Be Ready: Earthquakes, Volcanoes, Extreme Weather and Sinkholes

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Active today (November 19, 2026)

- ☐ 10 Winter Storm Warnings from the National Weather Service (AK, CA, NV).
- ☐ 9 Flood Watches from the National Weather Service (AK, CA, FL).
- ☐ 6 Flood Warnings from the National Weather Service (AZ, FL).
- ☐ Largest earthquake: M6.1, Pacific-Antarctic Ridge. See Earthquakes below.
- ☐ Great Sitkin volcano at alert level Watch. See Volcanoes and Ashfall below.
- ☐ Sinkhole reported (BBC). See Sinkholes below.
- ☐ Sinkhole reported (Montreal Gazette). See Sinkholes below.
- ☐ Sinkhole reported (Global News). 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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 kemeticmind.com.