

# 9. Plan and Train to Keep Your Family Safe

**Purpose:** Understand and prepare each member of the family to recognize and react properly in situations where danger exists.

## **Family Discussion:**

We need to learn how to prevent any dangerous conditions that we can control and react properly to those we come in contact with.

## **LIST OF POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS CONDITIONS**

### **Electrical Wires**

- Teach your family how to turn off the main circuit breaker (outside next to the electrical meter).
- Are there overhead wires near your house? In an emergency, exit the house on the opposite side.
- If you see a downed electrical wire or line, do not approach or touch it. Call 911. If you are in your car and can see downed wires, do not get out of the car. Call 911 and wait for help.
- In a thunderstorm, do not stand near or under power lines (or under a lone tree). They attract lightning.

### **Gas and Flammable Liquids**

- Teach your family how to shut the **natural gas** off (at the meter). Have a gas wrench attached to the meter.
- Train your family how to safely use a gas can. Store **gasoline** only in an approved container (in good condition) outside your house. Store camping fuels, etc., only in approved metal containers.
- Have a fire extinguisher near the place where you store flammable liquids. Teach your family how to use it.

### **Water, Rivers, and Streams**

- Never go through water running over a road, path, or sidewalk unless you know it is less than 6" deep.
- Keep the rain gutters and yard drainage clear and in good working order around the house.
- Teach each family member how to turn off the water line into your house, both at the house and the curb.
- If your street floods, plan how to respond, what to do, and where to meet if you are not all present.

### **Mudslides**

- Is your home on a hill or below a hillside? If so, learn if there is mudslide danger and plan an escape route and an assembly location if you need to leave your home. Make it part of Family Home Evening.

### **Other Hazardous Chemicals**

- During disasters, cleaning fluids and other hazardous chemicals may break and fall, mixing together and creating poisonous fumes. This may occur in your home (under sinks or in the garage) or at a grocery or hardware store.

### **Drunk or Impaired Drivers**

- If you see a car weaving or being driven erratically, get the license number (if possible) and call 911. Be aware that medical conditions can cause a person to become impaired while driving and alcohol may not be involved. However, always call 911. Depending on the situation, you may need to remain nearby until help arrives.

### **Generators**

- **If the power goes out and you have a generator, do not hook directly to circuits in your house unless (1) you have the main breaker turned off and locked and (2) know what you are doing.**

**Use extension cords to connect directly to the fridge or freezer, etc.** (You could blow up the generator and house wiring and start a fire if the power comes back on with your generator connected to the house wiring.)

### **Railroad Tracks**

- Is your house near railroad tracks? If so, learn how to exit the house on the opposite side. Practice exiting.
- Never stop on railroad tracks. Teach your family to know and respect crossing arms and signals.

### **Freeways and Interstates**

- If you are driving and **visibility** is reduced to zero, immediately pull off the road onto the paved/gravel pull-off area or off-ramp. Stay in the car unless you can see a guard rail or tree to get behind. Call 911.
- In the rain, slow down. If your car begins to **hydroplane**, take your foot off the gas, but **DO NOT** step on the brake. Steer straight ahead until the car stops hydroplaning. Hydroplaning often occurs when it is raining so hard you can see the rain splash on the roadway. SLOW DOWN.
- Learn to **STEER INTO THE SKID** if your car begins to skid on wet or icy roads.
- Learn about **BLACK ICE** and the situations where it can invisibly cover a highway.
- Drive slowly when the temperature is within 5 degrees of freezing, especially over bridges.

### **Animal Cruelty or Deprivation**

- If you see an animal being cruelly treated or looking starved or hurt, call 911 and report it. (This is not a dangerous condition to your family, but you should take appropriate action.)

### **Fireworks**

- Before purchasing or lighting any fireworks, learn the local law about the use of fireworks. **DO NOT** purchase or use any fireworks that are not of a "Safe and Sane Fireworks" variety. Never shoot a bottle rocket into the air or allow any member of your family to do so.

**\*ADD YOUR OWN LIST OF DANGEROUS CONDITIONS TO THIS LIST** and discuss in a Family Home Evening.