

Preparing for the Worst: Emergency Preparedness Kits

No one wants to face a natural disaster that forces them to leave their home. Unfortunately, unexpected emergencies can happen and it's better to be prepared for them than not. So how do you prepare? Keeping an emergency preparedness kit in your home is a very good start. Here's what should be included in an emergency preparedness kit, which you can store in plastic bins or duffel bags:

- Non-perishable food (3 days to 1 week supply) with a can opener, utensils, plates, and cups
- Hand sanitizer
- Water (6 L per person for a 3-day supply)
- Phone charger
- Flashlight
- First aid kit and medications
- Toiletries and an extra pair of glasses or contact lenses
- Copies of important documents (e.g., id, insurance)
- Cash
- Change of clothing and sleeping bag for each household member



- Battery-powered radio and batteries (in case services are cut)
- If you have a baby; formula, diapers, and baby food
- Extra keys to your car and house
- Whistle (to signal for help)
- Emergency contact information for someone who lives far away from you and is not likely to be affected by the same emergency

Hopefully, you will never need to use your emergency preparedness kit, but by having one at the ready, you can have peace of mind you will be in a much better position to manage a crisis.



September Is Baby Safety Month: Childproofing Your Home

Babies are curious little sponges who love to explore and are also completely naïve to any danger, thus the importance of childproofing.

To get started with childproofing, scan your home from the viewpoint of a small child.

Put **childproof locks on all your cabinets and drawers**, especially those with dangerous items like toxic cleaning products, including your oven door if needed. If you have a stove with knobs reachable to little hands, put **stove knob covers** on them.

Affix **corner covers** on corners your baby might bump into, like a coffee table.

Use a **baby gate** up to block off stairs or doorways of rooms you don't want them to go in.

Plug **electrical outlet caps** into empty wall outlets.

Attach **pinch guards** on the side of doors to prevent little fingers from being pinched.

Install **anti-scald devices** for faucets.

Secure tippable furniture, like shelving units, to the wall with **furniture anchors**.

Make sure you have **window locks** on any windows that could slide down on your child or that they could fall out of.

If you have a baby you will want to make sure you are one step ahead of them by childproofing your home *before* they are on the move. The last thing you want is a trip to the ER.

Inhaling Fall, Exhaling Summer, Cleanly

September marks the beginning of autumn, and if you don't have a regular schedule for filter maintenance, the start of a new season is a great time to start. Regular filter maintenance will help ensure you are breathing clean air, free of mould, dust mites, and other allergens.

Most often, when it comes to filters we think of replacing furnace filters, which should be done at least quarterly, but there can be several other filters commonly found in homes that are often neglected and just as important to replace or clean, such as those found in:

- Humidifiers/dehumidifiers
- Air purifiers
- Dryer lint trap
- Range hoods and over-the-range microwaves
- Bathroom fans
- Water filtration devices
- Vacuums

Another part of your home that is often not technically referred to as a filter but acts as one is your **window screens**. Screens should be wiped down with a damp cloth to remove dust, which will also help bring some more light into your home.

Exactly how often you need to replace or clean your filters depends on how often you use them and the manufacturer's



instructions. Some filters, need to be cleaned or replaced more often than others, like dryer lint traps, which need to be cleaned after every load.

With a little time taken out for some filtering maintenance, you will keep everything humming as it should, and your body will thank you as well.