



home readiness kit

Prepare to be safe and ready in an emergency!

A Home Readiness Kit is a vital precaution for every family in case of an emergency. Assemble the following items to last three days for each member of your family and store them in a portable bin for use at home or to take with you.

Keep this list on your refrigerator and assemble the basics to be safe and ready!

- Water.** One gallon per person per day. Store water in sealed, unbreakable containers. Identify the storage date and replace every six months. Have purifying agents available.
- Food.** Non-perishable packaged or canned food and a non-electric can opener. Powdered or canned milk. Hard candy, sugar, salt and pepper. Canned heat (Sterno). Don't forget pet food if you have pets!
- Clothing.** A change of clothing, rain gear, sturdy shoes, hats, gloves, sunglasses, rubber boots.
- Supplies.** A battery-powered radio, flashlight and plenty of extra batteries. Plates and plastic utensils, plastic storage containers, matches, paper and pencils, duct tape.
- Sleep & Warmth.** Blankets or sleeping bags.
- Medical.** A first aid kit and prescription medications, aspirin or non-aspirin pain relief, antacid, laxative, rubbing alcohol, activated charcoal, anti-diarrhea medication, antiseptic, eye wash.
- Money.** Credit cards and cash.
- Back-ups.** An extra pair of glasses, spare contact lenses and supplies for them. An extra set of car keys.
- Special Needs.** Baby items, formula and medications. Toys and books for toddlers. Items for elderly family members and for those with special needs.
- Information.** A list of family physicians and contact numbers, important family information, insurance information and the style and serial number of medical devices such as pacemakers.



Wildfire Safety Precautions

Summer in New Mexico brings the possibility of wildfires in our national forests, within the bosques, and in our wooded communities. People with allergies, asthma, lung disease and heart problems must take special care during wildfires. If there is smoke nearby, remain indoors and close doors and windows to limit smoke inhalation. Be sure to have the medicines needed for respiratory problems. Consider staying with a relative outside the fire zone.

Homes located in forested areas or along the bosque can be difficult to reach in an emergency. It is important to clear a defensible space of 30 feet around your home, free of excessive trees, weeds and other flammable materials, and to have improved driveway access for emergency vehicles to reach your home.

If there is a wildfire in your immediate area, early evacuation is the best way for you and your family to avoid injury and smoke inhalation problems. Include fire evacuation in your family emergency plan, specifying escape routes, alternative ways of communicating with family members if power lines go down, and plans for sheltering in place inside your home if evacuation is not possible. You may want to keep face masks on hand to protect you from smoke.

safe&ready

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Preparing for a Public Health Emergency – It's Everyone's Job!



Is your family ready? Prepare a Home Safety Kit – see the back page for all the details.

Readiness for Health Emergencies

How we keep ourselves safe has changed with the times. Seat belts were not introduced until the 1950s. Smoke alarms appeared for sale in the 1970s. Both are now part of our everyday lives. We leave a phone number with the babysitter, check our tire pressure, regularly change the batteries in smoke alarms and always fasten our children's seat belts.

In the four years since the tragedy of September 11, 2001, these preparations have taken a new direction. The New Mexico Department of Health has been working with community partners to improve emergency response. The goal is to keep everyone safe during a public health emergency.

Thousands of your neighbors are part of this effort, as health department employees, emergency management personnel, municipal workers, emergency medical technicians, hospital staff, police and fire personnel. These individuals have trained to respond to the new world of bioterrorism and to improve responses to age-old threats such as fire and flood. Emergency response plans have been created or expanded by government at the state and local levels, hospitals, schools and other public and private organizations.

In New Mexico, these organizations learned a great deal about emergency readiness in 2000, when we successfully and safely evacuated more than 18,000 people from the Los Alamos and White Rock areas during the Cerro Grande Fire.

During the past four years, the State of New Mexico has enhanced its response capacities to protect everyone in a public health emergency, whether it is a fire, flood, terrorist threat, or an epidemic.

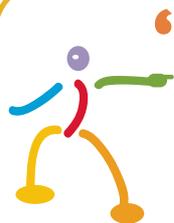
The Department of Health and its Office of Health Emergency Management would like you to know more about the extensive efforts being made to be sure New Mexicans are safe – and ready.



Team Players.
All New Mexicans play a part in the event of a health emergency.

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“New Mexico is a frontier state, so we've learned to fight flood, fire and disease. Our communities have become better prepared than ever. New Mexicans are tremendous survivors!”

Wynn Brannin
Emergency Medical Systems Communications
Department of Health

vital statistics

33

medically equipped vehicles, each capable of treating up to 35 people, can be deployed to the site of a multiple vehicle accident, plane crash, or civil or health emergency.

These units, designed specifically for New Mexico's needs, are being launched throughout the state this year.

Even very young children can be taught to dial 911 in an emergency and ask for help!

911

7,500

health, hospital and emergency personnel statewide can

receive vital emergency information within minutes via the Health Alert Network, which can transmit health information and prevention protocols statewide.



From the
Secretary of
Health

Systems that Protect and Prepare

The Department of Health is entrusted with protecting and enhancing the health of all New Mexicans. We work to prevent the spread of infectious disease, provide mental and physical health services, and promote the steps necessary so that all New Mexico residents have the skills and knowledge to maintain their well-being.

As the department's 3,740 staff members work to improve citizens' overall health, we also are prepared to respond to public health emergencies. The department's Office of Health Emergency Management is one of the many members of the statewide network that is continually developing responses to emerging and existing threats to our citizens and working to educate you about your role in readiness.

The department is continuously improving its systems of emergency response to take advantage of every new breakthrough in medicine, technology and communications. These improvements to health emergency preparedness rest on a foundation of cooperation created by the partnership of local, county, tribal, state and federal government agencies, the medical community, private sector industries and the general public.

This edition of "Safe and Ready" describes the systems that are in place to protect New Mexico's communities in the case of a public health emergency and begins the work of sharing the information you need to keep yourself safe during the fire season. Future editions will go into more detail about other steps you can take to be safe and ready during specific emergencies.

We cannot predict the kinds of emergencies we may face, but we can assure New Mexico is safe and ready.

Michelle Lujan Grisham

New Mexico Secretary of Health

Faster Detection & Response to an Epidemic or Threat

Epidemiologists are medical detectives who investigate clues to uncover, understand and control disease and other public health threats.

In the event of bioterrorism or an epidemic, they use their expertise and vigilance to determine the cause, and whether it's biological, chemical or radiological. Effective response requires rapid detection, investigation and early intervention.

Epidemiologists within the Department of Health's Epidemiology and Response Division determine risk factors for disease and disability, outline strategies, perform program evaluations and provide training. They work in conjunction with the department's Scientific Laboratory Division, which has expanded disease surveillance and laboratory capacity.

The department responds 24/7 to doctors, other health professionals and state agencies. The divisions are prepared to work with local health offices, with locations in every county, which may be the first to identify that an illness is spreading through a community.



Public Health Service Sites: Immediate Action in a Crisis

The New Mexico Department of Health can quickly launch emergency services statewide through Public Health Service Sites.

These sites can be set up as needed throughout the state. During a crisis, the public can expect screening and assessment, information and education, counseling, and the dispensation of vaccinations or medications. Medical staff could also determine the need for isolation of potentially contagious individuals.

At full capacity, each Public Health Service Site can serve up to 300 persons an hour, around the clock. Services would be provided by physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, health educators, mental health counselors, and interpreters. If needed, mobile assistance could be extended to those who are homebound, incarcerated, medically fragile, or have special needs.



“I don't think there is any more important job in the country right now than being an emergency coordinator. The public needs to understand that we all have a shared responsibility to prepare our communities. We do these things because we refuse to be victims. **”**

Tom Townsend
Emergency Management Coordinator
Las Cruces and Doña Ana County

Incident Command System: A Coordinated Response

Health department physicians, nurses, educators and other staff have been trained to take on new roles at a moment's notice, to manage health services in an emergency. In a crisis, they would coordinate vaccinations, treatment, information, and needed preventive measures in a swift, efficient response. As soon as the Governor declares a disaster, their work would take place under the direction of the state's Emergency Operations Center and local emergency managers. This would occur as part of the National Incident Management System and the National Response Plan, the federal structure that guides health and emergency response nationwide.

Community Health Councils Build Prepared Communities

On the local level, groups are paving the way for safe, ready and resilient communities. Local Community Health Councils work with county emergency managers, offering feedback, assessing community readiness and documenting county health infrastructure. They have identified psychological and social needs; located health leaders and managers; and set goals for becoming a prepared community.



“The more a community is prepared, the more self sufficient it will be during and after an emergency. Preparedness can enable communities, families and neighbors to provide emotional support and practical help to each other.”

Anne Pascarelli Barraza
Population Outreach Manager
Department of Health

more vital statistics

12,500

Emergency responders statewide have been trained by the Department of Health to respond to a health emergency. They include:



12

hours. The amount of time in which any needed inoculations, preventive medicines, or other medications and medical supplies can be delivered by the Strategic National Stockpile, at the Governor's request.

5

states are served by the New Mexico Department of Health's **Scientific Laboratory Division.**

find out more

resources



New Mexico Department of Health
www.health.state.nm.us

**State Office of
Emergency Management**
www.dps.nm.org/emergency

**New Mexico Hospitals & Health
Systems Association**
www.nmhhsa.org

**New Mexico Department of
Public Safety**
www.dps.nm.org

**Department of Health Office of Health
Emergency Management**
www.health.state.nm.us/ohem

**Federal Emergency
Management Agency**
www.fema.gov

**Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention**
www.cdc.gov

American Red Cross
www.redcross.org

Department of Homeland Security
www.dhs.gov

**Department of Health
and Human Services**
www.hhs.gov

Poison & Drug Information Center
1.800.222.1222

300

people are participating in emergency planning advisory groups. They work with the Department of Health to anticipate the needs of school children, Native Americans, border populations, and persons with special health needs.