



CITY OF SAUSALITO

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS – EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PROGRAM

“Preparing and Protecting our Community”

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS: TRIPS AND TRAVELING

When you and your family travel, you often go to locations away from where you have done your disaster planning and preparations. You may even be in areas where a different if not several different languages are spoken. Unless you have taken the time to research the area you are traveling to, you will not possess the knowledge of area specific risks inherent in the area where you are traveling. Other than in a general way, the plans you have made at home will not apply when you are traveling. However, there are many things you can do to protect yourself and others in the event of a disaster when traveling.

Let People Know Where You Will Be

Choose someone that will not be traveling with you and give them a complete written itinerary of your trip. This person will become your Primary Travel Liaison. If you have any set appointments, give your Primary Liaison all the meeting arrangements and pertinent contact information. For each portion of your trip, notify your Primary Liaison of your safe arrival and let them know where you will be staying and as well as provide them with telephone numbers where they can contact you in the case of an emergency.

If you are traveling to visit friends, family, or on business, someone where you are visiting should have the same information as your Primary Liaison. This person will be the Secondary Travel Liaison. Critical information that you should inform you Primary and Secondary Liaison of are:

- Hotel/Car/Tour Reservations
- Land/Sea/Air Transportation
- Any changes in your itinerary

Both of your travel liaisons should have each others contact information in case they must communicate with each other regarding you or your trip. Your liaisons should be individuals that you trust with your personal information.

Make Plans Early

While planning your trip, think about what you would do if a disaster struck during your traveling. This early planning will increase your awareness so that if a disaster happens you will be better able to remain in a position to make good decisions. During your trip planning phase, conduct researching into and review the current social and political situations that are occurring within your planned travel destination(s). If you are traveling out of the country, review the advisories and warnings issued by the U. S. Department of State (<http://travel.state.gov>). Other good resources which will assist you in researching your destination of travel are newspapers,



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magazines, and online publications that cover local and regional news. Your research should allow you to remain calm and in a position to make rational decisions if you are involved in an emergency or disaster.

If traveling on a plane, review the emergency pamphlet in the seat pocket in front of you in addition to paying careful attention to the flight crew during the pre-flight safety briefing. No matter how many times you have flown it is very important to reacquaint yourself with emergency procedures. If you are taking a cruise, please take the disaster drill conducted at the beginning of the cruise seriously and listen to the crews’ instructions. In addition, please take the time to familiarize yourself with where the life vests, fire extinguishers, and life boats are on the cruise ship.

Document and Distribute

Prior to leaving for your trip, make sufficient copies of your travel related documentation. First and foremost, make four copies of your identifications (driver’s licenses, state ID card, passport, etc). These copies should be distributed to one of your travel companions, one for each liaison, and one to keep with you. You should keep a copy with you, away from your wallet and passport, so it can be used to identify yourself if it becomes separated from your original identifications (lost, stolen, etc.).

Provide you liaisons with the following items:

1. Family contact phone numbers
2. Medical history and current prescription information.
3. Drivers License Number
4. Serial numbers from your travelers checks. You should also keep these numbers with you, separate from your wallet and passport
5. Transportation tickets: plane, boat, train, bus (these should already be found in a copy of your itinerary)
6. Security and alarm codes and emergency/non-emergency contact information for both home and vehicle systems.
7. Your passport identification page

Take only the credit, charge, debit and membership cards you actually plan to use. Should something happen to your wallet, the fewer items you must replace means the less likelihood that an identity thief pieces together enough of your financial background to use it against you.

Have your mail put on hold. You can do this either in person at your local Post Office or online at <http://www.usps.com>. Also if you subscribe to a newspaper service, contact them to stop your newspaper deliver while you are gone. If you do not want to stop your newspaper service, have a neighbor or a friend collect your newspapers each day.



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Hotel Security

Upscale hotels with valet parking are generally the safest lodging options, but they are also often the most expensive. The trade off is that there is usually someone at that location with whom you will have come into documented contact (parking stub, check in, etc) and that person will have known your whereabouts at a specific time, should something go wrong. Accommodations that are the most personal and individualized grant you this comfort. When deciding on your overnight arrangements, please consider the following:

Parking

- Park in well lit parking lots and as close to the entrance to wherever you are headed.
- Familiarize yourself with your route of travel. Note freeway ramps and alternate routes in case you miss your intended exit/entry/turn.
- If you don't have reservations and are looking for hotels/motels as you are driving, observe the neighborhoods and the surrounding buildings and people. Trust your instincts, if it doesn't feel right, you are probably right. Keep driving.
- Hotel parking garages shouldn't have elevators that go directly to guest floors. The parking garage bank of elevators should only go to the lobby, where a separate bank of keycard activated elevators give access to the guest floors.
- Make note of where you park your car. Have your key out as you approach your vehicle.
- Make sure you have an extra set of keys for your vehicle.

Checking in

- Key cards are safer than keys. If you are given a key with a room number on it, do not display it in public.
- Rooms on the second to fifth floors are safer from criminal incidents than those on the ground floor. Rooms higher than the sixth or seventh floor generally can't be reached by fire apparatus.
- Rooms that open to an interior hallway are safer than those that open to the parking lot.
- Rooms with a window facing outside versus an interior atrium window can be reached by fire apparatus.
- Rooms near elevators or stairways are safer than those at the end of the hall.
- Know where the stairs are and how many doors are between your room and the stairs.

In Your Room

- Look at the card on the door that shows emergency exits. Note your room's relation to the exits. If you don't understand the directions on the card, call the front desk for clarification. Walk to all exits, pacing off the steps and forming a mental picture of distances, obstacles, and other distinguishing features.
- Locate the nearest fire extinguisher. Count the steps to that as well.
- Be sure you know how to use the phone.



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DISASTER PREPAREDNESS – EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PROGRAM

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- Use the dead bolt at all times.
- Do not post “Make up this room” signs. If you need your room to be made up at an unusual time, make arrangements with the front desk.
- Use the hotel safe.
- Use a door wedge or jam a chair under the doorknob for extra safety.
- Identify anyone who knocks on your door before you open it. If someone calls and says they are from the hotel and need to enter your room for any reason, get their name and then check it out with the front desk before you allow them to enter.
- If a fire threat exists, check the door for heat prior to opening it; if the door feels warm or hot to the touch, leave it closed. Chances are there is a fire on the other side. If there is heat or signs of a fire in the corridor, saturate towels, bathrobes, blankets, etc with water and place them at the base of the door and around the door jambs to keep out the smoke. For tight door jambs, use tweezes, fail files, clippers or some other object to secure a good hold.
- Upon check out, destroy your key card. The key card contains personal information like your name, credit card number, and address. While encrypted to some extent, these cards are not ‘written over’ until another guest is issue that card their information is placed over yours.

Packing

What you pack will depend on where you are traveling to and how long you will be gone. However some basic rules for packing are:

- The lighter you pack the better. You are more of a target for criminals when you are loaded down with luggage than when you carry a single bag.
- Dress and act conservatively. Avoid traveling with or wearing jewelry or displaying other signs of wealth (designer luggage, clothing, accessories, cellular phones, etc.). Do not dress to draw attention to yourself. However, do not dress too casual and make yourself readily identifiable as a tourist. Try to be nondescript in your actions and language and keep your voice low. Be careful with physical gestures and never assume another person doesn’t understand the language you are speaking.
- Avoid handbags without secure closures, fanny packs, and bags/luggage with outside pockets. These are easy prey for criminals. A bag with a shoulder strap that can go across you chest is safer than one that is just carried in your hand or hung over your shoulder.
- Keep medicines in original containers. If authorities go through your luggage, which can happen in any international or domestic port, you want to be able to clearly identify the medications and demonstrate you are legally entitled to possess them.

Be Aware

- Walk with a purpose. Do not wander or walk aimless in areas that you are not familiar with. Be aware of your surroundings at all times and do not take short cuts.



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- When you enter a building, pay attention to exit signs and other departure points.
- If traveling in a group, have a meeting place and emergency plans for everyone.
- Note hospitals, urgent care facilities, police and sheriff stations, etc. Odds are you will spot these locations with very little effort.
- If you see evacuation route signs, note the direction they are pointing and their nearest cross streets.
- Keep your cellular phones charged. If you carry a cellular phone or another form of wireless device, make note of any coffee shops, restaurants, books stores, or other locations where wi-fi connections are available.