



Prescriptions for PREVENTION

Guidance from the Western States
Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit



Natural Disasters



Did you know?

Natural disasters including floods, hurricanes and wildfires pose immediate danger. They can have lasting impacts, including toxic chemical exposures in our streets, yards and homes. Disruptions from disasters can sometimes limit access to food, safe water, medications, and power.



Do

Before a disaster:

- Be informed about common natural disasters in your community
- Make a family emergency plan.
- Make "go-bags" with important items to take with you in an emergency
- Have and maintain carbon monoxide and smoke detectors in your home.

During a disaster:

- Pay attention to local emergency alerts.
- If you are told to shelter-in-place, immediately go to the closest safe indoor space.
- If you are told to evacuate, do so immediately.
- Emergency alerts may be disrupted. If you feel unsafe, evacuate.
- Monitor local air quality. Stay inside if outdoor air quality is poor; If outdoors on bad air days, wear a NIOSH certified N95 mask.

After a disaster:

- Consider local or federal resources that may help you and your family
- If you are doing clean-up, do so carefully. Wear appropriate clothing and protection: Change clothes at the site or before entering your home, wash them separately; Leave your footwear at the worksite or outside; Shower immediately after clean-up.
- Recognize and attend to signs of emotional distress, especially in children.



Don't

- After a disaster, don't return to your home until it is safe to do so:
 - Key cleanup should have been done;
 - Power lines must be secured;
 - Safe water, sanitation, and emergency medical care should be available.
- Don't have children, teens, or pregnant people help with disaster clean up. They are especially vulnerable to exposures.
- Don't let children play in flood water, which can carry debris, toxic chemicals, and bacteria.
- Don't let children stay in homes infected with mold or at high risk for mold after flooding.
- Don't use gas or diesel-powered appliances (like grills or generators) indoors. Use generators safely and least 20 feet away from buildings, to avoid carbon monoxide build up.



For more information, scan the code or visit

<https://wspehsu.ucsf.edu/curriculum-tools/prescriptions-for-prevention/>

Material developed in partnership with the Environmental Research and Translation for Health (EaRTH) Center: <https://earth.ucsf.edu>