

The City of Garden City - Citizen Readiness Planning Toolkit

Tools in the Toolkit:

1. Assembling a Ready Kit Template
2. Developing a Family and Household Emergency Plan Template
3. Developing a Family and Household Hurricane Evacuation Plan Template

Assembling a Ready Kit

One of the first steps you should take to ensure you and your family is ready for all disasters, is to build a disaster kit. By answering the questions in this template and assembling the necessary amount of recommended items you, your family, your pets, and your home will be better prepared and ready for the next disaster or emergency we face in Garden City.

Developing a Family and Household Emergency Plan

You should also take the time to develop a Family and Household Emergency Plan, this can help you before, during and after a disaster strikes. The plan template provided for you can be applied to nearly all conceivable events ranging from break ins, floods, and fires to major hurricanes.

Developing a Family and Household Hurricane Evacuation Plan

Because of the threat of hurricanes here in Garden City, it is important that you, your family, and your home are ready to ride out a tropical storm or have an adequate plan to evacuate out of harm's way. Section 3 of the toolkit will help you develop a detailed plan that will also help you on the road to recovery if your home is damaged or destroyed.

Privacy and Safekeeping

Once this disaster plan is complete, you should store it as well as the copies of important documents that become part of it in a safe and secure location that is protected from fire, water damage or theft. You should also ask a trusted friend or loved one, preferably outside of the area, to maintain a copy for you as well. You may also choose to save a file virtually by emailing yourself a copy and saving the email on a trusted password protected account. When fully completed, the plan will contain sensitive and personal information that may be needed after a disaster but should be safeguarded at all times.

Annual Review

This plan should be reviewed at least once per year, you may choose to do so on an important date for you and your family such as a birthday, anniversary or at the beginning of Hurricane Season.

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STEP 1- Developing a Basic Ready Kit

Many emergencies such as severe thunderstorms, tornadoes, hazardous materials spills or acts of terrorism can occur in Garden City with little or no warning. You and or your family may have to shelter at home without electricity, phone, or other utilities. You may not be able to drive to a grocery store, pharmacy or hardware store for essential items or they may not be open because of the event. Over the years, homes have been designed with less and less storage for food items and society has become dependent on a “just in time” delivery system in which people assume the stores with the supplies they need will always be open. Recent disasters have shown that necessary supplies will not always be available and it is best to prepare in advance. To ensure you and your family are prepared, take a few moments, and make a small investment to develop a Ready Kit.

Recommended Items to Include in a Basic Ready Kit:

- Water** -At least 3 gallons per person, for drinking and sanitation purposes for each person in the family and at least ½ gallon for each pet in the household
- Food**- At least a 3-day supply of non-perishable food for each person in the family. To include infant/baby formula.
- Pet Food** - At least a 3-day supply for each pet

*Food and water should be items you prefer and normally buy. The items listed above should be stored in a designated container, closet or in bags that can be loaded into a vehicle and moved in case an evacuation is ordered. These items should be rotated into your family’s normal food consumption to ensure they remain fresh. For example; canned meats, snack crackers, peanut butter etc. from your ready kit should be used as necessary as your family normally shops for groceries but immediately replaced to ensure freshness and to reduce the sudden costs of buying all of the items at one time when a storm approaches.

Your Kit Should Also Include:

- Can opener** For food, if kit contains canned food
- Radio** Battery-powered or hand crank NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries.
- Flashlight and extra batteries**
- First aid kit**
- Whistle** to signal for help
- Face mask** to help filter contaminated air
- Plastic sheeting and duct tape** to shelter in place
- Moist disposable hand or face wipes, garbage bags and plastic ties** for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers** to turn off utilities

Additional Items to Consider Adding to a Ready Kit:

- Prescription medications and glasses**
Ask your physician or pharmacists if you can obtain an extra re-fill of regular prescriptions so you can keep the most recently filled prescription in your ready kit and then rotate them into your daily consumption as normal.
- Infant formula and diapers**
- Important family documents** Such as copies of insurance policies, identification, and bank account records in a waterproof, portable container *[These will be part of your Family and Household Emergency Plan that will be covered in step 2 of the toolkit]*
- Cash or traveler's checks, credit cards, and change**
- Emergency reference material** Such as a first aid book or information from www.Ready.gov
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket and pillow** for each person.
- Extra Ice-** You can freeze extra containers of water and store them in your freezer and/or washing machine. This may help get you through a day or two if power is lost and you need ice to store medicines.
- Complete change of clothing** Include a long-sleeved shirt, long pants and shoes that cover the entire foot and are safe to walk over debris and other sharp surfaces. (Consider including clothes that meet the recommendations above that you no longer wear and may have considered getting rid of. If they fit you, they will meet your needs in a disaster in which fashion or style is less of a priority).
- Household chlorine bleach (non- scented) and medicine dropper**
- Fire extinguisher**
- Matches** In a waterproof container and/or butane lighter.
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items**
- Eating Utensils:** cups, plates, plastic utensils, paper towels
- Items to write with**
- Medical Assistance Devices-** Walkers, canes, toilet chairs etc. that members of your household currently rely on.
- Books, games, puzzles, or other activities for kids** (That do not require batteries or power)
- Candles**
- Phone chargers** both portable and wall.
- Pet items** to include leashes, carriers, medications, and shot records.

This list was comprised of tips and advice from several sources including the U.S. Fire Administration, American Red Cross and www.ready.ga.gov which you can visit for more information or to build a customized disaster plan.

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STEP 2- Family and Household Emergency Plan

Garden City faces numerous natural, manmade and human caused disasters and emergencies that could impact you, your loved ones, and your home. By developing a basic disaster ready kit as described in step one of the toolkit and by answering the questions and assembling the documents called for in this template, you will be much better prepared to handle the next emergency and recover much faster.

IMPORTANT:

Once this disaster plan is complete, you should store it as well as the copies of important documents that become part of it in a safe and secure location that is protected from fire, water damage or theft. You should also ask a trusted friend or loved one, preferably outside of the area, to maintain a copy for you as well. You may also choose to save a file virtually by emailing yourself a copy and saving the email on a trusted password protected account. When fully completed, the plan will contain sensitive and personal information that may be needed after a disaster but should be safeguarded at all times.

This template covers the following areas and asks you to gather information that may be needed in an emergency situation or after a disaster.

- Family Member Important Information
- Family Employment Important Information
- Family Members with Functional Needs
- Family Pet Information
- Family Disaster Meeting Location
- Out of Town Contact and Emergency Communications Plan
- Children's School Emergency Information
- Important Documents to Attach (both hard copy and electronic form via email or portable drive)
- Family and Home Fire Safety

Family Member Important Information

Fill out the following information for each family member and keep it up to date.

Name: Date of Birth: Social Security Number:

Cell Phone Number: Email Address:

Vehicle Year Make Model Color License Plate #

Important Medical Information: (Allergies, Medications, etc.)

Primary Physician Name: Phone Number:

Medical Insurance Provider: Phone Number:

Insurance Policy Number: Insurance Group Number:

Name: Date of Birth: Social Security Number:

Cell Phone Number: Email Address:

Vehicle Year Make Model Color License Plate #

Important Medical Information: (Allergies, Medications, etc.)

Primary Physician Name: Phone Number:

Medical Insurance Provider: Phone Number:

Insurance Policy Number: Insurance Group Number:

Name: Date of Birth: Social Security Number:

Cell Phone Number: Email Address:

Vehicle Year Make Model Color License Plate #

Important Medical Information: (Allergies, Medications, etc.)

Primary Physician Name: Phone Number:

Medical Insurance Provider: Phone Number:

Insurance Policy Number: Insurance Group Number:

Name: Date of Birth: Social Security Number:

Cell Phone Number: Email Address:

Vehicle Year Make Model Color License Plate #

Important Medical Information: (Allergies, Medications, etc.)

Primary Physician Name: Phone Number:

Medical Insurance Provider: Phone Number:

Insurance Policy Number: Insurance Group Number:

Name: Date of Birth: Social Security Number:

Cell Phone Number: Email Address:

Vehicle Year Make Model Color License Plate #

Important Medical Information: (Allergies, Medications, etc.)

Primary Physician Name: Phone Number:

Medical Insurance Provider: Phone Number:

Insurance Policy Number: Insurance Group Number:

Name: Date of Birth: Social Security Number:

Cell Phone Number: Email Address:

Vehicle Year Make Model Color License Plate #

Important Medical Information: (Allergies, Medications, etc.)

Primary Physician Name: Phone Number:

Medical Insurance Provider: Phone Number:

Insurance Policy Number: Insurance Group Number:

Family Member Employment Important Information

Family Member Name:

Employer 1 Name: Supervisor / Manager Name:

Employer Address

Employer Main Phone Number: Human Resources / Benefits Office Number

Employer 2 Name: Supervisor / Manager Name:

Employer Address

Employer Main Phone Number: Human Resources / Benefits Office Number

Family Member Name:

Employer 1 Name: Supervisor / Manager Name:

Employer Address

Employer Main Phone Number: Human Resources / Benefits Office Number

Employer 2 Name: Supervisor / Manager Name:

Employer Address

Employer Main Phone Number: Human Resources / Benefits Office Number

Family Member Name:

Employer 1 Name: Supervisor / Manager Name:

Employer Address

Employer Main Phone Number: Human Resources / Benefits Office Number

Employer 2 Name: Supervisor / Manager Name:

Employer Address

Employer Main Phone Number: Human Resources / Benefits Office Number

Family Member Name:

Employer 1 Name: Supervisor / Manager Name:

Employer Address

Employer Main Phone Number: Human Resources / Benefits Office Number

Employer 2 Name: Supervisor / Manager Name:

Employer Address

Employer Main Phone Number: Human Resources / Benefits Office Number

Family Members with Functional Needs

Some members of your household may have access or functional needs temporarily such as pregnancies or recovering from injuries and illnesses or they may have permanent needs that require additional planning. Regardless of the cause or type of functional need a family member has, it is wise to do some additional for these loved ones. Your plan, when applicable should include the following information for each household member with functional needs:

Family Member Name:

Copies of Medical Instructions When Applicable [write in or attach copy from physician(s)]

Copies of Medical Prescriptions When Applicable [write in or attach copy from physician(s)]

Contact Information for Medical Providers (outside the area, preferably near hurricane evacuation location) that can provide ongoing medical care such as dialysis, respiratory therapy etc.

Contact Information for Durable and Expendable Medical Equipment providers (outside the area, preferably near hurricane evacuation location) that can provide equipment or re-supplies of necessary items such as motorized wheel chair support, oxygen, test kits etc.

Family Member Name:

Copies of Medical Instructions When Applicable [write in or attach copy from physician(s)]

Copies of Medical Prescriptions When Applicable [write in or attach copy from physician(s)]

Contact Information for Medical Providers (outside the area, preferably near hurricane evacuation location) that can provide ongoing medical care such as dialysis, respiratory therapy etc.

Contact Information for Durable and Expendable Medical Equipment providers (outside the area, preferably near hurricane evacuation location) that can provide equipment or re-supplies of necessary items such as motorized wheel chair support, oxygen, test kits etc.

Family Pet Information

Pet 1: Name Type of Animal

Type of Breed: Color (description)

Height Weight Eye Color Date of Birth:

Latest Vaccine Information and Date

Veterinarian Name: Phone

List of Medications Pet Takes:

Microchip Number and Company (If your pet has a microchip) Microchip Number:

Microchip Company Phone Number:

Pet 2: Name Type of Animal

Type of Breed: Color (description)

Height Weight Eye Color Date of Birth:

Latest Vaccine Information and Date

Veterinarian Name: Phone

List of Medications Pet Takes:

Microchip Number and Company (If your pet has a microchip) Microchip Number:

Microchip Company Phone Number:

Pet 3: Name Type of Animal

Type of Breed: Color (description)

Height Weight Eye Color Date of Birth:

Latest Vaccine Information and Date

Veterinarian Name: Phone

List of Medications Pet Takes:

Microchip Number and Company (If your pet has a microchip) Microchip Number:

Microchip Company Phone Number:

Pet 4: Name Type of Animal

Type of Breed: Color (description)

Height Weight Eye Color Date of Birth:

Latest Vaccine Information and Date

Veterinarian Name: Phone

List of Medications Pet Takes:

Microchip Number and Company (If your pet has a microchip) Microchip Number:

Microchip Company Phone Number:

Attach Photos:

Family Disaster Meeting Location

Having a plan for your family during emergencies and natural disasters removes worries and alleviates stress during extremely difficult times. If your family all knows your family emergency meeting places, you can focus your energies on recovering from a disaster instead of responding. Setting up a family emergency meeting place is easy and takes just a few minutes:

You'll need a few different meeting places for your family depending on the emergency at hand. Once you and your family decide where you are meeting, make sure your children know which meeting place is appropriate for which disaster – you don't want your children running to the basement during a fire for example. Run several practice rounds so that the information is ingrained into both your mental and muscle memories.

Meeting Place #1: (Select a room inside your home primarily used for power outages, tornadoes, or thunderstorms)

Meeting Place #2 (OUTSIDE OF HOME, primarily used for fire drills, it should be nearby and usually in the back or front yard or a specific portion of a parking area for an apartment building)

Meeting Place #3 (Used if a major emergency occurs in your neighborhood or City, it may be a prominent landmark such as a park, school, or library)

Meeting Place #4 (Used if a #3 is inaccessible or impacted by the emergency or event, may be a prominent landmark such as a park, school, or library)

Out of Town Contact and Emergency Communications Plan

Emergencies can occur in your neighborhood or in and around the City of Garden City that may disrupt transportation systems and cut family members off from one another. Your primary concern will be to know the status of each of your loved ones. Communications systems may be disrupted because of the emergency or disaster, so it is important that each person has the same out of town contact so they can relay their status and transmit their location to other members of the family. An out of town contact, preferably someone who lives outside of the state, is more likely to be reachable because they should be impacted by the same emergency or disaster. If possible, all family members should use text messaging whenever possible. Text messages are more likely to be transmitted when communication systems are overloaded and they free up phone lines for emergency service related calls.

Fill in this information and make sure each family member keeps a copy in a safe place, such as a purse or briefcase, stored in their smart phone, car, office, and in your disaster kit. Be sure to look it over every year and keep it up to date. It is important that every member of the family contact the same person, so information can be relayed. All family members should use the primary contact first; if communication is unsuccessful they should then try the back up out of town contact.

Out-of-Town Contact (PRIMARY)

Name:

Home:

Cell:

Email:

Facebook:

Twitter:

Out-of-Town Contact (Backup)

Name:

Home:

Cell:

Email:

Facebook:

Twitter:

All family members with a cell phone should put "ICE" in as a contact person. 'ICE' Marks Your Contact(s) to call In Case of Emergency. Take a moment right now to put "ICE" by the names of the people you'd want called in case of emergency. That's what "ICE" stands for -- "in case of emergency." The point is to let rescue workers, police, or doctors check your cell phone and reach the people you would want contacted if you're in an accident or other emergency and unable to communicate.

Children's School Emergency Information

For most parents, an incident or accident involving their child at school can be a frightening and frustrating experience. By having some information stored ahead of time, some of the anxiety that occurs in a school situation can be alleviated.

Register your phone number(s) with your child's automated phone notification system if applicable. Many schools can transmit important emergency information in seconds through these systems. If you change phone numbers, make sure to update the school's system. During emergencies and disasters school staff may not be available to answer calls or change message systems.

For each school age child, fill in and maintain the most current information every school year:

Child #1 Name

School:

Address:

Phone:

Facebook:

Twitter:

Evacuation or Reunification Location:

Child #3 Name

School:

Address:

Phone:

Facebook:

Twitter:

Evacuation or Reunification Location:

Child #2 Name

School:

Address:

Phone:

Facebook:

Twitter:

Evacuation or Reunification Location:

Child #4 Name

School:

Address:

Phone:

Facebook:

Twitter:

Evacuation or Reunification Location:

Attach Recent Photos:

Important Documents to Attach

The following document should be kept in a secure location along with this plan. They should be reviewed at least once per year to ensure they are the most current and accurate information. These documents may be needed in all types of large disasters or more common emergencies such as a fire, flood or break in. It is recommended that this information be stored in a safe secured strong box or safe that is rated to withstand fires and be placed in a location where it will not be susceptible to flood waters entering your home or water damage from a broken pipe. It should also be secured to deter thieves from stealing it. The container should be small enough and mobile enough to be carried out if a no notice evacuation order is issued.

An original if possible or photo copy or digital copy of each of the following items should be included as attachments to this plan. (A paper or digital copy should be maintained by a trusted family member or friend in another location, preferably outside the Garden City area who would not be impacted by a disaster occurring here.

- Birth Certificate for each family member
- Driver's license for each applicable family member
- Social Security Card for each family member
- Last will and testament for each applicable family member
- Home mortgage account number and lender contact information
- Most recent homeowner's policy with provider or agent contact information
- Property or land deeds that should be on file in a government courthouse
- Vehicle titles
- Most recent auto insurance policy for each vehicle in the household
- Account statement for each credit card with the full account number and contact information to report a lost or stolen card
- Warranty agreement for high dollar value items purchased
- Copies of all cherished family photos directly from camera storage devices or by scanning older photos into digital images that can be reprinted should the originals be damaged or destroyed
- Photos of, (including serial numbers when possible) all high dollar value items in your home not specifically insured such as computers, televisions, recreational equipment etc.
- Marriage License
- Important Medical Records
- Pet Records

Family and Home Fire Safety

Why should you have a working smoke alarm? A properly installed and maintained smoke alarm is the only thing in your home that can alert you and your family to a fire 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Whether you're awake or asleep, a working smoke alarm is constantly on alert, scanning the air for fire and smoke.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, almost two-thirds of home fire deaths resulted from fires in properties without working smoke alarms. A working smoke alarm significantly increases your chances of surviving a deadly home fire.

What types of smoke alarms are available? There are many different brands of smoke alarms available on the market, but they fall under two basic types: **ionization** and **photoelectric**.

It cannot be stated definitively that one is better than the other in every fire situation that could arise in a residence. Because both ionization and photoelectric smoke alarms are better at detecting distinctly different, yet potentially fatal fires, and because no one can predict what type of fire might start in a home, it is recommended that every residence and place where people sleep be equipped with:

- **Both ionization AND photoelectric smoke alarms, OR**
- **dual sensor smoke alarms, which contain both ionization and photoelectric smoke sensors**

Smoke alarms are not expensive and are worth the lives they can help save. Ionization and photoelectric smoke alarms cost between \$6 and \$20. Dual sensor smoke alarms cost between \$24 and \$40.

For the residents of Garden City, the Garden City Fire Department will install up to four (4) smoke detectors for free. Just call 912-667-7780 to schedule an appointment.

Install smoke alarms in key areas of your home

Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, including the basement. Many fatal fires begin late at night or early in the morning, so the U.S. Fire Administration recommends installing smoke alarms both inside and outside of sleeping areas.

Since smoke and many deadly gases rise, installing your smoke alarms at the proper level will provide you with the earliest warning possible. Always follow the manufacturer's installation instructions.

Smoke alarm maintenance Smoke alarms *must* be maintained! A smoke alarm with a dead or missing battery is the same as having no smoke alarm at all.

A smoke alarm only works when it is properly installed **and** maintained. Depending on how your smoke alarm is powered (9-volt, 10-year lithium, or hardwired), you'll have to maintain it according to manufacturer's instructions. General guidelines for smoke alarm maintenance.

Smoke alarm powered by a 9-volt battery

- Test the alarm monthly.
- Replace the batteries at least once per year.
- The entire smoke alarm unit should be replaced every 8-10 years.

Smoke alarm powered by a 10-year lithium (or “long life”) battery

- Test the alarm monthly.
- Since you cannot (and should not) replace the lithium battery, the entire smoke alarm unit should be replaced according to manufacturer’s instructions.

Smoke alarm that is hardwired into the home’s electrical system

- Test the alarm monthly.
- The backup battery should be replaced at least once per year.
- The entire smoke alarm unit should be replaced every 8-10 years.

Never disable a smoke alarm while cooking

A smoke alarm is just doing its job when it sounds while you’re cooking or taking a shower with lots of steam.

- If a smoke alarm sounds while you’re cooking or taking a shower with lots of steam, **do not** remove the battery. You should:
- Open a window or door and press the “hush” button,
- Wave a towel at the alarm to clear the air, or
- Move the entire alarm several feet away from the location.

Disabling a smoke alarm or removing the battery can be a deadly mistake.

Fire Escape Plan

In the event of a fire, remember that **every second counts**, so you and your family must always be prepared. Escape plans help you get out of your home quickly. In less than 30 seconds, a small flame can get completely out of control and turn into a major fire. It only takes minutes for a house to fill with thick black smoke and become engulfed in flames.

Prepare and practice your fire escape plan twice a year with everyone in your household, including children and people with disabilities. Garden City Fire Department can also assist in preparing you plan. Please contact 912-667-7780 for more information. It's also a good idea to practice your plan with overnight guests. Some tips to consider when preparing your escape plan include:

- Draw a map of each level of your home and show all doors and windows. Find two ways to get out of each room. Make sure all doors and windows that lead outside open easily.
- Only purchase collapsible escape ladders evaluated by a recognized testing laboratory. Use the ladder only in a real emergency.
- Teach children how to escape on their own in case you cannot help them.
- Have a plan for everyone in your home who has a disability.
- Practice your fire escape plan at night and during the daytime.

- Everyone in your family should know to meet at your family meeting site, (Meeting Location #2 as discussed previously) once they are outside the home and they should never return to a burning building for any reason

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STEP 3- Developing a Family and Household Hurricane Evacuation Plan

An important thing to develop in advance of a hurricane is an evacuation plan for your family. Part of the evacuation process includes taking basic precautions to protect your home before you leave. Many of the items on this list have been taken from the Ready GA website <http://www.ready.ga.gov/> Some items unique to Garden City and Coastal Georgia have been added.

Determine if you live in a potential hurricane evacuation zone: Not all counties and locations within commuting distance to Garden City would necessarily have evacuations for a hurricane.

Establish a primary and secondary location to shelter you or your family:

- **Family or friends** who live outside of the potential evacuation area are preferred.
- **Hotels and motels** inland should be considered second. Identify hotels or motels in advance and ensure you have their phone numbers and website addresses on hand, so you can make reservations before departing the Garden City area. Consider pets.
- **Emergency Evacuation Shelters** should be considered as a last resort; emergency evacuation shelters will be opened and announced in inland communities on an as needed basis. Evacuees should expect no more than a roof over their head and restroom facilities at an evacuation shelter. Meals, cots, and other comforts may not be available for days if available at all. Listen to Georgia Public Broadcasting for shelter information during the event to include which ones are pet friendly.

Have an evacuation kit ready to go at all times. It should include:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight with plenty of extra batteries<input type="checkbox"/> Cellular phone, with wall and mobile chargers<input type="checkbox"/> Battery-powered radio with extra batteries<input type="checkbox"/> First aid kit<input type="checkbox"/> Prescription medications in their original bottle, plus copies of the prescriptions as well as any other important medical instructions<input type="checkbox"/> Eyeglasses (with a copy of the prescription)<input type="checkbox"/> Food and Water (at least three gallons per person is recommended; more is better) Foods that do not require refrigeration or cooking<input type="checkbox"/> Items that infants and elderly household members may require<input type="checkbox"/> Medical equipment and devices, such as dentures, crutches, prostheses, etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Change of clothes for each household member<input type="checkbox"/> Sleeping bag, blankets, and pillow for each household member<input type="checkbox"/> Checkbook, cash, and credit cards<input type="checkbox"/> Map of the State of Georgia<input type="checkbox"/> Food for family pets if applicable, along with cages, leashes and shot records |
|--|--|

Important items and papers to take with you:

- Driver's license or personal identification, Social Security card, proof of residence (deed or lease), Insurance policies, birth, and marriage certificates
- Computer hard drives and or backup files
- Stocks, bonds, and other negotiable certificates Wills, deeds, and copies of recent tax returns

Preparing Your Home in Advance of a Hurricane

Make plans to prepare your home long before a hurricane approaches, preparation should include:

- **Hurricane Shutters:** Consider purchasing or building shutters or some type of coverings for windows. Use materials that are rated to provide significant protection from windblown debris. See a licensed contractor or building supply store expert for more details.
- **Bring things indoors:** Lawn furniture, trash cans, children's toys, garden equipment, clotheslines, hanging plants and any other objects that may fly around and damage property should be brought indoors.
- **Plumbing and Sewer:** Contact a local licensed plumber to see if a sewer back flow prevention device could protect your home should public sewer systems be compromised.

Immediately Before Evacuating:

- **Leave trees and shrubs alone.** If you did not cut away dead or diseased branches or limbs from trees and shrubs, leave them alone. Local collection services will likely not pick them up before the storm.
- **Look for potential hazards.** Look for unripe fruit, and other objects in trees around your property that could blow or break off and fly around in high winds. Cut them off and store them indoors until the storm is over.
- **Turn off electricity and water.** Turn off electricity at the main fuse or breaker, and turn off water at the main valve.
- **Leave natural gas on.** Unless local officials advise otherwise, leave natural gas on because you will need it for heating and cooking when you return home. If you turn gas off, a licensed professional is required to turn it back on, and it may take weeks for a professional to respond.
- **Turn off propane gas service.** Propane tanks often become dislodged in disasters.
- **If flooding is expected, consider using sand bags to keep water away from your home.** It takes two people about one hour to fill and place 100 sandbags, giving you a wall one foot high and 20 feet long. Make sure you have enough sand, burlap or plastic bags, shovels, strong helpers, and time to place them properly.

Protect your valuables.

- **Move objects that may get damaged by wind or water to safer areas of your home.** Move television sets, computers, stereo and electronic equipment, and easily moveable appliances like a microwave oven to higher levels of your home and away from windows. Wrap them in sheets, blankets, or burlap.
- **Make a visual or written record of all your household possessions.** Record model and serial numbers. Include pictures or videos of these items. This list could help you prove the value of what you owned if those possessions are damaged or destroyed, and can assist you to claim deductions on taxes. [Do this for all items in your home, including expensive items such as sofas, chairs, tables, beds, chests, wall units, and any other furniture too heavy to move. Store a copy of the record somewhere away from home, such as with a trusted friend or family member outside the potential hurricane impact area.]

Remember the key to preparing your family and your home for a hurricane is taking the time to plan long before Garden City is threatened. More information on hurricane preparedness is available at:

<http://www.ready.ga.gov/>

<http://www.ready.gov/hurricanes>

<http://www.chathamemergency.org/general/family-disaster-planning.php>

<http://www.gardencityga.org/index.aspx?page=113>

<http://www.gardencityga.org/index.aspx?page=149>