

PREPARE 3 EMERGENCY “DASH” KITS

If you must evacuate quickly, you won't have much time to gather what you need. Tony Carper, Director of Broward Emergency Management Agency in Florida, suggests packing three “dash” kits that can be grabbed in minutes—and letting family members know where they're stored:

I. BASIC NEEDS KIT

This one will hold your necessities. Many items can be boxed and taped with an inventory list attached for faster loading and evacuation:

- Water**—one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation.
- Food**—three-day supply of non-perishable food.
- Sleeping bags**—and inflatable pillows.
- Clothing**—and sturdy, waterproof shoes or boots.
- Radios**—battery-powered or hand-crank model and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert.
- Flashlight**—preferably a waterproof model.
- Batteries**—spare sets for the radios and flashlight.
- Plastic sheeting**—and duct tape or a tent for temporary shelter.
- Non-electric can opener**—for food.
- Map**—of your area with evacuation route and destination highlighted.
- Baby items**—and any items needed for very old family members.
- Pet supplies**—food and medicines.

II. HEALTH SUPPLIES KIT

Medications and the names and numbers of doctors should be stored in a waterproof bag:

- Drugs**—two-week supply on hand—prescription and/or OTC medicines you use regularly (Ask your doctor for additional prescriptions in case you must fill them away from home).
- Glasses**—spare set.
- First aid kit.**
- Moisture wipes**—and garbage bags for personal sanitation.
- Ailment items**—Go to the web sites of groups for specific health conditions, such as diabetes, to find out what to pack in case of evacuation.
- Doctors**—make a list of providers in a 100-mile radius of your home and their phone numbers. Consider having a copy of medical records sent there in case your local doctor's office is damaged.

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III. FINANCIAL PAPERS KIT

Store cash and copies of key documents in a waterproof/fireproof strong box with a handle.

Or scan documents into your computer and copy the digital files onto a blank CD disc or flash drive. What to store:

- Cash**—or traveler’s checks.
- Blank checks**—in case you need to write checks or provide account numbers over the phone.
- Emergency contacts**—including lawyers, financial advisers, etc.
- Account numbers**—and contact phone numbers for banks, credit-card issuers, and brokerage accounts.
- PINs and passwords**—so you or family members can access vital accounts online from computers away from home.
- Insurance policies**—and contact information for your agent.
- Deeds**—and titles to property, estate documents such as your will, birth and marriage certificates and relevant employee benefits documents.
- Computer discs**—or flash drive holding critical documents from home computers.
- Safe-deposit box key**—for access, if needed.
- Negatives**—of irreplaceable personal photographs, protected in plastic sleeves.
- Home inventory list**—and pictures of possessions.