

When to Go: Evacuations

Evacuation should be addressed as part of everyone's planning efforts. City officials will tell you when to evacuate through the media and direct warnings. Evacuation is used as a last resort when a serious threat to public safety exists. If you must evacuate, your first plan should always be to stay with friends or family. In a planned evacuation, the City will advise residents of which areas are impacted and provide guidance on how the evacuation will proceed.

In an unplanned evacuation, such as for a hazardous material spill, officials will advise affected residents to leave the immediate area until the danger can be removed. Always have your Go Bag prepared and easily accessible in case of any evacuation. You may not have time to assemble your belongings, and you may not be allowed back until the danger has passed.

Evacuate immediately when you:

- Are directed to do so by an emergency official.
- Are in immediate danger.

Be Prepared to Evacuate

- Know evacuation plans for all the places you and your household members spend time. Often buildings have floor marshals who are responsible for evacuation plans.
- Make alternate transportation plans; the means of transportation you usually use may not be available.
- Practice plans through regular drills. People who practice escape drills can evacuate with greater ease than those who are unfamiliar with the procedures.
- If you have pets, consider what you would do if you cannot return home to them.

What to Do When You Evacuate

- If there is time, secure your home: close and lock windows and doors, and unplug appliances before you leave. Authorities will instruct you if it is necessary to turn off utilities.
- Wear sturdy shoes and comfortable, protective clothing, such as long pants and long-sleeved shirts.
- Bring your Go Bag with you.
- Do NOT use an elevator during a fire or other emergency unless directed to do so by emergency personnel. If power goes out or is shut off, you may become trapped.
- Remember, evacuation routes change based on the emergency so stay tuned for the latest information.
- Go to the nearest safe place or shelter as soon as instructed.

