

# Home Hazard Checklist

## Check it out

Set aside an afternoon to go through this checklist. Work in teams or all together to see how many items you can check off. Use a separate sheet to make notes about items that need to be corrected. Many of the hazards are easy to fix and the actions you take now will make you, your family and your home safer in the future.

### Preparedness

Disaster preparedness begins with a few important steps.

#### Our family has ...

- At least 1 person in our home with current first aid/CPR certification.
- A battery-operated, NOAA weather/all-hazards radio.
- A fire extinguisher that has been inspected and is fully charged.
- A family disaster plan that is practiced and updated approximately every 6 months.
- A disaster supplies kit that is refreshed every 6 months.
- A current home inventory with a copy stored at a separate location, such as an office, safe deposit box or relative's home.
- Reviewed our insurance policies this year.

### Safety outside

An inspection of your home and property can help you identify improvements that protect you from a range of hazards.

#### For GENERAL SAFETY, our family has ...

- Made our house number visible from the street.
- Identified the main gas valves to our home and learned how and when to turn them off.
- Protected our water pipes from freezing in the winter.
- A driveway that is accessible to emergency workers (adequate clearance on the sides, overhead and no tight turns).
- Checked the driveway and patio for any cracks or uneven surfaces that could cause falls.
- Braced window air conditioning units against falling.
- Inspected and tightened the tie-down straps in the last year (for manufactured homes).

#### To reduce damage from FIRE, our family has ...

- Cleaned debris off the roof, out of the gutters and away from air conditioning units.
- Stored firewood at least 30 feet away from our home.
- Installed screening underneath elevated decks to prevent debris buildup.
- Cleared 30 feet of space around our home to reduce damage from wildfires.

#### To reduce damage from HIGHWINDS, our family has ...

- Stored lawn furniture, toys, gardening tools and trash cans away from stairs and exits, and secured these items to prevent them from being blown by high winds and doing damage.
- Replaced roofing tiles that were broken or missing.
- Braced the chimney on the outside to prevent falling bricks and reinforced the ceiling to prevent bricks from falling through.
- Removed dead and broken limbs from trees to prevent them from falling or becoming wind-borne missiles during a storm.
- Strengthened the garage door to prevent damage from high winds.
- Installed hurricane or high wind shutters or have pre-cut plywood panels for all windows and sliding glass doors.

### Safety Inside

Taking some simple precautions can reduce or eliminate potential problems and make your home safer and more secure.

#### For GENERAL SAFETY, our family has ...

- Checked that gas appliances are properly vented.
- Pushed the test button on all Ground Fault Interrupt (GFI) outlets.
- Installed and checked light switch outlet covers so no wires are exposed.

- Protected all electrical devices with surge protectors.
- Checked that all power tools are unplugged and stored in cases when not in use.
- Fixed or moved torn carpets or wires in pathways that may cause people to trip.
- Checked that stair handrails are installed securely.
- Installed a non-slip backing on all throw rugs.
- Working nightlights at the top and bottom of each set of stairs.

**To reduce damage from FIRE, our family has ...**

- Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms in each living area that are tested monthly.
- Inspected and cleaned the covers of our smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms.
- Fire extinguishers that are properly mounted and inspected.
- Stored matches, lighters, and chemicals out of children's reach.
- Stored flammable materials (such as paints, gasoline and barbecue grill tanks) properly and away from heat sources.
- Cleaned the cooking grease off the kitchen exhaust hood and filter.
- Checked extension cords and replaced those that are damaged.
- Cleaned the chimney and dryer ducts in the last year.
- Cleaned or replaced the furnace filter regularly.

**To reduce damage from FLOODING, our family has ...**

- Installed a sewer back-flow valve to prevent water from coming back in the pipe.
- Shut-off valves for all plumbing fixtures to cut off the water in the event of a leak.
- Elevated the water heater to prevent water damage.
- Checked water hoses on clothes washers, refrigerator icemakers and dishwashers for cracks, leaks or other signs of stress. These hoses should be replaced every 5 years.

- Checked the caulking around bathroom fixtures to prevent water from seeping into the sub-flooring and wall, and causing damage.
- Checked the water heater for signs of leaks or rust that may indicate the need for replacement.

**To reduce damage from EARTHQUAKE, our family has...**

- Moved heavy or breakable objects from high shelves to lower shelves and secured them.
- Securely anchored mirrors, pictures and hanging plants to wall studs away from windows using closed hooks.
- Secured top-heavy and freestanding furniture to wall studs to keep it from toppling over in a disaster, injuring people and/or blocking exits.
- Secured all electronic equipment and appliances so that they cannot slide off countertops and furniture.
- Installed or replaced latches on kitchen, bathroom and workroom cabinet doors so that they cannot accidentally open if the house shakes.
- Strapped the water heater to wall studs to prevent it from moving or tipping.
- Installed and checked flexible connectors from water and gas lines to appliances, since rigid connections often break during an earthquake.
- Checked to see that our home is bolted to its foundation.

**Family Disaster Plan** – Families do best in a disaster by preparing in advance and working together as a team. Knowing what to do is everyone's responsibility. Discuss the disasters that are possible in your area and plan together what you will each do. Know how to contact each other and where to meet if anything happens.

**Build a Disaster Supplies Kit** – After a disaster, local officials and relief workers will be on the scene, but they cannot reach everyone immediately. Prepare your family to be on your own for at least 3 days with enough water and food for each family member, first aid kits, flashlights, fresh batteries, medicines and more. Don't forget to plan for your pets. If you've gathered supplies in advance, your family can easily evacuate or stay home safely and comfortably until help arrives.

**For more information call:  
Disaster Resistant Community at 425-8401**