization records, food and water, a pet carrier or cage, medications, muzzle, ID collar and leash.
- Extra set of car keys, credit cards, cash and important documents and information such as social security numbers and birth certificates.
- Vehicle fuel tanks filled, oil and windshield wiper fluid should be checked.
- Plastic and duct tape (see chemical emergencies).
- Enclose this preparedness guide in your emergency supply kit.
- Refresh your kit regularly, checking expiration dates.

# Emergency Planning for Persons with Special Needs

If you or someone you know has a special need, additional precautions should be taken to prepare for emergencies.

## Children:

**SMALL CHILDREN may need:** formula, diapers, bottles, medications, wipes, baby food, extra water, toys, books.

**DAYCARE/SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN:** If an emergency occurs while your child is in school or daycare, local public safety daycare and school officials have plans in place to provide for the safety of their children. Parents and guardians should become familiar with these emergency plans before an event occurs.

## Seniors:

Plan emergency procedures with home health care agencies or workers, tell others where emergency supplies are kept, teach others how to operate necessary medical equipment, label equipment such as wheelchairs, canes or walkers with your name.

## Persons With Disabilities:

- Create a support network to help in emergencies.
- Tell others where you keep your emergency supplies.
- Give one member of your support network a key to your house or apartment.
- Wear medical alert tags or bracelets to help identify your disability.
- Teach others how to operate necessary medical equipment.
- Know the location and availability of more than one dialysis treatment facility (if applicable).

Many local offices keep lists of people with disabilities so that they can be located quickly in a sudden emergency. Contact your city or town emergency management office for more information about support services for persons with disabilities in the event of an emergency.

When staying in hotels/motels, identify yourself to registration desk staff as a person who will need assistance in an emergency, and state the type of assistance you may need.

## Create an Emergency Health Information Card for the following purposes:

- Communicates to rescuers what they need to know about you if they find you unconscious or incoherent, or if they need to quickly help evacuate you.
- Contains information about medications, equipment you use, allergies and sensitivities, communication difficulties you may have, preferred treatment, treatment-medical providers, and important contact people.
- Create multiple copies of this card to keep in emergency supply kits, car, work, wallet (behind driver's license or primary identification card), wheelchair pack, etc.

For a downloadable version of a health card, visit [www.dph.state.ct.us/ready.htm](http://www.dph.state.ct.us/ready.htm).

## Effective Ways To Deal With Children After An Emergency Event

- Encourage children to talk about their fears. Let them ask questions and describe how they're feeling. Talk together as a family about the event.
- Reassure them with love. Tell them they are safe. Hold and hug them frequently.
- Keep them informed, in simple language, about what is happening.
- Emphasize that they are not responsible for what happened.
- Encourage them to return to school and discuss problems with teachers and to resume playing games, riding bikes and other such activities.

# Your Preparedness Plan

## Where To Go In An Emergency

Write down where your family spends the most time: work, school and other places you frequent. Schools, daycare providers, workplaces and multi-family dwellings should all have site-specific emergency plans. Learn about the emergency response plans of your local municipality, including your local health department or health district. Radio and television stations often provide the best source of timely and accurate information during an emergency.

## Create An Emergency Communication Plan

Record the following, and share this information with your loved ones:

### OUT OF AREA CONTACT

Name: .....  
City: ..... State: .....  
PH # (day): .....  
PH # (evening): .....  
CELL #: .....

### LOCAL CONTACT

Name: .....  
City: ..... State: .....  
PH # (day): .....  
PH # (evening): .....  
CELL #: .....

### NEAREST RELATIVE

Name: .....  
City: ..... State: .....  
PH # (day): .....  
PH # (evening): .....  
CELL #: .....

### FAMILY WORK NUMBERS

Mother: .....  
Father: .....  
Other: .....

### UTILITIES

Electric Co: .....  
Gas Co: .....  
Water Co: .....  
Telephone Co: .....  
Cable TV Co: .....

### SCHOOL

Address: .....  
PH #: .....

### OTHER

Address: .....  
PH #: .....

### OTHER

Address: .....  
PH #: .....

### ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Doctors: .....  
.....  
.....  
Pharmacist: .....  
Medical Insurance: .....  
SS Numbers: .....  
Local Health Department/District: .....  
Veterinarian: .....  
Home/Rental Insurance  
Name: .....  
PH #: .....  
Policy #: .....



The American Red Cross provides lifesaving emergency preparedness training and disaster relief to Connecticut citizens. Its disaster relief services are carried out primarily by volunteers and are free of charge. It is also the main provider of blood and blood products to Connecticut's 31 hospitals.

# An Emergency Has Been Declared

## What Should I Do?

- Remain calm and be patient.
- Follow the advice of state and local emergency officials.
- Check for injuries and get help for seriously injured people.
- Use 9-1-1 ONLY for life-threatening situations. It is very important to keep these lines open for those who need them.
- Secure your pets.
- Call your family contact – do not use the telephone again unless it is a life-threatening emergency.
- Check on your neighbors, especially those who are elderly or disabled.

## What Shouldn't I Do?

- Do NOT go to the hospital except in the case of a medical emergency.
- If you smell gas or think there may be a leak, do NOT light matches or turn electrical switches on or off.

## What Do I Do When Told To Shelter in Place?

- Stay calm.
- Bring children and pets inside immediately.
- Close and lock all windows and outside doors.
- Turn off all ventilation systems that bring in outdoor air, including fans and air conditioners.
- If you have a fireplace, close the damper.
- Gather your emergency supply kit.
- Go to an interior room, ideally without windows.
- SHELTER IN PLACE until you are told all is safe.

## What Do I Do When Told to Evacuate?

If officials instruct you to evacuate, do so! Based on the circumstances, public officials will direct you to the safest evacuation routes and shelters, as well as provide other important information via TV and radio. If directed to evacuate, take your emergency supply kit.

## What is meant by Quarantine and Isolation?

To contain the spread of a contagious illness, public health authorities rely on many strategies. Two of these strategies are **quarantine** and **isolation**. Both are common public health practices, aimed at controlling exposure to infected

or potentially infected persons. These strategies may be undertaken voluntarily or compelled by local public health authorities.

**Isolation** applies to persons who are known to have a possibly contagious illness, whereas **quarantine** applies to those who have been exposed to a contagious illness and who may themselves become contagious, but are not yet ill.

## Monitor And Listen:

As with any emergency, local authorities may not be able to immediately provide information on what is happening and what you should do. However, you should monitor TV and radio, or check the Internet often for **official** news and information as it becomes available.

## The Emergency Alert System

In Connecticut, we use the **Emergency Alert System (EAS)** during emergencies. When the decision is made to activate the EAS, original programming on TV or radio will be interrupted and an emergency message will be broadcast. It is important that you listen to these instructions and stay tuned for more information.

## What About Pets?

Long before an emergency occurs, individuals with pets should consider what they would do with their pets if they need to evacuate. People should contact friends, family, veterinarians or boarding kennels outside the affected area to arrange for care.

Due to public health and safety, only animals that assist people with disabilities will be allowed in Red Cross shelters. For more information on caring for your pets before, during and after an emergency, visit [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org).

# Natural Disasters

All communities are vulnerable to a variety of natural hazards, such as severe weather, including thunderstorms, flash flooding, snowstorms and tornadoes.

## Before A Natural Disaster:

- Make certain your emergency supply kit is refreshed, available, and ready.
- Educate yourself about weather terms such as:
  - A severe storm **watch** means that dangerous weather may develop.
  - A severe weather **warning** means a storm has developed and is on its way– take cover or seek safe shelter immediately.
- Evacuate when and if instructed to do so by emergency officials.

## During A Natural Disaster:

- Seek shelter in an internal room or basement.
- Take your emergency supply kit.
- Monitor TV, radio and Internet reports for **official** instructions, including shelter locations, weather reports, etc.

## After A Natural Disaster:

- Make certain that family members are uninjured.
- **DO NOT TOUCH** downed power lines. Notify your local power company of the location of downed power lines.

## Make A Winter Emergency Car Kit For Winter Traveling: Include the following:

- blankets/sleeping bags • flashlight with extra batteries
- first-aid kit • utility knife • high-calorie, non-perishable food • extra clothing to keep dry • sack of sand (or cat litter) • shovel • windshield scraper and brush • tool kit
- tow rope • booster cables • water container • compass and roadmaps

## Severe Weather Emergencies

### Blizzards:

Weather forecasts often provide ample warning to prepare for an impending blizzard. In this event, candles, flashlights, a battery-operated radio, cellular telephones, and if possible, a generator, are highly beneficial because electricity and telephone services may be disrupted for several days or weeks.

### Flash Flooding:

Move immediately and quickly to higher ground. The force of six inches of swiftly moving water can knock people off of their feet! If floodwaters rise around your car, get out and move to higher ground immediately. Cars can be easily swept away in just two feet of moving water.

### Hurricanes:

A hurricane is a type of tropical cyclone, accompanied by thunderstorms and a counterclockwise circulation of winds near the earth's surface. A full-blown hurricane is defined as having sustained winds of 75 MPH or higher. Atlantic hurricane season is June 1 through November 30. If a hurricane warning is declared, take appropriate sheltering and/or evacuation measures in order to protect lives and property.

### Tornadoes:

If you receive a tornado warning, seek shelter immediately. If you are in your car, stop. Get out and lie flat, face down in a low area. Cover your head and wait for the tornado to pass. At home, go to the basement, storm shelter or rooms near the center of the house. In a high-rise or other public building, move to the interior, preferably a stairwell or hallway.

# Biological Emergencies

A biological emergency can be the accidental or intentional release of organisms that can cause illness or disease in people. Protection during a biological event depends on the organisms being used. Some organisms, such as anthrax, cannot be passed from person-to-person. Others, such as smallpox, are contagious and require the isolation of ill persons and quarantine of those who were recently exposed.

## Before A Declared Biological Emergency:

- Make certain your emergency supply kit is refreshed, available, and ready.

## During A Declared Biological Emergency:

- Monitor TV, radio and Internet reports for **official** instructions, including the signs and symptoms of the diseases, whether or not medications or vaccinations are being distributed, and where to seek medical attention.
- Follow the instructions of health care providers and public health officials.
- Exposed persons should receive medical evaluation and treatment. Be prepared for long lines.
- If the disease is contagious, persons exposed may be quarantined.
- EVERYONE should use common sense and practice good hygiene and cleanliness to avoid spreading germs.

## After A Biological Emergency:

- Monitor TV, radio and Internet reports for **official** news, information and instructions.

# Chemical Emergencies

A chemical emergency can be the deliberate or accidental release of a vapor, liquid or solid that poisons people and/or the environment.

The toxicity of chemicals varies greatly. Some are acutely toxic (cause immediate symptoms); others are not very toxic at all. Chemicals in liquid or vapor form generally lead to greater exposures than chemicals in solid form.

Taking protective measures before, during and after a chemical emergency could reduce the impact of a disaster on you and your family. Follow these simple guidelines:

## Before A Chemical Emergency:

- Make certain your emergency supply kit is refreshed, available, and ready.
- Choose an internal room to shelter, preferably one without windows and on the highest level possible.

## During A Chemical Emergency:

- Close doors and windows.
- Turn off all ventilation systems that bring in outdoor air, including fans and air conditioners.
- If you are instructed to SHELTER IN PLACE, you should:
  - Seek shelter in an internal room and take your emergency supply kit.
  - Monitor TV, radio and Internet reports for **official** news, information and instructions.

## After A Chemical Emergency:

- Wash with soap and water immediately if exposed to a chemical.
- Remove contaminated clothing.
- Seek medical attention if necessary.

In the event of a threat, public health officials may not immediately be able to provide information on what you should do. It may take time to determine exactly what the illness is, how it should be treated, and who is in danger. However, you should monitor television and radio, or check the Internet for official news following the event to determine:

- The level of danger.
- Where to get medications or vaccines if necessary.
- What health effects may exist.
- Where to go for medical help or shelter.



# Nuclear & Radiological Emergencies

A radiological threat can include an emergency at a nuclear power plant, the use of a small nuclear weapon or the setting off of a “dirty bomb”. A dirty bomb contains an explosive that would scatter radioactive material over a targeted area.

## BEFORE a Nuclear or Radiological Emergency:

- Make certain your emergency supply kit is refreshed, available, and ready.
- Know your community’s communications protocol in the event of a nuclear or radiological emergency.
- Communities within the Millstone emergency planning zone are annually mailed the emergency preparedness guide “Emergency Planning for Millstone Station”. Include their plan – and this one – in your emergency supply kit. Residents living within a 10-mile radius of a nuclear power plant should be aware of the evacuation routes established for their area.

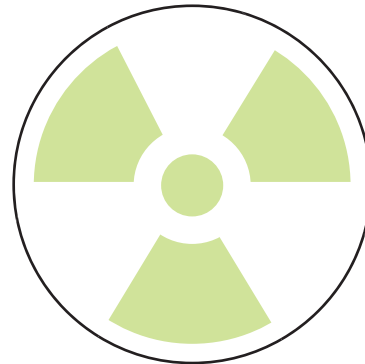
## DURING a Nuclear or Radiological Emergency:

- Close all windows and doors. Turn off all ventilation systems that bring in outdoor air, including fans and air conditioners.
- Choose an underground or internal room to shelter, preferably one without windows.

- **IF YOU ARE OUTDOORS:** Seek indoor shelter in the nearest undamaged building.
- **IF OUTDOORS WITHOUT AVAILABLE SAFE SHELTER:** Move as rapidly as is safe upwind and away from the location of the incident.
- Increase the shielding between you and the radiation. For example, several feet of concrete can create a protective barrier between you and the radiation source.
- Listen to your radio or TV for further instructions.

## AFTER a Nuclear or Radiological Emergency:

Monitor TV, radio and Internet reports for **official** news, information and instructions.



The State of Connecticut has plans and procedures in place to respond to a nuclear power plant emergency at either the Millstone Station in Waterford, Connecticut or Indian Point in Buchanan, New York. These plans address the specific response actions required to protect the health and safety of all Connecticut residents. In the event of an actual emergency at one of these facilities, public safety officials will activate the state emergency response plan and provide residents with timely public information and instructions.

# Connecticut's Public Drinking Water Supply

## If You See Something, Say Something

Actual instances of drinking water contamination are rare and typically do not pose health concerns. However, there are various events, either natural or man-made, that can create drinking water emergencies. For example, improper disposal of chemicals, animal and human wastes, wastes injected underground, and naturally occurring substances have the potential to contaminate our drinking water. Likewise, drinking water that is not properly treated or disinfected, or that travels through an improperly maintained distribution system, may also pose a health risk. Greater vigilance by you, as well as by your public drinking water supplier and by government officials, can help to prevent such events.

The Connecticut Department of Public Health and its partners across the state are taking action to ensure the safety of our drinking water supply and to respond effectively in the event of an emergency. **The Department of Public Health (DPH):**

- Provides technical assistance to public drinking water systems regarding emergency response issues and bioterrorism.
- Provides support for water systems in preparing risk and vulnerability assessments.
- Provides assistance to water systems in preparing emergency response plans, and works with the DPH Infectious Disease section to carry out these plans.
- Provides advice directly to the federal Environmental Protection Agency and to the Department of Homeland Security on matters relating to drinking water security.
- Produces forums and exercises designed to maintain an appropriate security awareness and to test response procedures.

## What You Can Do

If you notice suspicious activities in or around public drinking water sources, report them to your local law enforcement authorities. **Examples of suspicious activities include:**

- People climbing or cutting a utility fence around a water supply or facility.
- People dumping or discharging materials into a drinking water reservoir or supply.
- Unidentified trucks or cars parked near a water source or water treatment facility.
- The suspicious opening of, or tampering with, manhole covers, fire hydrants, buildings or equipment.
- People climbing on water storage tanks.
- People photographing, videotaping, or taking notes on utility facilities, structures, or equipment.
- Strangers loitering around locked gates of water supply facilities or water sources.

DPH reminds you to be observant. Report suspicious activity around your area water supply to authorities.



# Public Health Preparedness

Local, state, and federal public health agencies play a critical role in emergency preparedness and response. Some of the tools that are used for public health emergencies include:

## The Connecticut Health Alert Network (HAN)

HAN swiftly disseminates critical health information to and between the Connecticut Department of Public Health and its partners, including local health directors, health care providers, hospitals, emergency medical services personnel, and others.

## Public Health Investigation and Response

Epidemiologists conduct investigations to determine the cause and the persons exposed to an infectious disease, chemical or radiological source so that exposed persons can be given preventive treatment in time to avert illness.

## The Strategic National Stockpile (SNS)

SNS is a program of the federal Department of Homeland Security and implemented by the Connecticut Department of Public Health that provides for the rapid availability of

life-saving medicines, supplies and equipment in the event of natural or terrorist related incident.

## Mass Vaccination Regions

Connecticut is divided into 41 public health areas for the purpose of running clinics that can provide vaccine or antibiotics to Connecticut residents during a public health emergency. During an emergency, state and local health departments will provide information via television and radio as to where to go and when.

These mass vaccination clinics are coordinated by local health departments and public health staff, but many volunteers are needed. Nurses, pharmacists, physicians, and non-medical volunteers are considered crucial to the success of these clinics. **To become a volunteer, contact your local health district or department for more information, or call Infoline at 2-1-1.**

# Connecticut State Emergency Preparedness Partners

Each of Connecticut's state agencies and commissions work to strengthen Connecticut's level of emergency preparedness.

**The Department of Emergency Management & Homeland Security (DEMHS)** oversees and coordinates the state's plans for, and responses to, all human-made and natural disasters, utilizing available resources within state government.

**DEMHS** supports the 169 Connecticut municipalities and the two tribal nations in emergency planning and response through federal homeland security grants and other funding for equipment, training and exercises.

**The Department of Public Health (DPH)** is responsible for protecting the health and safety of the people of Connecticut. DPH collaborates with a broad array of partners, including local health departments, tribal nations, hospitals, law enforcement, and other state agencies and community partners to strengthen the public health infrastructure and enhance the state's level of emergency preparedness.

### Additional State Partners:

- Commission on Fire Prevention & Control
- Commission on Deaf and Hearing Impaired
- Connecticut Television Network (CTN)

- Department of Administrative Services
- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Children & Families
- Department of Consumer Protection
- Department of Correction
- Department of Education
- Department of Environmental Protection
- Department of Information Technology
- Department of Labor
- Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services
- Department of Mental Retardation
- Department of Public Safety/State Police
- Department of Public Utility Control
- Department of Public Works
- Department of Social Services
- Department of Transportation
- Military Department
- Office of Policy & Management
- Office of State Fire Marshal
- Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

# RESOURCES

## IN AN EMERGENCY CALL 9-1-1

**Connecticut Department of Emergency Management & Homeland Security** . . . . . 1-860-566-3180  
[www.ct.gov/demhs](http://www.ct.gov/demhs)

**Connecticut Department of Public Health** . . . . . 1-860-509-8000  
[www.dph.state.ct.us/ready.htm](http://www.dph.state.ct.us/ready.htm)

**Connecticut Poison Control Center** . . . . . 1-800-222-1222

**Infoline** . . . . . 2-1-1

**Red Cross** . . . . . 1-877-CT-REDCROSS (1-877-287-3327)  
[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

### Tip Lines

Report suspicious terrorist activities . . . . . 1-866-HLS-TIPS (1-866-457-8477) 1-203-777-6311

*Connecticut radio and television stations are a timely source of information in an emergency.*

## How Can I Help?

- Call the American Red Cross, Connecticut Blood Services Region at 1-800-GIVE LIFE (1-800-448-3543) to make an appointment to donate blood.
- Contact the relief agencies/organizations in your area to see what they may need, such as clothing or food.
- Take a Basic First-Aid or CPR class.
- Consider joining a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). Contact your local municipality for more information.
- Consider volunteering for a public health response team. Contact your local health department/district for more information.
- Form a neighborhood watch program to be better prepared for potential future events.

Be Aware

Be Prepared



Keeping Connecticut Healthy



This Connecticut Preparedness Campaign is funded by grants from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Environmental Protection Agency and the federal Department of Homeland Security.