

Step 1: Are You Prepared?

Could you take care of yourself and your household for a few days during a disaster?

Let's get ready, Palm Springs!

How many times over the last six months or six years have you thought about getting your emergency plan put together or updated? The thought of it can be overwhelming to many. Where do I start? Putting the plan together needs your best thinking but doesn't have to take a lot of time. By breaking down the overall plan into smaller tasks/steps, committing to spending 10 minutes to complete tasks, doing one or two tasks at a time, you will get it done! Don't worry if you can't complete a task in one sitting. By the end of this step you'll be amazed at what you've been able to accomplish!

Over the next Seven Steps, the Palm Springs Neighborhood Involvement Committee in partnership with the Palm Springs Fire Department Emergency Services will provide you with incremental tasks to complete that will get you set up with a good foundation and ready to handle an emergency that impacts you at home! We will also provide resources to help you prepare your business! Let's get ready, Palm Springs! Step by step, house by house, neighborhood by neighborhood.

Can you take care of yourself and your household during and immediately after a disaster? Is your business prepared for an emergency and do you have a plan on how to quickly resume operations? On average it will take three days to get resources (people and supplies) coming from the State and/or FEMA. Are you prepared?

The longer a member of the community can take care of themselves after a disaster the more time the first responders and city personnel can deal with the immediate threats to life and health and assess critical infrastructure (roads, utilities, etc.). Residents can best help themselves and their community by having an emergency and communication plan and preparing a 72-hour kit. Businesses can be ready for emergencies by developing a Continuity of Operations Plan.

Frequently, when we talk about emergency or disaster preparedness, we are thinking about "THE BIG ONE"! That major earthquake that experts remind us is overdue. Being prepared for an earthquake is important but we need to think about more than earthquakes. We also need to think about and plan for fires, hazardous material incidents, storms and disasters caused by humans.

The Eastern portion of the Coachella Valley was directly impacted by the massive power outage in September 2011 that left millions of people in California, Arizona and Mexico without power. Even though Palm Springs was not impacted, we all probably know someone who was! A huge geographical area and many people were without power for several days. Using an ATM, a credit card or getting gas for a car was not possible! Are you prepared?

Every summer families from communities all around the Coachella Valley are evacuated from their homes due to wild fires! On a personal scale, a home fire is disastrous! Are you prepared?

What can you do to prepare yourself, your family and your home for an emergency? Our local Public Safety, FEMA and the Red Cross advise us to do the following

1. Make a Plan
2. Create or buy a 72 hour kit
3. Be informed

As simple as this sounds, and as good as our intentions are for doing exactly this, many of us are still not prepared. Over the next seven steps, the City of Palm Springs Office of Neighborhood Involvement Committee

and the Palm Springs Emergency Services Coordinator will help households get prepared! We will take manageable steps towards being prepared at home and at work. Involve your children in the preparation activities.

Let's get ourselves and our City prepared for any disaster! We can prepare house by house, one neighborhood after another. Share this information with your neighbors. First step--begin with a plan! Attached is a plan that asks you the questions and gives you space to provide the answers. Complete the form online and print it off or print the form and complete it. FEMA and the American Red Cross also have forms you can use. The most important thing for you to do is to BEGIN! If you are a business owner, also consider getting your business prepared for an emergency. Check out that link below. Now is also the perfect time, if you haven't already, to sign up for Code Red and Nixle! Take a few minutes and get prepared!

Resources:

City of Palm Springs Fire Department	http://www.palmsprings-ca.gov/index.aspx?page=51
City of Palm Springs Office of Neighborhood Involvement	http://www.palmsprings-ca.gov/index.aspx?page=79
FEMA	http://www.ready.gov/make-a-plan
American Red Cross	http://www.redcross.org/
Prepare your business	http://www.ready.gov/business and http://www.fema.gov/private-sector-preparedness-ps-prep
Nixle and Code Red	Nixle provides text and email notifications of missing people, closed radios, as well as emergency alerts. To sign-up go to: http://local.nixle.com/city/ca/palm-springs/ When you sign-up for CodeRED you can choose to receive message via text, email, TTY, cell phone, landline, or all of them. CodeRED is the City's reverse 911 system. To sign-up go to: http://www.palmspringsca.gov/index.aspx?page=1040

Step Two, we will continue to prepare, we will identify critical documents and family records that are important to keep safe.