



FEMA

Scenario 7: Shelter in Place Answer Key

1. Whether you are at home, work, or elsewhere, there may be situations when it's simply best to stay where you are and avoid any uncertainty outside. There may be circumstances when staying put and creating a barrier between yourself and potentially contaminated air outside, a process known as "sealing the room," is a matter of survival. Use common sense and available information to assess the situation and determine if there is immediate danger. If you see large amounts of debris in the air, or if local authorities say the air is contaminated, you may want to take this kind of action.
2. In general, sheltering in place is appropriate when conditions require that you seek immediate protection in your home, place of employment, school, or other locations when disaster strikes. Local officials are the best source of information when determining whether to evacuate or shelter in place. In the event of an emergency, individuals should listen to their radios or local news stations and follow the directions of emergency management officials. People should take steps to prepare in advance in case local officials' direct residents to evacuate.

Preparing an Emergency Evacuation Plan

An emergency evacuation plan has two parts: evacuation from your home and evacuation from your neighborhood. An evacuation plan for your home is useful not only for disasters, but also for fires or other incidents in your home.

Important points to remember when creating an evacuation plan for your home:

- Have at least two escape routes from each room.
- Mark the locations of any escape ladders or other special equipment.
- Mark the locations of fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, first aid kits and Go-Kits.
- Mark the locations of the shutoffs for gas, water and electricity.
- Mark the locations of people with medical conditions or disabilities as well as the location of any special equipment they will need immediately.

Emergency Evacuation Inventory

If you must evacuate your home, you may have as little as 10 minutes. Under these circumstances, trying to think of what to save is very difficult. Take some time now to think about what items you would try to take with you. Write down a list of the high- priority items you would take if you only had 10 minutes to evacuate your home.

Remember, you may have to carry everything.

Evacuation Steps

If you have time during an evacuation, you may want to take steps to secure your home. Think about what you would need to do to secure your home. Write down your plans and keep the paper in a safe and accessible location.

Household Emergency Evacuation Plan

Draw your building's floorplan, then draw your evacuation routes and a meeting place. Make one drawing for each story of the building. Keep in a safe place and review often with your family.



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Have maps ready for the following:

- Closest evacuation centers.
- Main and alternative routes for leaving the city in north, south, east and west directions.
- Meetup spots outside the affected areas. For example: “We live approximately 50 miles east of a nuclear power plant. Should there be an accident, or an attack and the wind is blowing in an easterly direction, our plan is to head north and meet up in a town approximately 60 miles north of our home.”

Choosing an Out-of-Area Contact

During an emergency local phone service may be limited, so you should arrange with someone outside your area to be your family contact. Your contact person should have voicemail or an answering machine. Ensure that all family members know they should listen to the radio or TV for telephone use instructions, then phone the designated out-of-area contact person to say how and where they are and what their plans are. Keep calls short, and if possible, arrange to call the contact person back at a specified time for another check-in.

Choosing a Place to Meet

At the time of an emergency, your family might not be together. It’s important to choose family meeting places. Remember that bridges may be closed, and roads may be blocked by debris, so choose your meeting places carefully with access in mind. Pick places that are easy to identify, that can be reached on foot if necessary, and that are in an accessible, open area.

Consider where each of you will likely be at different times and on different days. The emergency evacuation plan for your neighborhood can be handy in a large disaster. By plotting out potential routes on a city map before the disaster, you’ll save yourself from having to figure something out while in a hurry.

Things to consider when crafting your neighborhood evacuation plan:

- Plan two routes for each direction (north, south, east, west).
- Avoid routes with obvious hazards, or routes that are likely to be impassible in a disaster. It’s a good idea to drive the routes before deciding. Avoid common routes that may be congested during an emergency.
- Establish plans with other family members for meeting up outside of the evacuated area. Make sure each member knows the location of the established meeting points.
- Have a phone list of three contacts outside your area. Each family member should carry a personal copy of this list. In an emergency, communications may be down in your area. Family members can contact the persons outside the emergency area to pass along messages and to check on the welfare of other family members.
- Be sure that each family member has a copy of the evacuation plan, maps and telephone numbers.
- You should also allow for an evacuation scenario from your workplace.



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Local officials on the scene are the best sources of information for your situation. Following their instructions during and after emergencies regarding sheltering, food, water, and clean up methods is your safest choice. Remember that shelter in place instructions are usually provided for durations of a few hours, not days or weeks.

How to seal your home:

- Bring your family and pets inside.
- Lock doors, close windows/air vents/fireplace dampers.
- Turn off fans, air conditioning and forced air heating systems, or set ventilation systems to 100% recirculation so that no outside air is drawn into the building.
- If gas or other vapors could have entered your home, take shallow breaths through a cloth or towel and avoid eating/drinking anything that might have been contaminated.
- Take your emergency supply kit unless there is reason to believe it has been contaminated.
- Go to an interior room with few windows as possible. Seal all windows, doors, vents with 2-4 millimeters thick plastic sheeting and duct tape. Consider measuring and cutting the sheeting in advance. Cut the plastic sheeting several inches wider than the openings and label each sheet. Duct tape plastic at corners first and then tape down all edges.
- Be prepared to improvise and use what you have on hand to seal gaps, so you can create a barrier between yourself and any contamination.
- Local authorities may not immediately provide information on what is happening what you should do. However, you should watch tv, listen to the radio, or check in the internet for official updates and instructions.

Your family emergency kit should, at minimum, include the following items: water (one gallon, per person, per day) and/or water purification tablets, first-aid kit, flashlight, batteries, a hand crank/solar power radio, non-perishable food, medications/prescription glasses, cash (in small denominations), a wrench (to turn off utilities), hand sanitizer, a Mylar blanket, ear plugs, and a book/deck of cards. If you have an infant, then include baby food, diapers, formula, etc.

An emergency kit for your pet should include: food, water, medication, medical records, and favorite toy. Include information on your pet's veterinarian contact information and be sure that your pet is microchipped or has ID tags.

This may include having items and services already in place before an evacuation/shelter in place order is issued. If a loved one is comforted by a certain item (a blanket, photograph, stuffed animal, etc.) be sure to pack the item in your Go-Kit whether evacuating or sheltering in place. If a relative requires scheduled mental health therapy, make sure that his/her mental health provider is aware where you will be evacuating to, or that you will be sheltering in place.