



# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Here are 5 ways to prepare yourself and your loved ones for disasters.

## Sign up for Emergency Alerts

Alert Hamilton County, or “Alert HC,” is the notification system to alert people in Hamilton County about emergencies and other important information.

Choose from more than 40 different alerts about potential hazards and emergencies that may impact your safety. These notifications can keep you informed and help you take actions to keep you and your loved ones safe when the unexpected happens.



Visit [AlertHC.org](https://AlertHC.org) to sign up to receive alerts directly to your phone or email.

## Review Your Insurance Coverage

Whether you are a homeowner or renter, having good insurance is one of the best tools for recovering from a disaster. Talk to an insurance expert about how to sufficiently insure your property for the hazards that impact Hamilton County. Consider hazard-specific coverage such as flood insurance.

## Safeguard Important Documents

Keeping your essential documents safe makes the disaster recovery process less stressful. Keep copies of items you would like to safeguard in a portable, waterproof container or save scans on a secure USB flash drive you can take with you. Important documents to protect include:

- Identification documents (identification records, immigration papers, etc.)
- Financial and legal documents (insurance, housing, vehicle, banking, retirement records)
- Medical records (health insurance, medical documents, current prescription information, etc.)
- Any valuable personal items (family photos, keepsakes, or other irreplaceable items)

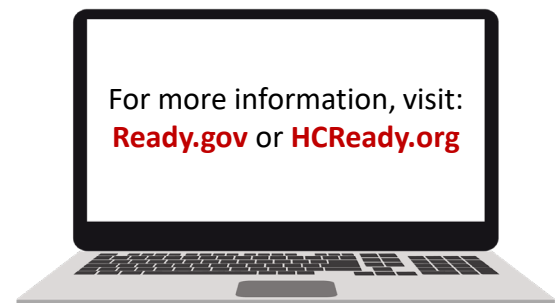
## Make an Emergency Plan

Your family may not be together during a disaster, so it is important to know how you will contact one another and reconnect if separated. Establish a family meeting place that is familiar and easy to find. Ensure all family members know emergency contacts and important phone numbers. If you will need assistance from family, friends, neighbors, or other caregivers, involve them in your planning process.

## Build an Emergency Kit

After an emergency, you may have to sustain your family for several days without power or running water. Be prepared by gathering items you may need in easy-to-carry containers or bags, and tailor your kit to the specific needs of your household (e.g., kids, pets, older adults, people with disabilities).

- Water (1 gallon per person, per day, including pets)
- Nonperishable foods and a manual can opener
- Flashlights, batteries, and portable phone chargers
- Necessary medications, hygiene items, and a first aid kit
- Clothing, blankets, comfort items, and cash



# ABOUT THE HAMILTON COUNTY OUTDOOR WARNING SIREN SYSTEM



Hamilton County's Outdoor Warning Siren System is made up of approximately 190 sirens located strategically around the county. They are used to let people outdoors know that there is a dangerous situation, and they should shelter indoors immediately and seek more information.

Hamilton County EMHSA cannot guarantee that the sirens will function correctly in a disaster or will be audible indoors or in noisy areas. Because of this, the sirens should not be your only source of hazard notification. Everyone should have multiple ways to receive emergency alerts. Sign up for Alert Hamilton County ([www.AlertHC.org](http://www.AlertHC.org)) to receive important messages about hazards that may impact your safety. Other ways to get emergency information include a NOAA weather radio and tuning into the local media.

## When are the sirens activated?

- The National Weather Service issues a Tornado Warning
- A tornado is reported by a public safety official
- A dangerous situation occurs which requires the public to seek shelter indoors immediately.

## What should I do if I hear the sirens in an emergency?

Immediately seek shelter indoors. If possible, go to the lowest level of the building and shelter within the most interior room of the structure, avoiding all windows. Seek information right away: check your phone for notifications, turn on a weather radio, and tune into local media.

## How long do the sirens sound in an emergency?

During a Tornado Warning, sirens will sound for three minutes straight in ten-minute intervals (three minutes on, seven minutes off) until the danger has passed. There is no "all-clear" siren.

## When are the Outdoor Warning Sirens tested?

Sirens are tested on the first Wednesday of each month at 12:00 p.m. (noon) unless there is inclement weather in the area. During a test, the sirens will sound for one minute.

If there is inclement weather in Hamilton County (severe storms or extremely icy/cold), tests are rescheduled to protect siren equipment or avoid causing confusion. Rescheduled tests occur the second Wednesday of the month at 12:00 p.m. (noon) and last approximately ten seconds.

## There is no need to shelter during Outdoor Warning Siren System tests.

## What is a tornado?

Tornadoes are violently rotating columns of air with winds up to 200 miles per hour that extend from a thunderstorm to the ground. They are extremely dangerous and can destroy buildings, flip cars, and create deadly flying debris. They are most common in the summer months but can happen during severe weather any time of year.

The National Weather Service sends 2 types of alerts about tornadoes:

### Tornado Watch

A tornado *might happen*. Weather conditions are capable of producing a tornado. Be alert and ready to take action.

### Tornado Warning

A tornado *is happening*. Shelter indoors immediately.

Visit [AlertHC.org](http://AlertHC.org) to sign up to receive these alerts directly to your phone or email.