

CALDWELL COUNTY
HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Preparedness Booklet

Are You Prepared?



Emergencies can happen at any time.

Let's *all* be prepared.

2010

We at Caldwell County Health Department, urge you to be prepared. We are working to make sure that all the County's resources are ready in the event of a natural or man-made disaster. We strongly encourage you to join us by preparing your home and place of business.

Please read the suggestions contained in this publication. Preparing ahead of time will help everyone get through an emergency a little easier.

Let's Prepare Together!

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Think about it...

How prepared are you and your family for a public health emergency?

- Could your family manage if you had no power for a week or more?
- If you couldn't leave home, do you have enough food and water to last at least 3 days? What about medications, diapers, or pet's needs.
- What could you do to be more prepared?



These questions and others are important to think about.

Some emergencies are easy to see, like a flood, hurricane, or fire. A public health emergency is harder to see. Things like the flu or a foodborne outbreak has the ability make you very sick..

You can prepare for most kinds of emergencies by doing the same things.

We want you to Be Prepared!

What is a Public Health Emergency

A public health emergency can be many different things.

It may be a **sickness** that can spread easily from one person to another. (Hepatitis A, measles, and flu for example.)

An emergency could also be an **event** that puts many people at risk of illness. (A flood, gas leak, and blizzard are examples of an event.)

Look at the chart below to see what can happen with public health emergencies.

Event/Sickness	Can cause
Pandemic flu	Loss of work or school Spreads very easily Can cause death
Gas leak or chemical spill (Mandatory Evacuation)	Damage to groundwater Harm to lungs, eyes, skin
Blizzard	Loss of power-spoiled food Lack of heat Stranded at home Help cannot get to you

What is Pandemic flu?

Pandemic– a serious illness that spreads very quickly in a large area, affecting many people.

Pandemic flu is a public health emergency.

A pandemic flu happens when:

- A new flu virus appears in humans
- The new virus spreads easily from person to person
- It causes major sickness
- The virus moves around the world



Because pandemic viruses are new, humans cannot fight them very well. This causes the disease to spread from person to person very fast. Many people become sick.

A vaccine cannot be made for a pandemic flu until the new virus appears. It can take many months to make a new vaccine.

What about other kinds of flu?

Seasonal flu is the flu we see every winter. This flu is a virus that spreads easily from person to person. It spreads through coughs, sneezes, and being close to or eating after someone who has the flu.

Symptoms of seasonal flu include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Sneezing

Flu can be serious or cause death.

Unlike pandemic flu, there is a vaccine to prevent it. It must be given every year, beginning in the fall.

Bird (Avian) flu is a flu that affects birds.

Bird flu spreads very easily among birds. A small number of people have gotten bird flu by working closely with birds.



Why do I need to prepare?

Some emergencies may only cause short-term problems. Others, such as pandemic flu, might change the way we live for months.

Pandemic flu can cause many people around the world to get sick at the same time. Things that we take for granted could be affected.

- Stores may be closed or have few supplies, including food.
- Banks, ATM's, restaurants, post offices and other businesses may be closed.
- If businesses are closed, well people may not be able to work.
- Gas may be in short supply; buses or taxis may not run.
- Large groups may not meet, like sporting events or church services.
- Schools and childcare centers may be closed.
- Sick patients could fill doctors' offices, clinics and hospitals.

By planning ahead you can help yourself and your family get through most emergencies a little easier.

Preparing for a Public Health Emergency

Being prepared means that you have made an emergency kit. You could stay in your home for several days, or leave quickly if you had to.

You can prepare yourself and your family for most public health emergencies by doing these 5 things:

1. Make a Family Emergency Plan

- Talk about what you would do during different kinds of emergencies.
- Talk about plans with older or disabled family members and neighbors.
- Local phone lines may not work. Decide on someone that your family can check in with in case you are separated.

2. Make an Emergency Kit

- Your kit should have enough in it to last at least 3 days. Longer is better.
- The kit should be packed in something strong and be easy to get to.
- You may want to make two kits. One for using at home and a smaller kit in case you have to leave.

Preparing for a Public Health Emergency (cont...)

3. Stay Inside

You may be asked to stay inside where your are. If so, here is what you should do:

- Be sure to have your emergency kits with you, if you're at home.
- Watch TV, listen to the radio, or check the internet to learn what else you should do.

4. Evacuate (Leave the area)

You should be able to quickly collect medicines, important papers, photos and other things you need within minutes.

- Plan where you will go if you must leave your home.
- Plan where your family will meet, if separated.
- Keep at least a half tank of gas in your car at all times.
- Take your emergency kit with you.
- Listen to your radio to learn what else you should do.

5. Don't forget your pets

- Plan ahead to take your pets with you. They may be lost or hurt if you leave them behind.
- Plan for a safe place to take your pets. Shelters don't often allow pets.
- Make an emergency kit for your pet.

How will I know about a public health emergency?

Any time there is a public health emergency, the Caldwell County Health Department will release all important messages to the local media.

To learn what you need to do about these emergencies:

- Listen to local radio stations.
- Watch local TV.
- Read the newspaper.
- Check local TV and newspaper websites.
- Check the Caldwell County website at www.caldwellcountync.org
- Watch Caldwell County TV, Charter Cable channel 10.
- Call our hotline number at (828) 426-8456 to receive all current recorded information.

What is Caldwell County doing to prepare?

Caldwell County has been planning for public health emergencies for many years.

The County works with preparedness groups for local agencies, city, state, and federal governments.

The County has:

- A county-wide emergency plan for large-scale emergencies.
- A Pandemic Influenza Preparedness and Response Plan.
- A multi-agency team that works to improve the way important messages are shared with the public and between agencies.
- A Public Health Preparedness Coordinator to make sure that Caldwell County is as prepared as it can be for public health threats.

Other things the County does:

- Carries out regular , true-to-life drills. Public and private agencies practice their response to an emergency together.
- Watches for human and animal disease outbreaks and takes quick action.

Make an Emergency Preparedness Kit

Put your kit in a sturdy container that is easy to carry, like a back-pack, duffle bag or plastic storage bin.

Think first about basic things that you and your family will need: fresh water, food and warmth. Keep at least a 3 day supply.

◇ **Water**

- 1 gallon per person, per day.



◇ **Food**

- Ready-to-eat foods that don't need to be kept cold.
- Food for infants, the elderly, or those on special diets.
- Non-electric can opener.
- Paper cups and plates, plastic forks, spoons
And knives, paper towels.



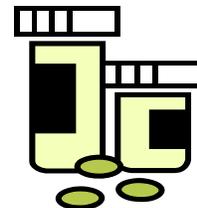
◇ **Clothes and bedding (for each person)**

- Blankets or sleeping bag.
- At least one change of clothes.



◇ **Medicines and self care**

- Prescription and over-the counter medicine.
- First aid kit
- Personal care items (brush, soap, deodorant)



◇ **Cash/Checkbook/Credit Cards**

- Cash and change
- Copy of your ID and credit cards

◇ **Important Paperwork**

- Mortgage, insurance, bank account records.
- Birth certificates, wills.
- Social Security cards, tax information.

◇ **Baby Care (if needed)**

- Disposable diapers
- Formula, bottles, pacifier.

◇ **Other Supplies**

- Flashlight and extra batteries.
- Radio or TV (battery operated).
- Matches in water proof container.
- Whistle to signal for help.
- Wrench or plies to turn off water or gas.

◇ **Pets**

- Food, water bowls, litter and pan.
- Leash, harness, or carrier.
- Medicine, shots, medical records (in a water proof container)
- Recent picture in case your pet gets lost.

◇ **Special Items**

- Picture or other things that are special to you and cannot be replaced.

Talk to your family—today!



“Will I have enough
of my medicine? “



“We practice for
an emergency at
school.”



“I’ve talked with my family
about what to do in an
emergency.”



“How will I reach my
children who are
away at college.”



“ How can I help my aging
parents in an emergency?”

Fast Facts:

- ◇ If power goes out, leave refrigerator doors closed. Food will usually be safe to eat for about 2 hours.
- ◇ Foods in a closed freezer that is 1/2 full will hold for up to 24 hours. Food in a full freezer should be safe for 48 hours.
- ◇ Cough or sneeze into the bend of your elbow. Wash hands with soap and water. These help to prevent the spread of viruses.

**CALDWELL COUNTY HEALTH
DEPARTMENT**

Helpful links:

These links include information about specific kinds of emergencies. They also have plans for the disabled, pet owners, businesses, and teachers.

www.redcross.org/preparedness

www.ready.gov

Includes help for seniors, disabled pets, Businesses and children /teachers.

www.readync.gov

Includes preparedness measures for specific Emergencies, seniors, and pets



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For more information please
contact your preparedness
coordinator

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Thank You