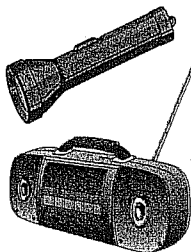




20 steps to be better prepared

continued

Step Nineteen



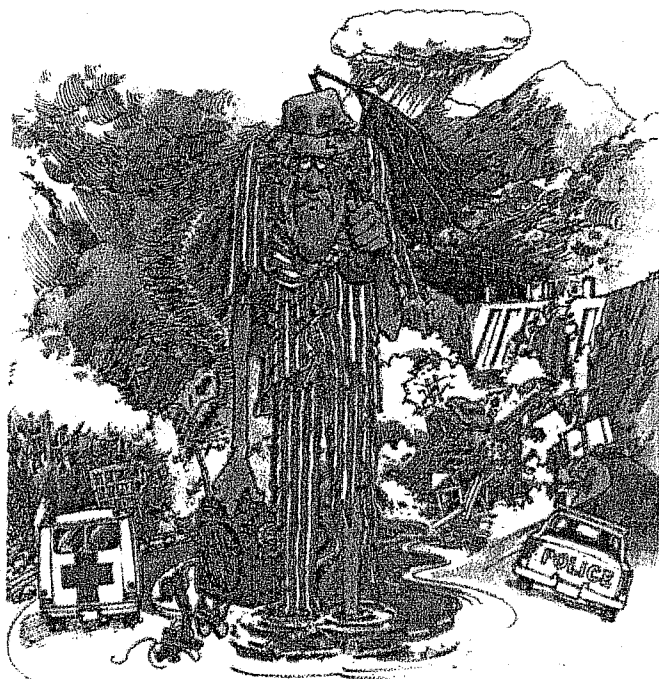
Don't forget to be prepared when planning to go on holiday. Nature doesn't take holidays so take a few essentials with you in case something happens while you are away.

Make sure you have a torch, a radio (and spare batteries for both) and take a first aid kit with you.

Have an alternative plan in case your travel is disrupted and take a phone card or mobile phone so you can ring for assistance or at least let friends or relatives know what has delayed you.

Step Twenty

If you have completed all of the other steps, sit back and congratulate yourself on being better prepared. Later you should go back to step one and review your preparations.



Plan for tomorrow today!



20 steps to be better prepared

If you find that preparing yourself for an emergency seems a bit overwhelming, use our 20 step programme to break it into manageable tasks. Even if you only do one thing a week, within 20 weeks (less if you have already done some of the things) you will be much better prepared.

Step One



Have you discussed what everyone should do in various emergency situations? It is only by talking about it and planning together that all members of your household will know what to do. Some of the things to think about are:

- Work out where the safest places in the house are for different emergencies.
- What will you do if disaster strikes while members of your household are dispersed around the town at work, school or recreation?
- Decide who will collect children from school or care.
- Plan where you will meet together if you can't get home and where you will leave messages for each other if you have to go away from your home before you are all back together.

TALK ABOUT IT!

Step Two

Take some time to do a hazard check indoors at home. Tall and heavy furniture may topple or move during an earthquake. Items on high shelves may become dangerous missiles flying horizontally across the room and precious ornaments could fall and be smashed.

Use screws and right angle brackets to fasten heavy furniture to the wall framing. Put heavy or sharp-cornered items on low shelves or in cupboards with secure door latches and attach precious objects to shelves with blu-tack or velcro so they are less likely to fall.

It won't take long and it won't cost much but it could save you and your family and your possessions some damage in an earthquake.



20 steps to be better prepared

continued

Step Three



How well do you know your neighbours? Enough that you know how you could help them and they could help you in a disaster? In major emergencies neighbours will need to help each other, so get to know yours and exchange information. Do you or your neighbours have skills or equipment that could be vital in an emergency?

If you have neighbours who are elderly or have a disability, plan to check on them as soon as possible after an emergency event. If your area is to be evacuated, they may need assistance.

Find out if there is a Neighbourhood Support Group in your area as these are a great way to develop a strong and caring neighbourhood network that can help provide mutual support following a disaster.

Step Four



If you had to evacuate your home tomorrow, would you know what to take with you? Remember that whatever you take, you may have to carry, so forget the telly. Furniture and appliances can be replaced - important family documents and photographs probably can't be. They are also easier to carry!

Take spare clothing and toiletries with you as well as any medications you rely on. A child's favourite toy may help to ease the distress of evacuation.

Secure your home as though you were going on holiday and turn off power, water and gas, but to indicate to emergency personnel that you have successfully evacuated, tear the rear cover off the phone book and put it in a window where it can be seen from the street.

To ensure you will remember to take everything you want, make an evacuation reminder list and tape it to the civil defence page in your phone book.

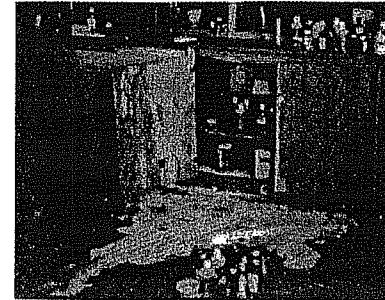
And what about your pets?



20 steps to be better prepared

continued

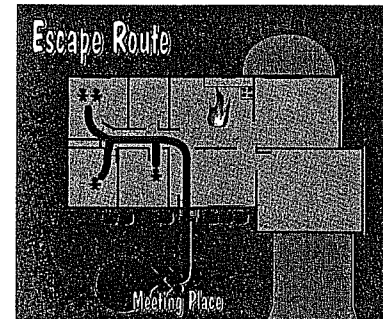
Step Sixteen



You should check how you store your fuel and garden chemicals. If these can tip and mix in an emergency, you could have a nasty and hazardous mess to clean up. If they can be reached by floodwaters, you could end up with contaminated water in your home and around your section, making restoration more difficult and more expensive.

Store all of your garden chemicals in locked cupboards out of reach of floodwaters (and children). Ensure that all liquid chemical and fuel containers have securely closed lids to prevent them spilling.

Step Seventeen



The chances are that you or some members of your household spend considerable time at a place of work. If so, you should check that there is a proper emergency plan to help ensure safety during and after a disaster.

Has your workplace been protected from hazards such as heavy equipment or furniture falling, chemicals spilling or fire breaking out? Are there trained first aiders on the staff and do you know who they are? Is there a proper evacuation procedure?

Step Eighteen



If you have pets you will want to look after them during and after a disaster.

Keep extra pet food on hand - tinned or dry food is best as it keeps the longest. A pet carry cage will be invaluable if you have to leave home in a hurry.

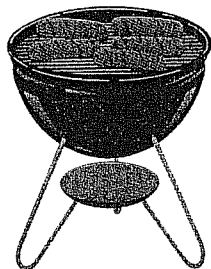
If you cannot take your pets with you, leave plenty of food and water for them and, in the case of cats or dogs, leave them free so that they can move away from any danger.



20 steps to be better prepared

continued

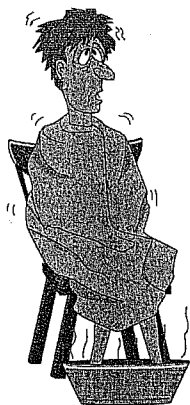
Step Thirteen



If electricity is off for a while, you may need an alternative way to cook. Have a spare bag of charcoal or keep the gas bottle for your barbecue filled and make sure you have a full supply of fuel for your camp stove or caravan or boat cooker if you have these.

For safety, use these alternative cooking devices outside only and be careful that you do not cause a fire as the phone may not be working and the Fire Service may be unable to reach you.

Step Fourteen



How do you heat your home? If electricity is off and your chimney or flue is damaged by a disaster, how will you keep warm? Portable gas heaters offer one solution but take care with their use to avoid a fire risk.

If you have no other safe means of heating, put on extra clothes, get everyone into a draught free room and wrap up in blankets or sleeping bags if necessary. Foil survival blankets help keep heat in and are a good addition to your first aid kit.

Step Fifteen



Do a safety check to make sure your fire won't cause you harm in a disaster.

Do a visual inspection of brick chimneys and if they show signs of cracking, leaning or other deterioration get them checked by a tradesman.

If you have a free standing solid fuel burner, check that it is securely fastened to the hearth, otherwise it could slide or tip over during an earthquake, injuring people and setting your house on fire. If it is in the old fireplace cavity, ensure that it is sufficiently secured. **AND REMEMBER**, a smoke alarm may be the best insurance you will ever buy!



20 steps to be better prepared

continued

Step Five



In a disaster you may not be able to get to your doctor or pharmacy for several days - especially if you are evacuated from your home. It is wise to ensure you never run low on essential medicines and don't forget to take them with you if you have to evacuate.

Check your quantity of essential medicines and never let them go below one week's supply.

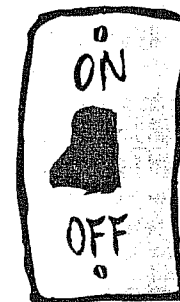
Step Six



If you have young children, it is probable that they spend time at places of care or education. If so you need to be sure that there is an adequate disaster plan at these places as it may be some time after an emergency event before you are able to collect your children.

Check with pre-schools and schools that your children attend to ensure that they have planned properly for the protection and care of the children in a disaster. They should have a written emergency plan they can show you. If not, insist that a good emergency plan be developed for the proper care of your children. Discuss it with the Board or Management if necessary! Not all schools and pre-schools in Wellington are sufficiently prepared for a disaster.

Step Seven



Every adult and older child should learn how to turn off your home's water, electricity and gas bottle. It would also be wise to know how to do this at work.

Turning off the water at the tap will help save water damage caused by broken pipes and prevent contaminated water getting into the hot water cylinder which may be your best supply of drinking water for a while.

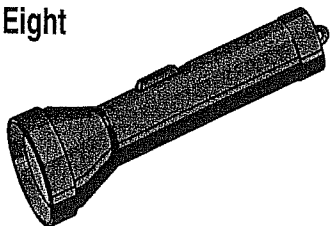
Switching off electricity prevents the risk of electric shock or fire from damaged wiring, while turning off gas bottles will protect you from harmful fumes and possible explosion and fire if the gas pipes are leaking.



20 steps to be better prepared

continued

Step Eight



How would you get on in a disaster at night if the power fails? You need a good source of safe emergency light.

The best option is a torch with some spare batteries. This will allow you to move around the house to look after yourself and others. Another good source of safe light is a chemical light stick, which will glow for up to 12 hours giving enough background light for comfort and safety as a last option and then with care.

Candles and gas or kerosene lanterns should only be used with great care. Discuss with your family the need for footwear after an earthquake — there could be broken glass on the floor.

Keep a torch in the car too. You never know when you may be stuck on a dark road and it will serve as a spare for at home if disaster strikes.

Step Nine

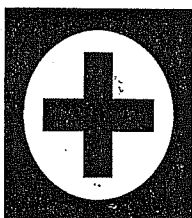


In a disaster you will want good information about what is happening, what you should do to look after yourselves and where you can get assistance. This type of information will all be broadcast over local radio stations so a battery-powered radio is a vital part of your emergency planning.

If the electricity is off, a battery-powered radio is the only way you will hear these broadcasts. A car radio will work but you may get tired of sitting in the car.

Have a spare set of batteries with your radio to ensure you won't be left without information at a critical time.

Step Ten



Many home first aid kits contain only a couple of disprins and a band-aid. If yours is like that, it won't be much use if you or a member of your household is badly hurt in a disaster.

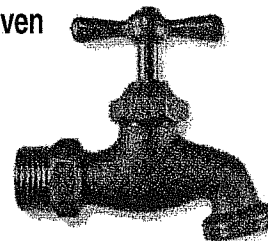
Get a good first aid kit or put one together by purchasing the items as you can afford them. The order of St John, Red Cross or your local pharmacy will advise you on what is necessary.



20 steps to be better prepared

continued

Step Eleven



Attend a first aid course if it is more than two years since you last did one or if you have never done one. After all, how would you feel if you could have saved the life of someone close to you if only you had done a first aid course, but hadn't?

Remember the Ancient Mariner's lament? Water, water everywhere but not a drop to drink? That could be you after a flood, earthquake or other event that disrupts the water supply to your home.

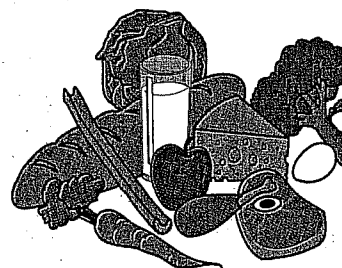
One way to ensure you have a supply of drinking water on hand is to protect your hot water cylinder by fastening it to the frame of the house and having a tap fitted to the cylinder's drainage pipe to make it easier to get water out of it. It may already have one — check it out!

**YOU NEED TO
STORE MORE WATER!!**



You can get a cylinder strapping kit from a plumbing supplier and fit it yourself but you need a plumber to fit the tap to the drainage pipe and you could get the plumber to fasten the cylinder at the same time. The cost will be worth it to have good drinking water after a disaster and to save both damage to your water cylinder and water damage around it. See also Page 35 for storage of emergency water.

Step Twelve



If you have to stay in your home for some time after a disaster, you won't want to go hungry. Following a disaster, use fresh food first then refrigerated and frozen foods. Use tinned and dry foods last. Open the fridge and freezer as few times as possible if the electricity is off.

Keeping extra food in the house is a good idea. On your next few visits to the supermarket, buy a couple of extra items to put in the cupboard just in case. The best things are those that will store for a long time and that need little or no preparation.



Home preparedness check

continued

Are your petrol containers, weed killers and other chemicals safely stored where they cannot tip over in an earthquake or leak in a flood?

- In a locked cupboard?
- On a shelf with a good edge rail on it?

Have you spoken with your neighbours and discussed how you can help each other?

- Do you or they have special needs (disability, frailty, young children)?
- Do you or they have tools, equipment or skills that could be useful?
- Is there someone who can keep an eye on your family if you have to report for duty at work during an emergency?
- Are you actively involved with a neighbourhood support group (if there is one)?
- Do you and your neighbours know that a sheet or towel hung out a window is a sign that help is needed?

Have you checked the adequacy of your insurance cover?

- On your house?
- On your contents?
- Is the value of your fire & other risks policy adequate for disaster cover or would "top-up" cover for reinstatement value be wise?
- See your insurance company to check on the adequacy of your insurance for disasters.



Home preparedness check

continued

Have you taken steps to ensure you will have adequate water if mains are off?

- Have you got suitable containers with stored water?
- Do family members know how to turn off water mains to prevent contaminated water entering house plumbing or internal flooding?
- If you have tank supply, are the tanks secured from toppling?
- Are your hot water cylinder and header tank strapped to the house framing? They are a good source of clean water.
- Does the family understand the need to conserve water?

Have you considered fire safety after an emergency?

- Do you have a fire extinguisher? Do older family members know how to use it properly?
- Do family members know how to turn off electric power to prevent the possibility of fire?
- Extinguish solid fuel heaters and fires and do not use until they have been checked for safety (flues and chimneys especially).
- Use torches or chemical light sticks in preference to candles or gas lanterns which could pose a fire or gas explosion risk.
- Does your family have a fire evacuation procedure?

Have you considered how to safely dispose of waste if the sewerage system and rubbish collection are not functioning?

- Use a bucket with a plastic bag insert as a temporary toilet and bury waste deeply in the garden.
- Store other rubbish in plastic bags.