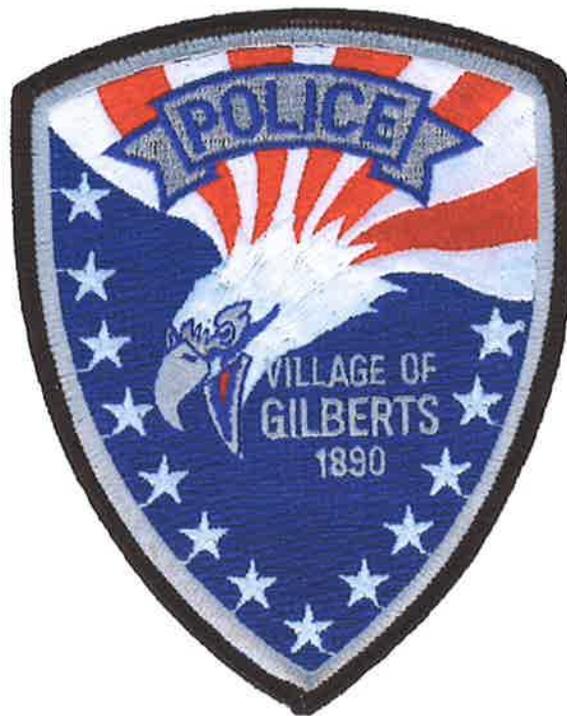


# Village of Gilberts Emergency Preparedness Guide

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## *Neighbors helping Neighbors*



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## **General Rules of Thumb**

If an emergency or disaster happens:

**Stay calm.** Try not to panic, take time to understand what has happened and what you can do to stay safe and avoid injury. Gather family members and pets together until you have assessed the situation. Sheltering in place is always a good first option.

**Check the scene.** Pay attention to your surroundings to determine whether you are safe, where you are and whether anyone around you needs help; if you think you are in danger, get to a safer place as soon as you can. If not at home when an emergency happens, try not to rush back there if traveling is unsafe.

**Give and Get Help.** If you or others are hurt or still in danger, call 911, explain what has happened, where you are, what injuries people have, and whether the danger still exists. If trained to administer first aid, do so until help arrives.

**Listen for official emergency announcements.** Your best source of information is local radio and television stations which will give emergency updates and instructions.

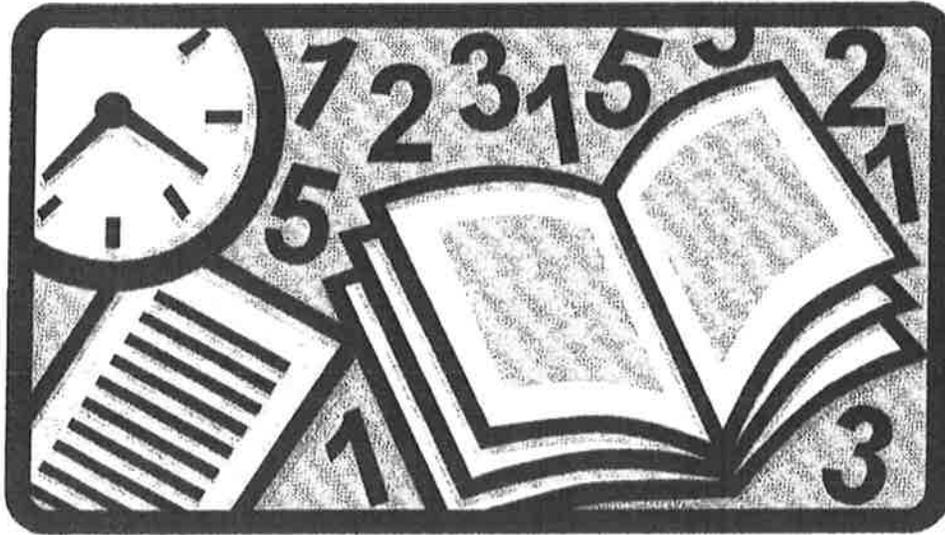
**Get prepared to evacuate if told to do so by local authorities.** If told to leave your home or work, do so right away, follow exact evacuation routes, and go to the specified shelter or safe area. If you can, bring your Emergency Kit with you, and get in touch with your family's designated emergency contact person as soon as you can to let them know where you are and if you are OK.

**Secure your home before leaving.** Close all the windows and lock the doors before leaving. Turn on your porch light if you still have electricity. If you know where you are being evacuated to, write the location down on a piece of paper along with a phone number and tack it to your door, so if separated family members or emergency workers need to get hold of you while you are gone, they will know how to contact you.

## **Getting Ready**

An emergency often happens without warning, leaving little or no time for you and your family to plan what to do next. So, it is important for you to learn about the measures you can take to be ready – before an emergency happens. This guide teaches you to make an Emergency Plan and put together an Emergency Kit.

## Make an Emergency Plan



Talk with your family about why and how you need to prepare for disaster emergencies:

- Discuss the types of disasters that are most likely to happen and what to do in each case. Some examples are described in the next section.
- Keep a list of emergency phone numbers next to each telephone. Not only should it include emergency response numbers, but those of relatives or close friends that can be notified in case of a disaster.
- Teach children how and when to dial 911. Write a script for them to follow that contains their name and address so they can convey the necessary information clearly to the call taker.
- Purchase a NOAA Weather Radio receiver that automatically alerts you when a severe weather watch or warning is issued for the area.
- Take first aid and CPR training as a family.
- Learn about the disaster plans at your workplace, children's school, or child's day care center and other places where your family spends time away from home. Make sure your child's school or child day care center has your current emergency contact number.
- Pick two places to meet if something happens; one right outside your home in case of a sudden emergency like a fire; and a second one outside of your neighborhood in case you can't return home.

- Ask a friend or relative who does not live with you to be your emergency contact person. Make sure everyone has this person's address and phone number; list them on the emergency contact page of this booklet and by each phone. If your family members get separated, they should call this person to tell them where they can be reached.
- Think about the special safety needs of small children, elderly or disabled relatives or neighbors, and pets. Keep a pet carrier handy for small animals, but don't endanger yourself trying to locate them in an emergency.
- Keep important documents and records in a secure location, bring some form of identification with you if evacuation is necessary.

### Put Together an Emergency Kit



Preparing an Emergency Kit ahead of time can save you time in case you must leave home quickly or be without power or water. Put your Kit together with items you may need after a disaster, and if you can, try to keep enough supplies on hand to meet your needs for at least three days. Store them in a sturdy, waterproof, easy-to-carry containers such as backpacks, duffel bags, plastic totes or clean, covered trash cans. Remember to include the following:

- A three day supply of water (one gallon per person per day) for drinking and cooking – store in clean plastic soda bottles as milk jugs will break down and leak over time. Any liquid beverage that does not require refrigeration (soda pop,

juices, sport drinks) will help prevent dehydration, especially in the summer months. These can be used to supplement your intake of water, especially if it is in short supply.

- Food that won't spoil or need much cooking (canned fruits and vegetables, cereals, peanut butter, crackers or cookies, and dry mixes like instant oatmeal or soups, rice or noodles). Use or replace these items every six months if possible. MRE's (meals ready-to-eat) are available at most sporting goods stores, offer a variety of menu options and have very long shelf life.
- One change of weather appropriate clothes and sturdy shoes, and one blanket or sleeping bag per person. Extra blankets or plastic tarps will help preserve body heat if without power during winter months. Hats and gloves during the winter months especially if without power for long periods.
- Small household tools (hammer, screwdrivers, pliers, wrenches, hand saw, etc.) and items such as a battery powered radio, flashlight with extra batteries, utility knife, bowls and cups, silverware, can opener, lighter or matches, duct tape, plastic sheeting, paper towels and something to write with like markers or crayons.
- An extra set of car and house keys, personal identification, and credit cards, cash or traveler's checks. Keep important family papers (birth certificates, passports, bank books or medical records, etc.) in a waterproof, fireproof locked container or at least a sealed plastic bag.
- Sanitation supplies such as toilet paper, hand wipes, diapers, tampons or sanitary pads, large and small plastic bags and waterless soaps and shampoos. Remember that whatever you have with you, will need to be disposed of at some time in a safe and sanitary manner.
- Special items for young children and elderly or disabled family members, and pets. Items such as prescription medications, over-the-counter medicines, specialty foods and dietary supplements or pet food or litter are not available in public shelters, you will have to bring with you what you will need.
- A basic first aid kit that includes bandages in assorted sizes, a disinfectant or other wound cleanser (iodine or alcohol wipes), gloves (nitrile or PVC as some people are allergic to Latex!), gauze pads, scissors, tweezers, cotton balls and swabs, popsicle sticks, adhesive tape, oral thermometer, etc.
- A sewing kit with needles, thread, safety pins and don't forget to pack your toothbrushes and contact lens kits as these items will be hard to come by.
- Remember to keep your cellular phone charged at all times and bring along the wall charger (just in case there is electrical power and you need to recharge).

A smaller version of your Emergency Kit can be stored in your vehicle for winter emergencies or if stranded in a blizzard. Your vehicle Kit should contain the following:

- Jumper cables and flares, a flashlight with extra batteries and a brightly colored piece of cloth that can be tied to the antenna if snowbound.
- It is generally not a good idea to carry additional gasoline in containers in your trunk, so keep your gas tank full at all times especially in winter.
- A tin can with a candle, waterproof matches or lighter and extra warm gloves. Note paper and something to write with, so if you have to abandon your vehicle, you can leave a note where you are heading and other important information.
- A blanket and plastic sheeting, duct tape and basic hand tools, such as a hammer, assorted screwdrivers, pliers, adjustable wrenches and a utility knife.
- A first aid kit and towels or rags, and if space permits, a small folding shovel.
- Traction devices, sand or cat litter for icy roads if needed. The additional weight of the sand does not give your car any extra traction on ice or in snow, it is most effective under the tires.

### **When a Disaster or Emergency Happens**

The next section will give you tips on how to know when there is an emergency, information about different types of disasters that could happen in the Gilberts area, and advice on how you can stay safe if and when they occur.



## How You Will Know When a Disaster Happens

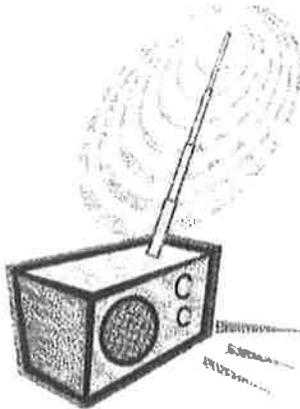
There are different ways that you will find out that an emergency or disaster is happening. Weather warnings will usually be given on television and radio.

A *Severe Weather or Tornado Watch* means that conditions are right for severe weather to possibly occur somewhere and at sometime within the watch area. Watches are issued for entire counties and for longer periods of time.

A *Severe Weather or Tornado Warning* means that severe weather or a tornado is now occurring within the warning area. Warnings are issued for specific areas within a county and for shorter periods of time. If you *are* aware that a weather warning has been issued for Gilberts or the immediate area, seek shelter right away.

In the event of a national emergency, the sirens will be activated with a warbling tone for 3 to 5 minutes. Listen to local radio and television stations for further instructions. The outdoor warning sirens also have the capability to make voice announcements, listen carefully and follow all instructions given.

In other situations you may be contacted by telephone, or emergency personnel will drive by and give instructions over the vehicle loudspeaker or may even come to your door. Please co-operate with the emergency personnel and follow their instructions.



## What to Do for Different Types of Disasters

**Thunderstorms/Lighting/Hail/High Winds** All thunderstorms produce lightning that can cause death or serious injury. Lightning can strike from up to 5 to 10 miles away, even if it is clear and sunny where you are. If there is a thunderstorm warning, or if you see or hear that a storm is approaching, follow these steps:

- Get inside a home, building or vehicle right away. Remember it is the metal shell of the car that protects you from lightning, not the rubber tires. Lay flat on the seat if possible.
- Close all windows and doors; draw the shades and blinds to protect yourself from flying glass if the window or door glass breaks due to high winds.
- If you're outside go to a low area, drop to a crouching position with both feet flat on the ground and close together. This will reduce the effects if lightning strikes in the vicinity. Be as small a target as possible.
- Stay away from trees, poles, metal objects, power lines, and do not use appliances such as phones, televisions or computers that can conduct the lightning current into your home or office.
- If driving in a car and large size hail begins to fall, seek out a bridge or overpass to park under. Be sure to pull to the shoulder and turn on your flashers as not to cause an accident.
- Before the storm arrives, secure any outdoor lawn furniture and planters which could become projectiles and cause damage to yours or your neighbor's property.
- Some thunderstorms may produce locally heavy rainfall, which may cause street flooding. Significant amounts of rain in short periods of time may temporarily overwhelm the storm sewer system.
- Be a good neighbor and prevent some of the causes of storm damage by keeping your trees trimmed and never allow grass clipping or leaves to block street sewers. If the water can't drain properly, it may flood your basement or your neighbors.
- Notify elderly or disabled neighbors of the storm warning so they may also take appropriate actions. They may not be aware of the storm's approach or may need extra help in making preparations.

**Tornadoes.** Tornadoes produce very high winds from funnel shaped clouds that can lift and move heavy objects such as buildings and cars. They can move extremely fast and do a lot of damage to people and property. If there is a tornado warning, or you see a tornado coming or hear the outdoor warning siren, follow these steps:

- If you see a tornado or funnel cloud aloft, report it immediately to the Police Department. Every attempt will be made to verify citizen reported sighting prior to notification of the National Weather Service and activation of the outdoor warning sirens.
- If you are outside, try to seek shelter in a house or other building right away (but not in a car or trailer); if there is no shelter nearby, lie flat, face down in a ditch or low area and cover your head until the tornado passes.
- If you are in a car, get out and lie flat, face down, in a ditch or low area and cover your head until the tornado passes. Parking until a bridge or overpass offers little protection as the winds are intensified as the tornado passes over.
- If you are already inside, move to the basement (under the stairs or a sturdy table or workbench) or preferably an interior, windowless room in the center of the building such as a closet or bathroom, and get into the bathtub and cover yourself with a blanket
- Avoid places with wide-span roofs, such as gymnasiums, auditoriums, cafeterias and large hallways or great expanses of glass, such as atriums and sun-rooms.
- Stay away from windows and doors. While the view of an oncoming tornado is spectacular, it is not worth risking one's life for a few minutes of video.
- Remember that the most damage is caused by high winds, inspect the condition of your roof and building annually and make repairs before the storms happen.
- After the tornado has passed, assess the damage to your home and then check in on your neighbors. Notify authorities if you need emergency medical assistance and watch out for downed trees and power lines.

**Winter Storms.** Winter storms can be dangerous because they leave people stranded and sometimes without power. If there is a winter storm warning, or if you are already stranded in a storm:

- If already inside, get your Emergency Kit and listen for official updates and important information.
- Do not travel unless absolutely necessary, and if you do, try to take public transportation. Allow extra time and make sure someone else knows where you are going and what route you are taking.
- Stay indoors and dress warmly - if you must go outside, wear enough clothing to keep you warm and dry (hat, gloves, boots and additional layers of clothing to help retain body heat).
- Eat and drink liquids on a regular basis, but avoid caffeine and alcohol. You lose as much moisture just breathing in the winter as you do sweating in the summer, so stay hydrated.
- Conserve heat and fuel —keep the thermostat at 65 degrees or less during the day and 55 degrees at night, close off unused rooms, stuff towels or rags in cracks under doors, and cover windows at night.
- Avoid using kerosene or propane heaters indoors if the power is out, and only use electric space heaters while someone is at home. Turn off electric space heaters at night as a safety precaution.
- If you have an emergency generator, make sure it is properly installed and only run outdoors. Do not exceed the rating of the extension cords or overload the circuit breakers and never back feed your electrical panel to supply electricity to the entire house.
- If you get stranded in your car or other vehicle, stay with your vehicle, and hang a brightly colored cloth on the radio antenna. Turn on the engine for only about 10 minutes each hour (or 5 minutes every half hour) to keep warm, but make sure the tailpipe is clear of snow and leave the window open a bit to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.
- The weight of the accumulated snow may cause structural damage to roofs and buildings. Carefully remove snow from roofs with an implement designed for the job. Shoveling a pitched roof by hand is dangerous, exercise extreme caution if you must do so.
- Your body reacts differently in cold weather, avoid over-exertion while shoveling snow – it can lead to a heart attack in certain at-risk people. Never stick your hand into the chute of your snow thrower to clear jams!

**Floods.** Floods can occur quickly and can be dangerous because of fast moving waters. If there is a flood warning or you believe a flood will happen soon:

- Save yourself, not your belongings.
- Stay away from floodwaters -even water just six inches deep can knock you off your feet.
- Do not let children play in or near floodwaters, flooded creeks or flood retention ponds.
- Never try to drive through floodwaters –if your car stalls, leave it and head for higher ground on foot.
- Once you are in a safe place, listen to a battery powered radio for official updates or wait for emergency personnel to give you instructions.
- If you have a basement, move valuable objects and furniture to upper floors.

**Fires/Explosions.** Fires can cause death and serious injury to people because of burns and breathing in of smoke. Explosions may occur on their own or as part of a larger fire and create a lot of damage to people and property. If you hear a fire alarm or smoke detector, see a fire, or see or smell smoke or natural gas, follow these steps:

- If indoors, get out immediately, call 911 to report a fire or smoke.
- If you smell natural gas inside a building, get out right away and call 911 from a neighbor's house. If you smell gas outdoors, call 911 from a safe location away from the odor.
- If a stove fire starts, slide a lid over it and turn off the burner. Never put water on a grease fire -this will make the fire spread. Baking Soda or salt straight out of the box will also extinguish a small fire in a pan if a lid is not handy.
- If you have a fire extinguisher and know how to use it, do so. If the fire will not go out right away, get out and call 911. Even if you successfully put out a small fire at home, call the Fire Department to check things out. Fire may extend into places you can't see and smolder there, only to erupt into a larger fire later.
- Be careful when opening doors -feel a closed door from top to bottom, cracks and door knob with the back of your hand before you open it. If it is cool and there is no smoke at the bottom or top, open it slowly. If it is warm or you see smoke at the cracks, you need to find another way out.
- Stay low -if your only way out is through smoke, crawl on the floor under the smoke to get to your exit. Soaking a towel in water to cover your face and breathing through it may help.

- If the smoke is too thick, or heat or flames block your exit, stay in a room with the door closed and window open and hang a sheet outside the window so firefighters can find you. Soak towels in water and stuff them under the door to help keep out the smoke.
- Once you are out of a burning building, stay out! Don't go back in for any reason.
- Meet family members at your pre-designated meeting place.
- Before a fire starts, make a family plan and rehearse it often. Children should be taught not to be afraid in times of emergency. A visit to the local fire station is a good educational experience for the children and adults as well.

**Chemical Spills.** Dangerous chemicals may be used by local companies or transported through the Village by railroad or by highway. Sometimes these can be released into the environment from an industrial or transportation accident or intentionally as an act of terrorism. There may be in addition to fire and explosions, a cloud of toxic substance released that is poisonous to people and animals.

- If you receive any threat about a potential toxic spill or chemical release, or see any unusual activity that you may believe is part of a chemical event, call 911 right away!
- If you live or work near the scene of a chemical event that is not in your building, stay where you are, listen for emergency updates and wait for instructions from the Police or emergency personnel before leaving the area.
- If you are at the scene of a chemical event, get yourself and others far away from the spill or leak, and then call 911. Try to stay upwind and wait in a safe place until emergency responders arrive. Watch for signs of toxic poisoning (trouble breathing, dizziness, irritated eyes, skin or throat, vomiting, cramps or diarrhea) and report those right away to emergency personnel.
- Try to avoid breathing in fumes or smoke by covering your mouth with your hand or a cloth. Never touch, taste, smell or place yourself near any spilled real or suspected chemical substance.
- If you come in contact with chemicals, pour cold water over yourself and others and remove any contaminated clothing. If you don't have access to water, or if the chemical may react with water, brush off the chemicals from the skin with a glove, plastic bag or cloth.
- If you are outside, try to stay upstream, uphill, and upwind of the chemical event.
- If you are told by local officials to "shelter in place", remain in your home or office, turn off all heating and air conditioning systems and get your Emergency

Kit. Go to an interior room (preferably without windows) and use duct tape and plastic sheeting to seal all of the cracks around the door and any vents into the room. Keep listening to your radio or television until you are told it is safe or that you should evacuate.

## **What to Do Until Help Arrives**

Basic First Aid and CPR skills can save a life.

If someone with you is sick or hurt, follow these basic first aid steps:

### ***Check-Call-Care***

**Check** the scene. Make sure it is safe for you to get closer, and then check the injured person to see if they have any life-threatening conditions (chest pain, difficulty breathing, heavy bleeding, is unconscious, or has severe injuries from a fall, head injury or burns).

**Call** for help. If the injured person has any of the life-threatening conditions listed above, call 911 right away, or have someone else call while you stay with the person.

**Care** Do your best to comfort the sick person and prevent further injury until emergency personnel arrive. Here are some ways you can help;

### **Control Bleeding.**

- Cover wounds with a pad, bandage, or cloth and press firmly.
- If there are no broken bones, lift and keep the injured area above the level of the heart.
- If the bleeding does not stop, put on extra bandages (without removing the previous ones), and squeeze the artery against the bone at a point between the injury and the heart (usually inner legs or inner arms).

### **Care for Shock.**

- Keep the injured person from getting either too cold or too hot.
- Lay the person flat on their back and keep the legs about 12 inches above the floor or ground (if no broken bones).
- Do not let the injured person eat or drink anything.

### **Tend Burns.**

- Cool the burned area with lots of cool water.
- Cover the burn with a dry, clean bandage or cloth.

### **Care for Injuries to Muscles, Bones and Joints.**

- Apply ice or a cold pack to control swelling and lessen pain.
- Avoid movement or activity that causes the injured person any pain.
- If you must move the person because the area is unsafe, try to keep the injured part still.

**Reduce Any Care Risks.** The risk of getting a disease while giving first aid is rare. However, to lower the risk:

- Avoid direct contact with blood and other body fluids.
- Use Nitrile or PVC gloves if you have them, as some people are allergic to Latex.
- Thoroughly wash your hands with soap and water right away after giving first aid.

### **Basic Survival Tips**

**If Your Power Goes Out.** Remain calm, call ComEd at (800) EDISON-1 (1-800-334-7661) to report the power outage, and follow these steps:

- Determine if it is just your home or the entire block. If it is just your house without power, check your circuit breakers first. Look outside to see if the service line from the pole to the house is intact, if the line is down in your backyard, stay inside!
- Do not call 911 to report a power outage. The Village cannot help restore electric power. If there is an immediate fire or safety hazard from a downed power line, call 911 and stay away from the area.
- Use a flashlight for emergency lighting instead of candles.
- Turn off all electrical appliances you were using when the power went out.
- Avoid opening the refrigerator or freezer so they will stay cold.
- Listen to your battery powered radio for updates and information.
- Assist family members or neighbors who may become ill from extreme heat or cold.
- Never run a generator, grill or kerosene heater inside a home or garage as these can cause a fire or carbon monoxide poisoning.

- If you need to cook, use a grill or camp stove outdoors, or use your fireplace. Canned food can be heated up and eaten right out of the can (be sure to open the can and remove the label before you heat it).

**If Food Supplies are Low.** Healthy people can survive for a long time on half of what they usually eat, and without food at all for many days. People (except for children and pregnant women) may ration food but not water. Follow these tips if your food supply is limited during an emergency:

- Eat salt free crackers, whole grain cereals and canned foods with high liquid content rather than high fat, high protein or salty foods that make you thirsty.
- If at home, use up foods from your refrigerator and freezer first, then use up the canned foods, dry mixes, and other items you already have on your cupboard shelves.
- Continue to drink water and other liquids as normal, if you can.

**If Water Supply is Limited.** Sometimes severe storms, floods, or simple mechanical problems can compromise the water supply. In the event of any difficulties with the water supply system, the Village will make announcements for residents to boil the water for 10 to 15 minutes to make sure it is safe to drink, otherwise follow these steps:

- Keep a few gallons of water handy in the refrigerator or closet for emergencies. Use the stored water for drinking or other household uses regularly so it is replaced often to keep it fresh.
- Camping and Sporting Goods stores sell Water Purification Tablets, these will purify several gallons of water, removing bacteria but not sediments. The water may be cloudy but is safe to drink.
- Add a few drops of Chlorine bleach to the water and let it stand for awhile. Do not use laundry bleach that contains perfumes, additives or detergents.

### **Staying Healthy and Safe After a Disaster**

**Coping with Trauma.** Recovery continues even days or months after a disaster as you and your family face the emotional and psychological effects of the event. Reactions vary from person to person, but may include: restless sleep or nightmares, anger, fear, or wanting revenge, lack of emotion, needing to keep active, loss of appetite, weight loss or gain, headaches, and mood swings.

All of these symptoms are normal reactions to stressful events. Let yourself and others react in their own way.

## **Ways You Can Help Others**

Here are a few more basic tips to keep in mind that may help you, your family, or emergency workers get through a disaster more quickly and safely:

- Only call 911 for a possible life-threatening emergency. Telephone lines are very busy in disaster situations, and they need to be kept clear for emergency calls.
- If you do not have an emergency, do not call or go to the hospital emergency department.

## **Acknowledgements**

Preparedness is a continual and changing process; it is an undertaking that requires frequent attention to potential hazards around us. We gratefully acknowledge the information obtained from the American Red Cross, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and other municipalities for providing ideas and content for this edition of the Village of Gilberts Emergency Preparedness Guide.



Fill these out and make copies for family members to carry with them:

**Emergency Contact Information**  
Emergency Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_  
Emergency Contact Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Emergency Contact Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Meeting Place #1 (near home): \_\_\_\_\_  
Meeting Place #2 (away from home): \_\_\_\_\_  
Cellular or Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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