**Emergency Management Frequently Asked Questions**

1. What should I do before an emergency?
   1. Know your evacuation zone and the evacuation routes.
      1. <https://myescambia.com/apps/knowyourzone/index.html>
   2. Create a family emergency plan and practice it.
      1. Prepared an emergency kit with food, water, medications, flashlight, radio, and important documents.
   3. Sign up for emergency alerts through your local emergency management agency.
      1. <https://myescambia.com/our-services/public-safety/beready>
2. How do I stay safe during an emergency?
   1. Follow instructions from local authorities.
   2. Evacuate if ordered.
   3. Stay indoors and away from windows if sheltering in place.
   4. Monitor weather updates and emergency alerts.
3. What steps should I take after an emergency?
   1. Avoid floodwaters and downed power lines.
   2. Check on neighbors and loved ones.
   3. Document any damages for insurance and FEMA.
   4. Contact local emergency services for support or guidance.
4. Resident Evacuations
   1. How will I know if I need to evacuate?
      1. Evacuation orders will be issued by local emergency officials via radio, TV, official social media accounts, and emergency alert systems.
   2. What should I bring when evacuating?
      1. Take your emergency kit, personal documents, medications, cash, clothing, food, water, and cellphone charger. Don’t forget pets and their supplies.
5. Safety Tips
   1. How can I stay safe around floodwaters?
      1. Never walk or drive through floodwaters. Just 6 inches of moving water can knock you down, and 2 feet can sweep away vehicles.
   2. Are there any specific dangers after a storm?
      1. Watch for fallen power lines, gas leaks, damaged structures, and contaminated water.
6. Generator Safety
   1. How do I use a generator safely?
      1. Only operate generators outdoors, far from windows and doors.
   2. Never use inside homes, garages, or enclosed spaces.
   3. Use proper cords and avoid backfeeding into the power grid.
7. Food and Drinking Water Safety
   1. Is my food safe after a power outage?
      1. Discard perishable foods if the refrigerator has been above 40 degrees for more than 4 hours. When in doubt, throw it out.
   2. How can I ensure my drinking water is safe?
      1. Follow boil water notices. If unsure, boil water for at least one minute or use bottled water.
8. Will EMS and Fire respond after a hurricane?
   1. EMS and Fire will be able to respond once sustained winds fall under 40mph.
9. Wastewater and Stormwater Safety
   1. Can I flush toilets or use sinks after a storm?
      1. If the sewer system is damaged or flooded, avoid flushing or draining until the system is inspected or restored.
   2. What should I do about stormwater flooding in my yard or neighborhood?
      1. Avoid contact. Report any blocked storm drains or chemical odors to local public works or emergency services.
10. Damage Assessment and Recovery
    1. How do I report property damage?
       1. Contact your insurance provider and document damage with photos. Report major structural issues to your local emergency management office.
    2. Can I return home after an evacuation?
       1. Only return when officials declare it safe. Follow local guidance for cleanup and utility restoration.
11. Debris Cleanup
    1. Who is responsible for debris removal?
       1. Local government agencies may coordinate debris pickup. Follow their schedule and sorting rules (e.g., separating vegetation from construction debris).
    2. Is it safe to clean up debris myself?
       1. Use gloves, masks, and protective clothing. Be aware of sharp objects, mold, or chemical exposure.
12. FEMA and State Assistance
    1. How do I apply for FEMA assistant
       1. Visit [www.disasterassistance.gov](http://www.disasterassistance.gov) or call 1-800-621-FEMA (3362). You’ll need your Social Security Number, damage documentation, and insurance information.
    2. What state assistance is available?
       1. The state may offer shelter, food, unemployment aid, and debris removal services. Check with your local emergency management or state relief agency for details.