



**PREPARING FOR EMERGENCIES**  
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

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The material used in this publication is constituted from 75% post consumer waste and 25% virgin fibre



# this booklet tells you what to do in an **emergency**



*“The Emergency Planning Society believes that this booklet provides valuable and common sense advice for the public, that can easily be adapted for use in many domestic situations. The fact that every home will have this advice can only be a good thing.”* **Debbie Spargo**, Chief Executive of the Emergency Planning Society

The Government is working hard to make sure that the UK is as prepared as it can be in the event of an emergency, and it is important that you are ready too. By being informed and prepared, you can significantly reduce the risk to life and property.

This booklet will tell you how you can help yourself and your family in emergencies. A lot of this information is based on common sense advice and may seem obvious or familiar to you, but it has saved lives in the past. It will also let you know what has been done to prepare and protect our country in recent years.

If you need alternative language versions or formats, please complete the form at the back of the booklet. You can also download more copies of this booklet at [www.preparingforemergencies.gov.uk](http://www.preparingforemergencies.gov.uk) and find many useful links to partner sites for more information.

# general **advice** about what to do in an emergency

If you find yourself in the middle of an emergency, your common sense and instincts will usually tell you what to do. However, it is important to:

- Make sure **999** has been called if people are injured or if there is a threat to life
- Not put yourself or others in danger
- Follow the advice of the emergency services
- Try to remain calm and think before acting, and try to reassure others
- Check for injuries - remember to help yourself before attempting to help others

If you are not involved in the incident, but are close by or believe you may be in danger, in most cases the advice is:

- Go inside a safe building
- Stay inside until you are advised to do otherwise
- Tune in to local radio or TV for more information

Of course, there are always going to be particular occasions when you should not “go in” to a building, for example if there is a fire. Otherwise: **GO IN, STAY IN, TUNE IN.**

The **GO IN, STAY IN, TUNE IN** advice is recognised and used around the world. It was developed by the independent National Steering Committee on Warning and Informing the Public as being the best general advice to give people caught up in most emergencies.



**Go in, Stay in, Tune in**



There is an agreement with radio and TV companies that if there is a major emergency they will interrupt programming to give public safety advice and information about the incident, so that when you **TUNE IN** locally or nationally anywhere in the UK you'll get the advice you need.

**Tune in**

# coping with specific emergencies

The emergency services are trained to cope with a wide range of emergency situations, but there is a lot that you can do to help them and yourself.

- Reduce fire hazards in your home
- Fit and maintain smoke alarms - at least one on every floor
- Most fire deaths and injuries occur while people are sleeping. Plan an escape route should a fire break out at night
- If there is a fire, get out, stay out and call **999**
- Never use the lift
- If moving or trapped in smoke stay close to the floor where the air is cleaner
- If a door feels hot, do not open it, as it probably means there is a fire on the other side
- Remember - never re-enter your home until the Fire and Rescue Service has made it safe

**Fire prevention and safety**



*“Do not wait until a fire occurs to think about it. Act now. Nearly all fires are preventable. You can get further practical, easy to follow advice on preventing fires and protecting your home from your local fire station.”* Alan Doig, President of the Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers' Association

If there is a bomb warning at your place of work, follow the advice of those in charge.

If a bomb goes off in your building, look for the safest way out.

**If you are trapped in debris:**

- Stay close to a wall and tap on pipes so that rescuers can hear you
- Do not use matches or lighters in case of gas leaks

If a bomb goes off outside your building, stay inside (away from windows, lifts and outer doors) in case there is a second bomb in the area.

If you saw the explosion, stay in the area in a safe place and tell the police what you saw.

## Bombs

The Fire and Rescue Service has become equipped in recent years to decontaminate large numbers of people quickly. This involves showering with soap and water and then dressing in temporary clothing that would be provided. It is important that this takes place where the incident happened so that other areas, including homes, are not contaminated. If necessary you would also be assessed by health service personnel.

999

- Move away from the immediate source of danger
- But wait for the emergency services to arrive and examine you and, if necessary, decontaminate you
- If you go home untreated you could contaminate others and make any incident worse

### Chemical, biological or radiological (CBR) incident

If there is a major power cut, turn off electrical appliances that will automatically switch on when power is restored - if several restart at once, they may overload the system. **TUNE IN** to local radio for advice and updates using a battery powered radio.

*In all of these situations -  
keep calm,  
think before  
you act and  
listen to the  
advice of the  
emergency  
services.*

### **Emergency plans exist in all areas of the UK**

The police, fire and ambulance services have tried and tested plans for responding to incidents, from fires to explosions, whether they are at your home, your school or affecting transport networks.

### **Health and hospitals**

Emergency equipment, vaccines and antibiotics are stored around the UK and are quickly available to doctors.

### **Emergency planning exercises**

Every year, many exercises are held involving the emergency services and all agencies responsible for recovery. These exercises practise our response to a range of emergencies, including terrorism, by testing our preparedness.

# what to do if you're **not** at **home**

## **Schools**

If your children are at school you will naturally want to collect them as soon as possible in the event of a major emergency. But it may not be safe to do so. Please **TUNE IN** to your local radio station for advice and for details of the arrangements your local council has made for letting parents know when to collect their children from school.

All schools have plans to cope with local emergencies such as fire and flood, and teachers and support staff do all they can to look after the pupils in their charge. You can find out more about school emergency planning from [www.teachernet.gov.uk/emergencies](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/emergencies)

*...safety of your children*



## **Businesses**

Employers have a responsibility for the safety and security of their staff. All businesses should have arrangements in place to deal with the impact of a major incident or disaster. Make sure you understand what you need to do in an emergency at work.

If you are a business, for advice on emergency planning go to [www.mi5.gov.uk](http://www.mi5.gov.uk)

*safety and security at work...*



# basic first aid



*“By being prepared and understanding the basics of First Aid, the public can be of great help until the emergency services arrive to take over - it helps save lives.”* **Liam Donaldson**, Chief Medical Officer

Knowing what to do in an emergency is vitally important. Consider getting some First Aid training and a First Aid kit, and familiarise yourself with how to deal with some of the more common situations opposite. If someone is injured, the following steps will keep them as safe as possible until professional help arrives:

- If people are seriously injured call **999** immediately
- Keep calm
- Make sure you and the injured person are not in danger
- Assess the injured person carefully and act on your findings using the basic First Aid steps opposite - remember, these are not a complete First Aid guide
- Keep an eye on the injured person’s condition until the emergency services arrive

If the person is unconscious with no obvious sign of life, call **999** and ask for an ambulance. If you or any bystander has the necessary skills, give them mouth-to-mouth resuscitation while you wait for the emergency services.

### **Unconsciousness**

Control severe bleeding by applying firm pressure to the wound using a clean, dry dressing and raise it above the level of the heart. Lay the person down, reassure them, keep them warm and loosen tight clothing.

### **Bleeding**

For all burns, cool with water for at least 10 minutes. Wrap the affected part in clingfilm, do not apply dry dressings, keep the patient warm and call an ambulance.

### **Burns**

Try to avoid as much movement as possible.

### **Broken bones**

If you'd like more information or advice, go to [www.redcross.org.uk/firstaid](http://www.redcross.org.uk/firstaid) or [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

# preparing for an emergency - what **you** can do

**To prepare for an emergency, you should take time to find out:**

- Where and how to turn off water, gas and electricity supplies in your home
- The emergency procedures for your children at school
- The emergency procedures at your workplace
- How your family will stay in contact in the event of an emergency
- If any elderly or vulnerable neighbours might need your help
- How to tune in to your local radio station



**If you are at home and an emergency happens, try to gather together:**

- A list of useful phone numbers, such as your doctor's and close relatives'
- Home and car keys
- Toiletries, sanitary supplies and any regularly prescribed medication
- A battery radio, with spare batteries
- A torch with spare batteries, candles and matches
- A First Aid kit
- Your mobile phone
- Cash and credit cards
- Spare clothes and blankets

**Also, it is always useful to have:**

- Bottled water, ready-to-eat food (e.g. tinned food) and a bottle/tin opener, in case you have to remain in your home for several days

**In certain very unlikely situations, you may be asked to leave your home by the emergency services. If this happens, leave as quickly and calmly as possible. And, if you have time:**

- Turn off electricity, gas and water supplies, unplug appliances and lock all doors and windows
- See the items listed above for what to take with you
- If you leave by car, take bottled water and blankets, and tune in to local radio for emergency advice and instructions

When you are told that it is safe to return home, open windows to provide fresh air before reconnecting gas, electricity and water supplies.

# helping to **prevent** a terrorist attack

*“All information received by the hotline is researched and investigated before any police action is taken. Let us decide whether the information you have is valuable or not. We still very much need your help to reduce the danger posed by terrorists. Indeed, a number of serious terrorist crimes have been thwarted thanks to the eyes and ears of the public.”*

**Peter Clarke**, Deputy Assistant Commissioner  
ACPO National Co-ordinator of Terrorist Investigations



*You can call the Police Anti-Terrorism Hotline on 0800 789 321. All calls will be treated in confidence. If you believe there is an immediate threat to life, call **999**.*

You may have vital information. If you hear, see or come across anything that may be linked with terrorist activity, please tell the police. They want to hear from you.

## **Terrorists need...**

*A place to live:* Are you suspicious about any tenants or guests?

*To plan:* Have you seen anyone pay an unusual amount of attention to security measures at any location?

*Money:* Individuals may set up bogus bank accounts, copy credit cards, return goods for large cash refunds.

*Equipment:* If you are a retailer, do you have any cause to be suspicious about anything being bought?

**Possible signs of terrorism**

Our ability to prevent a terrorist attack does not depend on the authorities alone. How well we cope also depends on **you**.

Links to useful information and advice can be found at [www.preparingforemergencies.gov.uk](http://www.preparingforemergencies.gov.uk)



*“Countering terrorism is MI5’s highest priority. Working closely with our law enforcement and intelligence partners, we strive to keep the UK safe and make it difficult for terrorists to operate here. But public vigilance, good sense and co-operation are just as important and essential components of the UK’s response as a whole.”* [Eliza Manningham-Buller, Director General of the Security Service \(MIS\)](#)

**Terrorist bomb attacks mostly happen in public places, especially where people gather or travel.**

- Be vigilant
- Look out for suspicious behaviour, vehicles or packages
- Do not hesitate to tell the police

**Keep alert**

Public safety is our first priority in all decisions about public information or warnings. It is the Government’s policy to issue warnings when the public can take action in response to a specific or credible threat. Such warnings will also provide further information that will help the public respond effectively.

**Government policy on terrorism**

# what's being done to **protect** the UK?

The police, fire and ambulance services are specially trained to deal with major emergencies and have specialist equipment to cope with a whole range of incidents. If necessary, military assistance can be called on by the Government and the emergency services.

There is now increased baggage and passenger screening at UK airports, and where appropriate UK aircraft carry plain-clothes police. Stronger cockpit doors have also been fitted to all sizeable aircraft.

We have also installed state-of-the-art surveillance systems at ports and traffic entry points into the UK. Also, all transport operators have emergency plans to evacuate you safely from their services if there is an emergency.

To check on the safety of a particular destination or country, ask your travel agent or the Foreign & Commonwealth Office at [www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk) or call 0870 606 0290.

**Travelling**



Over the last three years security around vital national resources such as water, energy and transport systems has been improved, safety advice given to potentially vulnerable businesses and locations, and laws toughened to make it more difficult for terrorists to operate here.

A lot of this work has to remain secret so potential terrorists don't get useful information.

### UK improvements

**The UK has had to live with the threat of terrorism for many years and the emergency services have well established plans and procedures in place to deal with a wide range of events.**

The Government has a comprehensive programme of work to improve the response to a range of disruptive emergencies that might affect the UK, not only terrorism.

It aims to ensure we are able to respond to emergencies at the national, regional and local level, and to make sure that the essential services (food, water, transport, health, financial services etc) keep operating.

# emergency contact details

You may find it useful to complete these contact details and keep them somewhere safe. You should be able to find these numbers in your local telephone directory.

| Name                          | Telephone Number     |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| Emergency Services            | <b>999</b>           |
| NHS Direct                    | <b>0845 4647</b>     |
| Anti-Terrorism Hotline        | <b>0800 789 321</b>  |
| Foreign & Commonwealth Office | <b>0870 606 0290</b> |
| Local Police Station          |                      |
| Local Authority               |                      |
| Doctor                        |                      |
| Work                          |                      |
| School                        |                      |

  

| Local Radio Station | Frequency (see local press for details) |
|---------------------|---|
|                     |   |

For more information on preparing for emergencies see [www.preparingforemergencies.gov.uk](http://www.preparingforemergencies.gov.uk)



# remember...

**If you are involved in any emergency it is important to:**

- Make sure **999** has been called if people are injured or if there is a threat to life
- Not put yourself or others in danger
- Follow the advice of the emergency services
- Try to remain calm and think before acting and try to reassure others
- Check for injuries - remember to attend to yourself before attempting to help others

If you are not involved in an incident but are close by or believe you may be in danger, in most cases the advice is: **GO IN, STAY IN, TUNE IN.**

For further information you can visit [www.preparingforemergencies.gov.uk](http://www.preparingforemergencies.gov.uk)

**Tear off this page and keep it somewhere safe for your reference.**

# order form

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