Emergency Preparedness: Evacuation

SECTION 1

1. **Sign up with LETA**
Larimer Emergency Telephone Authority
Website: www.leta911.org

Once you register on this website, you can list your cell phones and your email addresses so that you will be alerted in the event of an emergency.

Note: While it is very important to sign up with LETA, it is also important to:
- **Trust Your Instincts and**
- **Help Each Other**
A given fire may be moving so fast that LETA is unable to contact you first.

2. **Create an Evacuation Priority List**
Because you do not know how much time you will have, it is important to think about this ahead of time and create a list.

- Ideally this list will be on brightly covered paper, in a sleeve protector, and posted where everyone can find it.
- The list should be time contingent.

The most important items to be considered for inclusion on this list are highlighted throughout this handout.

3. **Pets**
Make certain that your transportation crates for your pets are easily accessible. If you are put on pre-evacuation notice, keep your pets in a smaller room so that you can easily get them and leave quickly.

- Crate and Leash
- Pet Medication
- Pet Food
- Vaccination Records
- Veterinarian: ________________________________________________________________

Pet Sign
This is a sign that you put in the front window near your front door that lists how many cats, dogs, and birds you have in your residence. These can be picked up at the Animal Medical Center and other Veterinarians around town.
4. Gather Important Documents
Gather all of your important documents so that they are all together in one place. If you need to evacuate quickly, you will not waste time trying to find and gather the documents you need.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has created a list of important documents that it recommends you have in the event of an evacuation. The following list of documents is taken from the Emergency Financial First Aid Kit FEMA 532 / August 2005. The entire Emergency Financial First Aid Kit is available for free from FEMA; Call (800) 480-2520 and ask for document #532. It is also available as a free download online at www.operationhope.org. The download includes sections to include personal household information, professional advisors and health care providers, and private security / access information. All of the important legal documents and financial statements that they recommend are listed on the following pages.

Checklist of Important Legal Documents and Financial Statements

**IMPORTANT LEGAL DOCUMENTS THAT APPLY TO MY FAMILY**

1. Birth Certificate(s)/Adoption Papers
   1. have _____need _____N/A _____
2. Marriage License
   2. have _____need _____N/A _____
3. Divorce Papers
   3. have _____need _____N/A _____
4. Social Security Card(s)
   4. have _____need _____N/A _____
5. Passport/Green Card
   5. have _____need _____N/A _____
6. Naturalization Documents
   6. have _____need _____N/A _____
7. Will
   7. have _____need _____N/A _____
8. Power(s) of Attorney (personal/property)
   8. have _____need _____N/A _____
9. Mortgage or Real Estate Deeds of Trust
   9. have _____need _____N/A _____
10. Vehicle Registration/Ownership Papers
    10. have _____need _____N/A _____
11. Other ___________________________
    11. have _____need _____N/A _____

**TAX STATEMENTS**

12. Previous Year’s Tax Returns
    12. have _____need _____N/A _____
13. Property Tax Statement
    13. have _____need _____N/A _____
14. Personal Property Tax (i.e. Car Tax)
    14. have _____need _____N/A _____

**FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS**

15. Bank/Credit Union Statements
    15. have _____need _____N/A _____
16. Credit/Debit Card Statements
    16. have _____need _____N/A _____
17. Retirement Accounts (401K, TSP, IRA)
    17. have _____need _____N/A _____
18. Investment Accounts (Stocks, Bonds, Mutual Funds)
    18. have _____need _____N/A _____
19. Other ___________________________
    19. have _____need _____N/A _____
SOURCES OF INCOME/ASSETS
20. Recent Pay Stubs for All Sources of Income
21. Government Benefits (e.g. Social Security, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Veterans’)
22. Alimony Income
23. Child Support Income
24. Professional Appraisals of Personal Property
25. Rewards Accounts (e.g., Frequent Flyer Programs, Hotel Rewards)
26. Other __________________________

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS
27. Mortgage Statement
28. Lease
29. Utility Bills (Electric, Water, Gas)
30. Car Payment
31. Student Loan
32. Alimony Payments
33. Child Support Payments
34. Elder Care Facilities
35. Other Debt_______________________

INSURANCE
36. Property Insurance
37. Rental Insurance
38. Auto Insurance
39. Life Insurance
40. Other __________________________

MEDICAL
41. Health Insurance ID Card (s)
42. Record of Immunizations/Allergies
43. List of Necessary Medications
(see below for a specific medication section)
44. Disabilities Documentation 44. have _____ need _____ N/A _____
45. Living Will 45. have _____ need _____ N/A _____
46. Dental Records / Child ID Cards / DNA Swabs 46. have _____ need _____ N/A _____
47. Other ____________________________ 47. have _____ need _____ N/A _____

MILITARY
48. Current Military ID 48. have _____ need _____ N/A _____
49. Military Discharge DD 214 49. have _____ need _____ N/A _____
50. Other ____________________________ 50. have _____ need _____ N/A _____

OTHER FINANCIAL/LEGAL DOCUMENTATION
51. _________________________________ 51. have _____ need _____ N/A _____
52. _________________________________ 52. have _____ need _____ N/A _____
53. _________________________________ 53. have _____ need _____ N/A _____

5. Additional Items to Take

- Safe Deposit Box Key
- Purse, Wallet, Drivers License, Cash, Credit Cards, Checkbooks
- Passwords
  Your written passwords list if you have one. Make certain that this is kept VERY safe during your evacuation.
- Medications
  Be as specific as possible so that if you have to refill a prescription you can do so more easily. List what they are and where they are located in your home.

  1. _________________________________________________________________
  2. _________________________________________________________________
  3. _________________________________________________________________
  4. _________________________________________________________________
  5. _________________________________________________________________
  6. _________________________________________________________________
  7. _________________________________________________________________
☐ **Computer Hard Drives / Laptops / Other Electronics? (E-readers, iPads, etc)**
Note specific computers and locations.

1. _________________________________________________________________
2. _________________________________________________________________
3. _________________________________________________________________
4. _________________________________________________________________

☐ **Cell Phones, Smart Phones, Chargers**
What and where are they?

1. _________________________________________________________________
2. _________________________________________________________________
3. _________________________________________________________________
4. _________________________________________________________________

☐ **Photographs**

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☐ **Special Heirlooms / Irreplaceable Items / Sentimental Items**

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☐ **Specialty Items**
These are items specific to the very young (diapers, bottles, carriers) or those who may need assistance (oxygen, wheelchairs, walkers).

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6. Additional Items / Considerations

- **Clothing and Toiletries**
  Clothing for each family member for three days to one week and toiletries.
  In addition to basic clothing, consider packing “work clothes” so that you can work, if you choose, while evacuated.

- **Flashlight, Radio- hand crank or battery powered, First Aid Kit**

- **Specific Clothing- boots, gloves, jackets**
  For each member of the family

- **Sleeping bag, blankets, and pillows**
  For each member of the family

- **Camera**
  To document damage to your home when you return

*It is understood that you may not have time to gather all of the above items. Remember that your life and the lives of your family are the most important.*

7. Contact Person & Gathering Place

Establish an out of town contact person
This is someone everyone in your household can contact to say they are okay. It is also the person extended family members can contact to check if you are okay.

Establish an alternative gathering place for family members
In the event that you are unable to return to your home- which could happen if an evacuation happens when you are out of the house- where will you meet?

8. Protecting your home

Home Protection Tips
*Taken from the website of the Estes Park Fire Department- ([http://www.estesvalleyfire.org/fire-safety-tips/](http://www.estesvalleyfire.org/fire-safety-tips/)).*

In a major wildfire, it may be impossible for the fire department to provide enough resources to protect your home. If you have time, you may want to take the following steps to protect your home.

- Place combustible items 50 feet from the structure- including lawn furniture, umbrellas and tarp.

- Close or cover outside attic, eaves and basement vents. This reduces the possibility of sparks blowing into hidden areas of the house. Close all shutters.

- Connect a garden hose to an outside faucet so it can reach any part of the house.

- Place a ladder against the roof of the house opposite the approaching fire.

- Shut off gas at the meter or propane tank.
Park your car in the garage, facing out. Close the windows, but do not lock the doors.

Close the garage door, but leave unlocked. Disconnect the automatic garage door opener.

Close all windows and doors, but do not lock them.

Close all doors inside the house to block circulation of air and minimize movement of fire.

Turn on all exterior lights. This will make the home more visible in heavy smoke or at night.

Take down lightweight curtains and close heavy weight drapes (if non-combustible). Move overstuffed furniture away from windows and glass doors. These may ignite though radiant heat.

SECTION 2
This section covers things you can do now to protect the value of what you own, your computer, and fire mitigation around your house.

Protect the Value of Items in Your Home

Do a Home Inventory
Statistics from the National Insurance Industry show that homeowners who do not have a thorough home inventory collect 60 percent of their property's total value when submitting a claim.

**Basic Option: Take Pictures**
- Room as a whole
- Specific items in the room / sections of the room / drawers & closets
- Store offsite: cloud storage, safe deposit box, different location
- Update yearly / after major purchases

Insurance Coverage
After you have a home inventory, check with your homeowners insurance company to be certain you have adequate insurance. Sometimes people find out they are under-insured once they conduct a home inventory.

Keep it safe
Once you conduct a home inventory, you need to keep it safe. Keep it in your safe deposit box or create two copies and keep them at different locations- perhaps one with you and one with a relative who lives elsewhere.

You could also choose to store it on your computer. If you do this, however, make certain that you are backing up your computer.

Protect Your Computer
Back it Up

You have two choices to back up your computer- external media or an online back up company.
Choice 1: External Method
When most people consider an external method they think of CDs or a USB Flash Drive, however, CDs degrade over time and Flash Drives can become corrupted. Flash Drives are prone to static and if it stores static, your data can be corrupted. The best method for an external back up is an external hard drive.

Use Two External Hard Drives
1) Purchase two external hard drives.
2) Back up your computer to the first one.
3) Move this first hard drive to a safe location (preferably a safe deposit box).
4) Then, back up your computer to the second hard drive. This second hard drive stays in your home.
5) Once a month (or more often), completely back up your computer, again to this second hard drive.
6) Take this hard drive to the safe deposit box and switch it out with the one you put there the previous month.

Establishing this pattern will ensure that the majority of your data will be protected. At any given time you should only lose one month’s worth of data if your home should be lost and you are unable to get your computer out.

Choice 2: Online Backup Companies
There are several highly rated companies that will back up your computer and store your data for you. A good overview of these companies can be found here:
http://online-data-backup-review.toptenreviews.com/

The advantage of choosing this method is that the majority of companies automatically back up your data on a regular basis so that you can simply “set it and forget it.” If your computer is lost, your data will be protected and available to download to a different computer.

Create Defensible Space
The following is an excerpt taken from the Larimer county website-
http://larimer.org/health/emergency/before_evacuating.pdf

WHAT TO DO NOW TO PREPARE
___ Clear debris from roof and gutters
___ Clear driveway to at least 20 feet wide with 15 feet vertical clearance (for emergency vehicles)
___ Clear vegetation from within 3 feet of hydrants
___ Clear weeds and cut grass within 30 feet of structures, propane tanks, utility boxes
___ Develop outdoor water supply with hoses to reach entire house, nozzle, and pump
___ Document an annotated list of all belongings
___ Have fire tools, ladder, and fire extinguishers available
___ Install chimney screen or spark arrestor
___ Install enclosed sides on stilt foundations and decks
___ Install only non-combustible roof material
___ Install screens on foundation and eave vents
___ Install shutters, fire curtains, or heavy drapes on windows
___ Install smoke detectors and test quarterly
___ Make a video of all belongings, talking about each
___ Post load limits on access bridges
___ Post name/address signs clearly visible from street or road
___ Practice family fire drill and evacuation plans
___ Practice STOP, DROP, and ROLL (should clothes catch on fire)
___ Prepare a list of valuables to take with you (store together, if possible)
___ Remove branches that overhang within 15 feet of roof and chimney
___ Remove trash and debris accumulations
___ Remove trees growing through porch, deck, or roof
___ Stack firewood uphill or on a contour at least 30 feet away from house
___ Take still pictures of all belongings as a backup
___ Thin and prune your trees and brush

**Key Pieces: Summary**

Sign up with LETA
Create an Evacuation Priority List
Include:
- Important Legal Documents
- Previous Year’s Tax Returns
- Retirement Accounts (401K, TSP, IRA)
- Investment Accounts (Stocks, Bonds, Mutual Funds)
- Insurance Documents
- Medical Documents
- Military Documents
- Safe Deposit Box Key
- See “Additional Items to Take” to complete your specific list

Home Inventory Basic: Take Pictures & Store Offsite
Back up your Computer

Establish an out of town contact person
Establish a gathering place for family members

*After key pieces are handled then prioritize next most important pieces for you*

**Resources Compiled by:**
Shellie Tressell
Simplicity Organizing Services