



Tip Sheet: How to Communicate During Disasters

Before a Disaster: How to Prepare Your Home and Mobile Device*

1. Keep a list of emergency phone numbers in your cell phone and a hard copy by your landline.
2. Have a car-phone charger and/or other alternative charger for your cell phone.
3. Having one traditional corded landline (copper lines) will allow you to communicate even if you lose power, lose internet or cell service.
4. Designate at least one out-of-town emergency contact. In some cases, it's easier to make long-distance rather than local calls during an emergency in your area.
5. Add an "Emergency Contact" to your phone's locked screen. This way, emergency personnel will know who to contact in case you are incapacitated. Make sure your emergency contact knows your medical issues, allergies or other special needs you may have.
6. If you are evacuated and have call-forwarding on your home phone, forward your home phone number to your cell phone number.
7. If you do not have a cell phone, keep a prepaid phone card to use.
8. Have a battery-powered radio or television available—keep spare batteries on hand.
9. Subscribe to text or email emergency alerts from local or state governments to stay informed.

**Questions about your mobile phone should be referred to your wireless provider or the phone's manufacturer.*

During and After a Disaster: How to Reach Friends, Loved Ones & Emergency Services

1. If you have a life-threatening emergency, call 911.
2. For non-emergency communications, use text, e-mail, or social media instead of making phone calls to avoid tying up the network. If you have to make a call, keep it brief.
3. Register yourself at American Red Cross's *Safe and Well* program www.redcross.org/safeandwell.
4. Conserve your cell phone battery by reducing the screen's brightness, placing the phone on sleep mode, and closing apps you are not using.
5. Tune into local TV and radio stations for important news alerts.
6. If you lose power, you can charge your cell phone in your car and listen to local radio stations for news alerts and updates. Just be sure your car is in a well-ventilated place (not in a garage), and do not go to your car until any danger outside has passed.
7. Do not talk, text or tweet on a cell phone while driving, unless you have hands free device.
8. Immediately following a disaster, resist using your mobile device to watch streaming videos, download music or videos, or play video games, all of which can add to network congestion. Limiting use of these services can help life-saving emergency calls get through to 9-1-1.

For more information on preparing for emergencies, visit www.Ready.wv.gov

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