

Emergency Preparedness

September is [National Preparedness Month](#); however, emergencies can happen anytime. In 2021, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) [declared](#) 80 major disasters and emergencies, including storms, floods, and tornados. Here at Northwestern, you may be faced with emergency situations such as fires, medical emergencies, power outages, natural disasters, hazardous material spills, suspicious activities, and active violence.

Planning

Waiting until an emergency occurs is not the time to begin planning. Preparing ahead of time can significantly increase the chances of keeping you and your colleagues safe.

- Learn how to respond to emergencies on campus by understanding Northwestern's Emergency [Procedures](#).
- Familiarize yourself with Northwestern's Emergency [Notification](#) System.
- Know emergency and other important telephone numbers.
- Complete [Emergency Response](#) training.

Tips for Success

When Talking to Your Team

Preparation is Key: Keep the topic relevant. Work with your team to review potential emergencies in your work area and discuss how your team will respond to these emergencies.

Stay Positive: Keep the focus on what can be done to create a safe workplace instead of focusing on what has gone wrong in the past.

Share a Story, Ask for a Story: Storytelling is a powerful method to convey information. Stories from your employees make the topic even more relatable.

Emergency Evacuations

The most likely response to an emergency on campus will be to evacuate your building to safety. Follow these guidelines to ensure your safety during an evacuation:

- ✓ Follow Northwestern's general emergency [evacuation plan](#) or your department's plan.
- ✓ Familiarize yourself with your building layout to create an exit strategy and know at least two ways out; ensure exit routes are always unobstructed.
- ✓ Never use elevators during an emergency evacuation and instead use designated stairwells.
- ✓ Know your building's designated [assembly area](#) and proceed there immediately when evacuating.
- ✓ Occupants with mobility challenges who cannot use stairwells should proceed to an area of rescue assistance (e.g., designated stairwell or office behind a closed door), where they can call 911 and wait for emergency responders to arrive.
- ✓ Never re-enter a building after an emergency evacuation until emergency responders (e.g., police, fire department) say it is safe to do so.

Learn more: Complete Northwestern's evacuation training for the [Chicago](#) or [Evanston](#) campus.

Report all injuries: [Online](#) or call (847) 491-5582.

Safety at Home – Create a Family Emergency Plan

It's possible that your family may become separated during an emergency. Be aware of the types of emergencies that can happen in your area (e.g., floods, power outages, and severe storms) and create a family emergency plan tailored to your family's specific needs (e.g., dietary, medical, care of children, pets) by following the steps below:

1. Determine how you will receive emergency alerts and warnings (e.g., radio, cell phones).
2. Establish an evacuation route and shelter plan.
3. Develop a family communication plan, which should include ways to contact and reconnect with your family in case of separation; established a meeting place that's familiar and easy to locate.
4. Create an [emergency preparedness kit](#).
5. Share and practice your emergency plan with your family.
6. Learn more about developing a family emergency plan [here](#).

For Additional Information

Contact Environmental Health & Safety at ehs@northwestern.edu

Do you or your team have a safety story you'd like to share? Contact Environmental Health and Safety for details.