

Your health during a natural disaster

Being informed is being prepared



Expect the unexpected



Often emergencies will be followed by other risks such as power outages and roadblocks which can result in assistance delays. Services could stop for up to 72 hours.



WHO IS MOST AT RISK?

- People who have a disability
- Older people
- Pregnant women
- Children
- People with health problems or limited money or social support
- People who live by themselves
- First Nations people
- People where English is their second language.

REDIPLAN

When emergencies happen, there are lots of decisions to make and a lot to do. With the Get Prepared app you can prepare for the unexpected by completing your RediPlan and being better prepared for emergencies.

RediPlan is unique as it takes an all-hazards and psychosocial approach to preparing for emergencies.

redcross.org.au/prepare





WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO BE PREPARED?



Healthcare access

Disasters can disrupt healthcare services, making it difficult for individuals to access medical care when needed. By being prepared, individuals can have necessary supplies, medications and information readily available to manage their health conditions even in the absence of immediate medical assistance.



Psychological well-being

Disasters can have profound psychological impacts, leading to stress, anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Being prepared can help mitigate these psychological effects by providing a sense of control, confidence and security.



Injury prevention

Preparedness measures such as securing furniture, having emergency kits and knowing evacuation routes can help prevent injuries during disasters. This is especially crucial in minimising trauma, which can overwhelm healthcare systems during a disaster.



Chronic disease management

For individuals with chronic health conditions such as diabetes, heart disease or respiratory disorders, maintaining access to medications, medical supplies and healthcare services, is essential for managing their conditions and preventing complications during and after a disaster.

Community resilience

Medical preparedness contributes to community resilience by reducing the burden on healthcare systems and enabling individuals to support themselves and others in their community during emergencies. This collective resilience enhances the overall response and recovery efforts.



Your emergency kit



Being prepared means having your own food, water, medication and other supplies to be able to look after yourself and your family.

An emergency kit is a collection of items your household may need for survival during an emergency and items to help you recover after an emergency.

- ✓ Adequate amount of water and food
- ✓ Mobile phone and charger
- ✓ Medication and first-aid kit
- ✓ Battery-powered radio, torch and spare batteries
- ✓ Protective clothing and woollen blankets
- ✓ Spare clothes, toiletries and sanitary supplies
- ✓ Contact information (doctor, chemist, next of kin, power company)
- ✓ Aids and equipment (vision aids, hearing aids, mobility aids)
- ✓ Other important information (bank card, ID, passport, insurance documents, USB stick, photos).

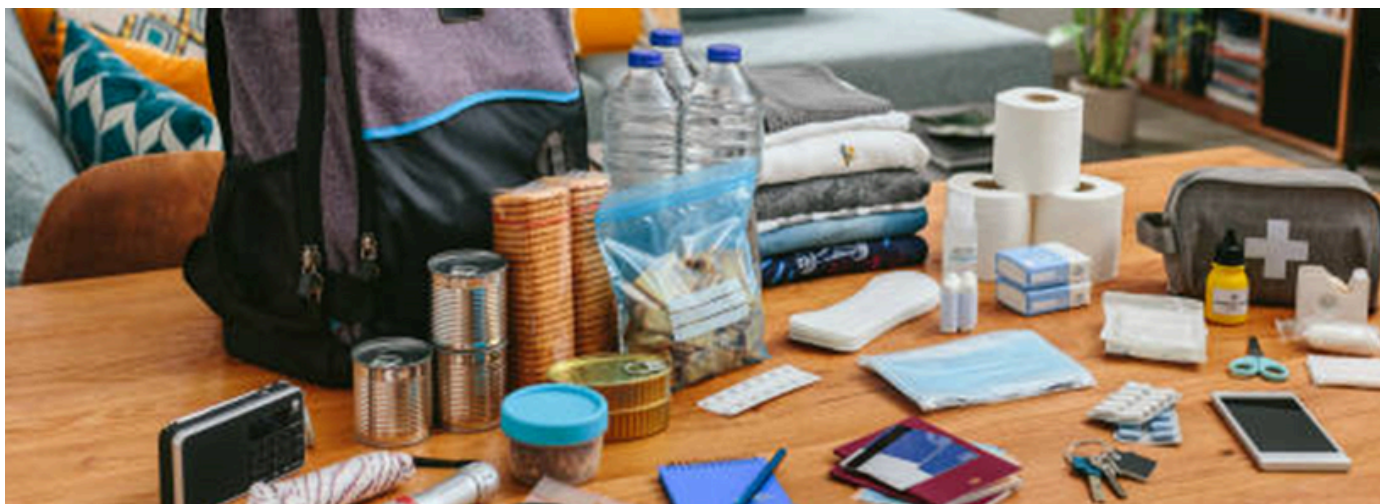
STOCKING YOUR PANTRY

Many families buy groceries weekly, with occasional extra trips during the week. Imagine if an emergency like injury, illness or road closures blocked access to stores keeping you homebound? Without quick access, you'd run out of food fast, especially if utilities are down.

Preparing for a 14-day stay at home (possibly without utilities) by stocking and rotating pantry items ensures readiness for various situations.

Essential items may include:

- dried and long-life food
- ready to eat canned foods
- water and drinks
- snack foods
- baby food
- pet food
- emergency backup power supply
- medications.





ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO CONSIDER IN YOUR EMERGENCY KIT



If you have children:

- medications such as EpiPen or asthma puffer, panadol
- medical records
- nappies
- formula and bottles
- carrier
- toys, special blankets, books or other items to help reduce stress.



If you have pets:

- carrier, cage and/or leash
- pet food and clean drinking water
- food and water bowls
- any medications
- veterinary records and contact details
- registration records
- toys, bedding, treat or other items to help reduce stress.

Have you considered?



mobile phone



personal memoirs such as diaries, stories, artworks



family memorabilia such as medals, photographs, documents



family photographs and albums



passport and other documents

Emergency planning tools



People with disabilities and at risk individuals face increased risks of injury or isolation during emergency situations. It's crucial to consider the following if you or someone you care for falls into these categories.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

P-Cep

The Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness (P-CEP) tool has been created to enable emergency preparedness. This tool can be used by anyone and has also been co-designed and tested with and for people with disability. It empowers people to evaluate their readiness, abilities and assistance requirements.

collaborating4inclusion.org/home/pcep

FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE

Historical trauma, ongoing effects of colonisation, and existing inequalities make Indigenous communities especially vulnerable during disasters. They bear unique pain from racism, discrimination and harm to their land. Disasters can deeply affect Indigenous peoples due to their strong connections to land, culture and identity, often leading to displacement and separation from loved ones.

Talking with local Indigenous communities about damaged cultural sites or newly discovered ones after disasters, often caused by fires, is crucial for prioritising environmental restoration and ongoing care of the land.

Search for the Aboriginal Support Network directory.

wsc.nsw.gov.au

OLDER PERSONS

Act!

This toolkit is a collaborative effort between essential emergency and Meals on Wheels services aimed at enhancing the emergency preparedness of vulnerable older individuals. It assists home support providers in empowering older adults to take proactive steps in preparing for emergencies.

nswmealsonwheels.org.au/act

IMMIGRANTS AND PEOPLE WHERE ENGLISH IS THEIR SECOND LANGUAGE

Disasters can disproportionately affect migrants living, working, studying, traveling or transiting in the affected country.

While migrants are most often resilient and resourceful, they also face a variety of factors, such as language barriers, unsafe working conditions and limited access to information resources and opportunities, which put them at risk in the face of hazards.

Visit the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) website for access to translation services.

tisonational.gov.au

Medical services during a disaster



During a natural disaster, attending to your general health might be overlooked. Illnesses can get worse, and you may leave your medications behind if you are evacuated. Here are four easy steps to get ready for a disaster.

MY HEALTH RECORD

In emergencies, healthcare providers can access your medical details through My Health Record, a secure platform storing your medical history, allergies and medications online. Download the My Health app on your mobile device and ask your doctor to upload your medical data to My Health Record.

digitalhealth.gov.au/myhealth

HEALTHDIRECT

If you live with a chronic illness, it's crucial to prioritise seeking medical advice during emergencies, as your condition may deteriorate rapidly. If your regular GP is unavailable, alternative options exist.

You can utilise Healthdirect by visiting their website at healthdirect.gov.au or calling 1800 022 222 to speak with a health professional for guidance.

healthdirect.gov.au

ACTIVE SCRIPT LIST

Your digital prescriptions can be safely stored online via the Active Script List (ASL) by a pharmacist. In emergencies, your pharmacist or doctor can access these prescriptions as necessary. During declared emergencies, pharmacists are authorised to provide certain medications without a prescription. If you need medications, seek assistance from a pharmacist.

SOUTH WESTERN SYDNEY PHN

Additionally, for after-hours medical services in South Western Sydney, please refer to the South Western Sydney PHN website.

swsphn.com.au/after-hours

PEOPLE WITH DIABETES

During an emergency, the body uses sugar differently. You may need to adjust your medicine. Having an emergency plan for your diabetes can help you control your condition in an emergency. Visit:

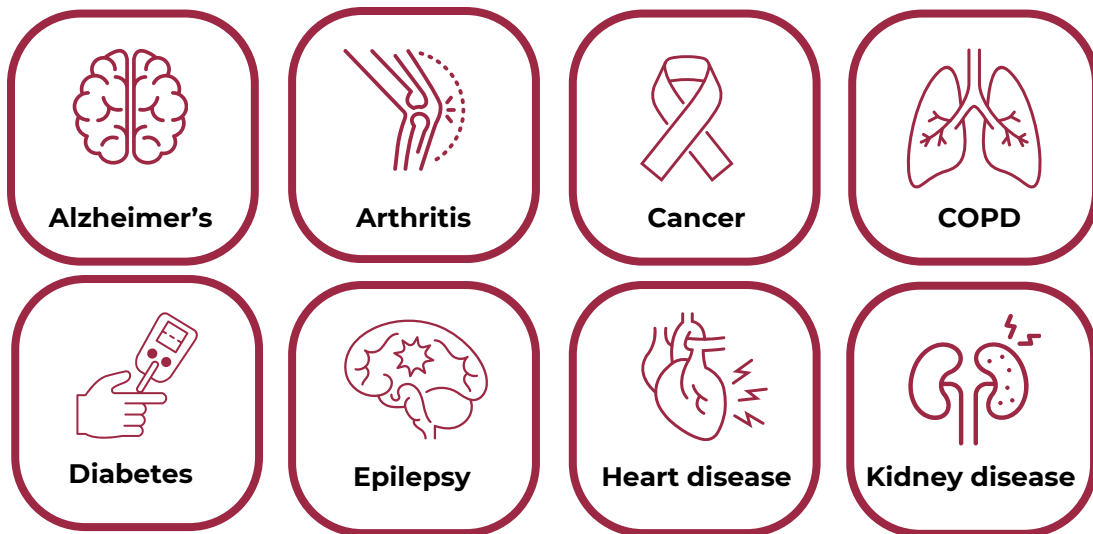
ndss.com.au/living-with-diabetes/health-management/emergencies-and-diabetes



Preparedness for people with chronic disease



For individuals with chronic health conditions, such as diabetes, heart disease or respiratory disorders, maintaining access to medications, medical supplies and healthcare services is essential for managing their conditions and preventing complications during and after a disaster.



KEY TIPS

- ✓ Make a plan tailored to your needs and abilities for emergencies.
- ✓ Ensure medications and necessary supplies are readily accessible in your emergency kit.
- ✓ Consider special requirements like mobility aids or assistive devices.
- ✓ Familiarise yourself with emergency protocols for your specific condition, including shelter.
- ✓ Arrangements and medical assistance.
- ✓ Stay informed about potential triggers or risks associated with your condition during emergencies.
- ✓ Communicate your needs and emergency plans with family, friends and caregivers.
- ✓ Regularly review and update your emergency plan and supplies.

How to emotionally prepare for a natural disaster



Getting emotionally ready for natural disasters is important. It can help you feel more confident and in control. This helps you make better emergency plans. It can also help lower your stress and longer-term mental health problems which may result from the trauma of being in a natural disaster.

AIME

The Australian Psychological Society outlines **4 steps** to being psychologically prepared, using the acronym '**AIME**'.



A

Anticipate you will feel worried or anxious and remember these are normal responses to a possible life-threatening situation.



I

Identify the exact physical feelings associated with anxiety and whether you are having any scary thoughts which are adding to the fear.



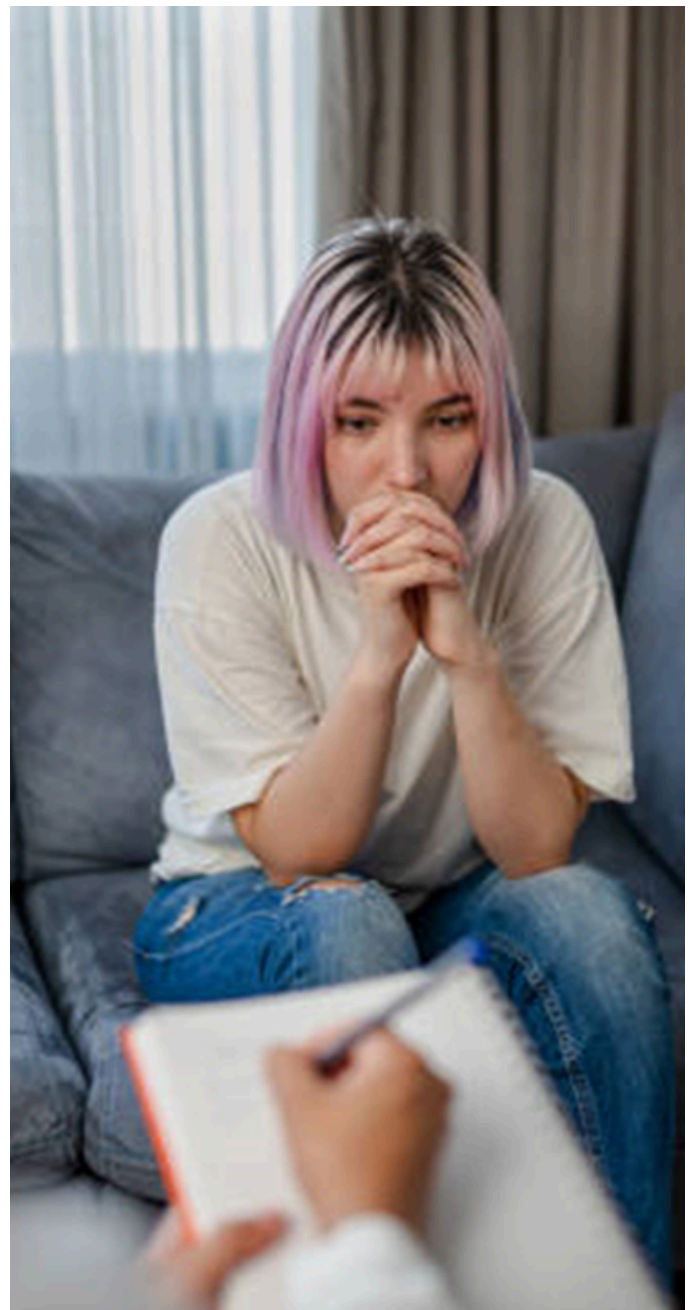
M

Manage your responses using controlled breathing and self-talk to stay as calm as possible so you can focus on the practical tasks which need your attention.



E

Engage with at least one person you trust to help you feel connected, more supported and less alone.





During emergencies, many people feel distressed, experiencing emotions like anxiety, sadness and difficulty sleeping.

Although these feelings typically improve over time, in crisis situations, common mental health issues like depression and anxiety may become much more prevalent.

It's vital to prioritise mental health during these challenging times by reaching out to friends and family for support and seeking professional assistance if necessary.

Remember, taking care of your mental well-being is just as important as caring for your physical health during emergencies.

MENTAL HEALTH PHONE LINES

Mental Health Line: 1800 011 511

Lifeline: 13 11 14

Suicide Call Back Service:
1300 659 467

Beyond Blue Support Service:
1300 224 636

Kids Helpline: 1800 551 800

Men's Line Australia:
1300 789 978

Alcohol Drug Information Service (ADIS)
NSW: 1800 250 015

Family Drug Support:
1300 368 186

Life In Mind:
02 48618000
(Southern Highlands Suicide prevention Program)

Head to Health: 1800 595 212

Youth and family services



Disasters can lead to a rise in domestic violence and sexual assault. Economic distress, urban living and displacement can worsen the situation. It's essential to recognise and address the warning signs of domestic violence and seek help to ensure your safety and wellbeing.

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FORUM

Work together to raise awareness and respond to domestic and family violence through education, support and advocacy for a safer and respectful community.

shdvhf.org.au/contact-us

STAR4KIDS (3-12 YEARS)

Psychological therapies for children aged three to 12 with, or at risk of developing a childhood emotional or mental health problems, delivered by mental health professionals experienced in working with children.

swsphn.com.au/star4kids

REFRAME (12-25 YEARS)

Mental health support for young people aged 12 to 25 living in Wollondilly and Wingecarribee. Services are delivered by youth engagement workers and mental health professionals experienced in working with young people.

communitylinks.org.au/reframe

1800RESPECT (1800 737 732)

Confidential information, counselling and support service.

1800RESPECT is available for free, 24 hours a day, seven days a week to support people impacted by domestic, family or sexual violence.

1800respect.org.au



How to stay informed



Whether you are visiting or a permanent resident, take some time to familiarise yourself with the location of your nearest police, RFS, pharmacy, doctor, vet and hospital.

IMPORTANT APPS



Hazards Near Me NSW

View emergency warnings and advice for fires, floods and tsunamis in NSW.



Emergency +

A national app developed by Australia's emergency services.



NSW Incident Alerts

Provides you with real-time alerts for incidents which may impact you at home at work or on the road.



Live Traffic NSW

Provides updates on road closures, road upgrades and road works, traffic cameras and traffic incidents.



BOM

Staying safe in severe weather. Preparing for severe weather. Check forecasts and warnings on this website or the BOM Weather app.

CONTACTS FOR RESIDENTS

Wingecarribee Shire Council

www.wsc.nsw.gov.au | 4868 0888

NSW Incident Alerts

www.nswincidentalerts.com

NSW SES

www.ses.nsw.gov.au | 132 500

Fire and Rescue NSW

www.fire.nsw.gov.au | 9265 2999

NSW RFS

www.rfs.nsw.gov.au | 1800 679 737

NSW Police Force

www.police.nsw.gov.au | 131 444

Endeavour Energy

www.endeavourenergy.com.au
131 003 (emergency)
133 718 (enquiries)

Water and sewer

www.wsc.nsw.gov.au | 4868 0888

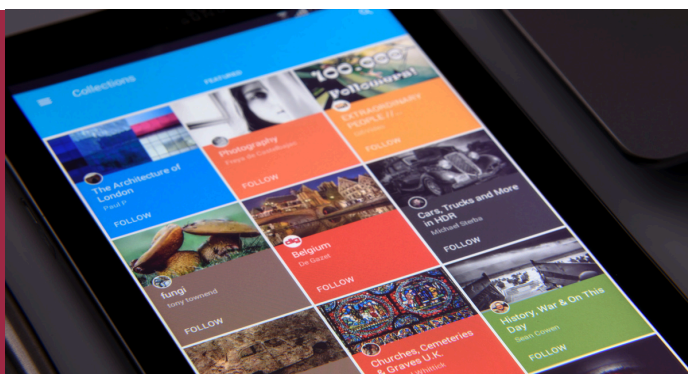
LISTEN

ABC Illawarra 97.3 MHz FM
Listen Live: abc.net.au/listen/live/illawarra

2ST Bowral 102.9

Highland FM 107.1

Power FM 94.9



My contact details on a page



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

MY INFORMATION

Name: _____
Address: _____
Next of kin: _____
Emergency contact name: _____
Emergency contact phone: _____

MEDICAL

Medicare number: _____
Pension/concession card: _____
Private health insurer: _____
Member number: _____
Private health insurer contact number: _____
GP/Dr's name: _____
GP practice name and address: _____
GP practice phone number: _____
Pharmacy name and address: _____
Pharmacy phone number: _____

MY MEDICATIONS

Medication name: _____
Dosage: _____
Frequency: _____
Medication name: _____
Dosage: _____
Frequency: _____

OTHER IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

NDIS number: _____
Other: _____



NSW Police Force



NSW GOVERNMENT

NEXT OF KIN PROGRAM

Developed by NSW Police Force

Next of Kin is the person you would like police to contact in case of an emergency.

WHAT IS THE NEXT OF KIN PROGRAM?

The Next of Kin Program helps people living alone to have the contact details of their nominated person recorded at a local police station.

The contact details of the Next of Kin, as well as the nominated doctor, dentist and any medical alerts that would help in an emergency situation will be entered onto a register. Any information provided will be securely stored and only accessed by NSW Police.

This information may assist the police and emergency services to contact a relative or other nominated person if needed in an emergency situation.

HOW DO I REGISTER?

Contact your local police station and ask to speak with the Crime Prevention Officer about the Next of Kin Program or complete the Next of Kin Program form and email to crimeprev@police.nsw.gov.au

The Next of Kin Program is a **FREE** to join.

Your local Crime Prevention Officer is:

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Name | |
| Police Station | |
| Contact No. | |
| NOK Registration No. | |

CUT HERE

CONFIDENTIAL: Next of Kin Program

REGISTRATION NUMBER

PERSON

Surname

Given Names

Date of Birth

Address

Phone (H)

Phone (M)

Language Spoken

NEXT OF KIN #1 (This can be a family member, neighbour, friend, etc)

Name

Date of Birth

Relationship (to you)

Address

Phone (H)

Phone (M)

Language Spoken

NEXT OF KIN #2

Name

Date of Birth

Relationship (to you)

Address

Phone

Phone

OTHER CONTACT DETAILS

Name of Doctor

Name of Dentist

Additional Information

I give permission for the NSW Police Force to hold my details on the Next of Kin register and contact any persons listed on this form in the case of an emergency.

Signature

Date

Search 'Next of Kin program' at police.nsw.gov.au

This brochure was a collaboration between South Western Sydney Primary Health Network and Wingecarribee Shire Council, in consultation with GPs, the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia and disaster experts.

