

Be Ready: Earthquakes, Volcanoes, Extreme Weather and Sinkholes

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Active today (October 31, 2026)

- ☐ 12 Flood Watches from the National Weather Service (AZ, CO, NM, UT).
- ☐ 6 Storm Warnings from the National Weather Service (PK).
- ☐ 3 Flood Warnings from the National Weather Service (AZ, FL).
- ☐ Largest earthquake: M4.9, 236 km NW of Port-Olry, Vanuatu. See Earthquakes below.
- ☐ Great Sitkin volcano at alert level Watch. See Volcanoes and Ashfall below.
- ☐ Sinkhole reported in Phong Nha (VnExpress International). See Sinkholes below.

Build a basic kit

- ☐ Water: one gallon per person per day for several days.
- ☐ Food: at least a several-day supply of non-perishable food, and a manual can opener.
- ☐ Battery or hand-crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert.
- ☐ Flashlight, first aid kit, extra batteries, whistle and dust mask.
- ☐ Cell phone chargers and a backup battery.
- ☐ Prescription medicines, glasses, and copies of ID and insurance papers in a waterproof container.
- ☐ Pet food and water; supplies for babies and older adults.

Get alerts

- ☐ Wireless Emergency Alerts on your phone need no sign-up.
- ☐ FEMA app: National Weather Service alerts for up to five locations.
- ☐ USGS Earthquake Notification Service and Volcano Notification Service (free).
- ☐ Make a household communication plan; texts often get through when calls don't.

Earthquakes

- ☐ Secure heavy items like bookcases, refrigerators, water heaters and TVs; store heavy and breakable objects on low shelves.

- ☐ During shaking: DROP to your hands and knees, COVER your head and neck, HOLD ON until it stops.
- ☐ If inside, stay inside and avoid doorways. If in bed, turn face down and cover your head and neck with a pillow.
- ☐ If driving, pull over, stop and set the parking brake. If outside, move away from buildings, trees and power lines.
- ☐ Expect aftershocks. If you are near the coast, go inland or to higher ground right after the shaking stops.
- ☐ If trapped, text or bang on a pipe or wall instead of shouting; use a whistle if you have one.

Floods and Flash Floods

- ☐ Turn Around, Don't Drown: six inches of moving water can knock you down; one foot can sweep your vehicle away.
- ☐ Stay off bridges over fast-moving water. Never drive around barricades.
- ☐ If your car is trapped in rapidly moving water, stay inside; get on the roof if water rises inside.
- ☐ Homeowner's insurance does not cover floods. Flood policies usually take 30 days to start, so buy early.
- ☐ Keep documents in a waterproof container and make password-protected digital copies.

Volcanoes and Ashfall

- ☐ Know your area's risk and sign up for the free USGS Volcano Notification Service.
- ☐ Follow evacuation orders and leave early. Avoid areas downwind and river valleys downstream of the volcano.
- ☐ Limit time outdoors in ash; use a well-fitting N95 mask. Cover vents and seal doors and windows.
- ☐ Avoid driving in heavy ash: it clogs engines. If you must drive, keep windows up and the air conditioning off.
- ☐ Do not climb on your roof to clear ash unless trained; ash is slippery and heavy.

Sinkholes

- ☐ Mark and secure any hole. Keep children and pets away.
- ☐ Do not put water into the hole; that may make it bigger.

- ☐ If a building is affected, with sinking, sagging or cracking walls, stay out and call your insurance adjuster.
- ☐ A hole in a public road: call local law enforcement or your city or county road department.
- ☐ If there is any risk of physical harm, call your local law enforcement agency.

Hurricanes and Tropical Storms

- ☐ Know your evacuation zone and route; practice it with your household and pets.
- ☐ Keep phones charged and have backup chargers when a storm is forecast.
- ☐ Clear drains and gutters, bring in outdoor furniture, and consider hurricane shutters.
- ☐ If told to evacuate, go immediately. For high wind, shelter in an interior room.
- ☐ If trapped by flooding, go to the highest level, but never into a closed attic.

Tornadoes and Severe Storms

- ☐ Know the signs: a rotating funnel cloud, an approaching cloud of debris, or a roar like a freight train.
- ☐ Pick your shelter now: a safe room, or a small, windowless interior room on the lowest floor.
- ☐ During a warning, stay away from windows, doors and outside walls; protect your head and neck.
- ☐ Do not shelter under highway bridges.
- ☐ In a car with no escape, stay buckled, put your head below the windows and cover it.

Extreme Heat

- ☐ Do not rely on a fan as your main cooling. Find a cooling center, library or mall if you lack air conditioning.
- ☐ Never leave people or pets in a closed car on a warm day.
- ☐ Drink plenty of fluids and avoid hard work outdoors at midday.
- ☐ Heat stroke signs: body temperature above 103°F, red hot dry skin, confusion. Call 9-1-1.
- ☐ Check on older adults, family members and neighbors.

Wildfires and Smoke

- ☐ Clear leaves and flammable material for at least 30 feet around your home.
- ☐ Set up one room you can close off from outside air, with a portable air cleaner.

- ☐ Keep an N95 mask for smoke. Evacuate immediately if authorities tell you to.
- ☐ Do not return home until officials say it is safe; watch for hot ash and embers.

Sources: Ready.gov (FEMA): ready.gov/kit, [/earthquakes](#), [/volcanoes](#), [/hurricanes](#), [/floods](#), [/tornadoes](#), [/heat](#), [/wildfires](#); Florida Geological Survey, Sinkhole FAQ (floridadep.gov/fgs/sinkholes/content/sinkhole-faq). Today's hazards: USGS, National Weather Service, National Hurricane Center, GDACS, as reported on kemetimind.com.