

GETTING STARTED

A good way to begin your planning process is to gather as much information as you can. There are numerous resources available to guide you through the process of getting your household prepared to deal with a disaster. Trusted Choice[®] and the Big “I” offer many disaster-specific readiness and recovery tips for consumers including the following suggestions to get started:

- Make a list of each of your insurance policy numbers and the insurance company name, and keep the information in your wallet, purse, or on your mobile device. For example, nearly all states use some form of a wallet-size auto ID card, which is required to be kept on your person, or in the vehicle. It's a good idea to do have similar information with you on all your other insurance coverages.
- Make a record of your insurance agent's web site address, and keep this information in your wallet, purse or mobile device. After a widespread catastrophe, more and more agencies post information about claims procedures on their web site. This is especially important in cases where the agency itself has been affected, and has set up temporary operations at another location. In addition, agency web sites will usually post emergency insurance claim phone numbers, etc.
- Use social media to contact your insurance agent. Many agencies use some form of social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, etc., and these information outlets can provide vital, timely information about claims procedures and other necessary information for policyholders.
- Find out how you and your neighbors would be informed about an imminent disaster.
- Ask if evacuation routes have been established.
- Contact your city's or town's planning and emergency assistance organizations. Ask them for information about disaster planning.
- Contact your children's school(s) or day care center to learn about the emergency plans they have in place.
- If a family member is in an elder care facility, check to see what emergency procedures they will follow.
- Take a First Aid/CPR class from the American Red Cross.

- If you have pets, have a contingency plan in place. Many emergency shelters won't accept them.