

EVACUATION & FINANCIAL PREPAREDNESS

With floods, earthquakes, and fires prominent in the news today, it might be a good time to remind ourselves of things we should have ready in case we are facing a disaster.

Caregivers should have plans in place for evacuating their family members, their pets, and themselves from their homes if a disaster occurs. Practicing the plan occasionally could avert problems if an emergency does occur. Fire drills in schools and businesses are a good example of prevention precautions that have been proven to be successful when needed.

Safeguarding financial and other important records is also a good plan. Insurance professionals suggest that you make copies of vital records and keep them at an alternate site such as in a safety deposit box at your bank. The following items should be the **minimum** of documents and information to be safeguarded:

- Copies of tax returns for the last five (5) years
- A copy of the deed to your home
- A listing of any major improvements to your home in the past few years with receipts
- Copies of birth certificates, driver's licenses, car titles and registrations
- A list of current family prescription medications and doctors' phone numbers
- Photos of each room in your home displaying major appliances, computers, etc.
- An up-to-date list of all household credit cards
- Copies of important investment instruments such as certificates of deposit

Having these documents makes it easier to file insurance claims or apply for disaster relief.