



February 2016



EMERGENCY PLANNING MAKES THE DIFFERENCE WHEN SECONDS COUNT...

The tornadoes that tore through communities next door to Heath were a brutal reminder of how important it is to plan for emergencies. Knowing what to do before, during and after an emergency is a critical part of being prepared and may make all the difference when seconds count. With the peak Spring season for severe weather still ahead, your City of Heath officials and staff urge you to take time now to review safety procedures and emergency plans for your family.

HERE'S A GUIDELINE:

What to Do before a Tornado or Natural Disaster:

Build an Emergency Kit

- A disaster supply kit is simply a collection of basic items your household may need in the event of an emergency.
- Try to assemble your kit well in advance of an emergency. You may have to evacuate at a moment's notice and take essentials with you, including any prescription medication. You will probably not have time to search for the supplies you need or shop for them.
- You may need to survive on your own after an emergency. This means having your own food, water and other supplies in sufficient quantity to last for at least 72 hours. Local officials and relief workers will be on the scene after a disaster, but they cannot reach everyone immediately. You could get help in hours or it might take days.
- Additionally, basic services such as electricity, gas, water, sewage treatment and telephones may be cut off for days or even a week or longer. Your supply kit should contain items to help you manage during these outages.
- You can get a list of specific items to include in your kit at: <http://www.ready.gov/build-a-kit> (see QR Code).

Make a Family Communication Plan

Your family may not be together when a disaster strikes, so it is important to think about possible situations and plan just in case. Consider the following questions when making a plan:

- How will my family/household get emergency alerts and warnings?
- How will my family/household get to safe locations for relevant emergencies?
- How will my family/household get in touch if cell phone, internet, or landline services do not work?
- How will I let loved ones know I am safe?
- How will family/household get to a meeting place after the emergency?
- You can download a template for creating your plan at: <http://www.ready.gov/make-a-plan> (see QR Code).

Continued next page...

QUICK LINK QR CODES



Emergency Kit Guide



Communication Plan Template



CERT Training



Safe Room Guidelines

What to Do before a Tornado or Natural Disaster, continued...

Register for Free Emergency Alerts

by Text, Email and Phone at www.nixle.com

Purchase a NOAA Weather radio and keep fresh, back up batteries on hand. Though some of our neighborhoods are within hearing distance of the City of Rockwall's outdoor warning sirens, the City of Heath does not have such a system, which is designed to alert people who are outdoors to take shelter. These systems are not intended for people who are inside a home or building to hear, which makes Nixle and other systems that provide warnings via text, email and phone critical.

Get Trained to Help Others

The desire to help the victims of the December 26 tornadoes was immediate and overwhelming, this created another issue for public safety and city officials to manage. Local organizations and churches, including Rockwall CERT, offer ongoing training. Learn more about becoming a trained member of CERT: <http://www.rockwall.com/FireDepartment/cert.asp> (see QR Code page 1).

Identify a Place to Take Shelter or Build a Safe Room at Your Home

FEMA has many resources to help you decide what's best for your family including: <http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/14951> (see QR Code page 1).

Know the Terms:

Tornado Watch – This means that tornadoes are possible. Remain alert for approaching storms. Watch the sky and stay tuned to NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio or television for information.

Tornado Warning – This means a tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar. Take shelter immediately.

During a Tornado:

If you are under a tornado warning, seek shelter immediately. Most injuries associated with high winds are from flying debris, so remember to protect your head.

After a Tornado: Injuries

- Do not attempt to move seriously injured people unless they are in immediate danger of further injury. Get medical assistance immediately.
- If someone has stopped breathing, begin CPR if you are trained to do so. Stop a bleeding injury by applying direct pressure to the wound.
- If you are trapped, try to attract attention to your location.

Honoring Service



The City of Heath recently honored employees for their outstanding performance in 2015, including from left, Employee of the Year Jeff McKenzie; and Departmental Employees of the Year Brandon Seery, DPS; Tara Plexico, Administrative Services; and John Langstaff, Public Works.

GET EMERGENCY ALERTS AND WEATHER UPDATES FROM WWW.NIXLE.COM

The Rockwall County Office of Emergency Management sends emergency alerts directly to you via email and/or text messages. Sign-up today. This is a free service at www.nixle.com.

After a Tornado: General Safety Precautions

- Continue to monitor your battery-powered radio or television for emergency information.
- Be careful when entering any structure that has been damaged.
- Be aware of possible structural, electrical, or gas-leak hazards in your home.
- If you suspect damage to your home, shut off electrical power, natural gas, and propane tanks to avoid fire, electrocution, or explosions.
- Wear sturdy shoes or boots, long sleeves, and gloves when handling or walking on or near debris.
- Do not touch downed power lines or objects in contact with downed lines. Report electrical hazards to the police and the utility company.
- Use battery-powered lanterns, if possible, rather than candles to light homes without electrical power. If you use candles, make sure they are in safe holders away from curtains, paper, wood, or other flammable items. Never leave a candle burning when you are out of the room.
- Never use generators, pressure washers, grills, camp stoves, or other gasoline, propane, natural gas, or charcoal-burning devices inside your home, basement, garage, or camper—or even outside near an open window, door or vent. These sources can cause carbon monoxide (CO), an odorless, colorless gas that can cause sudden illness and death if you breathe it. Seek prompt medical attention if you suspect CO poisoning and are feeling dizzy, light-headed, or nauseated.
- Hang up displaced telephone receivers, but stay off the telephone, except to report an emergency.
- Cooperate fully with public safety officials.
- Respond to requests for volunteer assistance by police, fire fighters, emergency management, and relief organizations, but do not go into damaged areas unless assistance has been requested. Your presence could hamper relief efforts, and you could endanger yourself.

Save the Date and Start Training! FUN & FIT IN THE PARK

Featuring the Heart of Heath 5k & Family 1-Mile Fun Run is Easter Saturday, March 26. Watch for more details next month and at www.heathtx.com.



The City Council said "thank you and farewell" to DPS Sergeant T.K. Kneedler, who has retired after serving the City for 19 years. Mayor Lorne Liechty presented Sergeant Kneedler with a proclamation that declared January 12, 2016, as "T.K. Kneedler Day in Heath" in recognition of his service and dedication to the community.