

EXTREME WEATHER

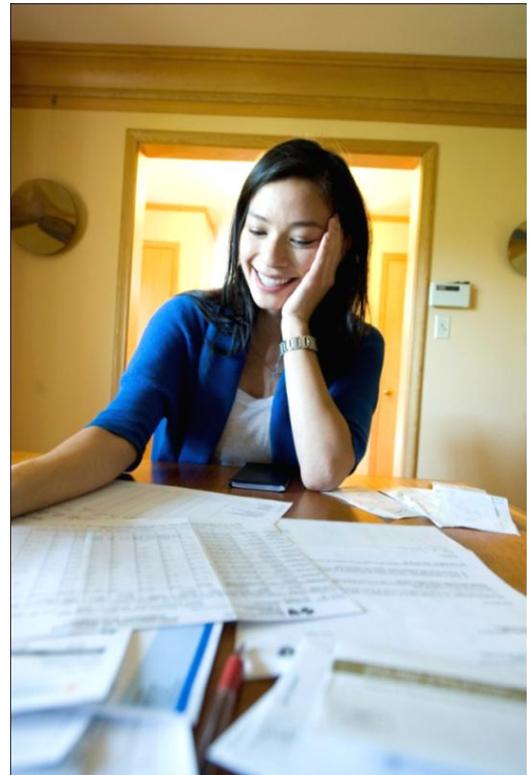
Red File: Your Grab & Go Case for Emergencies

Devastating disasters like a flood are a vivid reminder of life's uncertainty.

Have you ever wondered what you would do if you suddenly became a victim of a natural disaster, terrorist attack, fire, or other unexpected event? Would you know what to grab if you only had minutes to escape from your home?

The plans you have made in advance and the items you decide to take with you will determine how quickly you are able to rebound from disaster (whether you have the information to file claims, contact information for accounts, etc.).

National agencies that work with such disasters recommend that important items be gathered together and kept in a file case, in a place where all family members can quickly "grab it and go."



THE FOLLOWING SHOULD BE IN YOUR FILE CASE:

LIST OF VITAL INFORMATION, SUCH AS:

- Contact information (family members, financial advisors, attorneys, accountants, bankers, employers, doctors, etc.)
- Insurance policy information
- Bank, credit union, and credit card account information
- Summary of vital information (personal, financial, property, etc.)

YOU WILL NEED ORIGINALS OR PHOTOCOPIES OF:

- Birth and marriage certificates and/or divorce decrees
- Social Security cards of household members
- Driver's license and other wallet cards
- Will and/or trust documents; Powers of Attorney

- Recent income tax return
- Passports and/or other identity documents
- Military discharge papers
- List of your prescriptions – name of medication, dosage, pharmacy, etc.

YOU WILL ALSO NEED:

- Safe deposit box keys and/or safe combination
- Computer user names & passwords; CD with relevant personal, financial, and legal files
- Some emergency cash



If you are able, one idea is to create an electronic document with your information and scan official documents to make electronic copies. You can then use a web-based email system to send these documents to yourself so that you can access them from any internet-connected computer. You will still want to collect original copies of important documents in a safe place.

Use Extension's *Roadmap for Important Papers* tool (www.extension.umn.edu/go/1058) for extra help organizing this information.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

www.extension.umn.edu/flood

Fact sheets and videos with research-based tips on immediate and long-term flood issues

Flood Information Line: 1-800-232-9077, fil@umn.edu

For questions about water, crops, horticulture, and climatology issues

AnswerLine: 1-800-854-1678, answer@iastate.edu

For questions about cleaning, stains, mildew, and food safety issues

Author: Rosemary K. Heins, Family Resource Management Educator, University of Minnesota Extension