Be familiar with common disasters in your community so you know what to expect and where to go in an emergency. Keep your family safe by being ready to act.

**Tornado**
- **Look:** green clouds, strong wind, hail, or a funnel cloud.
- **Listen:** public warnings over TV or radio, emergency alert on cell phone, or tornado siren.
- **Go** to basement or windowless interior room. If you are in a car or mobile home find shelter nearby.
- Storms may take out power, blow furniture or debris outside; **watch** out for branches that may fall.
- If your home is unsafe, go to a public building for shelter or help.

**Flood**
- **Look** for heavy rain, melting snow, late thaw, or high rivers.
- If you live near water, in low areas, or streets with more concrete and less grass, you are more at risk for flash floods.
- **Do not** walk or drive through flooded streets, find a different route. Floodwater may carry garbage or pollution.
- Water in your home can cause damage to electricity, personal belongings and create mold that is harmful to breathe.
- Shut off gas, electricity and water if able.
- **Go** to a safe place that is high and dry.

**Blizzard or Extreme Cold**
- **Look** for low temperatures, windchill, or heavy snow.
- **Listen** for public warnings over TV or radio and the weather forecast.
- **Stay indoors** to avoid frostbite or hypothermia, cover your skin, use safe heating sources, wear warm layers.
- In extreme cold, **insulate** your body with paper, stay awake, keep moving.
- **Block** drafts in your home and close off unused rooms, insulate water pipes or leave a slow drip to prevent freezing.
- Be careful walking or driving near ice, remove snow by home.

**Heat Wave**
- **Look** for high temperature and humidity.
- **Listen** for public warnings on TV or radio.
- Children, elderly, outdoor workers and those with preexisting health conditions are most at risk for fatigue or heat stroke.
- Homes without AC, on upper floors, or on streets with more concrete and less grass or trees will be hotter.
- **Stay away** from afternoon sun, go to basement, or **visit** public cooling centers like libraries or malls.
- Avoid strenuous exercise, **drink** plenty of water, wear light clothing, take a cool shower.
- Get **help** if you feel dizzy or sick.
Both natural and human disasters can strike anywhere at anytime. Know how to protect your family.

**Air Pollution or Toxic Spill**
- You may have trouble breathing; those most at risk are children, elderly, and people with asthma.
  - Air quality worse in heat and fog.
  - Listen for public warnings.
  - Greater exposure if you live near highways, rail, polluting facilities, or work outdoors.
- Firefighters may knock on your door to evacuate your neighborhood.
- Reduce exposure: cover your mouth, leave the area, keep activity low.
- Keep pollution out of your home by closing your windows and vents, you can cover gaps with plastic and tape.

**Fire**
- Fire in a home moves very quickly.
- Exit your home as soon as you see smoke, smell gas, or hear a smoke alarm. Wake and gather family members, do not spend time to rescue belongings.
- Call 911 as soon as you are safely outside.
- Do not enter a building on fire.
- If you are inside during a fire, stay low and avoid breathing harmful smoke as you crawl to the nearest escape.
- Feel a door for heat to avoid burns.
- Never use elevators during a fire.
- If trapped inside, cover your mouth and seal doorways with a damp cloth.
- If your clothes catch fire, Stop, Drop and Roll.

**Blackout**
- Avoid fallen power lines that may be dangerous.
- Use battery or hand-powered flashlights rather than candles or torches to prevent a fire.
- Use gas-powered items outdoors only.
- Unplug electrical items to avoid a damaging power surge when electricity returns.
- Leave the refrigerator closed to retain temperature; after 2 hours eat perishable food before it ruins.
- Use natural light to preserve batteries.
- Follow safety instructions for backup generators.

Learn More
- [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)
- [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)
- [www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters](http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters)
- [www.echominnesota.org](http://www.echominnesota.org)
- Call 311 in Minneapolis or 1-888-883-8831 statewide

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