

Vibrant Hawai'i's

Guide to Household Preparedness



Ako 'e ka hale a pa'a, a i ke komo ana mai o ka ho'oilō,
'a'ole e kulu i ka ua o Hilinehu. 'Ōlelo No'eau 100.

Do not procrastinate; make preparations for the future now.

Stay Informed with Official Alerts



Dept of Emergency Management Alerts

Text HNLALERT to 888777

Official Social Media

Where to get official, credible information about what's happening.



Local Weather App

Hawai'i News Now

- iPhone and iPad users: hine.ws/iphonewx
- Android users: hine.ws/androidwx

Know what each alert means



Watch – Be alert. Conditions are favorable for dangerous weather or hazards. Pay attention to updates and get ready to act.



Advisory – Use caution. Hazardous conditions are occurring or expected, but usually less severe. Stay aware and avoid unnecessary risks.



Warning – Take action now! Dangerous conditions are happening or about to happen. Follow evacuation or safety instructions immediately.

All Hazard Outdoor Warning Siren

Sirens are tested monthly on the first weekday at 11:45 AM. Scan the QR code to report what you hear.



Important Phone Numbers

In an emergency, you may not have access to the contacts saved in your phone. Write down the numbers of:

- Household members (school, work, or cell phones)
- An out-of-area contact who can relay information
- Friends, relatives, or neighbors you could call or text to confirm you are safe

Family Meetup Location

If an emergency prevents us from getting home, or if home is not the safest place, our family will meet at:

Backup Location (if primary is not accessible):

* Make sure all family members know these locations and how to get there safely.

Children In Disaster

Children are more vulnerable than adults during disasters because of their:

- ♡ Smaller size and mental development
- ♡ Dependence on adults
- ♡ Vulnerability to victimization

How To Help

Keep routines. Children experience comfort from rituals and routines, like a story before bedtime or a family meal each evening.

Role model and listen. Children look to you and pick up on your moods and cues. Let your children know that it's okay to be sad, but do your best to reassure them that they're safe.

Provide perspective. Although the impacts of a disaster are very real, your child's fears may be out of proportion. Take the time to talk to them and hear their concerns.

Limit media. Even the mildest of natural disasters can be sensationalized on news and weather channels. Monitor their media intake.

Watch your child for changes in behavior, sleeping patterns, or eating habits. Children may be afraid or anxious for a while after the event. If changes in behavior do happen, they will likely lessen within a short time. However, if they continue, you should seek professional help and counseling.



The Parent Line 1-800-816-1222

A free, confidential phone service offering support and resources on parenting, child development, and behavior.

What every child should know.

My name is _____.

I am _____ years old.

My address is _____.

The person I trust is (First and Last
Name) _____.

Their phone number is _____.

I am allergic to _____.

Earthquake: 'Ōla'i

Hawai'i has many small quakes each day from volcanic activity—most are too small to feel, but bigger ones can cause damage or trigger tsunamis.

Before an Earthquake

- Make a family earthquake plan and identify safe spots in each room.
- Learn how to turn off gas, water, and electricity in your home.

During an Earthquake

- Drop, cover, and hold on under a sturdy table or desk.
- Stay indoors until the shaking stops. Stay away from windows.
- If outside, move to a clear area away from buildings, trees, and power lines.
- If in a car, pull over to a safe area and stay inside until the shaking stops.

After an Earthquake

- Check for injuries and hazards like gas leaks or downed lines.
- If you smell gas or suspect damage to electrical lines, turn off the electricity at the main breaker or fuse box.
- Expect aftershocks and stay alert for tsunami alerts.

Did you feel it?

Find the earthquake you felt, and report it to USGS.



Tsunami: Kai Ho'ē'e

If you hear a siren, turn on the radio, TV, or official alerts. Follow instructions right away. Stay at least 100 feet from rivers, canals, and marinas—waves can travel inland.

During an Earthquake

- If shaking is so strong you fall or can't stand: drop, cover, and hold on.
- Wait for the shaking to stop, then leave the tsunami evacuation zone immediately.

Natural Warning Signs of a Tsunami

- Ocean pulls back: You may see exposed reef, ocean floor, or fish.
- Wall of water or loud roar: Sounds like a train or jet.
- If you see or hear this—leave the evacuation zone right away.



Tsunami Watch: Be prepared to act. Authorities are collecting more information.



Tsunami Advisory: Stay out of water, away from beaches and waterways. A tsunami is imminent, expected, or occurring.



Tsunami Warning: Move to high ground or inland.



City and County of Honolulu
Tsunami Evacuation Zone Map

Learn more from the
Pacific Tsunami Warning Center





Wild Fire: Ahi



Fire Weather Watch: Issued when dry conditions and critical weather (strong winds, low humidity, and high temperatures) could create dangerous wildfire risk within 48 hours.



Red Flag Warning: This means there's a high chance of extreme fire behavior. Avoid outdoor activities that could spark a fire—this includes open flames, outdoor burning, using equipment that creates sparks, discarding cigarettes, or parking on dry grass.

Learn more from the
Hawai'i Wildfire Management Organization



Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS)

Hawaiian Electric may temporarily turn off power in high-risk areas with extreme wildfire conditions to help reduce the chance of wildfires starting and spreading. PSPS events are rare and only used to protect communities and first responders.

Learn more about Hawaiian Electric's
Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS)



After A Wildfire

Wildfire smoke is unsafe—especially for those with heart or lung conditions, pregnant women, kūpuna, and keiki. Stay indoors with windows and doors closed. If you must go outside, wear an N95 mask. Watch for symptoms and contact your doctor if your condition worsens.

Flood: Wai Pi'i



Flood Watch: Conditions are favorable for flooding. Stay alert and monitor updates.



Small Stream Flood Advisory: Minor flooding in low-lying areas, small streams, or poor drainage spots. Be cautious and avoid driving through water.



Flood Warning: Flooding is happening or will happen soon. Move to higher ground immediately.



Flash Flood Warning: Rapid flooding is happening now. Get to safety without delay—do not wait.

During a Flood

- Get to higher ground immediately.
- Never walk or drive through flood water – Turn Around, Don't Drown.
- If trapped, move to the highest floor and signal for help.

After a Flood

- Avoid hazards like debris and downed lines.
- Avoid floodwater that may contain sewage and harmful germs that cause rashes, diarrhea, and wound infections. If you do come into contact with it, wash with soap and water as soon as possible.
- Wear protective gear and document any damage for insurance.



Living in a One-Road-In/Out Area

Emergencies like wildfires, floods, and tsunamis can quickly block your only road. Planning ahead ensures your family can respond safely, even if you're not home.

Make a Family Evacuation Plan

- Identify who needs help: Young children, elderly relatives, and those with mobility or medical needs may need extra time or assistance.
- Assign roles: Decide who is responsible for helping each person, or who will check on them first.
- Have a communication plan: Make sure everyone knows how to call, text, or use a walkie-talkie if phone service fails.
- Create a reunification point: Choose a safe meeting place outside the neighborhood in case you are separated.

Prepare for Blocked Roads

- Plan alternative routes: Even if it means walking or biking, know how to get to safety.
- Keep “go-bags” ready: Include water, snacks, medications, flashlights, and copies of ID for each person.
- Store a folding cart or wagon: Useful for carrying supplies or helping small children or elderly relatives if you must evacuate on foot.
- Keep shoes and protective clothing accessible: In case you need to walk through rough terrain or debris.

Next Page —→

If Children Are Home Alone

- Teach them how to recognize alarms, sirens, or alerts.
- Make a step-by-step checklist of what to do, where to go, and who to call.
- Consider a trusted neighbor or family member who can assist them quickly.

If Elderly or Disabled Family Members Are Home Alone

- Arrange for a buddy system with a nearby neighbor.
- Keep a lightweight wheelchair, walker, or transport chair ready if needed.
- Store emergency medications and medical info in a grab-and-go bag.

Wildfire Safety

- Identify a nearby safety zone with little to burn—like a golf course, lava field, or wide gravel lot.
- Keep vehicles backed in for quick departure and always have at least half a tank of gas.

Tsunami Safety

- Know your fastest route to higher ground and practice it with your family.
- If roads are blocked, plan your walking path to safety before an emergency happens.
- Consider leaving early, you don't have to wait for the warning notification or siren before leaving the area.



Hurricane: Makani Pāhili

Hurricane season in Hawai'i runs from June 1 to November 30, when ocean and weather conditions are most likely to produce tropical storms and hurricanes. While direct hits are rare, even distant storms can bring heavy rain, high surf, flooding, and strong winds. Preparing early and knowing what to do before, during, and after a hurricane helps keep your 'ohana safe.

High Surf During Hurricanes

- **Arrives Early:** Dangerous surf can hit 1–2 days before a hurricane or storm makes landfall or passes offshore.
- **Powerful Waves:** Extreme shore break and rip currents occur, even at normally calm beaches.
- **Coastal Flooding:** High surf and storm surge can flood low areas and block roads.
- **Stay Back:** Avoid coastal paths, tide pools, and piers—waves can sweep people out to sea.
- **Heed Warnings:** Follow High Surf and Coastal Flood Warnings from Civil Defense and the National Weather Service.

Hurricane Season Checklist

- ☐ Review or purchase homeowner or renter insurance
- ☐ Refresh Go-Bags
- ☐ Check and update emergency notification apps
- ☐ Refresh emergency food supply
- ☐ Take a video of the inside and outside of your home.
- ☐ Trim back hazardous trees
- ☐ Get in the habit of refilling gas when half empty
- ☐ Fill spare propane tank

Hurricane Checklist



Hurricane Watch (Possible in 48 Hours)

- Board windows, trim trees, clear gutters, and bring in loose outdoor items.
- Fill car with gas. Do laundry.



Hurricane Warning (Expected in 36 Hours)

- Remove tarps and canopies; move car away from trees.
- Fill bathtubs for flushing water and freeze water/gel packs.
- Take trash and recycling to the transfer station.
- Set refrigerator to the coldest setting.
- Make a few extra meals that are easy to reheat.
- Monitor weather updates and review your evacuation plan.

During a Hurricane

- Stay indoors and away from windows, skylights, and glass doors.
- Shelter in a small interior room on the lowest level of your home.

After a Hurricane

- Return only when it's safe. Watch for downed power lines, gas leaks, and unsafe water.
- Document damage with photos for insurance.
- Remove standing water and wet items to prevent mold.

Downed Power Lines

- Treat all downed lines as live—stay 30 feet away.
- Avoid water or anything touching the line.
- Report immediately to 911 and Hawaiian Electric.

When There's No Electricity

- Use safe lighting: Choose flashlights or battery-powered lanterns—avoid candles.
- Protect electronics: Unplug appliances and devices like TVs, computers, game consoles, and fans, or use surge protectors.
- Leave one light on: This will let you know when power is restored.
- Generator safety: Read the manual first. Keep it outside, away from windows, to prevent toxic fumes, fire, or electric shock.

Food Safety in a Power Outage

- Keep fridge and freezer closed to hold the cold longer.
 - A full freezer stays cold for ~48 hours (24 if half full).
 - A closed fridge keeps food safe for ~4 hours.
- Check temperatures:
 - Fridge: 40°F or below
 - Freezer: 0°F or below
- Move perishables to a cooler with ice if the outage lasts over 2 hours.
- When in doubt, throw it out. Discard meat, dairy, eggs, and leftovers that have been above 40°F for 2+ hours.
- Look and smell isn't enough—bacteria can grow before food looks spoiled.

Insulin Safety

Power outages can make storing insulin challenging. Being prepared can save your life.

Know Your Insulin: Most types last up to 28 days at room temperature (59–86°F) once opened. Check your packaging or ask your pharmacist.

Have a Cooler: Keep an insulated cooler or medical cooling pack ready. Don't place insulin directly on ice.

Stock Up: Keep a 2-week supply of insulin, syringes/pens, testing supplies, and glucose tabs in your emergency kit.

Medication List: Include all meds, doses, and your doctor/pharmacy contacts in your kit.

Wear a Medical ID: A bracelet or card can speak for you in an emergency.

Know Safe Locations: Identify shelters or centers with generators for refrigeration.

Plan with Your Pharmacy: Ask about early refills during disaster declarations.

What to Know About Shelters

Where to Go

Shelter locations will be announced by the Dept. of Emergency Management in radio messaging and online at bit.ly/oahu-refugearea.

When to Go

- Shelters open during hurricanes, tsunamis, wildfires, or other major emergencies.
- Only go if your home is unsafe or you're told to evacuate.

What to Bring

- Go Bag with:
 - Medications, important documents, and ID
 - Water, snacks, and any special foods
 - Phone/charger, flashlight, batteries
 - Personal hygiene items
 - Comfort items for kids or pets

What to Expect

- Basic safety, not comfort: Shelters may not have beds, food, or showers right away.
- Stay informed: Staff will share updates and instructions.

Health & Safety

- Follow posted rules for everyone's safety.
- All Hawai'i County shelters are pet friendly. Bring a carrier, leash, pet food, bowls, and poop bags or disposable litter and tray.

72 Hour Go Bag

- ☐ 3-gallons of drinking water per person and pet
- ☐ Family documents, family member photos, Keiki ID
- ☐ Toiletries, Disposable towels and bathing wipes
- ☐ Hand Crank Radio
- ☐ Solar lanterns/flashlights
- ☐ Cards, hackysack, comfort items
- ☐ Notebook, Writing Pen, Sharpie
- ☐ Bowl and utensils
- ☐ Bedding, Poncho liner
- ☐ First Aid Kit, Medications
- ☐ Toilet Paper
- ☐ A change of clothes for each person
- ☐ Solar charger power bank
- ☐ Trash bag and Duck Tape

Add To Cart

This list is provided to help you in creating your own emergency kit.
Vibrant Hawai'i does not receive any affiliate benefits or compensation from Amazon or any other retailer.



Go Bag Friendly Food

- ☐ Energy or granola bars
- ☐ Tuna or chicken pouches
- ☐ Instant oatmeal packets
- ☐ Electrolyte drink packets
- ☐ Trail mix, dried fruit, or nuts
- ☐ Peanut butter or almond butter packets
- ☐ Instant miso soup or Cup a Soup

Add To Cart

This list is provided to help you in creating your own emergency kit.
Vibrant Hawai'i does not receive any affiliate benefits or compensation from Amazon or any other retailer.



Important Document Checklist

- ☐ Driver's license, passport, or military ID
- ☐ Birth certificates and Social Security Cards
- ☐ Green card, naturalization or immigration paperwork
- ☐ Adoption or child custody papers
- ☐ Marriage or divorce certificates
- ☐ Pet ownership and vaccination records
- ☐ Property or rental leases, mortgages, deeds
- ☐ Vehicle title, registration, VIN, loan papers
- ☐ Life, auto, home, renters, flood insurance policies
- ☐ Bank and retirement accounts
- ☐ Bills: Credit card, utility, loans, alimony & child support
- ☐ Proof of Income: pay stubs, tax records, govt benefits
- ☐ Wills, power of attorney
- ☐ Health insurance cards
- ☐ Health records
- ☐ Medical and mobility devices with model numbers
- ☐ Names of healthcare providers

Store important documents in a sealed plastic bag,
whether printed or saved to a USB drive.

For extra security, consider uploading digital copies
to a secure cloud drive.

First Aid Kit

- ☐ Hand Sanitizer
- ☐ Bandages
- ☐ Antibiotic Ointment
- ☐ Gauze
- ☐ Gauze Tape
- ☐ Sanitary Pads
- ☐ Instant Cold Pack
- ☐ Alcohol Pads
- ☐ Tweezers, Nailclipper, Scissors
- ☐ Pain Medication
- ☐ Anti-Diarrheal Medication
- ☐ Masks
- ☐ Antihistamine
- ☐ Sunscreen/Sunburn Lotion
- ☐ Necessary Prescription Medication

Add To Cart

This list is provided to help you in creating your own emergency kit.
Vibrant Hawai'i does not receive any affiliate benefits or
compensation from Amazon or any other retailer.



Household Preparedness Checklist

Water & Food for 14 Days

- 1 gallon water per person per day
- Shelf-stable foods + manual can opener
- Backup cooking fuel (propane, charcoal, or camp stove)

Power & Lighting

- Generator or portable battery
- Solar/hand-crank lights & chargers
- Extension cords & surge protectors

Health & Sanitation

- First-aid kit & extra prescriptions
- Toilet paper, trash bags, disinfectants
- Bucket or portable toilet

Home Safety

- Fire extinguisher & working smoke/CO alarms
- Tools to shut off gas and water
- Secure heavy furniture and clear roof/gutters

Communication & Documents

- Battery or crank radio
- Printed emergency contacts & local maps
- Photos of home/valuables & documents in waterproof bag

Managing Stress in an Emergency

Pause and Breathe

- Take 3–5 slow breaths in through your nose, out through your mouth.
- Ground yourself by noticing 5 things you can see, 4 things you can touch, 3 things you can hear.

Focus on Small Steps

- Break tasks into one step at a time (get your bag, check on a family member, move to safety).
- Remind yourself: “I can handle the next step.”

Stay Connected

- Talk to a family member, neighbor, or friend.
- Share updates calmly and offer reassurance to others.

Limit Overload

- Check the news or alerts briefly and periodically—not nonstop.
- Avoid rumors; rely on official sources for updates.

Reach Out for Help

- If feelings of panic or sadness become overwhelming, call or text 988 for support.

Other Important Information

Vibrant Hawai'i Resilience Hubs

Resilience Hubs are led by local neighbors who organize, share information, learn key emergency skills, and support each other before, during, and after emergencies.

Learn more about our network of
Resilience Hubs



Community Emergency Action Plans (CEAPs)

A CEAP is a neighborhood plan for disasters. It identifies local hazards, safe gathering spots, communication methods, and resources to help your community before, during, and after an emergency to help neighbors share information, coordinate evacuations, and recover faster.

Connect with your local Resilience Hub to get involved in creating a plan for your area.

Other Ways to Support Your Community

In disasters, Vibrant Hawai'i directs volunteers and donations to where they're needed most. Even if you're not in a Hub, you can still help:

- Join the Resilience Registry: Share your skills to help neighbors.
- Donate: Support Vibrant Hawai'i's disaster preparedness and response efforts.
- Stay Connected: Follow updates and share accurate information with family, friends, and neighbors.

koolauhubs@vibranthawaii.org | Phone: 802-365-1808
www.vibranthawaii.org | . Nonprofit Tax ID 85-3693179

Vibrant Hawai'i's Guide To Household Preparedness
2025 | All rights reserved.

