



Emergency preparedness for older people in Southland



Collaboration



Emergency Management Southland (EMS) is responsible for the delivery of Civil Defence and Emergency Management responses throughout Southland. EMS is responsible for the 24/7 operation of the Emergency Coordination Centre, which facilitates planning and operational activity during an event.



The Natural Hazards Commission Toka Tū Ake (NHC) exists to help New Zealanders prepare for and recover from the impact of natural hazards. Two of the ways NHC does this is through encouraging New Zealanders to take actions that will make their homes safer and stronger for natural hazards, and by providing natural hazards insurance for residential homes and land.



Age Concern Southland is a charity dedicated to people over 65, their friends, and whānau. They promote dignity, wellbeing, equity and respect and provide expert information and support services in response to older people's needs.

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

You already have the life experience to make good decisions in tough situations. Being prepared puts you in charge and helps you stay safe. You can still protect yourself and be prepared, even with physical limitations.

Emergency services and agencies, and Emergency Management Southland, will respond but can't be everywhere at once. It's important to plan and connect with the people around you, including your family, neighbours and friends.

This booklet has been designed as a guide to help you prepare, respond and recover from a natural hazard event.

Before

- Know what your risks are and take actions that will reduce any impact.
- Have a plan, practise the plan and be prepared.

During

- Planned actions you will take during the event.

After

- Steps to help you recover and get back to a new normal.

"Sometimes it does us a power of good to remind ourselves that we live where two tectonic plates meet in a somewhat lonely stretch of wind-swept ocean just above the roaring forties. If you want drama - you've come to the right place."

*- Former Prime Minister
the Hon Sir Geoffrey Palmer*

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Know your hazards

Learn about the hazards that can occur in your community and the impacts they can cause. This will help you work out what steps you can take to get prepared.

In Southland, the three main hazards are flooding, severe weather events and earthquakes.

Floods

Before

Find out if you are in a flood prone area. You can do this by going to the Environment Southland website to look at the natural hazards portal.

www.es.govt.nz and click onto Maps & Data.

You can also ring your local council directly for any enquiries. Your local council can provide flood information and other help. Council contact information is on the back of this booklet.

If flooding is possible in your area:

- Move valuable and dangerous items, including electrical equipment and chemicals, as high above the floor as possible. Don't forget items in your garage or garden shed.

- Use watertight containers to store important items.
- Secure outdoor possessions, including outdoor furniture that can be swept away in floodwaters.

During

Listen to the radio for updates and talk to your neighbours. If you can, check the Emergency Management Southland website and Facebook page. Follow instructions about evacuation in your area.

- Put safety first. Act quickly if you see rising water. Do not wait for official warnings. Head for higher ground.
- Do not try to walk, swim, or drive in floodwater. Even water just 15 centimetres deep can sweep you off your feet.
- Always assume that all flood water is contaminated.

After

Remember, if you have been evacuated it may not be safe to return home even when the floodwaters have receded. Listen to emergency services and Emergency Management Southland. Don't return home until they tell you it is safe to do so.

DROP, COVER and HOLD



Many people are injured moving around during earthquake shaking. **DROP, COVER and HOLD** is the right action to take.

- Drop down on your hands and knees.
- Cover your head and neck under a sturdy table (if possible).
- Hold on to the table legs.

If you cannot physically drop, just sit - cover and hold. If you use a walker or a wheelchair, follow these recommendations.



If you are using a walker, **LOCK, COVER and HOLD**.

- Lock your wheels (if applicable).
- Carefully get as low as possible, bend over, and cover your head and neck.
- Hold on until shaking stops.



If you are using a wheelchair, **LOCK, COVER and HOLD**.

- Lock your wheels.
- Bend over and cover your head and neck.

Earthquakes

Before

Look around your home and the places you visit often for anything that could fall, tip over or break during shaking. Secure or move items where needed, and consider shifting your bed if it's close to windows or tall furniture. Page 10 has more advice on how to make your home safer.

Making your surroundings safer now will help protect you when the shaking starts.

During

- **DROP, COVER and HOLD** until the shaking is over. If you cannot Drop, just **Cover** and **Hold** where you are. Do not try to move around during shaking.
- Do not go outside or you risk getting hit by falling masonry or glass.
- If you are outside, move away from buildings, streetlights and power lines if you can.
- If you are in bed, **STAY, COVER and HOLD**. Stay in bed. Cover yourself by pulling the sheets and blankets over you. Hold your pillow over you to protect your head and neck.

Immediately after

- Check yourself for injuries and get first aid if necessary.
- Look quickly for damage around you, particularly where furniture and fittings may have become hazardous.
- Be careful as you start to move about, many injuries happen after the shaking stops. Look out for broken glass and sharp objects.

Tsunami

All of Southland's coastline and large lakes are at risk of tsunami. Knowing the warning signs and the right action to take can help save lives.

Many tsunami follow earthquakes, and the shaking might be your only warning. If you live in a tsunami evacuation zone and an earthquake is **Long OR Strong, Get Gone**.

'Long' means it lasts more than a minute. **'Strong'** means it's hard to stand.

Move immediately to the nearest high ground (such as a hill), or if there's no high ground nearby, go as far inland as possible — especially if you're within 1 km of the coast or rivers.

'Don't wait for an official tsunami warning.'

Severe weather

Before

Stay up to date with the latest weather information from MetService. Pay attention to watches and warnings.

During

If severe weather is coming, Severe Weather Outlooks, Watches and Warnings are issued by MetService. They are available through radio, television, the MetService website and the MetService app.

Listen to advice provided by Emergency Management Southland and emergency services and follow any instructions.

- Secure your home by closing windows. Pull curtains and blinds closed. This can prevent injury from flying glass if the window breaks.
- Close all interior and external doors.
- Drive only if it is absolutely necessary.
- Be prepared to evacuate and keep your grab bag close.



Severe weather can include heavy rain and snow, thunder and lightning, and strong winds.

After

Continue listening to advice provided by Emergency Services. Be careful of following unauthorised information.

If it is safe to do so, check on neighbours, friends or family who may have been affected.

Continue to stay up to date with the latest weather information.

Other hazards

Depending on the location of your property, you may also need to be aware of tsunamis (coastal properties) and landslides (homes on, or near, slopes).

You also need to be aware of the other risks if you are travelling out of the Southland area including, volcanoes and tornadoes.

Further afield, events can affect you indirectly as many supplies are transported to Southland. If the larger South Island cities are affected by an event, or the transport routes in between, it is highly possible the supply chains won't be able to operate as normal.

Landslides

Landslides are one of the most common natural hazards to affect New Zealand homes. Most landslides are caused by earthquake shaking or heavy rain and if your home is built on, or close to, a slope, then landslides are a hazard you should be particularly aware of.

If you are on or near a slope, it's important to maintain and strengthen retaining walls and ensure that adequate drainage is in place. It's also a good idea to regularly inspect your property for indications of ground movement, which can include: small slips or rock falls, tilting trees or fences, leaning, cracking or bulging retaining walls, and windows and doors that are suddenly sticky to open. Finally, make sure you understand what insurance cover you would have in place for any land damage.

If you suspect that a landslide is occurring, or is about to occur, then evacuate immediately to ground outside the path of the landslide - if it is safe to do so.



Get prepared before an event

Experiencing a disaster can be overwhelming. Being prepared will reduce the pressure on you and help you recover more quickly. Preparing takes time and effort so you might want to do a little at a time. The more you do, the better you can look after yourself and your loved ones in a disaster.

If you are renting, your landlord should allow you to take these steps to make your home safer. You'll need to return the property to its original condition when you move out. Talk to your property manager before you make any changes.

Make your home safer

We can't eliminate hazards and their impact on our households and communities. That's why it's so important to take steps to be prepared and know what to do in an emergency. Taking these steps before an emergency helps to reduce the risk, and the impact it might have.

Some quick and easy steps you can take are:

- Use brackets or specialist straps to secure tall or heavy furniture and appliances such as wardrobes, bookcases and fridges to wall studs.
- Make sure your hot water cylinder is correctly secured.
- Store large, heavy, or breakable objects to shelves or cupboards lower down.
- Secure fragile items to shelves using Blu Tack or Quake Wax.
- Store flammable products and hazardous materials securely on bottom shelves in cabinets that are closed with latches.
- Hang picture frames and mirrors securely, and away from beds or where people sit often.
- Find your shut-off points for water and gas mains.
- Document items in your home, including taking photos.

For more information visit:
www.naturalhazards.govt.nz/be-prepared

Insurance

It's important to protect your home and its contents against loss or damage.

It is strongly recommended you have contents insurance. This will help to replace your belongings if they are lost or damaged. Some contents insurance policies may include provisions for temporary accommodation if the property you rent becomes uninhabitable.

Make sure you're covered

If a natural hazard affects your home, insurance cover for your property is provided by both the Natural Hazards Commission and your private insurer. You automatically have natural hazards insurance cover if you have a home insurance policy that includes fire insurance (and most do).

The best time to understand your insurance is before you need it. Talk to your insurer about:

- what is covered and what's not included, including the limits of land cover.
- the amount you are insured for to make sure it will be enough to rebuild your home and replace your valuables.
- your rights and obligations for any shared-ownership property.

Visit www.knowyourcover.co.nz to find out more about natural hazards insurance.

Make a claim

If you have been affected by a disaster, contact your private insurer to make a claim. They will be your single point of contact during the claims process.

Before you start cleaning up take photos and videos of all visible damage, which will support your insurance claim.



Know how to stay informed

Unfortunately, there is no single solution for ensuring communication during emergencies. We encourage you to include multiple key contacts in your emergency plans. This should include both local contacts – such as family members, friends, or neighbours who can physically check on you – and an out-of-town contact. The out-of-town contact can play a vital role by following up through official channels such as the Police or Red Cross if they are concerned or unable to reach you.

Radio

The radio is a great source of information in an emergency. If the power goes out, a solar or battery powered radio (or your car radio) can help you keep up to date with the latest news.

Antenno App

If you use a smartphone, you can download the Antenno app. Antenno is a free mobile app that sends alerts and notifications from Emergency Management Southland to your smartphone, so you know what's happening during an emergency. It is best to download the app and become familiar with it before an emergency occurs.

Online & social media

You can head to official websites and social media pages for information and updates. You can also send any information of disasters to authorities. Check the back page of the booklet for important contact information.

Telephones & internet communication

Emergencies may affect your ability to communicate by phone or the internet, especially if the electricity is cut off. Home broadband internet connections and cordless landline phones will not work when the power is off. If your landline phone is not working, you will not be able to use it to dial **111**. Listen to the radio and talk to neighbours about local updates.

In an emergency, mobile phone networks can become overloaded quickly. Keep them clear so emergency calls can be made and, if you can, use text or online messaging to keep in touch. Keep a written list of important numbers, in case you have to evacuate.

If it is not an emergency, try the police non-emergency number by dialing **105**.

Neighbours

Get to know your neighbours before an event. Your neighbours can be a great source of information and getting updates.



We have listed useful radio, websites and important information on the back of this booklet.

Make emergency plans

Make a home emergency plan

A home emergency plan lets each member of a household know what to do in an emergency and how to be prepared, this makes emergency situations less stressful while saving precious time.

How to make a home emergency plan

If your house is ok, you should stay home but you need to decide where you will go in case you have to evacuate or can't get home.

Discuss and write down places to go:

- A safe meeting place if you can't get home. It might be a friend's home or with family.
- A place to stay out of town during or after an emergency. Go there when you have to evacuate from your neighbourhood (e.g. for a flood) or if you can't get back to your neighbourhood.
- Arrange for someone to check on you at the time of a disaster and be sure to include caregivers in your plans.

Fill out the Emergency Contact form in the pocket of this booklet and place it on your refrigerator.

Have an emergency kit

Emergency supplies for your home

In an emergency, Emergency Management Southland and emergency services may not be able to respond in your area immediately. You could be stuck at home without basic services, such as electricity, drinking water, flushing toilets, and phones for days or even weeks. It is expected that you will be able to support yourself for at least seven days – ideally longer.

Your house is already full of emergency items disguised as everyday things – as long as you can find them in a hurry and/or in the dark! They don't all need to be in one place.

Think about how you will access drinking water, cook food and warm yourself without electricity.



Important points to note:

- **Something prepared is always better than nothing.**
- **Neighbours can help each other by sharing resources like barbecues and portable gas stoves.**

Fill out the Household Emergency Checklist found in the pocket of this booklet and keep it up to date.



Have a grab bag

Emergency supplies

If you must evacuate, you will need essential items you can carry with you.

Ideally you should store these items in a grab bag, ready for you to take if you have to leave in a hurry. If not, figure out what you already have in your home, so you can grab them quickly.

An example list of basic supplies to have in a grab bag in case you have to evacuate can be found in the pocket of this booklet.

Special dietary requirements

If you or someone in your household has special dietary needs, make sure you have sufficient stock of these food items for a minimum of a week or more if you can. Include a supply of your special food items in your grab bag too. Emergency shelters are unlikely to have the special food items you may need.

If you receive Meals on Wheels or other meal services make sure you have food supplies in your house that you can prepare and cook, or that don't need cooking, if you cannot be reached.

**If you wear glasses or hearing aids, remember to take them with you!
Make sure to maintain your emergency checklist every 6 months and
replace all expiring items.**



Medications

For many, interruptions in medication can have severe and potentially fatal repercussions.

- Keep a minimum of a week or more if you can, supply of essential medications.
- Complete a medical information list that you can use, include your:
 - Medical centre's name and phone number
 - names of medication and their dosages and the condition you take them for
 - any allergies or sensitivities and any communication or cognitive difficulties

- If you have asthma or a respiratory disorder, make sure your grab bag has masks (rated P2 or N95).
- If any of your medication needs to be stored in a refrigerator (e.g. Insulin), keep ice packs in the freezer. Then, if you have to evacuate you can take it with you in a small chilly bin or wrapped in a towel/newspaper to keep cold for longer.
- Know where to go for assistance if you are dependent on a dialysis machine or other life-sustaining equipment or treatment.

Every time medications are changed update your grab bag, also check the expiration dates of prescription medications in the grab bag every six months.

If you are diabetic make sure you have some high sugar foods in your grab bag, such as lollies, honey or juice, in case blood sugars become low.



Build a personal support network

Your support network will be the first people you can turn to in an emergency. They might be your neighbours, family or friends – people who are regularly in the same area as you. It's important your network includes more than one person.

Get to know your neighbours. You'll want to look out for your neighbours and they'll want to look out for you.

Having connections in local community-based organisations is important – they may be able to assist you with everyday problems and emergencies or find roles for you to help others.

- Share contact details and agree on how you will contact each other during an emergency.
- Tell them about your emergency plan and ask about their plans.
- Find out who can help you and who might need your help.
- Join a Neighbourhood Support group.
- Post a printed contact list in a visible place in your home and give copies to your neighbours and support network.



Disabilities and special requirements

If you or someone in your family has special requirements or is disabled, you will need to include their needs in your emergency plan. It's important to take time to plan and prepare.

Physical disability or mobility impairment

If you or someone you are caring for has a physical disability or mobility impairment, make sure you bring any aids required.

Sight impairment

Be prepared if you have to evacuate. You may have to depend on others if you have to evacuate, go to an unfamiliar Civil Defence Centre, or Community Emergency Hub.

If you have a guide dog, make sure you have a grab bag for them with food, medications, vaccination records, identification and harnesses.

Keep extra canes at home, even if you use a guide dog. Animals may become confused or disorientated in an emergency.

Hearing impairment

Make sure you have a way to find warnings, information and advice in an emergency.

- Arrange for your support network to alert you to any warnings and to keep you informed.
- Give a neighbour or someone in your support network a key to your house so they can alert you.
- Put a writing pad, pencils and a torch with batteries in your grab bag so you can communicate with others.

If you wear hearing aids, make sure you have spare batteries.

Pets

Reduce the risks to your pets and other animals.

- Include essential supplies for your pets in your grab bag and emergency supplies.
- Ask your neighbours to look out for your pet if an emergency happens, and you can't get home.
- Make sure you have a pet crate or cage for your animal(s).
- Keep a printed photo of your pet(s) in your grab bag in case they become lost.

After an event

Preparing pets for evacuation by bringing them indoors and confining them to one room allows you to find them quickly when you need to leave. Have pet carrier boxes and leads ready.

Your animals are your responsibility. You need to include them in your emergency planning and preparation.

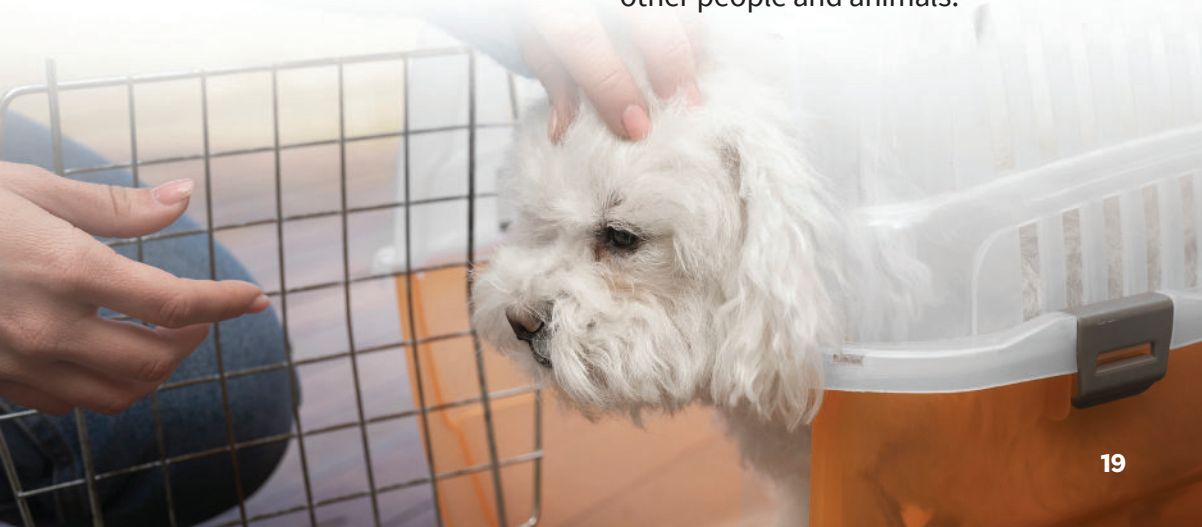
Take your pets with you when you evacuate if it will not delay you. Otherwise, consider an early evacuation.

If you are required to evacuate and need to go to a Civil Defence Centre or Community Emergency Hub, you can bring your pet with you.

Please remember:

- You are responsible for your pet at all times.
- Bring a cage or carrier, food, and any medication your pet may need.
- Dogs must be kept on a lead.

Be aware of your pet's wellbeing and take measures to protect them from disasters and to ensure the safety of other people and animals.



How to respond during an event

Sheltering in place

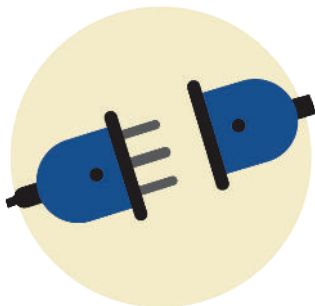
If it is safe to stay home, you should.

If you are not at home and it is too dangerous for you to leave your current location, you may also need to take shelter where you are.

You should stay there either until you are asked to evacuate, or until you are told it is safe to leave.

Sheltering at home

- Unplug small appliances. Small appliances may be affected by electrical power surges.
- Turn off utilities if instructed by authorities. Authorities may ask you to turn off the water, gas, or electricity supply to prevent damage to your home.



Electric heating

If all your heating is electric and you have no fireplace, you will need to consider what you will do to keep warm if the power goes out. Put on warm layers before you get cold, have a good supply of warm blankets to wrap up in and keep windows and doors closed.

Gas cookers and BBQs

Gas cookers and BBQs are a great alternative to use when power goes out. They can be used both for cooking and for boiling water for hot water bottles to help keep you warm.

DO NOT use outdoor gas appliances such as camping cookers and BBQs indoors.

Drinking water

To store enough drinking water for 7 days. 3 litres per person per day just for drinking and cooking. Add some extra for pets. Do not use empty milk bottles.

If you have to evacuate

Evacuate immediately if told to do so by authorities, or if you feel unsafe.

Take your grab bag with you. Use travel routes specified by local authorities, some areas may be impassable or dangerous. **If you do not drive**, make sure you have a plan with a neighbour, friend or family.

Preparing to evacuate

There may be times when authorities tell you to prepare to evacuate, but you do not need to leave immediately. For example, you may be told to prepare to evacuate if river levels are getting very high and there is a risk of flooding.

If you drive, get in a habit of keeping your petrol tank at least half full. If there are power cuts in an event, fuel stations may not be able to operate pumps.

Prepare to evacuate by following these steps:

1. Put on protective, weather appropriate clothing to cover your arms and legs, and sturdy footwear in case you have to move through debris (e.g. if there has been an earthquake).
2. Put your grab bag by the door or in your vehicle.
3. Leave mobile phones on and charged so you can receive Emergency Mobile Alerts and Antenna updates.
4. Listen to the radio or check website or Facebook pages (see back page) for updates. Talk to neighbours and friends for latest information.
5. Listen to Emergency Management Southland and authorities and follow any instructions regarding evacuation of your area. Self-evacuate if you feel unsafe.



What to do after an event

Urgent repairs and recovery

Do not do anything that puts your safety at risk or causes more damage to your property. If you are concerned about the safety of your property, contact your local council.

- You can make urgent repairs to make your as home safe and sanitary as possible.
- Before you start cleaning up take photos and videos of all visible damage, and perishable or unsanitary items. Note down the details of valuable items before disposal.
- Always wear protective gear, including gloves and masks, in case you're exposed to hazardous material.
- Food and water are easily contaminated during emergencies; you need to take extra care to avoid getting sick.
- Get essential services repaired and keep copies of invoices.
- Before any work is started, talk to your insurer and check if the cost will be reimbursed as part of your claim.

If your property is damaged

If you have been affected by a disaster, **take photos** and get in touch with your insurer as soon as you can to lodge a claim and understand how they can help.

Feeling stressed?

Emergencies are scary and it's perfectly normal to feel stressed or anxious. Don't be afraid to talk to others about how you feel and to seek help if you need it.

Everyone affected by a disaster may experience symptoms such as irritability, not being able to sleep, forgetfulness, headaches etc. They are all normal reactions, but if any of these symptoms affect your ability to function or are prolonged, seek medical attention or call the numbers below.

Healthline 0800 611 116

Need to talk? Call or text 1737 to speak to a trained counsellor.

How can you help your community?

Older people are an important part of volunteer networks, often forming the backbone of local community organisations, bringing extensive skills and experience.

Check on your neighbours and help if you are able to.

If you want to volunteer it is easy to start close to home, think about people who might need your help in an emergency (e.g. disabled people, single parents with young children, people who are new to the area and people who live on their own).

If you are part of local community-based organisations, there are often volunteer roles available during emergencies.



Key communications

Southland Radio Stations

In an emergency, the media will provide regular updates. Listen to the radio and follow trusted news sites.

All local radio stations will broadcast the same emergency information when needed.

The Breeze 91.6 FM

The Hits 98.8 FM

Te Anau 90.4 FM

Hokonui 94.8 FM

MoreFM 89.2 FM

Te Anau 96.0 FM

National Radio 101.2 FM or 720 AM

Milford Sound 92 FM

Te Anau 101.6 FM

Newstalk ZB 864 AM

Radio New Zealand (RNZ National)

Invercargill 101.2 FM

Milford Sound 92.0 FM

Stewart Island/Rakiura

101.6 FM or 720 AM

Te Anau 101.6 FM

Radio Southland 96.4 FM



Emergency Management Southland

 0800 76 88 45


 cdsouthland.nz

 facebook.com/cdsouthland

Invercargill City Council

 0800 422 435


 icc.govt.nz

 facebook.com/
invercargillcitycouncil

Southland District Council

 0800 732 732

 southlanddc.govt.nz

 facebook.com/
southlanddistrictcouncil

Gore District Council

 0800 467 332

 goredc.govt.nz

 facebook.com/goredc

If life or property are at risk, call 111

(Fire, Police and Ambulance)

If it is not an emergency, try the Police non-emergency number by dialing **105**.