

# EMERGENCIES HAPPEN: PROTECT WHAT MATTERS MOST

COMPREHENSIVE  
GUIDE



Your Emergency  
**RediPlan**

[redcross.org.au/prepare](http://redcross.org.au/prepare)

the  
power of  
humanity



# **PREPARE FOR WHAT LIFE THROWS AT YOU, BIG OR SMALL**

**Emergencies don't just include major natural disasters like bushfires, earthquakes or floods. A fall in the home that results in an unexpected hospital stay, a car accident, or serious illness can also cause significant disruption and add stress to your life.**

**You can reduce the impact of emergencies, big and small, by being prepared.**

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# EMERGENCIES DON'T DISCRIMINATE

**1 IN 3  
AUSTRALIANS**



One in three Australians will experience an emergency or the threat of an emergency in their lifetime.<sup>1</sup>

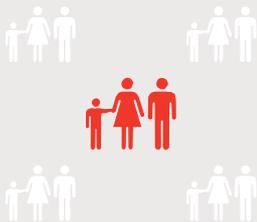
**65%  
EXPERIENCE  
TRAUMA**



65 per cent of people will experience a traumatic event in their lifetimes.<sup>2</sup>

(vehicle accident, violent assault, workplace accident)

**MORE THAN  
1 IN 5**



More than one in five families will be impacted by an insurable event in their working lives.<sup>3</sup>

**MORE THAN  
80%**



After an emergency, more than 80 per cent of people affected will recover well without prolonged distress and without the event significantly impacting on their mental health.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Reser, J, Bradley, G, Glendon, A, Ellul, M, Callaghan, R 2012, Public Risk Perceptions, Understandings, and Responses to Climate Change and Natural Disasters in Australia and Great Britain

<sup>2</sup> Australian Centre for Post Traumatic Mental Health (2007) Acute Stress Disorder and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder: a Practitioner's Guide

<sup>3</sup> Kelly, S and Vu, Q N (2010) Understanding the Social and Economic Cost of Underinsurance The Lifewise/NATSEM Report

<sup>4</sup> Mark van Ommeren, Shekhar Saxena, & Benedetto Saraceno, (2005), Mental and social health during and after acute emergencies: emerging consensus? Bulletin of the World Health Organisation 2005; 83:pp71-76.

# Emergencies. Not something we think about every day. Yet still they affect hundreds of thousands of people across Australia every year.

Emergencies can strike at any time. They can damage and destroy homes and valuables, they often have negative effects on health, they upset routines, and in many cases they can lead to significant financial burden.

Some of us feel the effects of an emergency for a long time. For some, lives will never return to the way they were before.

While emergency services do all they can to help, the person most responsible for your wellbeing before, during and after an emergency is you. And the people most likely to help you will be those you know.

Thankfully, there are things you can do now to help you and your loved ones to be prepared and cope better should an emergency occur.

Your RediPlan has been designed to provide an easy-to-follow set of actions to help you plan for emergencies, grouped into four simple steps:

**1 GET IN THE KNOW**

**2 GET CONNECTED**

**3 GET ORGANISED**

**4 GET PACKING**



Australian Red Cross/Rodney Dekker

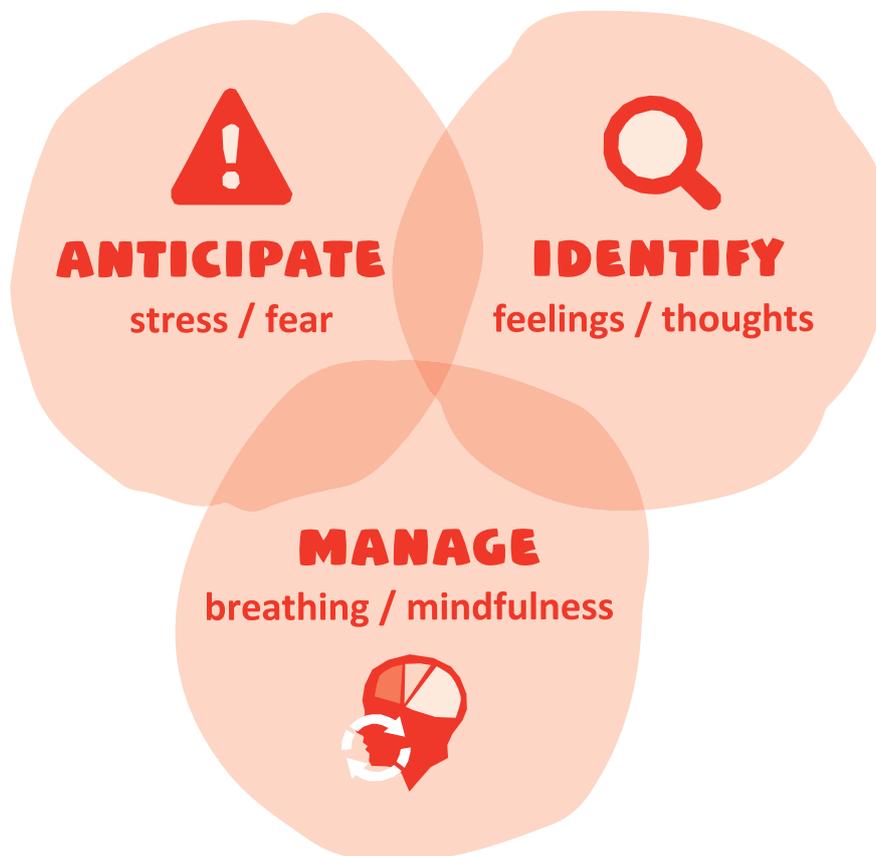
# FIRST THINGS FIRST: PREPARE YOUR MIND



As you work through your RediPlan, it's really important to think about how to prepare both practically and psychologically for an emergency.

Face it, emergencies are scary and stressful. And most people under a lot of stress don't think as clearly as usual, affecting decisions and reactions. So the first step to help you cope with your responses and those of others is to be able to anticipate, identify and manage beforehand how you and your family are likely to feel, think and respond in an emergency.

Here are some useful tips to help do just that:





## ANTICIPATE – it's going to get stressful

- How do you think you will react to the stress? How do you usually react to highly stressful situations? Think about how you might feel during an emergency and what you and others might be thinking. Common feelings include anxiety, fear, general stress, uncertainty and helplessness. Although these reactions are very natural, they may stop you from preparing or acting so it's important to acknowledge them and manage them better when they happen.



## IDENTIFY – your feelings and thoughts

- How you feel in highly stressful situations is strongly affected by the way you cope with the physical signs of anxiety and the thoughts running through your head
- We experience anxiety in a variety of ways, including upset stomach, irritability, headaches, shortness of breath and tightness in the chest. For children it might include anxious behaviour, such as excessive clinging
- Try to also identify any frightening and negative thoughts you might have. Do those thoughts help or hinder? Some typical, but unhelpful thoughts include things like: "I can't cope," "I'm so scared," "We're all going to die," "I don't know what to do"
- Some unhelpful thoughts might also be ones that try to minimise the threat, like: "this happened last year so it can't possibly happen again this year". Not thinking about a threatening possibility or denying the need to prepare can actually make us more anxious—and far less prepared—in the event of an official warning situation.



## MANAGE – your feelings and thoughts with simple breathing and self-talk

Use familiar techniques to help manage your feelings or try the following:

- Practise calming techniques, such as deep, relaxed breathing or mindfulness (use a smart phone app such as Smiling Mind to help you get started)
- Replace frightening thoughts with more helpful ones like: "Breathe calmly," "I can handle this," "I'm coping".

Try not to focus on the bad things that might happen, but instead tell yourself that the calmer you are, the better you'll be at managing exactly what needs to be done.

Complete the worksheet at the end of this book to help prepare your mind.

*This section was written with the assistance of the Australian Psychological Society.*

# STEP 1 GET IN THE KNOW



# Getting in the know is your vital first step towards being prepared for an emergency. You need to know the risks you face, how your life might be disrupted and who can help, before you can act.

## Emergencies can happen anywhere, any time:

- At or near home
- At work
- At school or childcare
- On holiday
- While out and about.

Knowing how life could change for you in the hours, days, months and sometimes years after an emergency will help you work out what you can do now to make your world a less stressful place should an emergency occur.

## This section will help you to:

### THINK



- Know which emergencies are more likely to affect you
- Think through how each emergency might affect you and your family in the short- and long-term, both practically and psychologically
- Find useful sources of local and expert information that can help you deal with potentially fatal threats before, during and after an emergency.

### ACT



- Identify what you can do to help yourself and what you might need help with during an emergency
- Learn about emergencies from people in your community and whether there are emergency plans that you need to know about.

### SHARE



- Share what you've learned and help others to get in the know.



# THINK

Think of all the different places you frequent. Emergencies don't only happen at home.

**NATURAL:**

- Fire
- Earthquake
- Storm
- Floods

**ALSO:**

**Broad thinking**

**INDUSTRIAL**

Industrial, transport accidents or chemical spills

**URBAN**

Electricity or Gas outages

**SUBURBAN**

Flash flooding

**REGIONAL**

Bush fire

Think about the types of emergencies that could happen in these places and the different events that might cause a disruption to your life. There are the obvious ones like fires, cyclones, storms and floods. But what else could happen?

Think about how your needs and abilities might change. Moving to a different area, working different hours, starting a family. Change is a part of life and how we prepare for emergencies should reflect this.

Think broadly. Industrial disasters, transport accidents, or chemical spills. Drought, disease, or utility outages. They can all disrupt your life as readily as an unexpected visit to hospital, a debilitating injury, or a car accident.

*Remember: being prepared for small events can help you be prepared for big events.*



Australian Red Cross/Tim Lofthouse



### Think short-term:

- where will you go if you have to leave home quickly or weren't able to go home?
- what will you take with you?
- what will you do if you have to stay in your home while the emergency passes and services are restored?
- what happens if you're separated from loved ones and can't get in touch - where would you meet and how would you stay in touch?
- what will your kids do if they're home alone?
- what happens to your pets if you're not at home?
- what will you do if your usual ways of getting groceries, petrol or medical supplies are disrupted for several days?



### Think long-term. What happens if:

- you or someone you love is injured or dies
- your children can no longer attend their school or childcare centre
- you or someone in your family is no longer able to work because their business is destroyed or an injury prevents them from working
- your property and all your valuables are destroyed
- you are separated from your animals
- local services are disrupted and unavailable for a period of time
- many of your friends move away from the area because of the emergency?

# Expect the unexpected

**Emergencies can have unexpected impacts on our lives. It's important to think about what you can do now to avoid or reduce those impacts. Just knowing what *might* happen will help.**

## Your ability to think

Really stressful events can affect the way our brains work. Many people talk about experiencing memory loss, losing the ability to concentrate, and finding it hard to read and retain information after an emergency. This is common. For most people, such impacts fade over time.

## Your relationships

Focusing on the practical things after an emergency, like cleaning up or rebuilding, is a given. But what about the things even closer to home: your relationships? Your wellbeing and your relationships with loved ones are the most important things in helping you to recover after an emergency. Think about the possible impacts an emergency may have on these relationships and talk about them with your loved ones.

## Your children

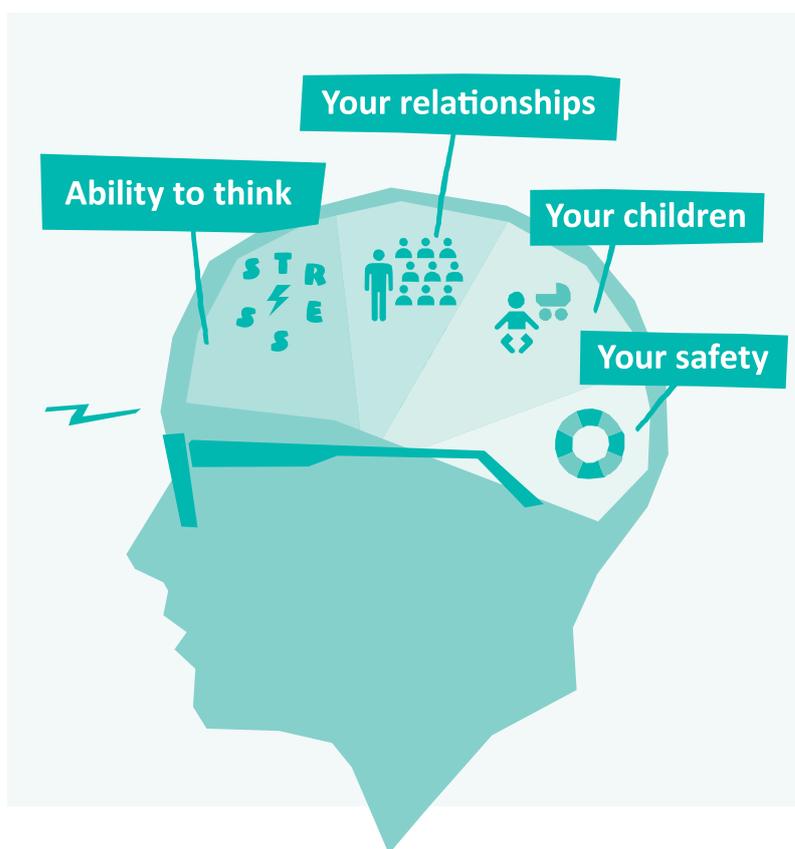
Emergencies impact children and infants just as much as adults. Most parents worry about these impacts, and often see changes in behaviour after an emergency. For most kids, the way their parents cope will be the strongest indication of how they will cope. Red Cross has included common reactions that children have after a disaster in its Parents' Guide. See the reference section to find out how to get a copy.

## Your safety

Unfortunately, research and experience tell us that family violence increases in the often chaotic circumstances after an emergency, as living arrangements and support networks are disrupted. Family violence can include physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, social and/or spiritual violence. Think about how you and others might manage challenging situations—such as pre-existing apprehended violence orders and custody arrangements—after an emergency.

If you're worried about family violence occurring after an emergency, talking to your personal support network, family violence services or the police can be helpful to make plans.

Family violence is never OK.



# Know your strengths and limitations

**Think about what you'll be able to do for yourself and any help you may need before, during and after an emergency.**

There are people who can and will help you prepare for an emergency, but the person in the best position to do so is you. You have the best understanding of your own abilities and possible needs. So be honest with yourself, and plan accordingly.





# ACT

## Write down what you can do on your own and what you might need help with.

Fill in the personal assessment worksheet at the end of this section. It will help you and others better understand what you can do for yourself and what you'll need help with during an emergency.

### Learn about local emergency risks and impacts

#### Get in touch with:

- your local council or the council where you plan to stay
- your library or historical society to find out about past emergencies in the area
- local indigenous organisations
- people who have lived in your area a long time
- your local fire service for house or bushfire information
- state or territory emergency services (e.g. the SES) for flood, storm, cyclone, tsunami and earthquake information.

#### Ask about:

- local risks
- 'hazard seasons'—when they start and finish in your area
- indigenous weather knowledge and history that might apply to hazards
- how to make a hazard-specific plan
- past emergencies in your area and how they've affected the community
- who is responsible for managing emergency responses, community recovery activities, and which agencies provide emergency information during emergencies.



### *People die in emergencies*

Australia's fire services and state/territory emergency services have well-tested planning guides for bushfires, cyclones, floods, storms, earthquakes and tsunamis.

These guides help you make decisions about how you might manage potentially life-threatening situations. Seek advice from the experts to plan for these events.

## Find out about existing local emergency plans

### Talk to your:

- local council
- workplace
- children's school, kindergarten or childcare facility
- relevant aged care facility
- your preferred cattery or kennel
- family and friends.

### Ask whether plans exist and how you might access them. Find out:

- how they plan to respond to a particular emergency
- how information will be passed on to you during and after an emergency
- what, if anything, is expected of you during an emergency
- what services might be available after an emergency
- how services might be disrupted by an emergency.

## Tune in to important information sources

Local radio is a good source of information before, during and after an emergency. It provides information about warnings, what is happening, what the authorities want you to do, and support services available. ABC Local Radio will interrupt normal broadcasting to bring you information. Know your local ABC frequency.

Though social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook can be good sources of current information, they can also be inaccurate, which may cause stress. Rely on sites of reputable sources, such as police or emergency services agencies. Follow these sites ahead of time through Twitter and Facebook feeds.



Download an emergency preparedness app. There are many great apps created by a number of emergency agencies available for smart phones. You'll find a list in the reference section at the back of this book.



### *Getting help in an emergency*

- Call 000 for police, fire or ambulance **ONLY** in a life-threatening situation. Do not use this number to get general information. This number must stay clear for emergency calls
- If you are hearing impaired and rely on TTY, use 106 to send a text message
- Contact the SES or Territory Emergency Services on 132 500 if you have urgent storm damage or are threatened by floods
- Keep emergency telephone numbers handy, including electricity, gas, water, council, local doctor/hospital/vet and school/childcare.



# SHARE

## Prepare and share

- Talk to others in your community about what you've learned about the risks you face in your local area and the impacts emergencies might have on your (and their) life. Encourage them to do the same with their friends
- Help others to identify the emergencies that might affect them and to find the resources they need to help them prepare. In particular, do you know people who might need special assistance in an emergency? Offer to help them think through the emergencies that might affect them, who might be able to help them, and where they can get information to suit their special needs
- Share your story. The experience of an emergency or a loved one experiencing an emergency are two of the most common reasons people give for their own emergency preparedness. If you or a loved one has experienced an emergency, share the story with others. Let them know the impacts it had on your life, what you did beforehand that helped, and what you'd do next time to lessen the impacts.

### GET IN THE KNOW CHECKLIST



#### Do you know:

- Emergencies that might affect your local area?
- Where to get information about an emergency from?
- When 'hazard seasons' start and finish in your area (e.g. bushfire season)?
- How your life could change as a result of an emergency, including unexpected impacts?
- What emergency plans are in place in your area, what they include, and what is expected of you in these plans?
- Your local ABC and commercial radio frequencies?
- Facebook/Twitter feeds of emergency services agencies?
- How to share what you know with others and to help others get in the know?





# PERSONAL ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

This worksheet will help you and others better understand what you can do for yourself and what you'll need help with during an emergency.

Share this with your personal support network and remember to update it at least annually to reflect changes in your life.

WHAT YOU KNOW	Y	N	NOTES	TIP
Do you know what emergencies might affect you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ _____ _____	Remember to think about emergencies that might affect you in all the important places in your life, not just at home. <b>See page 10</b>
Do you know where to get information about an emergency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ _____ _____	There are many ways to get information about emergencies. <b>See page 14</b>
Can you access this information?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____	Emergency agencies have information and resources available on their websites and can send you information upon request. There might even be emergency preparedness sessions you can attend in your local area. <b>See page 15</b>
Can you understand this information?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ _____ _____	Some emergency information can be complex. Ask a friend, family member or colleague to help explain information to you.
Is your ability to communicate with others affected by any of the following? <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Language</li><li>• Literacy level</li><li>• Disability</li></ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____	Talk to your personal support network about getting information delivered to you in a way that addresses your needs.

YOUR WELLBEING	Y	N	NOTES	TIP
Are you in good health?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Think physical and emotional health. It's important that you are as healthy as you can be before an emergency occurs. Your wellbeing now will have an impact on how you recover from an emergency.</p>
Are you actively managing any physical or mental health conditions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>It's really important that you are actively managing any illnesses or health conditions you have that may impact on your recovery from an emergency. These might be physical, emotional or mental health conditions. List medications or medical assistance of any kind you currently rely on in your medical plan and include in your kit.</p> <p><b>See page 51</b></p>
Have you had any major life changes in the last six months?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Major changes in our lives, like moving house, having a baby, a relationship breakup, or changing/losing a job can affect our ability to cope. Think about ways to manage the impacts major changes may have on your life. <b>See the section First things first: prepare your mind (page 6)</b> for more information.</p>
Are you able to cope with stressful situations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Almost everyone affected by an emergency will experience varying degrees of stress at some point during and after the event. Anticipating, monitoring and understanding your own and your loved ones' reactions will really help you during an emergency.</p> <p><b>See the section First things first: prepare your mind (page 7)</b> for more information.</p>
Is your ability to communicate with others affected when you are under stress?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Inform your support network and talk to them about what assistance they can provide to help you to communicate during an emergency.</p> <p><b>See page 26</b></p>

YOUR WELLBEING	Y	N	NOTES	TIP
Do you suffer from anxiety?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	Think about what you do or need to seek relief from anxiety. List this in your medical plan and let your personal network know that you've done so. <b>See page 66</b>
Are you able to manage your daily routine without assistance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	For those who need assistance with things like personal care, getting around, or preparing or eating food, think about how an emergency might affect any assistance you receive. Work with your support network to ensure you have a plan should assistance be disrupted or should you be required to stay somewhere else. <b>See page 44</b>
Are you reliant upon any medical equipment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	Make sure you include medical equipment in your RediPlan and kit and that you have talked to your support network about assistance you might need. Remember that medical equipment that requires electricity might be affected if the power is cut. <b>See page 51</b>
Are you reliant upon a caregiver?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	Include your caregiver when planning for an emergency. They should be a part of your personal support network and they can help you put your RediPlan together. Include in your RediPlan what happens if your carer is unable to visit you. <b>See page 26</b>
YOUR NETWORK	Y	N	NOTES	TIP
Do you feel well-supported? Support may come from family, friends, your community and/or care services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	It is really helpful to identify your own personal support network or to become a part of a support network for someone you know. <b>See page 26</b>
Are you part of a club, a group or a service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	The connections you have with people in your community will help you in many really important ways after an emergency. <b>See page 24</b>

YOUR NETWORK	Y	N	NOTES	TIP
<p>Would you know how to get involved in a club, a group or a service if you were interested in doing so?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Think about who is missing from your network. If you feel like you are not part of a community or could benefit from expanding your existing network, think about how you might do this. <b>See page 25</b></p>
<p>Do you know the names of people in your street?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<p>Write these names (and phone numbers if you have them) down in your RediPlan. <b>See page 27</b></p>
YOUR SECURITY	Y	N	NOTES	TIP
<p>Do you have a reliable source of income?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Emergencies can be really expensive and financial matters can become a significant burden that causes a lot of stress to people. Think about how you can plan to cover financial losses caused by an emergency and in doing so avoid the stressful burden that accessing money can become. <b>See page 39</b></p>
<p>Have you financially protected your assets and livelihood (i.e. insurance)?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Get insurance, review your current insurance policies, and/or make a financial plan. Insurance is an important step in protecting your property and your income. Make sure your household and income protection insurance policy covers you for all types of emergencies. <b>See page 39</b></p>
<p>Is your home disaster resilient?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Talk to your local council about existing building codes, planning zones and any criteria for disaster resilient homes in your area. Talk to your local emergency services for tips to protecting your home and property from an emergency. <b>See page 34</b></p>
<p>Do you feel safe in your home or neighbourhood?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Feeling insecure in your home or neighbourhood can affect your ability to cope with stressful situations. Talk to your personal support network if you do not feel safe in your home. <b>See page 26</b></p>

# STEP 2 GET CONNECTED



Australian Red Cross / Lisa Fitzgerald

*“Getting to know your neighbours  
is essential as they are the ones that you will rely on.”*

*Resident, Parkerville fire, Western Australia*

## Being connected to your community means you can help each other in an emergency and, if you need it, in the long recovery journey afterwards.

People who receive positive support from their community (i.e. family members, friends, co-workers, neighbours) after an emergency tend to recover better than those who don't.

### Consider this:

- It's most likely to be your neighbour or a passer-by, not emergency services, who will help you to survive during an emergency
- Your friends, family and neighbours will probably be the ones who provide most of the general, practical and emotional support you'll need before and after an emergency. Things like helping to secure and clean up your property, helping with child minding or the school run, providing meals, working through admin, or just being there to talk to or share the experience
- Your community networks will most likely provide you with the information you need to know about recovery services and activities relevant to you after an emergency.

### This section will help you to:

#### THINK



- Identify and strengthen existing connections
- Consider how you might help others to prepare.

#### ACT



- Identify a personal support network
- Create new connections.

#### SHARE



- Start the conversation about emergencies within your network.



# THINK

## Think about your existing connections. Who do you consider to be in your community? Who do you already know?

A community is more than the geographic area you live in. It may also include others who share something in common with you, such as language, culture, religion, interest or hobby.

### Think:

- work relationships
- neighbourhood networks
- relationships through local shops and services like banks or the post office
- your social networks, such as friendships, local schools, your religious belief or sports/interest groups
- the relationships within your family.

Now think about who's missing from your network. If you feel like you're not part of a community or could benefit from expanding your existing network, think about how you might do this. Who would you like to get to know? Which groups would you like to be a part of?

Think about how an emergency might affect your networks. A common impact of an emergency is the disappearance of what was considered routine. This might include the communication network you're familiar with, or the conversations you have with familiar faces while walking down the street or visiting the shops.



## Staying cool, calm and connected

**Being separated from family and friends is one of the most stressful things a person can experience during and immediately after an emergency.**

It can also affect long-term health. Emergencies often occur during the day when household members are at work or school. If access to home is cut off, or telecommunications are affected, it's all too easy to become separated. Think about what each of you will do if household members are separated by an emergency and how you'll get back in touch.

## Connection works two ways

Think about those around you. Some people will need more help than others in an emergency—help you can provide.

Think about how you might be able to help someone you know during and after an emergency.

### These people might include:

- older adults living at home by themselves
- people with physical or intellectual disabilities
- people with mental illness
- single parents with young children
- families where one partner regularly works away from home
- large families
- people recently arrived to the area
- people recently arrived to the country, including refugees or newly arrived immigrants.



### *If you become separated from loved ones during an emergency*

Red Cross manages Register.Find.Reunite., a national registration and enquiry service for people affected by an emergency. The aim of the service is to reduce distress in communities and families separated by an emergency by connecting loved ones. When it is operating, you can register yourself and your family or enquire about a loved one during and after an emergency at an evacuation, relief, or recovery centre, or online at [redcross.org.au](http://redcross.org.au)





# ACT

## Identify a personal support network

**A personal support network sounds great at any time, but having one is essential during and after an emergency.**

Typically, it includes people who can help you get the resources you'll need. They should be available to check in on you regularly and help you when required. Your personal support network could be your immediate family, your neighbours, a group of friends, more formalised support service staff, such as carers, or any combination of these.

### Your network should:

- be made up of people you trust
- understand what you can and can't do on your own and know when you need assistance
- be able to provide (or organise) help within minutes.

Don't depend on only one person. Remember that people in your network could also be affected by the emergency and may not be able to help you when you need them. Three trusted people in your network is a minimum.

It's good to know you probably won't have to build a network from scratch. You probably already have a personal support network—within your household, family, or friendship group—but you just haven't thought of these people in this way.

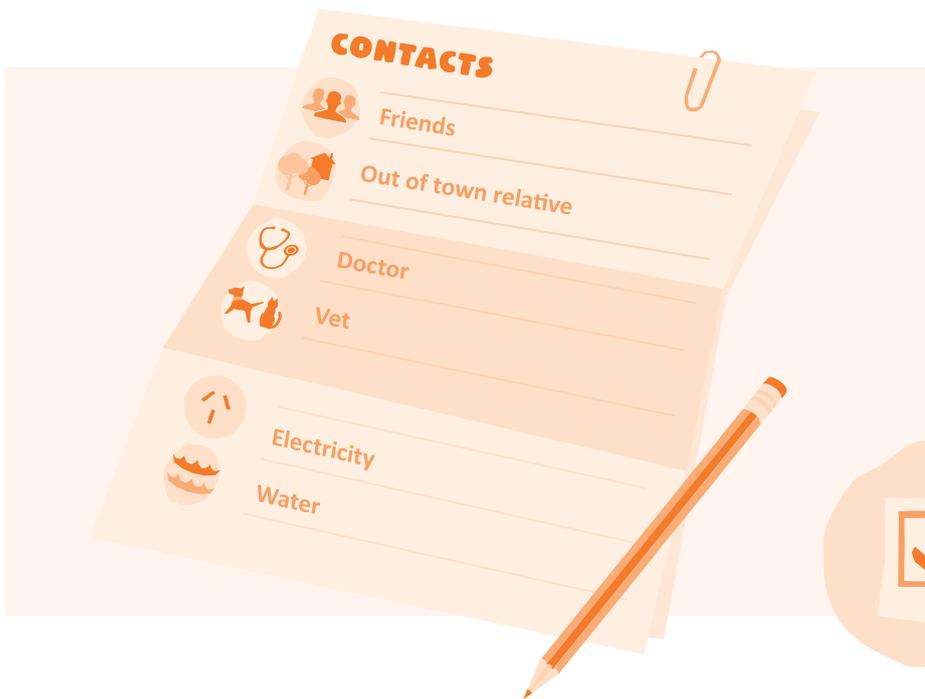
### Once you've identified your network:

- ask them to help you plan for an emergency (use the household emergency plan template to help do this)
- talk through your plan with your network and provide copies. Make sure everyone understands what to do in an emergency
- show your network your personal assessment worksheet or ask them to work through it with you so they understand what they might need to help you with
- become part of a support network for someone you know.

If you know of someone who might need help in an emergency, talk to them about emergency planning. With their agreement, write their names, addresses and contact numbers in your RediPlan. If they're happy to talk to you (remember that some people value their privacy) find out if they have family members or organisations that help them to live independently.

Offer to help them prepare their own RediPlan and encourage them to share their plan with the people who help them.

## Record before you ring



Use the template at the end of this section to write down the numbers of important people or organisations in your life. Be as thorough as you can. You need to write them down, because your phone may not be operating in an emergency.

## Super-size your community networks

Start small. Family and friends first. Then knock on neighbours' doors where you feel comfortable doing so. Introduce yourself and leave your contact details, or maybe pop a contact card in their letterbox. Beyond that, there's plenty you can do to expand your community.

- Get to know your local service providers; café staff, hairdresser, florist, grocers, etc.
- Organise a street party
- Hold a communal garage sale
- Organise a neighbourhood clean-up
- Talk to your local council about community-building initiatives or community groups that they may have running or might like to support
- Join or start an online community through Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn or Instagram
- Get involved in a local cause. Working together for a common goal can be a great way to build your community.



# Preparedness: Start the conversation



*Let's talk about how an emergency might affect our community and what we can do as a group to prepare.*



*I'd like to discuss our community's strengths and how we can use them to help each other during and after an emergency.*



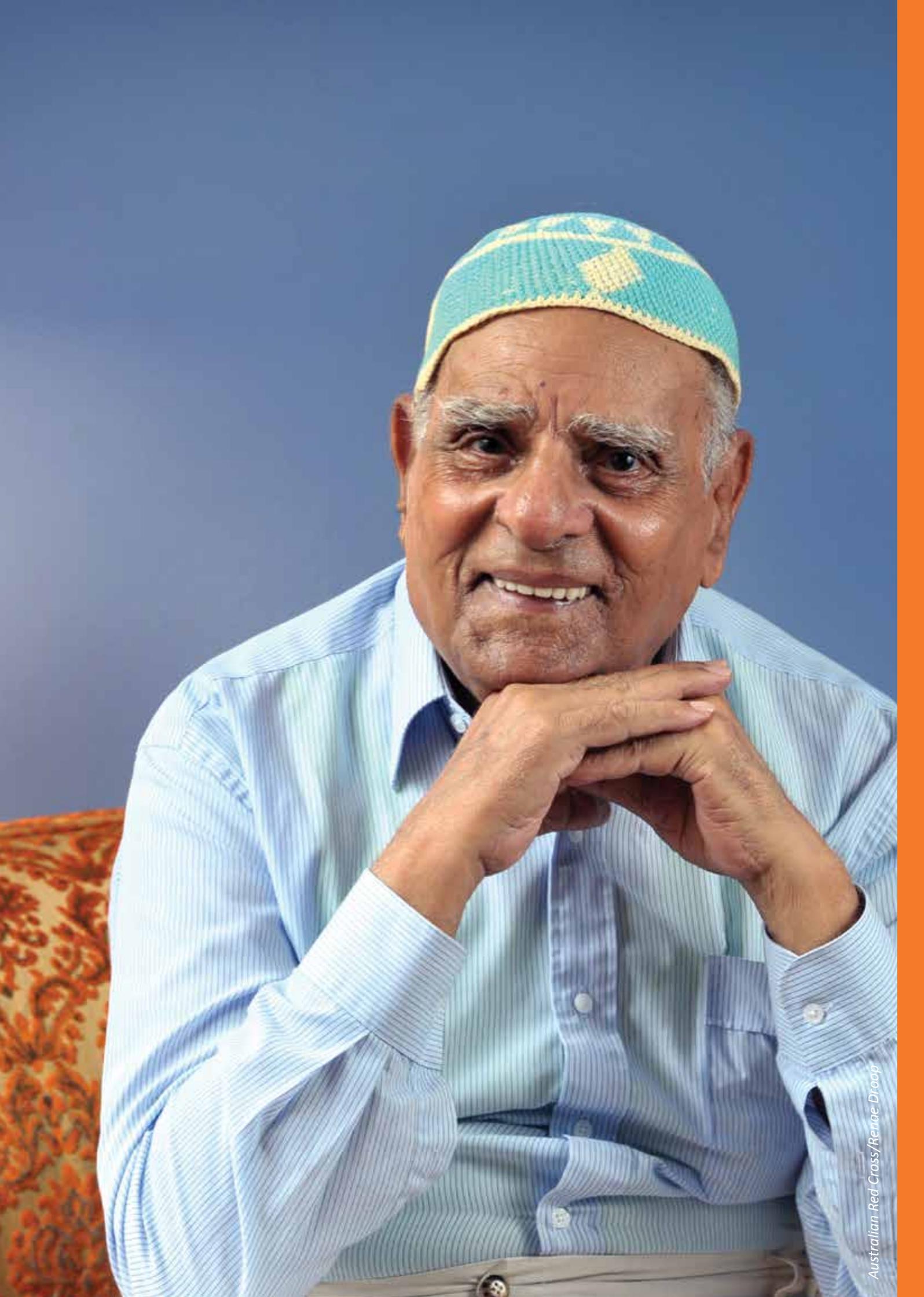
*Let's work together to identify any gaps in our preparation that could pose a problem if an emergency occurs.*



*I'd like to share thoughts on identifying people in our community who may need help and what we as a group can do to provide that help.*



*Let's talk about roles and responsibilities before an event occurs; who'll do what, when and how.*





# SHARE

## Are you connected?

- Start some conversations about emergencies with people you know: your local school or childcare facility, your children's local sporting group, your parents, a hobby group, or any of the groups or networks of people you consider to be a part of your community. You might even talk about what the group can do to help prepare others in your community
- Arrange to have emergency services workers talk to a group you belong to about how to prepare for an emergency. All agencies run sessions, usually for free. Contact Red Cross in your state or territory if you'd like to hear from a trained Red Cross presenter
- Join an emergency or community service organisation. Red Cross has emergency services teams across the country. These teams help people with a range of services including supporting people to prepare for emergencies and responding to people's needs during and after an emergency. More information is available at [redcross.org.au](http://redcross.org.au)



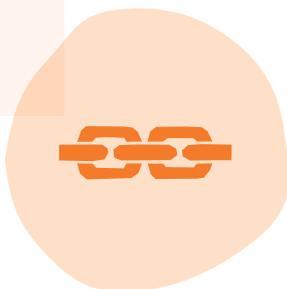
# YOUR COMMUNITY

Your parents, hobby group, community group



# EMERGENCY SERVICES

Join an emergency or community service organisation



## GET CONNECTED CHECKLIST



### Have you:

- Identified and strengthened existing connections?
- Recorded where you'll go in the case of an emergency and told members of your personal support network where you plan to go and how you'll get there?
- Written down important phone numbers including the contact details of your out-of-town contact?
- Created new connections in your community?
- Started the conversation about emergencies within your network?

# STEP 3 GET ORGANISED



Australian Red Cross / Michael Torres

You've thought about the impact emergencies may have on you and your community. You've strengthened your community links. You're well on the road to having an emergency plan.

**Now it's time to get organised.**

**Organising the things that will help you gain a sense of control after an emergency is the next step to being prepared.**

**Getting organised means:**

- Thinking through what might happen to you during and after an emergency
- Taking action to protect the important things in your life before an emergency occurs.



***Getting organised will reduce stress and save you precious time as you recover. The two most important things to think about: planning to survive and planning to recover.***

- **Planning to survive means taking action that will protect your life and assets as an emergency is happening**
- **Planning to recover means taking action to make sure that the impact on you and your family/ household is kept to a minimum.**

**The business of survival and the survival of business**

Local businesses are a vital part of a healthy, thriving community. Ensuring that businesses are able to withstand and recover quickly from an emergency has an impact not only on the immediate lives of owners and employees, but the entire community.

Planning to reduce the impacts an emergency might have on your business will make a huge difference. And it doesn't have to be hard, with many tools available to help you to create a business emergency plan. See the list of references at the back of the book to help you get started.

**This section will help you to:**

**THINK**



- Consider whether you'll stay or go if threatened by a major emergency
- Understand the importance of protecting the things that will help you recover faster after an emergency.

**ACT**



- Document a plan to protect:
  - You, your household members, and your pets and animals
  - Things and places that are important to you
  - Your financial situation.

**SHARE**



- Talk through your plan with your networks
- Help others to develop their own plan/s.



# THINK

## Planning to survive

**Think about whether you will stay or leave your home during an emergency. The circumstances will depend upon the hazard and your own capacity to manage.**



The possibility of mandatory evacuation (where you are told by authorities to leave your home) is always real, so you may not have a choice. Think about where you might go if you were to leave home or weren't able to go home during an emergency, and how you would get there. It's critical to know in advance.

Many people plan for their family to separate during disasters. For example, one adult stays to look after the house, while another leaves. We see time and again that being separated from loved ones during an emergency can be very traumatic and stressful and can have long-term mental health impacts. While you can't always plan for where you'll be during an emergency, think about the impacts that deliberately separating may have on your household.

Emergency authorities may set up a centre for people to shelter while the worst of the emergency passes. These centres are known by different names in each state and territory (e.g. evacuation centre, emergency relief centre, welfare centre). These shelters only offer very basic support—in some cases just a roof over your head—and tend to be crowded and noisy.

There are plenty of helpful resources to assist you when planning to survive an emergency. Your local fire service can provide you with advice on planning evacuation routes and contingency plans, reducing your risk of house fire, and making a bushfire safety plan. And your local state/territory emergency services can provide information about how to stay cyclone-, storm- and flood-safe.

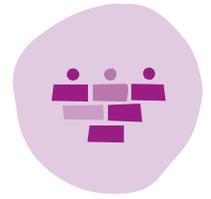


***What are the important things in your life that you can take action to protect now in order to reduce the disruption an emergency might cause?***

Remember to think people, animals, objects, places, networks and routines.

Everyone's different, so we all value different things in different ways. On page 34 are some suggestions for you to think about when getting yourself organised.

# Planning to recover



## Planning to recover is about protecting the life you've been living.

### Protect the bottom line

Emergencies can be really expensive. And financial matters can become a significant long-term burden that causes a lot of stress. Think about how your ability to earn an income might be affected by an emergency. Lost property might need replacing, your workplace might close down due to damage, cleaning up damaged property may require time off work, and sometimes you'll need to take sick leave for illness or injury suffered as a result of the emergency.

Think about how you can protect your income or ensure that your finances are safeguarded. Think about life insurance or income protection insurance to protect your family if the main income earner in the household is affected by an emergency.

While there might be financial assistance available from governments and other agencies after an emergency, it's usually small and targeted at immediate needs. It won't be enough to replace your home or valuables. Thinking about how you can cover financial losses caused by an emergency will save you a lot of stress and burden.

### Loss of life

While no one likes to talk about it, emergencies can cause loss of life. Think about the impact that the death of a family member would have on your life and what impact your own death would have on those around you. Think not only about the emotional impacts, but also the practical ones. If you haven't already, consider preparing a will and organising life insurance.





## Animal instincts

Don't forget pets and animals when getting organised. Knowing they are safe and well during and after an emergency can be a great comfort in a stressful situation. Think about what you would do with them during an emergency. Consider how you'd find alternative accommodation. Some vets and boarding facilities may be able to assist. Check that these facilities have emergency plans too.

Planning to move large animals such as horses or alpacas takes time and preparation. Identify a safe place where they can be relocated during the emergency and include details in your RediPlan about how you'll move them.

Remember, you may not be at home when an emergency occurs, so make sure you plan for this scenario as well.



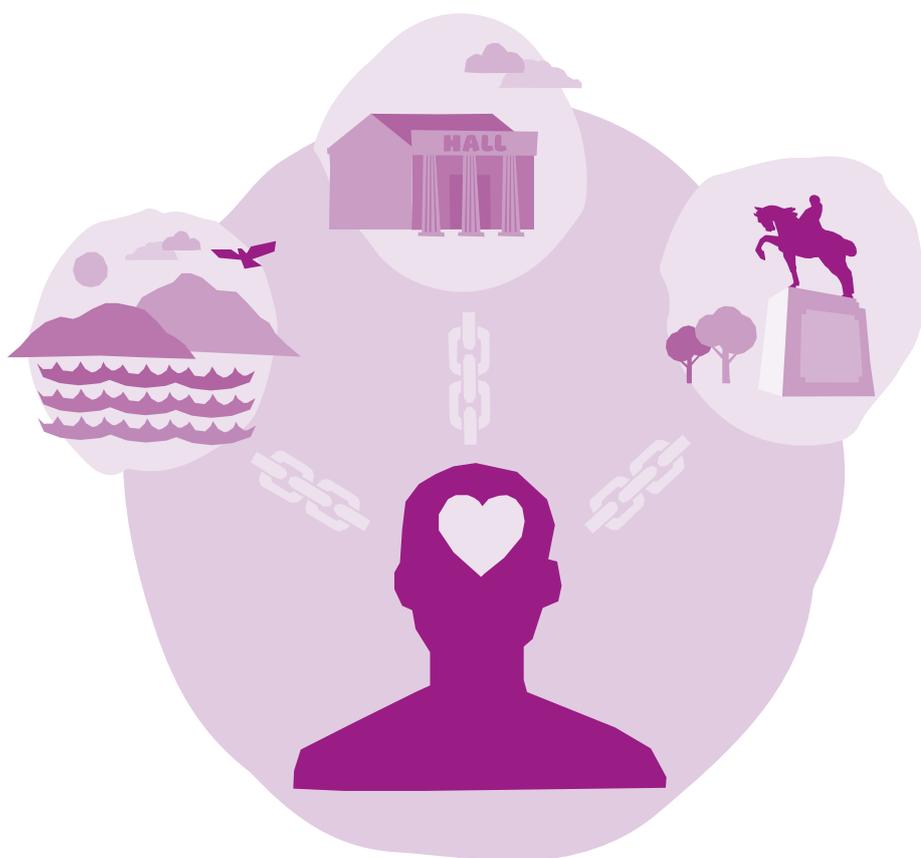
## Irreplaceable items

Objects can shape our identity. Saving precious items and keepsakes can speed up the recovery process because it protects the links we have with the past and can bring significant comfort if we've lost property and/or loved ones.

Think about all the important items in your life that might cause distress if they were lost. Protection of life should always be the first consideration for people during an emergency, but ensuring you protect the things that carry significant meaning for you, that connect you with your past and who you are, will help you recover.

*“Physically, there was no choice: you just get in there and do as much as you can. Emotionally it’s been so hard. My parents, they built that house. It’s been the only house they’ve ever lived in. They had to chuck all their furniture on the street. One minute we’re all home and the next minute you’re chucking your whole life on the street.”*

*Ashley, Brisbane, Brisbane Floods 2010/11*



### Landmarks and landscapes

Places can provide us with a sense of who we are and a connection to our community, with landscapes and landmarks making our world familiar. Loss of or damage to these can have profound effects on people, both practically, in terms of physical disorientation, and in terms of impacting links to people’s pasts and their identities.

Think about the important landmarks or landscapes that have meaning for you. There’s often not a lot we can do to protect them in an emergency because it’s outside of our control.

However, it’s still important to acknowledge the places that are of importance to us, as it helps prepare for the reactions you might have after an emergency if important landmarks or landscapes are destroyed or damaged. It might also give you ideas about ways that you can contribute to or advocate for measures that might go some way to protecting these important places.



# ACT

Your RediPlan should reflect your life and the things that matter to you. Every RediPlan will be different, depending on the person. Nevertheless, here are some suggestions to help you when thinking about what you'll need to organise.

## A healthy habit

Write down and regularly update in your RediPlan any medical conditions you have, medications you take, as well as emergency contact details for your medical providers.

For wheelchair or walking frame users, make sure you can easily access escape routes and your chair or frame is in a designated place so they can be found quickly.

Teach your support network how to operate necessary equipment. Label and attach laminated instructions. Never assume that an evacuation/relief centre will be able to meet your medical needs. Plan accordingly.



***A RediPlan is more than a piece of paper***

Talking through and creating your RediPlan with others in your household will ensure that you all include the things that are important to you and that you all understand what you will need to do in the case of an emergency.



***"I forgot my medication and that made it pretty difficult. We just grabbed a few things and hoped for the best."***

*Ashley, Brisbane, Brisbane Floods 2010/11*

## Plan well and prosper

### At any time, it makes good sense to have a financial plan.

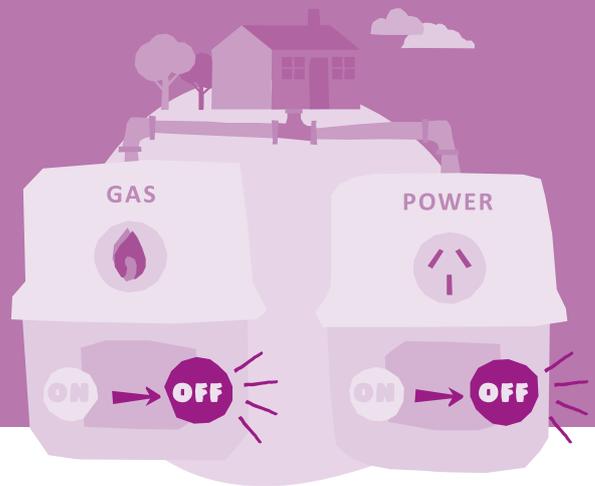
It helps you understand where your money goes and which items are essential as opposed to being little luxuries that can be dropped under financial stress.

It's also worth writing into your RediPlan how you might access emergency cash, up to \$2,000 in a hurry should you need to. See the reference section at the back of the book for resources to help with financial planning.



#### Utility Tip

You may be advised by authorities to turn off your electricity, water and gas in an emergency. Find out where the meters and shut-off valves are and talk to your providers about how these can be turned off if need be.



## The assurance of insurance

### A simple truth: many people don't have adequate home insurance as they are often covered only against theft, not damage from disasters.

If you haven't got insurance, get it, and if you have, review your current policies. Make sure your household and income protection insurance policies cover you for all types of emergencies. In some cases, policies don't cover flooding or acts of terrorism. Check that your household cover includes rental assistance and how long this assistance lasts should you be forced to move out of your home. Also think about life insurance.

For small business owners, ensure that you have business interruption insurance.

Review your insurance on an annual basis to make sure that your cover keeps up with rising costs. And of course, record all insurance details in your RediPlan.

## Minimise the stress of property loss

Navigating a partial or complete rebuild if an emergency damages your property can be really stressful, particularly if new building codes have come in since your property was built. Talk to your local council about existing building codes, planning zones, and any criteria for disaster-resilient homes in your area. While new codes may be introduced after the emergency, it's good to know what the existing codes are so you know what you might be facing, including increased costs associated with bringing your property up to the new standard.

The impact of the emergency might also challenge whether you want to live in an area.



## Identify a power of attorney

Easily overlooked is the need to identify who you want to have enduring power of attorney should you find yourself in circumstances that will need someone to make decisions for you. The Office of the Public Advocate in your state or territory can provide more information on this topic.

## Identify a next of kin

Your next of kin will be informed in case something serious happens to you. Tell your next of kin that you expect them to communicate with other members of your family, and friends. If circumstances prevent this from happening (e.g. strained family relationships), think about other people you wish to keep informed about your situation in the case of your death, an accident or serious illness.

## Make a will

Every adult should have a will. It's a sensible action that lets your family know exactly what should take place should the unforeseen happen. This might relate to financial matters, as well as guardianship of children and pets. Wills can bring peace of mind and reduce stress for loved ones. Make a will by contacting your solicitor, a public trustee, or getting a will pack from the post office.

***“A recurring theme in conversations I had with people who were bereaved by the Bali Bombings and Black Saturday Bushfires was the stress of having to deal with people’s estate, and trying to second guess their wishes. So often I heard ‘If only I knew what they wanted...’”***

***John Richardson, Red Cross***

## Nothing can replace the irreplaceable

**Prepare a list of important items that you can't easily replace. Do this with family, neighbours or friends. It'll be a good topic of conversation, as each item will have a story. Think practically:**

- Are these items easy to gather and move from the house if you had to leave quickly?
- Are they fragile and would they need packing?
- Do you have a bag/box of the right size in which to take them all?
- Would you have enough space in a car to take items?
- Are these items that you could copy and store in another place, e.g. photos, letters, children's art, videos? For example, can you have original photos located on a bookshelf in the living room and a copy of these photos saved on a computer with a relative and in the office?
- Would these items be safe from flood waters if they were up high or in waterproof containers?
- Do these items need to be protected from fire, e.g. in a fireproof safe?

In a rush it's easy to forget things. So write in your RediPlan how you will protect your important items. Think about making a map of your home, and mark the items on it. Doing so will also help others locate the items if you're not home during an emergency.

Include items considered important by each member of your household. Everyone will have different items that they consider irreplaceable, so make the whole household aware of them.

***“One couple in their 70s came in. They worked all their lives to build a beautiful home and business. And it's all gone. Insurance might rebuild your house, but it can't rebuild your life.”***

*Carolyn, Red Cross volunteer, 2013 Blue Mountains fires.*

## Photograph important landmarks and landscapes

Take photos of your important places and document why it's important to you. If an important public building is damaged during an emergency, talk to your local council to find out if you can contribute to its rebuild through a public consultation process.

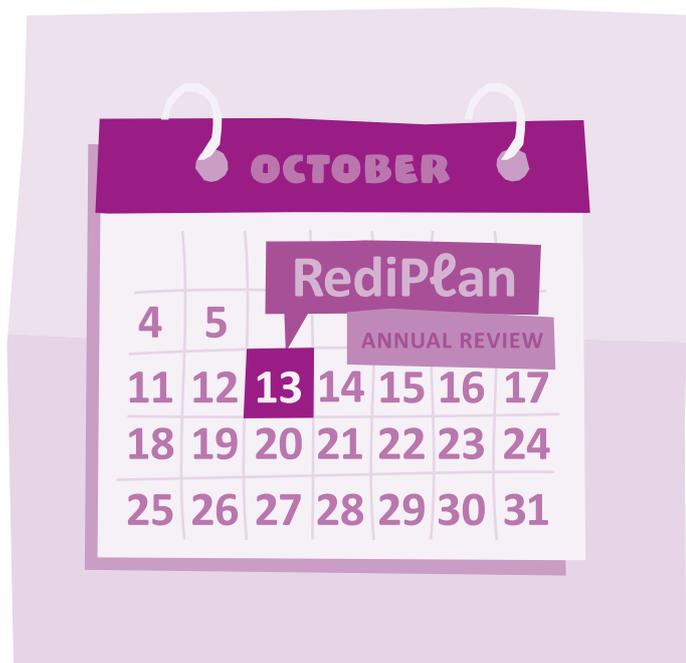
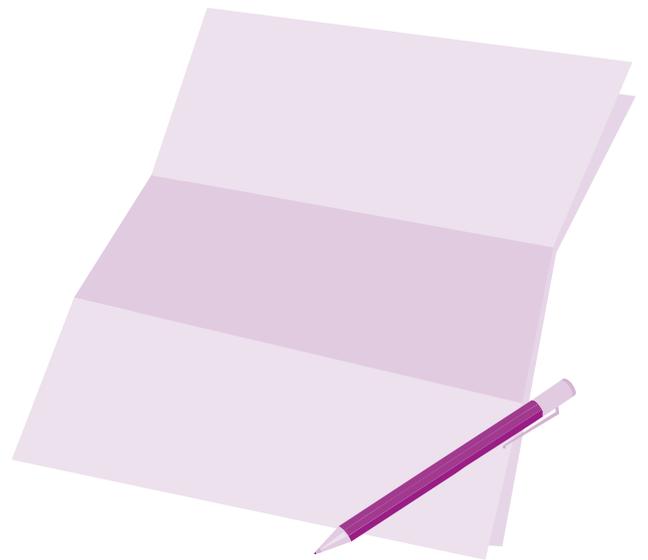
## RediPlan: get it in writing

Talk to your support network if you need help to write down your RediPlan. If you rely on community support services to live in your home, you should talk to the coordinator or your case manager about what would happen if an emergency occurred in your area. See Step 2 to better understand what a support network is and how you can establish your own.

Use the RediPlan template at the end of Step 4 to record your plan.

## It's important stuff

Your RediPlan may contain confidential information such as personal financial and medical details. Ensure you don't include any details that will allow people to access your finances, or, if you do include it, store your RediPlan in a secure location and share it only with those you trust.



## It's a date: review your RediPlan annually

It's important that your RediPlan is kept up-to-date and even more important that it remains at the back of everyone's minds. Practise it as regularly as you can. Red Cross recommends that you practise your plan at least once a year.

Lock in October 13 as your annual reminder to review and practise your plan to coincide with the United Nations International Day for Disaster Reduction.



## Your RediPlan review

- Check your plan is up-to-date and phone numbers are still valid
- Confirm your out-of-town contact is still happy to be your contact and that everyone in your plan remembers what you have agreed to do should you be separated during an emergency
- Check your insurance policies and make sure your cover is adequate
- Check the contents of your Survive and Recover Kit (see Step 4) and replace perishable items and batteries as needed
- If you live in an area prone to bushfire, flood, earthquake, storm or cyclone, talk to your local fire or emergency services about how to prepare your home before the season starts.





# SHARE

## Spreading the word

- Once you've completed your RediPlan, keep a copy securely at work, in the cloud, or with a trusted friend or personal support network member
- Get together with everyone in your support network or sit down with everyone in your household, including children, and have a conversation about your plan and the things you've organised as part of it. Make sure everyone understands it and knows what to do if an emergency occurs. Any plan is useless unless everyone involved understands their role and responsibilities.

***“Don't think it won't happen to you—it can and DOES! Don't skimp on your insurance. Get a good company and be prepared to pay a bit more to get good cover with people who will honour the policy correctly. When you leave your house before a fire, take your pin numbers, account numbers, tax numbers, address books and your phone charger. Those things cause great loss of time and energy just to sort out. If you are IT literate, put everything in the cloud!”***

***Owner of destroyed Parkerville home,  
Stoneville Mt Helena Fire 2014***

## GET ORGANISED CHECKLIST



- Do you know where your gas, power and water meters and shut-off valves are?
- Have you checked your insurance cover?
- Have you put together a medical information list?
- Have you developed a household financial plan?
- Have you listed your irreplaceable items and written a plan to protect them?
- Have you thought about and photographed all the places that are important to you that you would miss if they were gone?
- Have you helped others to get organised?



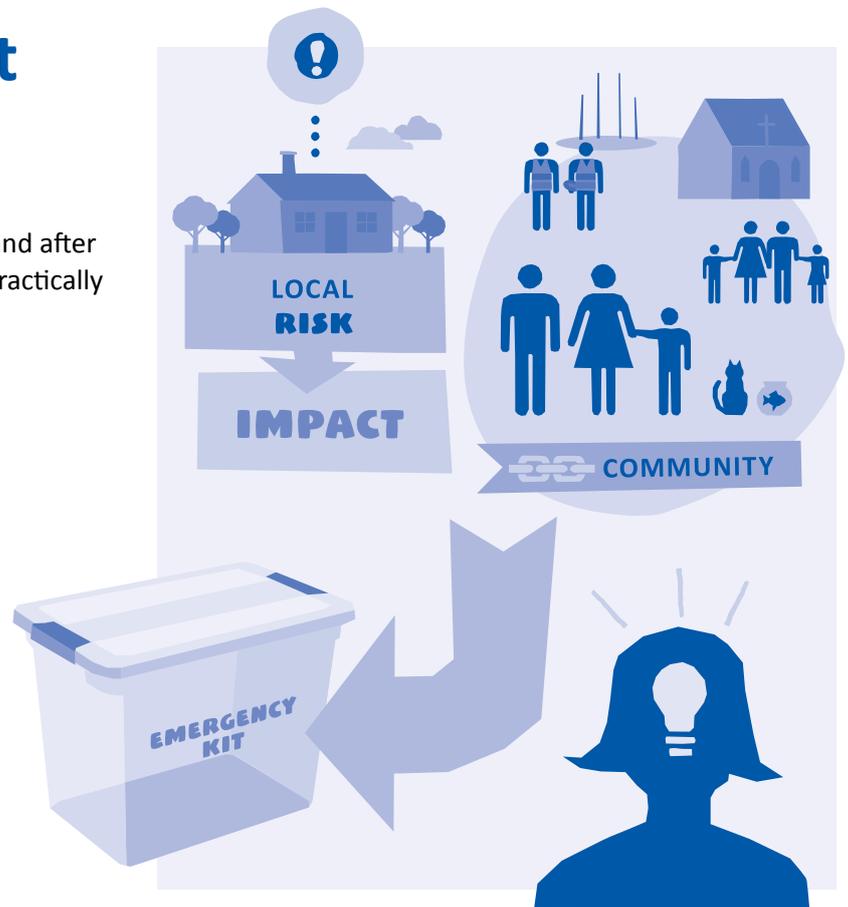
# STEP 4 GET PACKING



So, you know your local risks and their impacts, you've connected more to your community, and you've begun the process of getting organised.

## Now it's time to get *really* practical.

Packing a kit of items that will help you during and after an emergency is an important way to prepare practically for an emergency.



This section will help you to:

### THINK



- Understand why you should think about your survival and recovery when packing a kit
- Identify items for your kit.

### ACT



- Pack a survive and recover kit
- Store and review your kit.

### SHARE



- Help others to pack a kit
- Identify items that could be shared within your community that will help you during and after an emergency.



# THINK



*Think about the practical things you'll need during and after an emergency. There are two types of items you should think about:*

- **Survival items** — things that will help if you have to evacuate your home quickly or if you have to stay in your home when essential services have been cut off
- **Recovery items** — things that will help limit the disruption to your life after the emergency has passed. These will be much more personal to your own needs and situation.

## Survival items

Think about the essential things you'd need to get through a few days without basic services. In some emergencies you might choose or be advised to stay at home, while in others you might choose or be told to leave.

When thinking about survival items to pack in your kit, consider:

- what things would you take if you needed to leave home in a hurry
- what would you like to have with you if you had to unexpectedly stay somewhere else
- what will you need to provide food, water, warmth and light if essential services have been cut off?

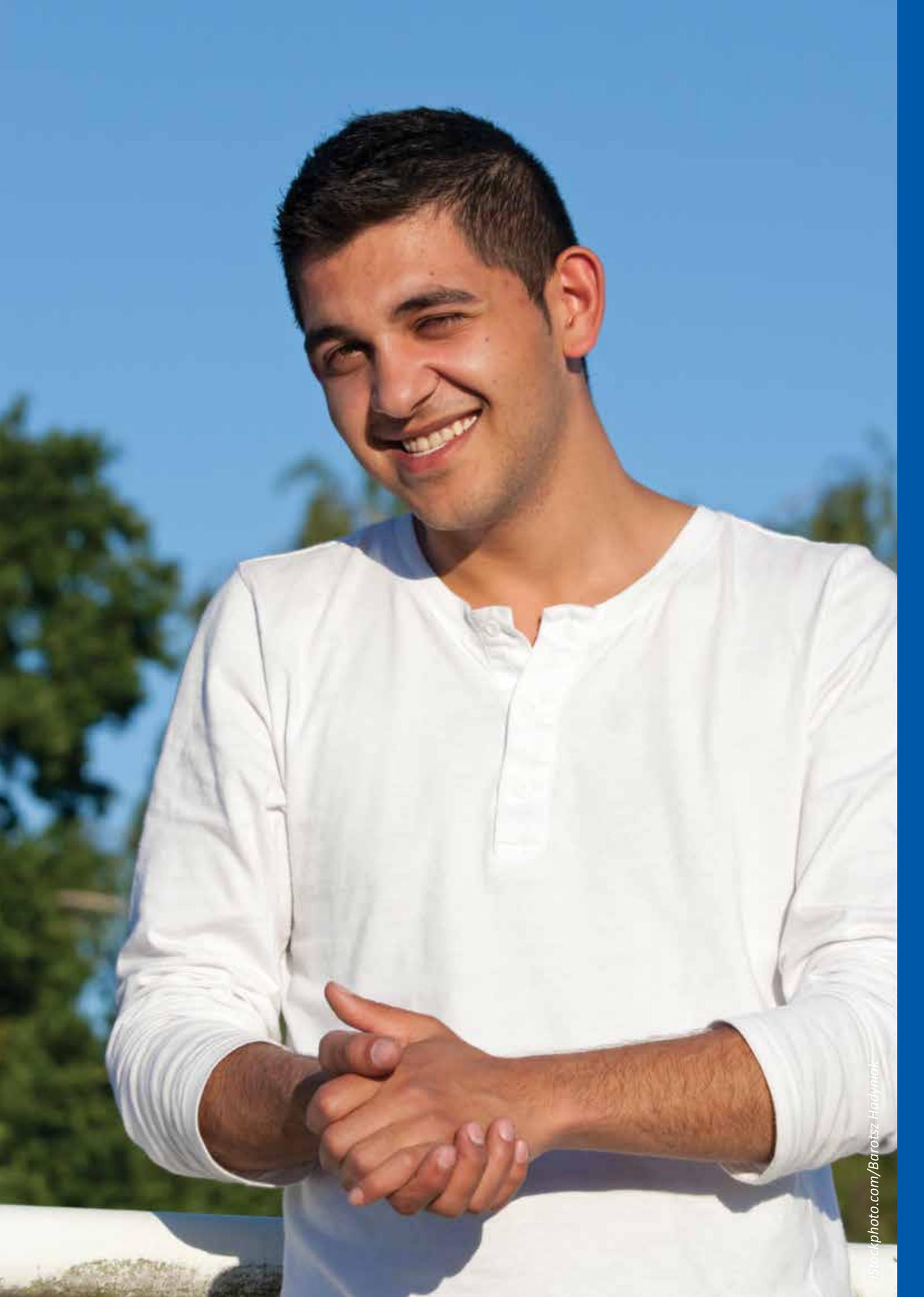
On page 50 you'll find suggestions for standard survival items. For detailed emergency kit lists and recommendations, talk to your local fire services and state and territory emergency services agencies.

## Recovery items

Thinking about the days and months after an emergency is an important part of putting an emergency kit together. There are a number of items that Red Cross recommends you include in your kit. There'll also be many more personal items that you might decide to include.

### When thinking about recovery items to pack in your kit, think about how you will:

- **identify yourself** if your wallet and/or your house and its contents are destroyed
- **access money** if banks are closed and ATMs are not working
- **provide details of your insurance cover** and contents for insurance claims if you don't have access to the original paperwork
- **occupy/comfort your children** if they're unable to return home for extended periods due to property damage
- **care for your pets and animals** during an emergency and afterwards
- **prove ownership of your home/car.**





# ACT

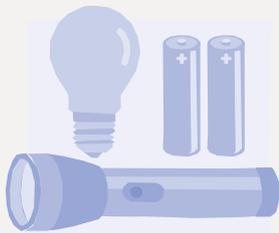
## Get your essentials together

Packing your survive and recover kit can be satisfying and fun, especially for the kids. So get together with everyone in your household or your personal support network to make a list of what you'll need.

Chances are you'll already have many necessary items in the house. If you need to buy anything, remember you don't have to do it all at once. You can stagger it over weeks or months—a few items each time you shop.

### Suggested survival items:

#### Light



**NOTE!**

Don't leave batteries in the torch, and check them every six months. Consider wind-up torches that don't need batteries. Red Cross sells them online at [redcross.org.au](http://redcross.org.au)

#### Water



**NOTE!**

Never drink tap water after an emergency until authorities have advised it is safe. Water can be stored for up to 12 months in airtight containers. Label when water was last changed.

#### Cash



**NOTE!**

Many people do not carry large sums of cash. ATMs and banks may not be operating in the early stages of any emergency. Having some cash will help meet basic and urgent needs.

#### Food



**NOTE!**

Remember the needs of everyone in your household, including babies, children and pets. Have at least three days' worth of food (meals, drinks and snacks) ready in case you need to leave home. If staying home, you will need food high in energy with a long shelf life that's easy to prepare.

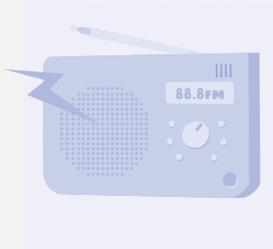


## Take your medicine

Medical needs are an important consideration for everyone when packing a Survive and Recover Kit.

Plan to have 14 days' worth of any medications you might need.

## Radio



### NOTE!

Radio is often the best source of information in an emergency. Mark on the dial the frequencies of your ABC Local Radio and any other local radio services. Red Cross sells wind-up emergency radios online at [redcross.org.au](http://redcross.org.au)

## Chargers



### NOTE!

Have a charger or charged battery pack for your phone. Also consider, keeping an older landline phone that is not reliant on power—your telephone exchange may still operate even if the power is out.

## Protective clothing / blankets



### NOTE!

Consider clothes made from natural fibres, keep seasons in mind, and try to pack sturdy shoes or boots and heavy-duty gloves. Remember sunscreen, insect repellent, and wide-brimmed hats.

## Special medical supplies or equipment



### NOTE!

Consider what medications or supplies you might need and include these, alongside a list with their title, dosage and copies of your prescriptions.

## Toiletries



### NOTE!

Having toiletries can help keep you refreshed and give you a sense of routine—even when you are unable to wash or shower.

## First Aid Kit



### NOTE!

As well as buying a Red Cross household or car first aid kit, it's also a good idea to do first aid training.

## Pet essentials



### NOTE!

Factor your pet into water needs, and make sure your dog or cat is registered and microchipped.

Most of the things you need will be at a supermarket, hardware store or even the \$2 shop. Remember you may already have useful items around the home, such as camping equipment.

## Suggested recovery items:

### Scans or photocopies of important documents



- Passports
- Wills
- Driver's licences
- Marriage and birth certificates
- Land titles
- Mortgage papers
- Insurance papers
- Prescriptions
- Medical histories
- Child immunisation books.

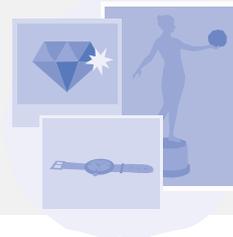
#### NOTE!

Check functionality regularly, and use waterproof or fireproof containers if necessary. It's a good idea to have a back-up copy of documents securely stored in an alternative place to home, perhaps in a locked drawer at work, with a family member, or stored in the cloud.

### Copies of videos and photos



### Photographs of valuable household items



Store your scans or copies so that they can be grabbed quickly and easily if you have to leave.

The same care taken with your important documents can be applied to your personal videos and photos.

Take photos of any important household items, particularly those that are insured. Store the photos in a secure place, with copies in your kit, to assist with any insurance claims after the emergency.

Map where your valuable items are stored in your home in case you have to collect them quickly.

**Make sure valuable items are stored well above ground level, or use waterproof containers.**

Consider purchasing a fireproof safe for valuables. Keep some sturdy garbage bags for putting other items of sentimental value in, in case you have time to collect them in an emergency.



## Entertainment

### *Comfort the kids*

Children will need familiar things to help comfort them in a stressful and uncertain situation. Talk to your kids about what's important to them.

This is likely to be different to what you think is important to them.

## Store and review your kit

### **As you can see, you'll need more than a simple shoulder bag to hold your survive and recover kit.**

You'll need a sturdy container, preferably waterproof. Think about a box with wheels or handles and a watertight seal. Alternatively you can use a large sports bag or a suitcase with wheels. Arrange your container last so you'll know what size it needs to be.

Store your survive and recover kit where it's easy to access—close to an escape route in your house, or in a shed. Mark your kit clearly, and put some reflective tape on it so it can be seen easily in darkness. Make sure everyone in your household and personal safety network knows where it is.

### **Set an annual reminder in your phone and/or calendar to check your survive and recover kit.**

Make a note of any perishables and rotate them through your bathroom and pantry. Your kit should be updated to reflect changes in your life, such as the addition of children or pets, changes to relationships, location changes, and so on.





# SHARE

## Remember, a conversation is where an action begins.

**Don't underestimate the power of talking to others about emergencies and what we can all do to prepare.**

- Talk to your support network about your survive and recover kit. Make sure everyone is clear on its contents and where it's stored
- Help someone else put together a survive and recover kit
- There are many items that will assist you after an emergency that could be of benefit to others in your networks and vice versa. Talk to your network about your survive and recover kit, as well as about what you might need/have to help you clean up after an emergency. For example, a lawnmower or other gardening equipment, power tools, etc, will be really helpful when preparing or cleaning up property.

### Share and share alike



Sharing resources with others will help you immensely after an emergency, both in terms of being able to undertake any clean up work without having to purchase new equipment, but also in terms of strengthening the bonds and capacity within your community.

### GET PACKING CHECKLIST



#### Have you:

- Packed a stock of items to help provide food, water, warmth and light if essential services have been cut off?
- Packed your valuables (or identified a plan to pack them in the case of an emergency, including mementos and keepsakes)?
- Scanned all your important documents and packed the copies in your survive and recover kit and in a second safe place?
- Shown your survive and recover kit to your personal support network?
- Helped others to pack their own survive and recover kit?
- Talked to your local network about resources you might be able to share in the event of an emergency?



# YOUR REDIPLAN

\_\_\_\_\_’S RediPlan.

## MY EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Name of household member	Medicare number	Centrelink number	Passport number	Tax file number	Driver Licence number	Car registration

## MY IMPORTANT NUMBERS

	Name	Relationship	Phone	Address
Member of support network				
Member of support network				
Member of support network				
Out-of-town contact #1				
Out-of-town contact #2				
Other:				

## MY IMPORTANT SERVICES

	Company	Account number	Contact details
Electricity			
Gas			
Water			
Internet			
Phone			
Roadside assistance			
Other:			

abc.net.au



MY LOCAL ABC FREQUENCY: \_\_\_\_\_

MY AGREED MEETING PLACE: \_\_\_\_\_

## MY ALTERNATIVE PLACE TO STAY IN AN EMERGENCY

Name	Phone	Address



See **Step 2** for more information about staying connected during an emergency, including identifying an out-of-town contact, an agreed meeting place, and an alternative place to stay in an emergency.

## MY MEDICAL PLAN

Medical support list	Name	Phone	Out of hours contact	Address
Doctor				
Local hospital with 24-hour emergency				
Chemist				
Optometrist				
Dentist				
Other:				

## MEDICAL CONDITIONS

	Y	N	Plan to manage condition during and after an emergency
Heart disease	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Diabetes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Asthma	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Migraines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Fainting spells	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Anxiety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Epilepsy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
High blood pressure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Thyroid problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Dizziness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	



Consider getting a medical alert system that can easily call for help if you are immobilised in an emergency. Most alert systems require a working phone line, so have a back-up plan, such as a mobile phone or pager, in case landlines are disrupted.

## Current medications



Write down below any medication you are currently taking.

Remember to attach copies of concession cards, health insurance cards and prescriptions to this plan. You may also want to identify where you keep the medication in your home in case you have to evacuate quickly or someone needs to get it for you.

### CURRENT MEDICATIONS

Medical condition	Medication	Dosage	Times taken	Prescribing doctor (include contact details)	Location of medication in the home

### MEDICAL AIDS

	Y	N	Details	Plan to manage equipment in the case of an emergency
Do you use any equipment to assist you	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Style and serial numbers of medical devices				
Allergies and/or sensitivities (food, medication etc)				
Blood type				



Plan to have all the things you'd need with you for a week or two. This includes any medications you take regularly or specialised equipment (wheelchair, glasses, hearing aid) and supplies (patch kit for a wheelchair tyre or extra batteries). See Step 4 for more information about packing a survival and recovery kit.

## DISABILITY

	Y	How my disability might affect my ability to respond to an emergency	Support plan
Intellectual	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Learning	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Speech-related	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Sensory	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Physical	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Neurological	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>		

## MY WILL

	Solicitor/s	Address	Phone
Location of my Will			

## MY POWER OF ATTORNEY:

## MY INSURANCE

	Insurer	Contact details	Policy number
Home and contents			
Health			
Car			
Life			
Income protection			
Business			



Consider your particular needs and how your support network might best assist you during an emergency. If you require help to evacuate, include written instructions and ensure your support network is aware of your plan. For example, “I am diabetic. Please take my insulin from the refrigerator”, “My service animal may legally remain with me”.

## MY IMPORTANT ITEMS LIST AND PLAN

Item	Location	Plan for protection

See **Step 3** for more information about how to identify and protect important items.

## MY ANIMAL PLAN

Animal name	Breed	Microchip number	Vet/Kennel contact details	Emergency safe place	Equipment required	Plan



In planning for emergencies you'll also need to think about your pets and animals and what they would need over the course of a week or more, including food, identification, medication, transport and accommodation.

# OTHER RECOMMENDED REFERENCES



## Red Cross preparedness resources

**Red Cross has a suite of further preparedness and recovery resources that can help you better prepare for an emergency, understand what you may experience when recovering from an emergency and what you can do to help yourself through this difficult time.**

Resources include information for seniors, materials for parents and teachers to assist children prepare and recover and advice on how to cope in the aftermath of a disaster. [redcross.org.au/emergency-services.aspx](https://redcross.org.au/emergency-services.aspx)

Red Cross also has After the Emergency, a website dedicated to young people affected by emergencies that gives you a wealth of information and the opportunity to share your own stories. [aftertheemergency.redcross.org.au](https://aftertheemergency.redcross.org.au)

PrepareCenter.org is the website of the Red Cross Red Crescent Global Disaster Preparedness Center. It offers knowledge and resources on preparedness programs, tools and experiences for communities across the globe. [preparecenter.org](https://preparecenter.org)

Red Cross has a range of emergency preparedness products including wind up torch radios and first aid kits. To purchase, visit [shop.redcross.org.au](https://shop.redcross.org.au)

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## Information from the Australian Government

For up-to-date information, call the Australian Government Emergency Information Line on **180 2266**.

In the case of a major emergency, check the Australian Government Disaster Assist website for information about Australian Government recovery assistance and links to other relevant information. [disasterassist.gov.au](https://disasterassist.gov.au)

To understand how the Australian Government is working to plan and respond to emergencies, visit the Emergency Management Australia website, [ag.gov.au/EmergencyManagement](https://ag.gov.au/EmergencyManagement)

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## Emergency management mobile apps

A number of mobile apps are available to give you practical advice and real-time information about emergencies, including:

**Disaster Watch:** news and information about disaster events in Australia.

**Disaster Alert:** a mobile multi-hazard monitoring application with real-time global data.

**Fires Near Me:** bushfire and fire ban information from the fire agencies in the Australian states and territories.

**FireReady:** the official warnings and information app from the Victorian Government.

**ReadyQLD/NSW/ACT:** information to help communities prepare for disasters.

**Before the Storm:** Let children learn about emergency preparedness and resilience in this educational game.

**Emergency+:** provides emergency services with your exact location using your phone's GPS coordinates.

**Emergency App Aus:** Find and share your location with emergency services and contact essential businesses in your area.

**Know Risk:** Lets you store all your insurance policies and keep a record of your valuables online.



## Warnings and weather conditions

Visit the Bureau of Meteorology's website to learn about emergency warnings for extreme weather conditions like floods, cyclones and tsunamis and to familiarise yourself with local warnings in the state/territory section relevant to you. You can also listen to the Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS), a distinctive sound used by emergency services to alert the community when an urgent safety message is about to be played on radio, television, public address systems or mobile sirens.

**[bom.gov.au](http://bom.gov.au)**



## Local radio

Find your local ABC frequency for the latest emergency information.

**[abc.net.au](http://abc.net.au)**



## Getting to know neighbours

Neighbour Day is an annual celebration of community promoted by Relationships Australia. Visit their website to find out how you can get involved or ask your local council if they have programs to help neighbours get to know each other.

**[neighbourday.org](http://neighbourday.org)**



## Insurance

The Insurance Council of Australia has a guide to help you choose household insurance.

**[insurancecouncil.com.au](http://insurancecouncil.com.au)**

KnowRisk is a community education program designed by the Australian and New Zealand Institute of Insurance and Finance (ANZIIF) to improve our understanding of insurance and how it relates to managing the many risks we all face in life.

**[knowrisk.com.au](http://knowrisk.com.au)**



## Financial

The Australian Government has a website to assist with information on a whole range of financial matters including preparing a household budget.

**[moneysmart.gov.au](http://moneysmart.gov.au)**

For more information about financial planning, contact a Centrelink Financial Information Officer on **13 2300**.



## Business preparedness

The Australian Government's business planning website has a number of emergency management and recovery plan templates to download.

**[business.gov.au](http://business.gov.au)**

Check the websites of your state or territory emergency services and fire authorities as many of these also include information and tools to help businesses prepare.

# Psychological resources and support services



## Psychological preparedness

Visit the Australian Psychological Society website to learn more about psychological preparedness.

[psychology.org.au](http://psychology.org.au)

## Telephone support

There are a range of telephone support services that help with a range of issues people may face:

Lifeline: **13 11 14**

Mensline Australia: **1300 78 99 78**

Suicide Call Back Service: **1300 659 467**

Kids Helpline: **1800 55 1800**

Relationships Australia: **1300 364 277**

Carers Australia: **1800 242 636**

SANE Australia: **1800 18 7263**

National Sexual Assault, Domestic and Family Violence Counselling Service for people living in Australia:

**1800 RESPECT**

## Coping with trauma stress

Phoenix Australia – Centre for Posttraumatic Mental Health provides information on coping with trauma, including factsheets and advice for adults, children and parents on taking care of yourself after a disaster.

[acpmh.unimelb.edu.au](http://acpmh.unimelb.edu.au)

The Australian Child and Adolescent Trauma, Loss and Grief Network provides information, tips and links to other organisations for everyone involved in the care of children or youth who have experienced trauma, loss and grief.

[earlytraumagriev.anu.edu.au](http://earlytraumagriev.anu.edu.au)

## Coping with depression and anxiety

Beyondblue: the national depression initiative provides information about depression, anxiety and related disorders and where to get help.

[youthbeyondblue.com](http://youthbeyondblue.com) is beyondblue's website for young people with information on depression, anxiety and other problems young people may experience growing up: **1300 22 4636**

[beyondblue.org.au](http://beyondblue.org.au) and [youthbeyondblue.com](http://youthbeyondblue.com)

The Black Dog Institute provides a range of fact sheets on coping with depression and bipolar disorders.

[blackdoginstitute.org.au](http://blackdoginstitute.org.au)

## Support for young people

ReachOut.com provides 24 hour support for young people facing a range of challenges.

[reachout.com](http://reachout.com)

Headspace provides mental health and wellbeing support, information and services for young people and their families.

## Support for relationships

Relationships Australia is a leading provider of relationship support services for individuals, families and communities.

[relationships.org.au](http://relationships.org.au)

## Coping with grief and bereavement

The Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement provides bereavement counselling and support programs, information, and referral assistance to members of the general public: **1800 642 066**

Bereavement Information and Referral Service  
**1300 664 786**

[grief.org.au](http://grief.org.au)

The Compassionate Friends provides a 24-hour telephone information, referral and service for parents who have lost a child, or people who have lost a brother or sister: **1800 641 091**

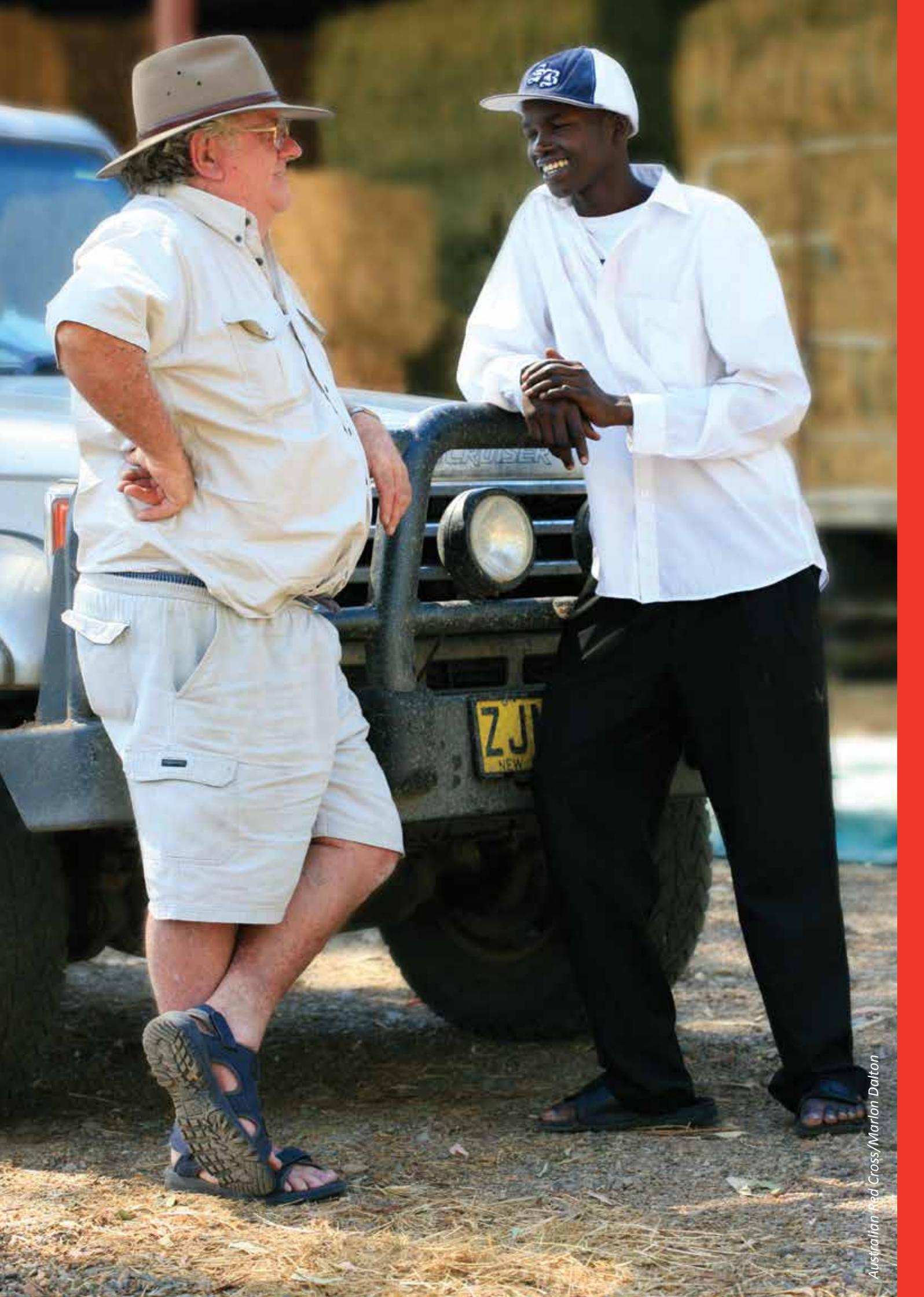
[compassionatefriendsvictoria.org.au](http://compassionatefriendsvictoria.org.au)

GriefLink is an information portal on death-related grief for the community and professionals.

[grieflink.asn.au](http://grieflink.asn.au)

The Sue Evans Fund for Families developed two guides on Surviving Traumatic Grief, documenting the experiences of those who had lost loved ones in the Black Saturday Bushfires in Victoria.

[sueevans.com.au](http://sueevans.com.au)





# PREPARE YOUR MIND WORKSHEET

This worksheet helps you to identify your anticipated stressors, the feelings and thoughts they may provoke, and prompt you to think about how you can invest in your wellbeing.



**Anticipate:**

My stress triggers: e.g. tiredness, being pulled in too many directions.



**Identify:**

How I know I am experiencing negative stress:

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## MY PLAN TO COUNTER NEGATIVE STRESS AND INVEST IN MY WELLBEING:

	In an ideal day* I will:
Connect	
Be active	
Take notice	
Keep learning	
Give	

\* Aspirational.

## My rule for when I will seek further help

e.g three consecutive nights of disrupted sleep.

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### Manage:

These five actions are identified as helping you feel good and function well: connect, be active, take notice, keep learning, and give.<sup>1</sup> Invest in your wellbeing by incorporating these actions into your day to day life:



<sup>1</sup> New Economics Foundation (2008): Five Ways to Wellbeing  
neweconomics.org



Australian Red Cross/Michael Torres



# MY IMPORTANT NUMBERS

## EMERGENCIES

Police Fire Ambulance	000
SES	132 500
Poisons Info Line	13 11 26
Lifeline	13 11 14
BeyondBlue	1300 22 46 36

## MY IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Doctor		Home Care Agency	
Dentist		Local Radio Frequencies ABC	
Vet		Local Radio Frequencies Other	
Solicitor		Out-of-Town Contact	
Council		Power of Attorney	
Gas		Insurer	
Telco		Bank	
Power		Roadside Assistance	
Water			

Your Emergency  
**RediPlan**

[redcross.org.au/prepare](http://redcross.org.au/prepare)

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# MY IMPORTANT NUMBERS

## MY HOUSEHOLD NUMBERS

Name	Work	School	Mobile

## MY NEIGHBOURS / PERSONAL CARE NETWORK NUMBERS

Name	Work	Mobile

## OTHER IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Name	Work	Mobile



**Tip:**

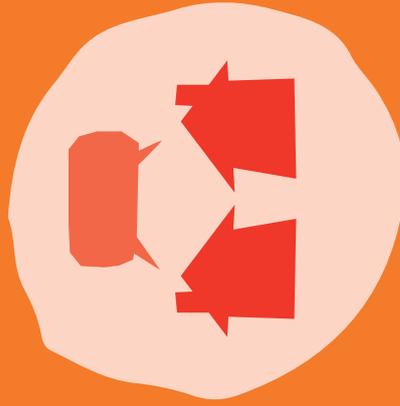
Store these numbers in your phone and take a picture of the card so you will have all your important details available in one place. You may also want to send a copy to friends or relatives to have on file in case of an emergency.



# CONNECTING TO THE SOCIAL GRID

## HEY NEIGHBOUR!

Besides being fulfilling in many other ways, being a part of a community will help you in an emergency.



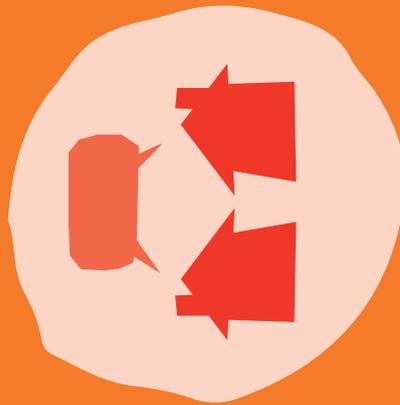
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the power of humanity

## HEY NEIGHBOUR!

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Your Emergency  
**RediPlan**  
[redcross.org.au/prepare](http://redcross.org.au/prepare)



the power of humanity

Tear out these handy postcards and leave in your neighbour's letterbox.



# CONNECTING TO THE SOCIAL GRID

## HELLO! MY NAME IS:

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I live :

- Next door
- Over the road at \_\_\_\_\_
- Up the street at \_\_\_\_\_

Did you know it's most likely to be your neighbour or a passer-by, not emergency services, who will help you survive during an emergency? Neighbours can also provide practical and emotional support after an emergency, as well as important information about recovery services.

**My/our details are:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**We are also good for:**

- Putting out the bins
- Collecting mail
- Watering the garden
- Feeding pets
- Cup of sugar

## HELLO! MY NAME IS:

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I live :

- Next door
- Over the road at \_\_\_\_\_
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**We are also good for:**

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- Feeding pets
- Cup of sugar

# RED CROSS EMERGENCY REDIPLAN

**Red Cross has been helping people prepare for, cope with and recover from emergencies since 1914.**

**Emergency RediPlan is an award winning and internationally recognised disaster preparedness guide, designed to assist individuals and households create their own personalised emergency plan and prepare themselves for the longer-term psychosocial impacts of an emergency.**

Red Cross supports people to be better prepared, better connected and more resilient to the psychosocial impacts of emergencies. We recognise that the impacts of emergencies extend beyond the physical, to people's psychological and social wellbeing. In all of our preparedness activities, Red Cross takes a non-hazard specific approach, meaning that we help individuals and communities to prepare for any type of emergency — natural or man-made, big or small. Our work has been designed to complement the work of other emergency services agencies, such as fire and rescue.

To learn more about preparing for an emergency or to complete an online version of RediPlan visit [redcross.org.au/prepare](https://redcross.org.au/prepare)

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## How can I become a supporter?

Red Cross relies on committed volunteers, members and donors.

You can support Red Cross by:

1. *giving* monthly, leaving a bequest in your will or making a one-off donation to Disaster Relief and Recovery
2. *visiting* your local Red Cross store
3. *donating* blood

[redcross.org.au](http://redcross.org.au) or call **1800 811 700**

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### National Office

155 Pelham St  
Carlton VIC 3053  
T +61 3 9345 1800

### Supporter Services Centre

GPO Box 2957  
Melbourne VIC 8060  
T **1800 811 700** (free call)  
F 1800 855 240  
E [donorinfo@redcross.org.au](mailto:donorinfo@redcross.org.au)

### ACT

3 Dann Cl  
Garran ACT 2605  
T +61 2 6234 7600

### SA

212 Pirie St  
Adelaide SA 5000  
T +61 8 8100 4500

### NSW

St Andrews House  
Level 4, 464 Kent St  
Sydney NSW 2000  
T **1800 812 028** (free call)

### TAS

40 Melville St  
Hobart TAS 7000  
T +61 3 6235 6077

### NT

Level 1, 13 CASCOM Centre  
Scaturchio Street  
Casuarina NT 0810  
T +61 8 8924 3900

### VIC

23-47 Villiers St  
North Melbourne VIC 3051  
T **1800 810 710** (free call)

### QLD

49 Park Rd  
Milton QLD 4064  
T +61 7 3367 7222

### WA

110 Goderich St  
East Perth WA 6004  
T +61 8 9225 8888

November 2016

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[@redcrossau](https://twitter.com/redcrossau)



[youtube.com/AustralianRedCross](https://youtube.com/AustralianRedCross)



[linkedin.com/company/australian-red-cross](https://linkedin.com/company/australian-red-cross)

[redcross.org.au](http://redcross.org.au)

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