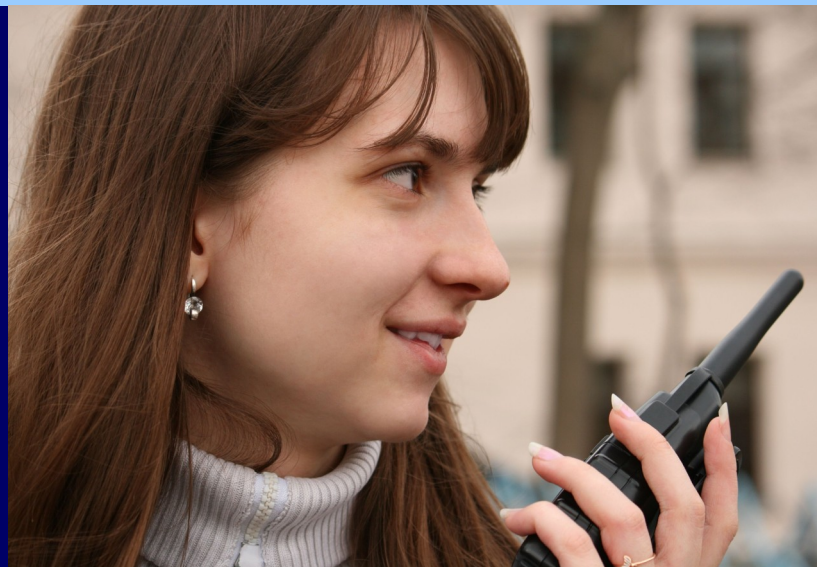# At-A-Glance

Family Communications Plan

Your family may not be together when disaster strikes. Plan how to contact one another during an emergency. Think about how you will communicate in different situations.

Contact card for each family member…

• Complete a contact card for each family member. Keep these cards handy in a wallet, purse, or backpack/book bag for kids.

• Check with your child's daycare or school. Facilities designed for children should include identification planning as part of their emergency plans.

Did you know?

An extra cellular phone charger in your vehicle allows you to remain in contact when the power is out.

Out-of-town contacts and In Case of Emergency (ICE):

• Identify an out-of-state friend or relative to notify when you are safe. It may be easier to make a long-distance phone call than to call across town; an out-of-town contact may be in a better position to communicate among separated family members.
• Identify a local friend or relative across town to notify when you are safe. A local contact may be able to provide help in contacting other family members or assist in a disaster.
• Every member of your family should know family phone numbers and either own a cell phone, or have coins or a prepaid phone card to call their emergency contact person. If you have a cellular phone, program that person as "ICE" (In Case of Emergency) in your phone.

Alternate forms of communication:

• Teach family members how to text message (also known as SMS or Short Message Service). Text messages can often get around network disruptions when a phone call might not be able to get through.
• Share your emergency communications plan with friends and relatives.
• Subscribe to cellular phone alert services. Many communities have systems that will send text alerts or e-mails to let you know about bad weather, road closings, and local emergencies.
• Consider communicating via e-mail or using various forms of social media during an emergency.

Sources: U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency

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