

City of Laurel



Emergency Preparedness Guide



www.CityofLaurel.org





Craig A. Moe **Mayor, City of Laurel**

Every day we witness disasters, emergencies, and incidents that have befall our community and neighboring communities. These events seem to be playing out right before our eyes and can have significant dramatic effects on all our residents and businesses.

As Mayor of the City and an emergency first responder for over 35 years, I know firsthand how important it is for our residents and business owners to be prepare and ready for any type of emergency.

The ability of our community to prepare for these emergencies or disasters directly affects our ability to react, respond, and recover from emergency incidents, both natural and manmade.

Along with our City Council, I have taken the necessary steps to enhance and expand the emergency services management within our City and we continue to make significant strides to work with all our citizens and businesses in preparing for emergencies.

In 2016, it has become imperative that we all recognize the importance of preparing for and dealing with disasters and incidents involving our local communities and surrounding neighbors.

This Emergency Preparedness Guide will provide you with some basic guidelines and facts that you can use to enhance your individual preparedness action plan. This guide does not provide everything that you will need to know or prepare for, but will be a valuable tool in your home, office or business plan.

The greater Laurel area residents, businesses and visitors benefit greatly from the dedicated professional and volunteer first responders along with our elected leadership and City employees who work tirelessly to provide you the guidance, direction, and assistance in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from disasters and emergency events within the City.

However, without your direct support, understanding, and actions we cannot be successful in this critical endeavor.

On behalf of our City Council and myself, I want to sincerely thank everyone in contributing to this important effort and to stay diligent. Together we can realize our goals on being prepared!

“In Service for Others”



Emergency Preparedness Guide

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Emergency Preparedness Guide

Preparing for Emergencies

The importance of preparing ourselves for disasters is universal. Emergencies can happen anywhere-at home or at work- and everyone must take action to prepare for emergencies in case something unexpected happens.

Being prepared can reduce fear, anxiety, and losses that accompany disasters. Communities, families, and individuals should know what to do in the events of a fire and where to seek shelter during a tornado. They should be ready to evacuate their homes and take refuge in public shelters and know how to care for their basic medical needs.

However, the truth is there's no one-size-fits-all solutions to being prepared. Everyone must be prepared to be their own "emergency manager." When disaster strikes, you may have to be able to survive on your own for 72 hours or more without access to power, food, or transportation. You should also think about your own situation and what additional needs you might have.



Your Emergency Preparedness Kit

The seven basic items that should be stored in your home are water, food, a first-aid kit, tools and emergency supplies, clothing and bedding, specialty items, and an ABC fire extinguisher. Keep the items that you would most likely need at home in one easy-to-carry container such as a large, covered trash can, plastic storage container, camping backpack or duffel bag. Store it in a convenient place, put a smaller version (that includes flares or reflective triangles, jumper cables, local road maps, and seasonal supplies) in your car, and keep a "mini" one-container version at work. Keep items in airtight plastic bags. Remember to change the stored water and rotate the food supplies every six months (place dates on containers). Check the supplies and re-think your needs every year. Consult your physician or pharmacist about storing prescription medications, and maintain a list of your prescription needs.

Water

Purchase bottled water, or store tap water in clean, airtight plastic containers such as soft drink bottles. Avoid containers that will decompose or break, like milk cartons or glass bottles. Keep at least a three-day supply of water for each person in your household. Plan for one gallon of water per person per day. Water should be stored in a cool, dark place with the date labeled on the container. Tap water generally may be stored up to two weeks without further disinfection. Having some water purification tablets on hand could be useful in the event of an extended disruption in water service. NOTE: Water Purification tablets release chlorine or iodine. People with hidden or chronic liver or kidney disease may be adversely affected by iodized tablets and may experience worsened health problems as a result of ingestion.

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Food

Store a three to five-day supply of nonperishable food per person. These foods should require no refrigeration, preparation, or cooking, and little or no water. Examples include: ready-to-eat canned meats; canned fruits and vegetables; canned or boxed juices; canned or powdered milk and soup; condiments such as sugar, salt, and pepper; high-energy food like peanut butter, jelly, low-sodium crackers, granola bars, and trail mix; vitamins; foods for infants or persons on special diets; cookies; tea bags; hard candy; instant coffee; and sweetened cereals.

First-Aid Kit

Assemble a first-aid kit for your home and each vehicle. At a minimum, the kit should include sterile adhesive bandages in assorted sizes, 2-inch and 4-inch sterile gauze pads (4-6 each size), hypoallergenic adhesive tape, triangular bandages (3), 2-inch and 3-inch sterile roller bandages (3 rolls each), scissors, tweezers, needle, moistened towelettes, antiseptic, thermometer, tongue depressors (2), tube of petroleum jelly or other lubricant, cotton balls, assorted sizes of safety pins, soap/cleansing agent (isopropyl alcohol or hydrogen peroxide), latex gloves (2 pairs), and sunscreen. You should also include aspirin and non-aspirin pain reliever, anti-diarrhea medication, Syrup of Ipecac (use to induce vomiting if advised by the Poison Control Center), activated charcoal (in case of poisoning), antacids, potassium iodide, and laxatives.



Tools and Emergency Supplies

Keep the following items handy for all-around use: battery-powered radio, flashlight, extra batteries of assorted sizes (check shelf life before purchasing), duct tape, aluminum foil, rope, paper cups, plates and plastic utensils (or mess kits), cash (include change) and/or traveler's checks, nonelectric can opener and utility knife, small ABC fire extinguisher, pliers, shut-off wrench (to turn off household gas and water), compass, matches in a waterproof container (or waterproof matches), plastic storage containers, signal flares, paper and pencil or pen, needles and thread, medicine dropper, whistle, plastic sheeting, scissors, N95 filter masks (or any dense-weave cotton material that fits snugly over the nose and mouth), work gloves, and local map. For sanitation, pack toilet paper, soap and liquid detergent, feminine supplies, personal hygiene items, washcloth and towels, small shovel, plastic garbage bags with ties, plastic bucket and lid, disinfectant, and household chlorine bleach.

Clothing and Bedding

Assemble one or two complete changes of clothing per person, sturdy shoes or work boots, rain gear, blankets or sleeping bags, hat and gloves, thermal underwear, and sunglasses.

Specialty Items

Babies—formula, diapers, bottles, powdered milk, and medications.

Adults—medications, prescriptions, denture needs, eyeglasses, contact lenses and related supplies, and insect repellent.



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Entertainment—games, pack of playing cards, books, and several quiet toys for children.

Important Family Documents—wills, insurance policies, bank account numbers, contracts, deeds, passports, stocks and bonds, immunization records, important phone numbers, credit card accounts, social security cards, and other personal family records. These items should be kept in a waterproof portable container.

Equipment—NOAA weather radio.

Emergency Planning for Pets

Emergency planning is for all members of the family, including pets. With the exception of service animals, most shelters do not accept pets. Prepare a list of kennels, friends or family members who may be able to care for your pet in an emergency. If you plan to place your pet in a kennel, make sure that the facility meets all requirements for long-term care and has an adequate disaster plan itself. If you must evacuate, do not leave pets behind—there is a chance they may not survive, or may get lost before you return. Put together a basic emergency preparedness kit for your pets to take with you in case you must leave your residence quickly. Recommended items include:



- A pet first-aid kit and guidebook.
- An airline-approved carrier for each dog, cat or other pets.
- Identification tags, collar, and muzzle/leash.
- An extra supply of pet food and a manual can opener.
- Plenty of clean water.
- Bowls (disposable containers if you must leave your residence).
- A blanket (for bedding and scooping up a fearful pet).
- A few favorite toys (to reduce stress).
- Vaccination records, registrations, special needs list, and sufficient medicines.
- All vaccinations must be up-to-date and a City of Laurel license is required for your pet to be admitted into an animal shelter.
- Current photos and descriptions of your pets to help others identify them in case you and your pets become separated and to prove they are yours.

For more information on emergency preparedness for pets, call the Humane Society of the United States at 202-452-1100 or visit their Web site at www.hsus.org.

Household and Financial Preparations

Whether you own your home or rent, there are many things you can do to protect your home and possessions. You can increase your safety and reduce your insurance costs by:



- # In harm's way
- Protecting your home from the damage of a hurricane
-
- Garden tools, saws, grills and hose** should be anchored or shelved.
- Electric appliances** and furniture off the floor and cover in plastic.
- Inset windows** in sliding patio doors, if wind-blown, will lift them off the tracks and blow into the house.
- Fill bathtubs and sinks** with water in case water supply is interrupted or contaminated. Turn off main water in the house.
- Store personal papers and irreplaceables** in the highest point possible in water-proof containers.
- Turn off pets' air conditioning** or shelter them from the storm.
- Close all outdoor electrical outlets** and cover with duct tape.
- Secure garage and porch doors.**
- Park your vehicle** before the garage door and keep the gas tank full.
- Stay in a central room** or at the charmed side of the house. Move to another room as wind direction changes.
- Get the refrigerator** on maximum cool, do not open unless necessary. Keep a full set of portable items and canned foods.
- Lower radio and television antennas.**
- Turn off main gas and electricity** before you go. Use Baigtights.
- Hurricanes are the most powerful storms on earth.** Destructive winds, tornadoes, coastal surges and inland flooding can cause damage that costs billions to repair.
- Before the storm**
- Hurricanes have potential for both wind and water damage. A few things can go a long way to greatly reduce the impact of the storm. The main goal is to prevent wind damage, which in turn will secure the structure and prevent water from entering.
- Keep swimming pools filled** to 12 inches below the ridge, close the pump and turn off the electricity, add additional chlorine.
- Get the refrigerator** on maximum cool, do not open unless necessary. Keep a full set of portable items and canned foods.
- Lower radio and television antennas.**
- Stay in a central room** or at the charmed side of the house. Move to another room as wind direction changes.
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How Much Cash Should I keep on Hand during an Emergency?

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And don't forget the coin jar where you put the change from your pockets. You might be surprised to realize that you could have some hefty cash already stashed there.

Emergency Situations

There are two primary kinds of emergencies that people have in mind when doing their planning. The first is a civil or natural disaster emergency, during which normal infrastructure such as bank ATM networks, credit card processing and other forms of electronic payment may break down. The second is a personal emergency, such as a job loss or hospitalization, which may disrupt your income and force you to rely on savings to get by. These issues require very different plans.

Disaster Planning

Many events could keep you from getting access to your cash, such as earthquakes, floods, tornadoes or hurricanes or civil emergencies such as what happened during the 9/11 attacks. A good rule of thumb is to keep cash on hand in five, ten and twenty denominations, as breaking larger bills might be troublesome. For emergency disaster preparedness, keep at least one month of expenses on hand at home. This should more than cover anything that comes up as most of these types of disasters are mitigated within a week or two.



Personal Emergencies

Cash planning for a personal emergency can be harder to prepare for, as a family emergency can last much longer than a civil emergency. Financial expert Suze Orman recommends keeping eight months of your household expenses on hand for emergencies instead of the six months recommended by others. This type of emergency cash fund is usually maintained at a bank or in a CD deposit. Place seven months of expenses in the bank and keep one month of expense money at home in your cash fund for emergencies.

- Digitize all critical documents and place on a thumb drive which is kept in a secure location.
- If you use a bank safe deposit box, it is recommended that you keep your items in a water tight box within the safe deposit bank in case of major flooding.

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Emergency Planning for Businesses

Businesses are just as vulnerable to emergency situations as individuals. Business owners should develop emergency plans for the sake of their employees as well as the survival of their businesses.

Emergency planning includes:

- Maintaining a list of emergency numbers of employees so their families can be contacted if necessary.
- Having a plan in place to evacuate staff and customers quickly and safely. The plan should include a designated meeting place outside the building.
- Practicing the plan with staff.
- Backing up computer data regularly and storing it offsite.
- Purchasing ample insurance coverage to minimize losses.
- Identifying crucial business operations and developing plans to ensure their continuation in the event of an emergency
- Ensuring local police have up to date emergency contact information for key personnel.

Employees need to know what to do in an emergency. The time to think about what you need to do in the event of a disruption to your business is before you face a crisis. Your employees depend on you now for direction and leadership. They will depend on you even more should there be an emergency situation.

When business is disrupted, it can cost money. Lost revenues plus extra expenses means reduced profits. Insurance does not cover all costs and cannot replace customers that defect to the competition. A business continuity plan to continue business is essential.



The US Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMSA) has resources available to assist the business owners with preparing for emergencies and should be used to develop their action plan for these incidents.

Businesses are critical to our community and just like individuals and families, they need to be prepared for the unexpected.

The following websites are provided as a resource for the business owners:

<https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/89550>.



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Homeland Security

National and Maryland Homeland Security Advisory systems have been put into place to provide a quick and comprehensive way to provide information on warnings and actual events involving terrorist acts that may occur.

National Terrorism Advisory System - The National Terrorism Advisory System, or NTAS, replaces the color-coded Homeland Security Advisory System (HSAS). This new system will more effectively communicate information about terrorist threats by providing timely, detailed information to the public, government agencies, first responders, airports and other transportation hubs, and the private sector.

These alerts will include a clear statement that there is an **imminent threat** or **elevated threat**. Using available information, the alerts will provide a concise summary of the potential threat, information about actions being taken to ensure public safety, and recommended steps that individuals, communities, businesses and governments can take to help prevent, mitigate or respond to the threat. For more information or to check for alerts visit [www.DHS.gov/national- terrorism-advisory-system](http://www.DHS.gov/national-terrorism-advisory-system)

NTAS Alerts contain a **sunset provision** indicating a specific date when the alert expires - there will not be a constant NTAS Alert or blanket warning that there is an overarching threat. If threat information changes for an alert, the Secretary of Homeland Security may announce an updated NTAS Alert. All changes, including the announcement that cancels an NTAS Alert, will be distributed the same way as the original alert.

State and local health departments also are preparing for terrorist events. Working under guidance from the

Centers for Disease Control, health officials have implemented an enhanced disease surveillance system to rapidly identify any unusual disease events that may be occurring in the state. State and local health departments are working closely with agencies and organizations locally and across the state to develop coordinated response plans for various situations. In case of an attack, pertinent health information would be provided to the public via mass.

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

Located just outside of Washington, DC and near major communications infrastructure and military bases, Laurel citizens have unique reasons to be prepared for emergencies. To help prepare residents and respond to emergencies, the City of Laurel has created a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).



NTAS Alerts

Imminent Threat Alert

Warns of a credible, specific, and impending terrorist threat against the United States.

Elevated Threat Alert Warns of a credible terrorist threat against the United States.

Sunset Provision

An individual threat alert is issued for a specific time period and then automatically expires. It may be extended if new information becomes available or the



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CERT's mission is to facilitate the development of a community-based disaster response plan for the City of Laurel to ensure the city is prepared for any type of emergency. CERT supports Laurel's disaster planning by coordinating with other agencies, developing tabletop exercises, reviewing disaster plans, and enhancing communication.

CERT trains and organizes teams of volunteers that provide assistance to the citizens of Laurel before, during, and after disasters or major incidents. CERT volunteers help others following disasters when professional responders are not immediately available to help, and supplement and support the efforts of professional responders upon their arrival. CERT volunteers also support emergency response departments by organizing and participating in local preparedness projects and initiatives. The CERT program educates participants about how to prepare for hazards that may impact their communities and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations.

CERT team personnel are clearly marked and identified and they are there to help and assist all citizens. It is advised that you follow their directions and requests during an incident.

If you are interested in becoming a CERT member or if you just want to receive Emergency Preparedness training, please contact City Of Laurel's Emergency Management Coordinator, Stephen Allen at 301-725-5300 x2244 or email at sallen@laurel.md.us

Active Shooter

Active shooter events have become more common than in previous years and should be regarded as a critical subject that needs to be discussed within all members of your household. These events happen unexpectedly and fast and the decisions and actions that you and your family members make, could be the difference in the outcome.

The United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has published numerous documents that provided examples of good practices for coping with an active shooter situation.

- Be aware of your environment and any possible dangers.
- Take note of the two nearest exits in any facility you visit.
- If you are in an office, stay there and secure the door.
- If you are in a hallway, get into a room and secure the door.
- As last resort, attempt to take the active shooter down. When the shooter is at close range and you cannot flee, your chance of survival is much greater if you try to incapacitate him/her.



"CALL 911 WHEN IT IS SAFE TO DO SO!"



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The current recommended course of actions if you find yourself in an active shooter incident is to:

- First – RUN
- Second – HIDE
- Third – FIGHT

Active shooter incidents can be life or death situation for you and/or a family member and should be part of your emergency preparedness guide. Additional education and training material is readily available from your local police department, DHS websites, and your local emergency management agency.

The following website is one of the suggested resources.

<http://www.dhs.gov/active-shooter-preparedness>.

Reporting Suspicious Activity

Occasionally, the federal government may call for a heightened state of alert on the part of local law enforcement and residents. When the police go to a higher state of alert, they may add extra patrols in various locations, increase staffing, carry extra protective equipment, and maintain more frequent communication with federal, state and other local law enforcement agencies.

Residents should also increase their awareness of their surroundings and report any suspicious activity to the police. Many people fail to act because they are not sure if what they are observing is worth reporting.

When in doubt, call the police immediately. Don't lose precious time discussing the event with friends and neighbors first. Types of activity that residents should report include people, vehicles, or circumstances that appear unusual or out of place, such as:

- A stranger around your neighborhood or a strange vehicle parked in your neighborhood for a long period of time.
- Someone looking into houses or vehicles.
- Recurring appearances of strange vehicles in the neighborhood.
- Someone tampering with the electrical, gas, water, or sewer system without an identifiable company vehicle and uniform.
- An unusually large amount of traffic coming to a house or apartment building.
- Houses or buildings where extreme security measures seem to have been taken.
- Houses or buildings where no owner or primary renter is apparent, and no home activities—yard work, painting, maintenance, etc.—seem to go on.
- Strange odors coming from around houses or buildings.
- Any stranger knocking at doors.
- Persons standing around, possibly acting as lookouts.



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If you suspect a crime is being or is about to be committed, call 911. Do not panic and do not put yourself at risk. **If the activity simply appears suspicious, call the police non-emergency number for your area** and describe the activity in detail.

You need not give your name in either case. However, if you want a police officer to contact you, be prepared to give your name, address, and telephone number, and ask that the officer contact you. This information is kept confidential.

Terrorism

It Takes a Community to Protect a Community

"If You See Something, Say Something" is a national campaign that raises public awareness of the indicators of terrorism and terrorism-related crime, as well as the importance of reporting suspicious activity to state and local law enforcement.

Across the nation, we're all part of communities. In cities, on farms, and in the suburbs, we share everyday moments with our neighbors, colleagues, family, and friends. It's easy to take for granted the routine moments in our every day—going to work or school, the grocery stores or the gas station. But your every day is different than your neighbor's—filled with the moments that make it uniquely yours. So if you see something you know shouldn't be there—or someone's behavior that doesn't seem quite right—say something. Because only you know what's supposed to be in your everyday. Informed, alert communities play a critical role in keeping our nation safe. "If You See Something, Say Something" engages the public in protecting our homeland through awareness-building, partnerships, and other outreach.

The following website is one of the suggested resources.

<https://www.dhs.gov/see-something-say-something>.

Terrorism is a broad term that describes the use of force or violence against persons or property in violation of the criminal laws of the United States for purposes of intimidation, coercion, or ransom. Terrorists often use threats to disrupt our lives and create fear among the public and to try to convince citizens that their government is powerless to prevent terrorism. The effects of terrorism can include a significant number of casualties, structural damage to buildings, and disruptions in basic services such as electricity, water supply, public transportation, communications, and healthcare. You can help thwart terrorist activities by being observant and reporting suspicious activity that you think may be terrorism related to the Maryland State Police's Homeland Security and Intelligence Bureau at 1-800-492-TIPS (1-800-492-8477). You can prepare to deal with a terrorist incident by adapting many of the same techniques used to prepare for other crises:

- Be alert and aware of the surrounding area. The very nature of terrorism suggests that there may be little or no warning.
- Take precautions when traveling. Be aware of conspicuous or unusual behavior. Do not accept packages from strangers. Do not leave luggage unattended.



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- Learn where emergency exits are located. Think ahead about how to evacuate a building, subway, or congested public area in a hurry. Learn where staircases are located.
- Notice your immediate surroundings. Be aware of heavy or breakable objects that could move, fall, or break in an explosion.

Handling Mail Safely

The United States Postal Service urges people to report any suspicious letter or package that:

- Has excessive postage, no postage, or non-canceled postage.
- Has no return address or a fictitious return address.
- Has an improper spelling of addressee names, titles, or locations.
- Looks lumpy or has a lopsided appearance.
- Is sealed with excessive amounts of tape.
- Is unexpected and is from a foreign country.
- Has a postmark showing a different location than the return address.
- Displays distorted handwriting or cut-and-paste lettering.



If you receive a suspicious letter or package:

- Do not open it.
- Do not shake, bump, or sniff it.
- Cover it or place it in a plastic bag.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.
- Call the police non-emergency number.

In most cases the police will be dispatched for a report of an unopened suspicious letter or package and after investigating the item, will advise you what to do. If the letter or package does not meet specific criteria, they may simply advise you to dispose of the suspicious letter or package if you are uncomfortable opening it.

The fire department will respond to reports of suspicious substances for evaluation and proper disposal. When in doubt, however, call the Police non-emergency number or 911.

Emergency Shelter

When conditions warrant, local officials may instruct residents to seek shelter in their homes or officials may establish community-based shelters for local residents. Normally, shelters are set up in public schools, recreation centers, or other appropriate facilities where residents can seek refuge as well as sleep and eat. Persons needing shelter are asked to bring a change of clothing, bathing and sanitary supplies, pre-filled prescription and other medical needs, denture and eye care materials, and special dietary supplies or requirements. With the exception of service animals, pets are generally not permitted in the shelters.

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If local officials advise you to “**shelter-in-place**,” they mean for you to remain indoors and protect yourself there. Take your children and pets indoors immediately. Get your emergency preparedness kit, and make sure the battery-powered radio is working.

In the case of a chemical or biological emergency, go to an interior room, preferably one without windows. An above-ground location is preferable because some chemicals are heavier than air, and may seep into basements even if the windows are closed. While gathering your family, you should:

- Close all windows, exterior doors, and fireplace dampers.
- Turn off all clothes dryers, fans, and heating and air conditioning systems.
- Place wet towels in front of exterior door thresholds.
- Use plastic sheeting or heavy duty garbage bags to cover doors, windows, exhaust fans, outlets, vents, and heat registers. Each piece you use should be several inches larger than the space you want to cover so that you can duct tape it flat against the wall. NOTE: Ten square feet of floor space per person will provide sufficient air to prevent carbon dioxide build-up for up to five hours.
- Close the window shades, blinds, or curtains if you are told there is a danger of explosion.
- Stay inside and continue listening to your radio or television until you are told all is safe or you are told to evacuate.
- If possible, create and stock a safe room in advance which can be used as your last resort if you need to shelter in place.



In the case of a nuclear or radiological attack, seek shelter as quickly as you can, below ground if possible. If your home does not have a basement, go to an interior room on the first floor. The heavier, dense materials—thick walls, concrete, bricks, books, and earth—between you and the fallout particles, the better.

Flat roofs collect fallout particles so the top floor of a high-rise is not a good choice, nor is a floor adjacent to a neighboring flat roof. Stay inside and continue listening to your radio or television. Do not leave your shelter until officials say it is safe to do so.

When Electrical Power is Lost

Disruption of electrical service can occur as a result of many things, including lightning, high winds, ice and heavy snow, and equipment failure. For the most part, service is normally restored within a short period. However, major power outages can happen for extended periods from time to time. When power is lost, you should:



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- Check to see if your neighbors have power. The power loss may be only in your home, due to a blown fuse or a tripped circuit. If your neighbors also are without service, call your local power company (see list of useful phone numbers). If you must go outside to assess the situation, take a flashlight and watch for downed power lines that could still be energized. If downed lines are located, don't go near them or touch anything that they may be in contact with. Report downed power lines immediately.
- Use flashlights or battery-operated lanterns for lighting. Candles and kerosene lanterns are not recommended for lighting because of fire hazards.
- Turn off all major appliances. When major appliances—refrigerators, electric water heaters, air conditioners, and pumps—are left on, they could overload electric lines when power is restored causing a second outage.
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible. Food can be kept cold for a day or two if the doors are kept closed. During the winter, you may be able to store some items outside in a proper container. If temperatures are below freezing, it's possible to freeze water outside in containers and place them inside your refrigerator to help keep food cold. Try to consume perishable foods first. When in doubt, throw it out.
- Use portable emergency generators cautiously. They can be used to provide limited electrical power during an outage. But, take care to ensure that they do not pose a threat to you and your family. **Never fuel or run a portable generator in the home or garage, as gas-powered generators pose a serious fire and carbon monoxide threat.**
- Generators are required to be installed in compliance with your local power company's guidelines and local laws and regulations. Always operate according to the manufacturer's instructions. For additional information on the proper use of emergency generators, call your power company.
- If you depend on a well or cistern for your water supply be prepared to use alternate sources of water until power is restored. These systems normally use electric pumps which may not operate when the power is out.
- Be aware that gas appliances may not work if the electricity is off because the equipment may require electricity for ignition or valve operation.
- Drain pumps, supply lines, water heaters, boilers, and traps in drains of tubs, sinks, commodes, washing machines and dishwashers. Plumbing can freeze when power is lost during cold weather periods. To avoid major flooding when temperatures rise, turn off supply lines to outside spigots. Water heaters that are drained to prevent damage from freezing must have their power circuits shut off as well. Failure to do so could result in loss of the heating element when power is restored. Never turn on a water heater unless the tank is full.
- List life support equipment required for family members who depend on these devices (respirators, ventilators, oxygen equipment, or other life-sustaining devices) with the power company. You should have a contingency plan that always includes an alternate power source for the device and relocating the person.



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- It is highly suggested that you have a battery backup for your electric sump pump.
- Home generators must be connected to a disconnect switch if your house power is being provided by a generator. This prevents the reverse charging of all electrical outlets within your house.

Please refer to your local electrical code and remember to call the City of Laurel or ask for assistance and guidance.

Please refer to the following Baltimore Gas & Electric's website for additional information regarding power loss preparedness and actions needed in case of a power loss:

<https://www.bge.com/Outages/StormCenter/Pages/Storm-Center.aspx>.

Please refer to the following Potomac Electric Power Company's (PEPCO) website for additional information regarding power loss preparedness and actions needed in case of a power loss:

<http://www.pepco.com/storm/>.

Keeping Warm

Select a single room in the home in which the entire family can live—ideally a room that gets sunlight during daylight hours. Use fireplaces and wood-burning stoves with care, and always supervise them when burning. Make sure the fireplace is in proper working condition and has been inspected regularly. Never use charcoal as an indoor heat source; charcoal produces deadly carbon monoxide gas. Do not use gas or electric stoves as a source of heat—doing so can cause a fire or fatal gas leak. Wear layers of clothing, including sweaters and coats, which hold warm air and help to maintain body heat for longer periods. For homes with natural gas heaters, keep meters and vents clear of ice and snow.



Checking on Relatives and Neighbors

During storms and other emergency events, check to see how your relatives and neighbors are coping, especially senior citizens and persons with disabilities. If possible, help them plan or locate resources from which to obtain assistance. Contact the Prince George's County Department of Family Services for information on services available for the elderly and residents with disabilities.

Emergency Preparedness Guide

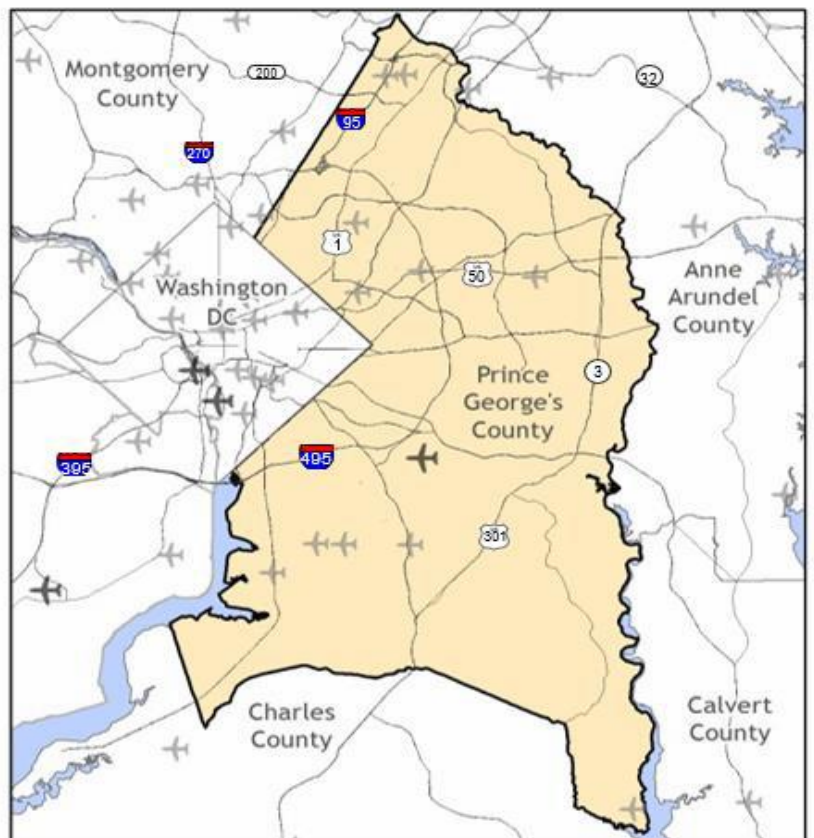
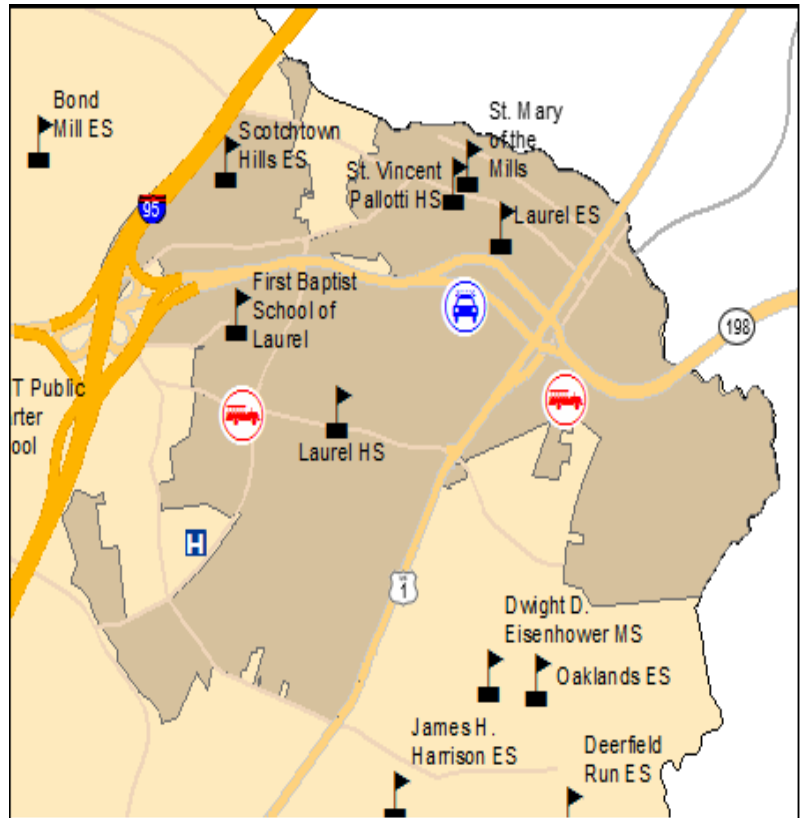
Evacuation

Local officials may call for evacuation in specific areas at greatest risk in your community. Keep car fuel tanks at least 3/4 full at all times. Gas stations may be closed during emergencies or unable to pump during power outages. If you are told to evacuate, it is important to stay calm, listen carefully, and follow all instructions. Information will be provided to the public through the media. If you're sure you have time, call your family contact to tell them where you are going and when you expect to arrive. Turn off your home's electricity and water at the main switch and valve if advised to do so by local officials.

However, leave natural gas on unless otherwise instructed. Only a professional can restore gas service once it's turned off, and this could take weeks in a disaster situation.

If you must choose quickly what to take with you, grab these things, lock the door behind you and go; prescription medications, medical equipment, emergency supplies (flashlight, batteries, radio, first-aid kit, bottled water), a change of clothes, sleeping bag or bedroll and pillow for each family member, and car and house keys.

If you plan to travel by car, make sure your car emergency preparedness kit is in the trunk of your vehicle. If you believe the air may be contaminated, drive with the windows and vents closed and keep the air conditioning and heater turned off.





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Do not enter the wrong-way lanes of any highway without specific police permission, and remember that it is against the law to drive on the shoulder of the road. Shoulders are reserve for police, fire, and rescue vehicles.

Federal highways and primary state roads within Prince George's County have been designated as county evacuation routes (see map below). **However, alternate routes might be used if an emergency warrants the closing of one or more of these designated highways or roads.** Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that you listen to the radio for travel instructions. All news radio stations such as WTOP (1500 AM/107.7 FM) and WMAL (630 AM) provide 24/7 traffic information.

Children in School

In the event of a community or natural emergency, or an evacuation a shelter-in-place order, parents should check the local media and local school system cable stations, hot lines, and Web sites for announcements about changes in school openings and closings. News about changes in school schedules is routinely disseminated through most metropolitan radio and television stations. Many schools now use email notification to alert parents immediately of changes in school schedules. Check with your school to see if an e-mail notification system is in place. Generally, unless evacuation of a particular school is ordered, students will be kept at school until school officials can safely transport them home. Because the best place for your child in a regional crisis may well be in school, parents are discouraged from going to school to pick up their child. If a parent does go to school, he or she should be prepared to present the identification required by the school system-usually a photo ID. Note that if a school is ordered to shelter-in – place – to protect the safety of the children – no one will be allowed in or out of the school building until the danger has passed. In that event, parents, for their own safety, should also remain indoors. Relying on the schools to transport student's home on normal bus routes will help avoid gridlock in and around schools and help keep roads clear for essential emergency vehicles. If buses are severely delayed, schools may ask parents to help by picking up their children. Parents should check the local media and school news outlets regularly for announcements about school decision.

Please refer to the following Prince George's County Public School Safety Office's website for additional information regarding preparedness and actions needed in case of a school emergency:

<http://www1.pgcps.org/safety/index.aspx?id=6492>.

For a list of all Prince George's County Schools and phone numbers, refer to following website:

<http://www1.pgcps.org/schools/>

Senior Information

Older adults should have an individual emergency plan. You can prepare your individual emergency plan by planning ahead, keeping in touch with your family and neighbors, and sharing your emergency information with others.



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Plan Ahead

Disaster can strike without warning and older adults can especially be vulnerable in disasters. Older adults can help ensure their safety in case of an emergency by:

- Having your emergency preparedness kit at home ready to take with you in case you need to evacuate your home. The kit can also help you “shelter-in-place” if emergency officials direct people to stay in their homes.
- Knowing the location and phone number of your local American Red Cross office.
- Labeling any equipment, such as wheelchairs, canes, or walkers you would need.
- Listing the style and serial numbers of medical devices such as pacemakers.
- Planning for transportation if you need to evacuate.
- Filling prescriptions before they run out.
- Knowing the telephone number of a 24-hour pharmacy for emergencies.
- Knowing the 24-hour emergency contact number for your doctor.
- Posting emergency phone numbers near the phone.
- Keeping a copy of important contact numbers and medical information in your wallet or purse.
- Planning and practicing the best escape routes from your home.

Keep in Touch with Family and Neighbors and Share Your Emergency Information

Establish relationships with nearby neighbors before an emergency or disaster happens. **Ask nearby family or neighbors you trust to check on you during a disaster. Keep in touch with your family and neighbors and look out for each other by:**

Sharing your emergency contact and medical information with your apartment building management or condo association.

- Giving your emergency contact and medical information to your neighbors and family.
- Creating a contact list of your neighbors' information.
- Arranging for someone to check on you.
- Teaching those who may need to assist you in an emergency how to operate necessary equipment. Be sure they will be able to reach you.
- If you have home health care services, plan ahead with your agency for emergency procedures
- Notifying local police, fire, and rescue responders of special needs or mobility issues.

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Social Media: Before & After Emergencies

Statistics worth noting: In 2016:

- Roughly 92% of US adults own a mobile phone.
- More than 72 % of adults who use the internet are users of Facebook.

Social Media is vital during emergencies because it's two-way communication. It's a viral message that gets repeated over and over again. It allows people to prepare for an emergency before it strikes, report emergencies, or call for help. Most users of social media expect their first responders and local government agencies to monitor social media and respond to requests for help right away.

Social Media allows emergency agencies to:

- Reach a wider audience instantly to provide timely and accurate information during an emergency.
- Send and receive emergency alerts.
- Monitor the conversations of users to learn what's happening.
- Confirm information.
- Provide updates.
- Respond to feedback.
- Rumor control.



Before an emergency, residents and visitors can use Social Media to get prepared.

Users can find out in real time when a disaster might strike. They can receive preparation and safety guidelines and be informed of evacuation orders if necessary.

Using Social Media during the **Response Phase** can save lives.

Residents and visitors can learn where emergency shelters are, report missing people or learn how to be reunited with someone who's been found.

People affected by a disaster, can learn about food and water distribution via social media or learn where to go for medical attention.

Social Media can be vital to get information out about areas to avoid during a crisis. It is also an important tool to use to dispel rumors during emergency response operations.

During an emergency, Social Media is a great way to provide updates on what's happening, in real time.

You can quickly tell a lot of people at once where to go for help.

Social Media is the quickest way to dispel rumors during the response phase. It's also a good way to offer safety tips.



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Social media is ongoing contact with those affected—a vital link.

After an emergency, Social Media is critical to helping people recover quickly. Residents and visitors can learn where to turn for resources and share the information quickly with family and friends.

The most important thing to know about Social Media and emergencies—it is a resource first for those affected. Next it's a resource for families, and after that social Media is a resource for the surrounding area.

City of Laurel's Social Media addresses:

Twitter:

@LaurelCityOEM

@LaurelPIO

@CityofLaurel

Facebook:

City of Laurel - Government

Recovering from an Emergency

Recovery continues even after the emergency or disaster, as you and your family face the emotional and psychological effects of the event. Reactions vary from person to person, but may include:

- Restless sleep or nightmares
- Anger or wanting revenge
- Numbness or lack of emotion
- Needing to keep active, restlessness
- Needing to talk about your experiences
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss or gain
- Headaches
- Mood swings

All of the above are normal reactions to stressful events, and it is important to let people react their own way. It may be helpful to:

- Talk with your family and friends about what happened and how you feel about it, and try to evaluate and plan for the chance it could happen again
- Volunteer at a local shelter, blood bank, or food pantry to assist emergency victims
- Spend time doing things other than watching or listening to news of the emergency or disaster
- Consult your minister or spiritual advisor

In particular, children may need reassurance and extra attention. Children may respond to an emergency or disaster by demonstrating increased anxiety or emotional and behavioral problems. Some younger children may return to earlier behavior patterns, such as bed-wetting and separation anxiety. Older children may react to physical and emotional disruptions with aggression or withdrawal. Even children who have only indirect contact with the emergency or disaster may have unresolved feelings. In most cases, such responses are temporary and as time



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passes, symptoms usually ease.

It is best to encourage children to share their feelings, even if you must listen to their stories repeatedly—this is a common way for children to grasp what they’ve experienced.

If a child has difficulty expressing feelings, allow the child to draw a picture of what happened. If a young child asks questions about the incident, answer them simply without the elaboration needed for an older child or adult.

Remember, children imitate the way adults cope with emergencies. They can detect adults’ uncertainty and grief. Adults can make emergencies and disasters less traumatic for children by maintaining a sense of control over the situation. The most assistance you can provide a child is to be calm, honest and, caring.

Personal Emergency Information Sheet

The **Out-of-Area Contact** is one of the most important concepts in your emergency preparedness plan. When an emergency or disaster occurs, you will be concerned about the welfare of your loved ones. In an emergency or disaster, local telephone service may be disrupted. However, long distance lines, because they are routed many different ways out of your community, may be open. It is also important to remember that the telephone company’s emergency telephone network is the pay telephone system. They will restore it before the rest of the system. So, if you have change to make a pay telephone call and an out-of-area contact, you may be able to communicate with loved ones in the affected area indirectly through your out-of-area contact.

Out-of-Area Contact

Name _____
City _____
Telephone (day) () - _____ (evening) () - _____
Cellular Phone () _____

Local Contact

Name _____
City _____
Telephone (day) () - _____ (evening) () - _____
Cellular Phone () - _____

Nearest Relative/Friend

Name _____
City _____
Telephone (day) () - _____ (evening) () - _____
Cellular Phone () _____



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Family Work Numbers

Name

Numbers

Family Physicians

Name

Numbers

Emergency Telephone Numbers

In a life threatening emergency, dial 911.

Police Department _____

Fire Department _____

Hospital _____

REUNION POINTS: After an emergency or disaster it may be impossible for family members to return home for one reason or another. It is very important that you select a meeting point away from your neighborhood where you can once again join the members of your household.

Reunion Locations

1. Right outside your home _____

2. Away from the neighborhood, in case you cannot return home _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Route to try first _____

At Home Learn the Location of:

1. Emergency preparedness kit _____

2. Gas shut off valve _____

3. Water shut off valve _____

4. Electricity shut off valve _____





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Volunteer Opportunities

Fire/EMS/Law Enforcement:

Laurel Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association
Laurel Citizens Police Academy

For information go to: <https://www.cityoflaurel.org/comm/volunteering>

Laurel Volunteer Fire Department – 301-776-3600 - www.laurelvfd.org

Laurel Volunteer Rescue Squad – 301-725-3345 - www.laurelrescue.org

Emergency Preparedness:

City of Laurel CERT Team

For information go to: <https://www.cityoflaurel.org/comm/volunteering>

Contact Lena Grant at 301-725-5300 or email lgrant@laurel.md.us

City of Laurel Contact Information

City of Laurel

Mayor Craig A. Moe

City Administrator Martin A. Flemion, III
Deputy City Administrator William Goddard, III
Emergency Manager Stephen Allen, SR.

8103 Sandy Spring Road
Laurel, MD 20707
Office: 301-725-5300 Fax: 301-490-5068
Web Site: www.cityoflaurel.org

City Council

Mike Leszcz, City Council President

Valerie M.A. Nicholas, Council Member, Pro-tem - H. Edward Ricks, Council Member

Donna L. Crary, Council Member

Frederick Smalls, Council Member

Office phone: 301-725-5300x 2120 or laurelcouncil@laurel.md.us



Emergency Preparedness Guide

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE (FIRE, POLICE, EMS): CALL 911



Laurel Police Non-Emergency 301-498-0092 - Emergency 301-725-3000

Working in partnership with the entire community, the Laurel Police Department is committed to providing the highest quality of police service to the citizens of Laurel by preventing crime, enforcing the law, and vigorously pursuing and arresting criminals. Fear or threatens the quality of life in the City of Laurel.



Emergency Operations Center – 301-725-5300 x2210

The City's Emergency Operations Center addresses the need to respond to various crises that can occur in our community. Weather-related events that have affected the City have magnified the need for a centralized Emergency Response Center.



Department of Public Works - 301-725-0088

The mission of the Department of Public Works is to provide the citizens of Laurel with the best possible services in the most efficient and economical way possible. Services include, residential and commercial refuse and recycling collection, street and sidewalk maintenance and repair, tree management, engineering solutions for public safety, effective management of the Capital Improvement Program, maintenance of the automotive fleet, snow and ice removal and quick and effective responses to inclement weather damage.

OTHER ASSISTANCE

American Red Cross	1-800-733-2767
Blood Donations	1-800-733-2767
Poison Control.....	1-800-222-1222
Communicable Disease	301-883-7834
Laurel Advocacy and Referral Services (LARS)	301-776-0442





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Useful Phone Numbers and Websites

Prince George's County Website.....	www.co.pg.md.us
Federal Emergency Management Agency Website.....	www.fema.gov
Maryland Emergency Management Agency Website.....	www.mema.gov

POLICE NON - EMERGENCY NUMBERS

City of Laurel Police	301-498-0092
Prince Georges County Police Headquarters	301-772-4900
District II Bowie	301-390-2100
District VI Beltsville.....	301-937-0910

FIRE DEPARTMENT NON - EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Laurel Volunteer Fire Department.....	301-776-3600
Laurel Volunteer Rescue Squad	301-725-3345
Prince George's County Fire Department	301-883-5200
Howard County Fire Department	410-313-6000
Anne Arundel County Fire Department	410-222-8360

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

City of Laurel Emergency Management	301-725-5300
Prince George's County Emergency Management	301-583-1899
Anne Arundel County Office of Emergency Management	410-222-0600
Howard County Office of Emergency Management.	410-313-6030

GOVERNMENT SERVICES

City of Laurel Animal Control	301-498-0092
Prince Georges County Animal Control.....	301-780-7201
Arson Hotline	7ARSON (772-7766)
Central Maryland Regional Transport (CMRT).....	301-324-2877
Regional Transit Authority (RTA)	1-800-270-9553
Child Protective Services for Prince George's County.....	301-808-5624
Department of Corrections	301-952-4800
Prince George's County Sheriff's Office	301-780-8600
Department of Public Works & Transportation, Emergency Dispatch Number.....	301-499-8600
Department of Public Works & Transportation, Road Operations Storm Center (Snow Storms 40" or more and Severe Ice Storms).....	301-350-0500
Prince George's County Department of Family Services.....	301-699-2672
Department of Social Security	1-800-772-1213
Maryland Energy Assistance.....	1-800-332-6347
Emergency Food, Elizabeth House.....	301-776-9296



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Prince George's County Health Department..... 301-583-5920
Prince George's County Information Line301-952-4810
Prince George's County Board of Education www.pgcps.org

UTILITIES

BGE Power Outages.....877-778-2222
BGE Emergencies1-800-685-0123
PEPCO.....1-877-737-2662
Washington Gas Office: 703-750-1000: Report gas leak 703-750-1400
WSSC..... 301-206-4002
Verizon..... 1-877-449-6767
Comcast800-934-6489

