



DECATUR EMERGENCY SERVICES 2022-2023



DECATUR

AWARE & PREPARED



For Emergencies and
Natural Disasters

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Decatur must be prepared to deal with a host of potential disasters

A disease epidemic could threaten lives and livelihoods. A hazardous materials spill on the train tracks could mean evacuation. A severe winter storm could confine Decatur families to their homes for days and cut off water, electricity, and telephone service.

What are Decatur's Fire, Police and Public Works departments doing to prepare for these and other emergencies? And what can you do? This insert is designed to answer these questions by providing:

- Information about the city's emergency plans, programs and resources.
- Tips on how you and your family can prepare for potential disasters.

Decatur's emergency management efforts are guided by the principle that we must be prepared for daily emergency service requests while continually preparing for any large-scale events that may impact this community.

This can only be accomplished through planning, training, and a partnership between Decatur residents and employees.

The staffs of Decatur's emergency services departments – Fire, Police and Public Works – are always available to help you in your preparation efforts. In the upcoming year, please consider taking one of the first aid and CPR classes frequently offered by the Fire Department, participating in the Citizens Public Safety Academy at the Police Department in the fall, or volunteering as a Citizen Assisting Public Safety (CAPS) member to help us serve your neighbors during emergencies.

Emergency response is a team effort and it is our hope that the information provided here will serve as a guide for you and your family to take the necessary steps in developing and maintaining a plan for the emergencies that may occur. The responsibility to be aware of and prepared for the possibility that an extraordinary event may affect our normal day-to-day existence is shared by all of us. Together we can make Decatur a community well prepared for any emergency.

Meet the Team

Decatur's Emergency Managers



Toni Washington, Fire Chief and Emergency Management Director



Meredith Roark, City Clerk and Deputy Emergency Management Director



Andrea Arnold, City Manager overseeing fire



David Junger, Assistant City Manager overseeing police



Scott Richards, Police Chief

How We Communicate

When an emergency occurs, the City of Decatur uses multiple channels to relay information to the community. These range from the low-tech (signs posted on city buildings, outdoor tornado siren warnings) to the latest social media apps. Here are the major ways the city communicates during an emergency:

DecaturGA.com

Road closures and other last-minute alerts are posted under “In the Spotlight” on the Decatur home page. When severe weather events occur, a special emergency banner is splashed across the homepage with the most vital information on how to stay safe.

Facebook and Twitter

Real-time updates are often posted to the city’s social media accounts: facebook.com/decaturga and twitter.com/CityofDecaturGA. Many others in the community use #decaturga on Twitter and Instagram to share what they are experiencing.

DecaturMakeover.com

This is your best source for information about ongoing infrastructure and construction projects that result in road closings, and for development-oriented city news.

Smart911

Used primarily for severe weather alerts, Smart911 has also been activated to help locate missing persons, including children. Go to smart911.com to sign up for voice or text alerts.

Nextdoor.com

The City and police department share alerts, updates, and information on programs and events with Nextdoor, a free private social networking website that requires address verification so you share only with your neighbors. Anyone who lives or works in the 4.6 square miles of the city can sign up to receive updates at nextdoor.com.

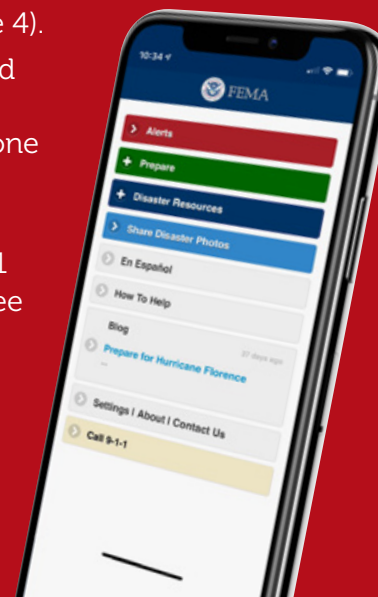
Fire Rescue, Public Works, and the Police departments are critical to the City’s disaster preparation and response.



Things to Do NOW!

When disaster strikes, you may not have much time to respond. Prepare now – it could save your life and the lives of your loved ones.

- Always remain calm.
- Prepare a Family Emergency Plan (see page 5).
- Assemble an emergency supplies kit with enough supplies to last for three days per person in your household (see page 6).
- Ask your child’s school for a copy of its emergency plan to keep at home or office.
- Learn to text – a text message is more likely to get through in a disaster situation than a phone call.
- Register your phones for the Smart911 Weather Warnings. This system will alert you to the dangers of severe weather and any other emergencies that require quick notification (see page 4).
- Download FEMA’s smartphone app.
- Create a Smart 911 profile (see page 4).



Prepare for Flu Season

Influenza (the flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. Depending on the strain's severity, it can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. Some people, such as children, older adults and those with certain health conditions, are at high risk for serious flu complications. According to the CDC, the best way to prevent the flu is by getting vaccinated each year. Also, due to the rapid speed at which the flu can spread, the following healthy habits should be practiced to help prevent the spread of germs and the flu.

Wash your hands properly and often:

Follow the steps described below to remove germs.

Cover your coughs and sneezes:

- Use a tissue. If you don't have one, use your upper sleeve (not your hands).
- Throw the tissue away.
- Wash your hands.
- Stay at least six feet away from others if you are coughing and sneezing – or if they are.
- Stay home when you're sick. Avoid spreading germs to others!
- Get a flu shot every year – it's the best way to protect yourself from seasonal flu.
- Consider getting a COVID-19 vaccination or booster shot. Check with your doctor but for many people, the flu shot and the COVID-19 shot can be administered at the same time.

Clean Hands Save Lives

According to the CDC, handwashing is like a “do it yourself” vaccine. Regular handwashing is one of the best ways to remove germs, avoid getting sick and prevent the spread of germs to others. It involves five simple and effective steps one can take to reduce the spread of diarrheal and respiratory illness so that you can stay healthy.

How you should wash your hands:

1. Wet hands with clean, running water of any temperature.
2. Lather hands by rubbing them together with soap.
3. Scrub hands for at least 20 seconds.
4. Rinse hands well under clean, running water.
5. Dry hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

No soap and water? Use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.

When you should wash your hands:

- Before, during and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before and after caring for someone who is sick
- Before and after treating a wound or cut
- After using the toilet
- After changing diapers or cleaning up after a child who has used the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- After touching an animal, animal feed or animal waste



Smart911 Alerting System Enhanced

Decatur's Smart911 system includes emergency and general notification alerts. The Smart911 Emergency Notification System is a multi-platform system that quickly notifies citizens of emergency situations and severe weather requiring immediate action, via telephone, text and/or email, depending on an individual's preferences. All residential phone numbers in the BellSouth/AT&T system should be in the telephone database. Other telephone numbers, such as mobile phones, will have to be registered.

The city can trigger Smart 911 alerts for emergencies such as:

- Water contamination
- Utility outage
- Evacuation notice and route
- Missing person
- Fires or floods
- Bomb threat
- Hostage situation
- Chemical spill or gas leak
- Other emergency incidents where rapid and accurate information is essential

The Smart911 system also offers a weather warning option that alerts residents to threats of severe thunderstorms, flash floods and tornadoes. When severe weather threatens, the system alerts residents only in the areas immediately affected. The information is based on NWS (National Weather Service) weather polygon technology.

You must register to receive weather warnings. Only registered residents will be contacted during an alert. To register, go to Smart911.com and check the box next to the Emergency Notifications option.

If at anytime you would like to be removed from the alerting system and have opted-in, simply log into your Smart911 profile and unsubscribe. However, loaded landlines cannot be unsubscribed from receiving emergency alerts.

For more information about Smart911 contact Fire Chief Toni Washington, toni.washington@decaturga.com, or call 404-373-5092.

Make a Family Emergency Plan

Your family may not be together when disaster strikes. Plan how you will contact one another and review what you will do in different situations. Keep a copy of this plan in your emergency supply kits, or another secure place where you can access it easily.

Establish an out-of-town contact.

NAME

PHONE

EMAIL

Fill out the following information for each family member and keep it safe.

NAME

DATE OF BIRTH

BLOOD TYPE ALLERGIES

IMPORTANT MEDICAL INFORMATION

NAME

DATE OF BIRTH

BLOOD TYPE ALLERGIES

IMPORTANT MEDICAL INFORMATION

NAME

DATE OF BIRTH

BLOOD TYPE ALLERGIES

IMPORTANT MEDICAL INFORMATION

NAME

DATE OF BIRTH

BLOOD TYPE ALLERGIES

IMPORTANT MEDICAL INFORMATION

NAME

DATE OF BIRTH

BLOOD TYPE ALLERGIES

IMPORTANT MEDICAL INFORMATION

Determine where to go in an emergency.

Write down where your family spends the most time: work, school and other places you frequent. Schools, daycare providers, workplaces, and apartment buildings should all have site-specific emergency plans.

Home

ADDRESS

PHONE

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING PLACE

REGIONAL MEETING PLACE

School

ADDRESS

PHONE

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING PLACE

REGIONAL MEETING PLACE

Work

ADDRESS

PHONE

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING PLACE

REGIONAL MEETING PLACE

Other familiar place

NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING PLACE

REGIONAL MEETING PLACE

Other important information to keep handy

DOCTOR

PHONE

DOCTOR

PHONE

DOCTOR

PHONE

PHARMACIST

PHONE

MEDICAL INSURANCE

PHONE

POLICY#

HOMEOWNERS/RENTAL INSURANCE PHONE

POLICY#

VET/KENNEL

PHONE



EMERGENCY SUPPLIES

HOW COMPLETE IS YOUR KIT?

FEMA and the Ready Campaign recommend that all Americans have basic supplies on hand in order to survive for at least three days if an emergency occurs. They recommend the following basic kit.



Basic Kit

- ☐ One gallon of water per person, per day (three-day supply) for drinking and sanitation
- ☐ Non-perishable, three-day supply of food and can opener if required
- ☐ Battery-powered or hand-crank radio and a NOAA weather radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both
- ☐ Flashlight and extra batteries
- ☐ First aid kit
- ☐ Whistle
- ☐ Dust mask, to help filter contaminated air
- ☐ Plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter in place
- ☐ Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- ☐ Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- ☐ Local map
- ☐ Cell phone with charger and battery backup

Additional items to consider including

- ☐ Prescription medication and glasses
- ☐ Infant formula and diapers
- ☐ Masks, soap, hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes
- ☐ Pet food and extra water for your pet(s)
- ☐ Important family documents – copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records in a waterproof, portable container
- ☐ Cash or travelers' checks and change
- ☐ Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person
- ☐ Complete change of clothing, including a long-sleeved shirt, long pants and sturdy shoes
- ☐ Household chlorine bleach and a medicine dropper. Mix nine parts water to one part bleach for use as a disinfectant. To treat water for consumption, use six drops of regular liquid bleach per gallon of water. Do not use scented, color safe or bleaches with added cleaners. See page 15.
- ☐ Fire extinguisher
- ☐ Matches in a waterproof container
- ☐ Feminine supplies and personal hygiene products
- ☐ Mess kits, paper cups, plates and plastic utensils, paper towels
- ☐ Paper and pencil
- ☐ Books, games, puzzles or other activities for children

Where to Store Your Supply Kits

You don't know where an emergency will occur, so consider preparing supplies for home, work and vehicles.



Home

Keep your basic kit in a designated place and have it ready in case you have to leave your home quickly. Make sure all family members know where the kit is kept.



Work

Be prepared to shelter at work for at least 24 hours. Include food, water and other necessities like medicines in a "grab and go" style kit. Keep comfortable shoes at your workplace in case an evacuation requires walking long distances.



Vehicle

Keep your gas tank full and carry these items:

- Jumper cables or jump box
- Flashlights and extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Food items containing protein
- Water for each person and pet in your car
- AM/FM radio for traffic reports and emergency messages
- Cat litter or sand for tire traction
- Shovel and ice scraper
- Change of clothes and blankets/sleeping bags
- Phone charger
- Flare or reflective triangle

CYBERSECURITY PROTECT YOUR DATA



Cyberattacks are malicious attempts to access or damage a computer or network system. Cyberattacks can lead to the loss of money or the theft of personal, financial and medical information. These attacks can damage your reputation and safety.

Cyberattacks can occur in many ways, including:

- Accessing your personal computers, mobile phones, gaming systems and other devices.
- Damaging your financial security, including identity theft.
- Blocking your access or deleting your personal information and accounts.
- Complicating your employment or business services.
- Impacting transportation and the power grid.

Protect Yourself Against Cyberattacks

You can avoid cyber risks by taking steps in advance:

- Limit the personal information you share online. Change privacy settings and do not use location features.
- Keep software applications and operating systems up-to-date.
- Create strong passwords by using upper and lower case letters, numbers and special characters. Use a password manager and two methods of verification.
- Watch for suspicious activity that asks you to do something right away, offers something that sounds too good to be true, or needs your personal information. Think before you click. When in doubt, do NOT click.
- Use a secure Internet connection and Wi-Fi network, and change passwords regularly.
- Don't share PINs or passwords. Use devices that use biometric scans when possible (e.g. fingerprint scanner or facial recognition).

- Check account statements and credit reports regularly.
- Be cautious about sharing personal financial information, such as your bank account number, Social Security number or credit card number. Only share personal information on secure sites that begin with https://. Do not use sites with invalid certificates. Use a virtual private network for a more secure connection.
- Use antivirus and anti-malware solutions, and firewalls to block threats.
- Back up your files regularly in an encrypted file or encrypted file storage device.
- Do not click on links in texts or emails from people you don't know. Scammers can create fake links to websites.
- Remember that the government will not call, text or contact you via social media about owing money.
- Keep in mind that scammers may try to take advantage of financial fears by calling with work-from-home opportunities, debt consolidation offers and student loan repayment plans.

During a Cyberattack

- Check your credit card and bank statements for unrecognizable charges.
- Check your credit reports for any new accounts or loans you didn't open.
- Be alert for emails and social media users that ask for private information.
- If you notice strange activity, limit the damage by changing all of your internet account passwords immediately.
- Consider turning off the device that has been affected. Take it to a professional to scan for potential viruses and

remove any that they find. Remember: A company will not call you and ask for control of your computer to fix it. This is a common scam.

- Let work, school or other system owners know what happened.
- Run a security scan on your device to make sure your system is not infected or acting more slowly or inefficiently.
- If you find a problem, disconnect your device from the Internet and perform a full system restore.

After a Cyberattack

Let the proper federal, state and local authorities know if you believe you have been a victim of a cyberattack.

- Contact banks, credit card companies and other financial services companies where you hold accounts. You may need to place holds on accounts that have been attacked. Close any unauthorized credit or charge accounts. Report that someone may be using your identity.
- File a report with the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) if you think someone is using your Social Security number illegally.
- File a complaint with the FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3). They will review the complaint and refer it to the appropriate agency.
- File a report with the local police so there is an official record of the incident.
- Report identity theft to the Federal Trade Commission.
- Contact the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) at ftc.gov/complaint if you receive messages from anyone claiming to be a government agent.
- Contact additional agencies depending on what information was stolen. Examples include contacting:
 - The Social Security Administration (800-269- 0271) if your Social Security number was compromised, or
 - The Department of Motor Vehicles if your driver's license or car registration has been stolen.
- Report online crime or fraud to your local United States Secret Service (USSS) Electronic Crimes Task Force or the Internet Crime Complaint Center.

Potential Threats to Decatur

Here is a list of emergency events that could occur in Decatur and advice about what you can do to stay safe before, during and after.

WINTER STORMS and Extreme Cold

Severe winter storms can cause dangerous or life-threatening conditions: snow, extreme cold, icy road conditions, and downed trees and power lines.

Before:

- Stay informed on winter weather.
- Winterize your home. Insulate walls and attics, caulk and weather-strip doors and windows, and install storm windows or cover windows with plastic.
- Insulate pipes and allow faucets to drip a little to avoid freezing.
- Winterize your car. Keep a shovel, a wind-shield scraper and small broom in your vehicle.
- Add rock salt, sand and shovels to your emergency supplies kit, as well as extra socks, hats, mittens and blankets.

During:

- Conserve fuel.
- Stay safe and dry inside.
- If you are outside, cover your mouth, keep dry and avoid overexertion. Dress for the weather, wear layers, mittens and a hat.
- Drive only if absolutely necessary. If you become trapped while you have a cell phone, call 911, explain your situation, and tell them to try to track your location by the phone signal.
- If you must drive, travel during the day;

don't travel alone; keep others informed of your schedule; and stay on main roads.

After:

- Check on neighbors or anyone who may need assistance.
- Use common sense when going outdoors.
- Supervise children at all times.

Children should play only in safe, supervised areas outdoors – never in the street or snow banks on the side of the road.



Floods are one of the country's most common natural disasters. Flooding poses a greater threat in low-lying areas and near water. Even the smallest streams, creek beds and drains can overflow and create flooding. During periods of heavy rain or extended periods of steady rains, be aware of this possibility.



A heat wave is an extended period of extreme heat, and is often accompanied by high humidity. These conditions can be dangerous and even life-threatening for people who do not take the proper precautions.

Before:

- Make sure your home is well insulated, including weather stripping around doors and windows.

During:

- Cover windows that receive morning or afternoon sun with drapes, shades and awnings.
- Never leave children or pets alone in a closed vehicle.
- Avoid strenuous activity. Stay inside as much as possible.
- Drink plenty of water, even if you do not feel thirsty. Avoid alcohol and caffeine.
- Eat small meals and eat more often.
- Watch for signs of heat exhaustion, including cool, moist, pale or flushed skin; heavy sweating; headache; nausea or vomiting; dizziness; and exhaustion. Body temperature will be near normal.
- If you see signs of heat exhaustion, get the person out of the heat and to a cooler place.
- Watch for signs of heat stroke, including hot, red skin; changes in consciousness; rapid, weak pulse; and rapid, shallow breathing. Body temperature can be very high. If you see signs of heat stroke, call 911 and get help fast. Move victims to cooler places and keep them lying down.

POWER OUTAGE

Severe weather and storms can cause power outages. Restoring power can take time.

Before:

- Have flashlights, a battery-powered or hand-cranked radio, and extra batteries on hand.
- Keep plastic containers filled with water, leaving about an inch of space in each one. The chilled or frozen water will help keep food cool during power outages.
- Back up computer files regularly.
- Have a phone that does not require electricity, either a standard telephone or a mobile phone, rather than a cordless phone.

During:

- Never use candles for emergency lighting, use flashlights.
- Turn off any electrical equipment you were using when the power went out. Leave one light on so you know when the power returns.
- Avoid opening the refrigerator and freezer.
- Listen to the radio for updates.
- If it is hot outside, take steps to remain cool. If it is cold, take steps to remain warm.

After:

- Stay away from downed power lines.
- Do not refreeze dairy products, seafood or food that has completely thawed and been 40 degrees for more than two hours, or anything with a questionable texture or smell. If in doubt, throw it out.



Before:

- Raise your furnace, water heater, or electrical panel if they are in areas of your home that may be flooded.
- Seal walls in basements with waterproofing compounds.
- During a flood or flash flood watch, be prepared to evacuate: fill your car's gas tank; bring in outside furniture; and unplug electrical appliances and move them to high points in your home.
- During a flash flood warning, immediately seek higher ground.

During:

- Stay out of flood waters, if possible. Even water a few inches deep can be dangerous. If you have to walk through water, use a stick to check the firmness of the ground ahead of you.
- Avoid moving water.
- Do not drive into flooded areas. If your car becomes surrounded by rising water, get out quickly and move to higher ground.
- Stay away from downed power lines.
- Stay off bridges over fast-moving water:

they can be washed away without warning.

After:

- Do not drink or cook with tap water until local authorities say it is safe.
- Watch out for areas in which the floodwaters may have receded, leaving weakened roadways.
- Clean and disinfect all items that got wet.
- Be aware of the risk of electrocution.
- Be aware that snakes and other animals may be in your house.



TORNADO

The southeast is one of the areas of the United States most likely to experience tornadoes, which spin off from powerful thunderstorms, and can kill people and devastate neighborhoods in seconds. The rotating, funnel-shaped cloud can have whirling winds up to 300 miles per hour. Damage paths can be more than a mile wide and 50 miles long.

Before:

- Stay informed – listen to a NOAA weather radio to check local forecasts and news reports regularly.
- Determine in advance where you will take shelter during a tornado. Basements and storm cellars are the best choices. If no underground shelter is available, choose an interior room or hallway on the lowest floor possible.
- Look for the following danger signs: dark, often greenish sky; large hail; a dark, low-lying cloud that may be rotating; and a loud roar similar to a freight train.
- If local authorities issue a tornado watch, remain alert for approaching storms, watch the sky and stay tuned to the radio or television.
- If local authorities issue a tornado warning, take shelter immediately.

During:

- If you are in a building, go to a pre-designated shelter area. Stay away from corners, windows, doors and outside walls. Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside. Get under a sturdy table and use your arms to protect your head and neck. Do not open windows.

- If you are in a vehicle, trailer or mobile home, get out immediately and go to the lowest floor of a nearby, sturdy building or storm shelter.
- If you are outside with no shelter, lie flat in a nearby ditch or depression and cover your head with your hands.
- Be aware of the potential for flooding. Do not get under an overpass or a bridge. You are safer in a low, flat location. Watch out for flying debris, which is the cause of most fatalities and injuries during tornadoes.
- Do not try to outrun a tornado if you are in a vehicle.

After:

- Stay out of damaged buildings.
- Stay clear of downed power lines.
- Help injured or trapped people.
- Check on others who may require assistance, such as older adults, children and people with disabilities.
- Wear appropriate gear during clean-up, such as thick-soled shoes, long pants, and work gloves.

THUNDERSTORM



Severe thunderstorms can produce large hail, high winds, downpours, tornadoes, and dangerous lightning. Lightning often strikes outside of heavy rain and may occur as far as 10 miles from any rainfall. Most lightning deaths and injuries occur when people are caught outdoors in the summer months during the afternoon or evening.

Before:

- Stay informed – listen to a NOAA weather radio to check local forecasts and news reports regularly.
- If a thunderstorm is likely in your area, postpone outdoor activities.
- Unplug appliances and other electrical items, such as computers, and turn off air conditioners.
- If you are unable to unplug electrical equipment, turn it off.

During:

- Follow the 30-30 rule: when you see lightning, count the seconds until you hear thunder. If that time is 30 seconds or less, the thunderstorm is within six miles and is dangerous. Seek shelter immediately. The threat of lightning continues longer than most people think. Wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder before leaving your shelter.
- Stay off corded phones, computers, and electronic equipment that puts you in direct contact with electricity or plumbing. Avoid showering or bathing.
- If you feel your hair stand on end, lightning may be about to strike. Squat on the balls of your feet, place your hands over your ears and your head between your

knees. Make yourself the smallest possible target and minimize your contact with the ground. Do not lie flat on the ground.

After:

- If a person is struck by lightning, call 911 and get medical care immediately.
- Lightning-strike victims carry no electrical charge; attend to them immediately. Check their breathing, heartbeat and pulse.

TORNADO SIRENS

Severe weather in our area often includes the threat of tornadoes. Decatur has six outdoor sirens to warn the community when such a threat occurs. The sirens are located at Glennwood, Winnona Park, Oakhurst and Westchester Elementary Schools, the Police Department, and Legacy Park.

What are Tornado Outdoor Warning Sirens?

They are alarms that will be sounded to alert citizens who are outdoors that a tornado may be imminent. They are not designed to be heard within a home or other building, however.

When will I hear them?

Sirens will be sounded when the National Weather Service issues a tornado warning for the Decatur area or when a tornado is spotted by a member of public safety. The sirens will sound for three to five minutes.

The city will conduct a test of the system at 5 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each month. The sirens will be sounded for one to two minutes. If the weather is inclement on the first Wednesday of the month, the test will be postponed until the next day.

What should I do when I hear the siren?

Take cover. Go indoors to a safe room at ground level or below with as few windows as possible. Basements are usually the best option.

If you are in a vehicle and see a tornado approaching, get out immediately and go to the lowest floor of a sturdy, nearby building. If a building is not available, lie flat in a nearby ditch or depression and cover your head with your hands. Be aware of the potential for flooding. Do not get under an overpass or bridge. You are safer in a low, flat location. Never try to outrun a tornado in urban or congested areas in a car or truck. Instead, leave the vehicle immediately for safe shelter.

Flying debris from tornadoes causes most fatalities and injuries. Stay in a safe place until the weather improves.

How will my family be alerted indoors and at night?

Everyone must take personal responsibility to monitor radio and television weather reports when severe weather occurs. In a crisis, the Emergency Alert System instantly interrupts radio and TV broadcasts to provide emergency information. The National Weather Service uses the system to alert the public to emergency weather information and dangerous conditions. EAS warnings are also transmitted on National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Weather Radio. Since neither the sirens nor the media may alert you indoors at night, we recommend that households and businesses have a Weather Alert Radio, which sounds an alarm when the National Weather Service issues a tornado warning. If you buy a radio, we strongly recommend you purchase one that is programmable with your local county code.





HAZMAT INCIDENTS

Listen to local radio or television stations for detailed information and follow instructions carefully. Remember that some toxic chemicals are odorless.

If asked to evacuate:

- Do so immediately.
- Stay tuned to the radio or television for information on evacuation routes, temporary shelters and procedures.
- If you have time, minimize contamination in the house by closing all windows, shutting all vents and turning off attic fans.
- Take pre-assembled disaster supplies (see page 6).
- Remember to help your neighbors who may require special assistance — infants, elderly people, and people with access and functional needs.

If asked to stay indoors:

- Bring pets inside.
- Close and lock all exterior doors and windows. Close vents, fireplace dampers and as many interior doors as possible.
- Turn off air conditioners and ventila-

tion systems, or set ventilation systems to 100 percent recirculation so that no outside air is drawn into the building.

- Take shallow breaths through a cloth or a towel if gas or vapors could have entered the building.
- Avoid eating or drinking any food or water that may be contaminated.
- Go into your pre-selected shelter room.
- Seal gaps under and around the following areas with wet towels, plastic sheeting, duct tape, wax paper or aluminum foil:
 - Doorways and windows
 - Air conditioning units
 - Bathroom and kitchen exhaust fans
 - Stove and dryer vents with duct tape and plastic sheeting

If outside:

- Stay upstream, uphill and upwind. In general, try to go at least a half mile from the danger area.
- Do not walk into or touch any spilled liquids, airborne mists or condensed solid chemical deposits. Try not to

inhale gases, fumes and smoke. If possible, cover mouth with a cloth or mask while leaving the area.

- Stay away from accident victims until the hazardous material has been identified.

If in a car:

- Stop and seek shelter in a permanent building.
- If you must remain in your car, keep car windows and vents closed and shut off the air conditioner and heater.

After a Hazardous Materials Incident

- Listen to local radio or television stations for the latest information.
- Go to a designated public shelter if you have been told to evacuate or you feel it is unsafe to remain in your home. Text SHELTER + your ZIP code to 43362 to find the nearest shelter in your area (example: shelter 30030).
- Act quickly if you have come into contact with or have been exposed to hazardous chemicals.
- Follow decontamination instructions from local authorities.
- Seek medical treatment for unusual symptoms as soon as possible.
- Place exposed clothing and shoes in tightly sealed containers.
- Advise everyone who comes in to contact with you that you may have been exposed to a toxic substance.
- Return home only when authorities say it is safe. Open windows and vents and turn on fans to provide ventilation.
- Find out from local authorities how to clean up your land and property.
- Report any lingering vapors or other hazards to your local emergency services office.

EMERGENCY PLANNING for Seniors and People with Disabilities

For a senior citizen or resident with disabilities, Ready.gov recommends these considerations when developing an emergency plan:

Do you:

- Use communication devices?
- Depend on accessible transportation to get to work, appointments or other places in the community?
- Receive medical treatments (e.g., dialysis) on a regular basis?
- Need assistance with personal care?
- Rely on electrical equipment or other durable equipment?

- Use mobility aids such as a walker, cane or wheelchair?
- Have a service animal?
- Receive Social Security or other monthly benefits by mail?

Planning alternatives in advance of need can keep you safe and comfortable during an emergency situation that may last for days or even longer.

WE ♥ YOUR PETS

In disasters, incident management teams face an array of management challenges, including the care of animals affected by the disaster. While the care of animals in disasters should never take precedence over the care of people, providing such care may facilitate the personal safety and care of a large segment of the human population; therefore jurisdictions must be prepared to provide additional safeguards and options for owners and their animals.

Include these items for your household pets and service animals in your family's disaster kit:

- Food, water, and bowls for each pet. (Keep a three-day supply for evacuations, and a two-week supply for sheltering-in-place at home.)
- Paper towels, plastic bags, and spray disinfectant for animal waste cleanup.
- Extra collars and tags, harnesses, and leashes for all pets (including cats).
- Copies of your pet's medical and vaccination records. Boarding facilities may not accept your pets without proof of health.
- Two-week supply of medication, along with a copy of the current prescription.
- Recent photo of you with your pet.
- Crate or traveling carrier large enough for your pet to stand up and turn around in. Label the crate with your pet's name, your name, and where you can be reached.
- First aid kit.



Other Ways to Be Prepared

The **City of Decatur Fire Rescue Department** recommends three of its class offerings to the community in order to help everyone get prepared for disasters. These classes are all focused on skills that you hope you will never need but will be so thankful you have if the situation arises.

- **CPR/First Aid.** This four-hour class covers the American Heart Association's Heart-saver course on giving effective compressions, breaths, and AED use as well as basic first-aid skills. The class is free for City of Decatur residents but the American Heart Association charges \$20 if a card is desired, although City of Decatur Fire Rescue will provide a certificate free of charge if a card is not necessary. You can sign up by going to decaturga.com and typing "CPR class" in the search box. The fee for non-residents is \$50, which includes the AHA card.
- **Stop the Bleed.** Although the CPR/First

Aid class briefly discussed bleeding control, this free one-hour class teaches the skills to stop life-threatening bleeding while awaiting first responders. Those interested in this class can email fire Captain Gary Menard at gary.menard@decaturga.com and will receive a certificate of completion.

- **Fire extinguisher use.** This free one hour class addresses when it is safe to use a fire extinguisher as well as the proper use and storage. Those interested can contact Fire Captain Gary Menard at gary.menard@decaturga.com.

The **City of Decatur Police Department** has two classes for the community to consider.

- **Revved Up Kids.** Revved Up Kids was founded with a singular purpose: Protect children from sexual abuse and exploitation. This is a self-defense course offered for children in grades 1st to 5th and teen

girls in 6th to 12th. Classes are hosted at the Decatur Police Department. You can learn more about this program and register for future classes by going to revvedupkids.org.

- **Rape Aggression Defense (RAD).** This course is designed to provide women with a voice and techniques to use in overcoming adverse dynamic situations. The course includes lecture, discussion and self-defense techniques suitable for women of all ages and abilities. Classes are three hours each and are held over four different sessions. If you are interested in participating in this program, please email Sergeant John Bender at john.bender@decaturga.com. There is no charge for this course.

Both departments offer additional educational classes to the community. Reach out to Fire Captain Menard or Police Sergeant Bender for more information.

TREE MAINTENANCE

Major storms can inflict severe damage to the tree canopy in a very short period. Yet some trees survive with minimal damage. With proper advance care, much of the most severe damage to trees and property can be avoided.

A damaged or downed tree can cause significant property damage, serious injury, and/or the loss of utility services for days. Thus far, our enhanced tree maintenance program has been very successful. We have seen a marked improvement in the health of city trees and a significant reduction in damage from unhealthy trees. In addition, the tree inventory of city-owned trees also allows us to assess trees and prioritize maintenance requirements.

How should a resident deal with a tree that has dead limbs, is dying, or is dead?

Proactive maintenance of trees on private property is the first step. Trees should be checked for root rot fungus and inspected yearly. Find a certified arborist at georgiaarborist.org/find-tree-care.

What should a resident do after a storm?

Once a storm passes, be patient! Remember that first responders will be attending to medical emergencies and priority tree removal will go to clearing major roads. Report downed power lines and help your neighbor if any tree poses an immediate danger. Call 911 to have someone from the Fire Department respond and assess the immediate safety concerns. Walk around your yard to identify hazard

trees, pick up brush and locate staging areas for chipping or mulching. Once these tasks are done, the next question is whether the tree is located on public or private property. If the tree is on private property, then it is the responsibility of the property owner.

Remember, recovery is not just about cleaning up the debris. Homeowners should visually monitor trees throughout their community after a storm and they should contact their certified arborist six months to a year after the storm to reevaluate their trees. If a tree does need to be removed, homeowners should refer to the City of Decatur's tree removal permitting requirements. Permits can be submitted on-line and tree information can be found at decaturga.com/trees.

If a tree of concern is on public property or on someone else's property, contact the city arborist in the Engineering Division at 678-553-6527, or treepermits@decaturga.com. Outside of regular business hours call the Public Works Department at 404-377-5571.

TREE CARE AFTER A STORM

If a tree requires immediate attention, call a Certified Arborist. If the tree is leaning on wires or buildings, or is snagged on other trees, professional assistance is needed. If the

tree is on a city right-of-way, call 311 before having work done. Contact your insurance company to clarify their requirements. They may need to approve the contractor you hire.

If the tree is not a hazard, make sure it gets continued care. It's fine to wait a few weeks or months before making a decision on the fate of a tree. The cost for such treatment may well go down from that quoted directly after a storm.

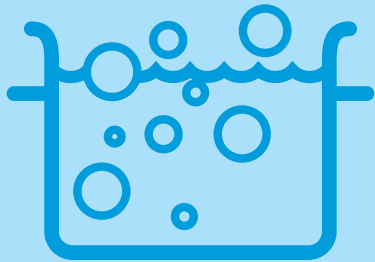
Carefully assess a tree's potential for survival. In the immediate aftermath of a storm, many homeowners rush to clear away as much debris as possible, often making decisions to remove trees that could have been saved with proper treatment and care. If more than half a tree's branches or mass has been damaged and needs to be removed, it is doubtful that it will be able to produce adequate foliage for nourishment in the coming seasons.

Don't be scammed! After a storm tree care "experts" come out of the woodwork, offering to remove your trees for a very low price. Unfortunately, the end result is often unsatisfactory. Hire an established professional. Find more information at tcia.org or treesaregood.org.

H2O No!

In emergency situations, use bottled water if possible; bottled water is the safest choice for drinking and all other uses. If bottled water is not available, the following methods can help make your water safe to drink.

BOIL IT



If you don't have safe bottled water, you should boil your water to make it safe to drink. Boiling is the surest method to kill disease-causing organisms, including viruses, bacteria, and parasites.

You can improve the flat taste of boiled water by pouring it from one container to another and then allowing it to stand for a few hours, OR by adding a pinch of salt for each quart or liter of boiled water.

If the water is cloudy:

- Filter it through a clean cloth, paper towel, or coffee filter OR allow it to settle.
- Draw off the clear water.
- Bring the clear water to a rolling boil for 1 minute.
- Let the boiled water cool.
- Store the boiled water in clean sanitized containers with tight covers.

If the water is clear:

- Bring the clear water to a rolling boil for 1 minute.
- Let the boiled water cool.
- Store the boiled water in clean sanitized containers with tight covers.

BLEACH IT

If you don't have safe bottled water and if boiling is not possible, you can make small quantities of filtered and settled water safer to drink by using a chemical disinfectant such as unscented household chlorine bleach. Disinfectants can kill most harmful or disease-causing viruses and bacteria, but are not as effective in controlling more resistant organisms, such as the parasites *Cryptosporidium* and *Giardia*. If the water is contaminated with a chemical, adding a disinfectant will not make it drinkable.



To disinfect water with unscented household liquid chlorine bleach:

If the water is cloudy:

- Filter it through a clean cloth, paper towel, or coffee filter OR allow it to settle.
- Draw off the clear water.
- Follow the instructions for disinfecting drinking water that are written on the label of the bleach.
- If the necessary instructions are not given, check the "Active Ingredient" part of the label to find the sodium hypochlorite percentage, and use the information in the next section to determine how much bleach to add.
- Stir the mixture well.
- Let it stand for at least 30 minutes before you use it.
- Store the disinfected water in clean, sanitized containers with tight covers.

If the water is clear:

- Follow the instructions for disinfecting drinking water that are written on the label of the bleach.
- If the necessary instructions are not given, use this:

Using a dropper: For every gallon of water, use six drops of bleach

Using a measuring spoon: For every gallon of water, use 1/8 teaspoon

Note: most household bleach contains 8.25 percent sodium hypochlorite (the active ingredient). If your bleach has only 5-6 percent, use 8 drops per gallon.

- Stir the mixture well.
- Let it stand for at least 30 minutes before you use it.
- Store the disinfected water in clean, sanitized containers with tight covers

Chlorine dioxide tablets can be added to your bleached water to control against *Cryptosporidium* if the manufacturer's instructions are followed correctly.

LEARN MORE [epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/emergency-disinfection-drinking-water](https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/emergency-disinfection-drinking-water)

YIELD

to emergency vehicles

If police, fire or ambulance service vehicles are using their emergency lights (blue or red) and sirens, safely maneuver your vehicle out of their way. Slow your vehicle and move over to the shoulder of the road, or as far to the right of the roadway or lane as you can, and stop. You should always use caution to ensure that you do not endanger other motorists, bicyclists, or pedestrians while doing so. Do not block an intersection or otherwise prevent the emergency vehicle from making a necessary turn.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT RESOURCES

The information in this guide is provided by several of these agencies.

Be Ready Campaign
ready.gov

Federal Emergency Management Agency
fema.gov

Georgia Emergency Management Agency
gema.ga.gov

National Weather Service
nws.noaa.gov/education.php

CDC Pandemic Flu information
cdc.gov/flu/pandemic

Red Cross
redcross.org

Emergency Financial First Aid Kit
operationhope.org/financial-disaster-recovery/

Georgia Power Outage
georgiapower.com/outages

IMPORTANT DECATUR PHONE NUMBERS

911

for police, fire, and medical emergencies

Police Department non-emergency
404-373-6551

Fire Station No. 1
404-373-5092

Fire Station No. 2
404-378-7611

Public Works
404-377-5571

City Hall
404-370-4100

TEXT 911 IN AN EMERGENCY

Citizens inside the city limits, especially those who are hearing or speech impaired or who find themselves in a situation where a voice call is not possible, can now send emergency text messages to 911. Here's how:

To text to 911 in an emergency:

- Enter "911" in the "To" field.
- Text in simple words – do not use abbreviations.
- Include the location of the emergency and the type of help needed.
- Keep the text message brief and concise.
- Press the "Send" button.
- Be prepared to answer questions and follow instructions from the 911 call taker.

When to text to 911:

- If you are hearing impaired.
- When a voice call could escalate a threat.
- If you are injured and cannot speak.
- If you are in a remote location and can only send a text message.
- When you are unable to complete a voice call to 911 because of high volume or network issues.

Currently, the three major carriers – AT&T, T-Mobile and Verizon – have agreed to offer the text-to-911 service. This does not mean that the service is available in all areas, however. Should you be out of the area for a carrier, you will receive a message stating that the text service is not available and to call 911. Photos, videos and other attachments cannot currently be sent to 911 via text, although these capabilities will be available in the future.