

Borough of River Edge  
705 Kinderkamack Road  
River Edge, New Jersey 07661  
(201) 599-6300

Dear River Edge Residents:

The River Edge Office of Emergency Management is pleased to provide you with our local Emergency Planning Guide.

This year after looking back at the last several years, it is now more important than ever for all River Edge residents to be prepared for a variety of emergencies. One of the key roles of Emergency Management is to provide you with the needed information and how to stay informed. We encourage all residents to review the Plan and print it out. The Plan can be accessed on the Borough Website under [EmergencyManagement@www.RiverEdgeNJ.org](http://www.RiverEdgeNJ.org/EmergencyManagement).

Training is critical to preparedness. Your Borough Officials, Department Managers and the Emergency Services interact with each other and are aware of their roles in emergency situations.

The Office of Emergency Management encourages all River Edge residents to plan, prepare and stay informed to ensure the safety of your family.

River Edge has several different ways to communicate with you and your family during emergency situations. We encourage you to sign up for NIXLE @nixel.com. and Facebook. During ongoing emergencies, we will also place pertinent information on Facebook and/or NIXLE will reach you via email, text messages and other electronic formats.

Check the Borough Website at [www.riveredgenj.org](http://www.riveredgenj.org) for materials related to situations that may impact you and your family.

**FOR ALL IMMEDIATE EMERGENCIES ALWAYS DIAL 911**

Working together will ensure that all of us will be properly prepared. Communication is critical to our shared services. Our ongoing ability to reach out to you with the most updated information is only as good as our database. Do not delay. Utilize the forms and the Website to provide us with your email address, text message or other means to reach you.

William R Sanders Jr.

Emergency Management Coordinator

## GENERAL INFORMATION FOR EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

This section of the guide provides information that will help you and your family to protect yourselves during an emergency. Timing is critical during an emergency, being prepared may be the difference in keeping you and your family safe from harm, especially during sudden emergencies.

Emergencies vary, they may require a quick evacuation, or you may decide to stay in place. The amount of time could be for hours or days depending on the type and severity of the situation.

River Edge OEM working with Federal, State, County and local officials have prepared emergency information and specific checklists for different situations to help you be prepared.

We recommend that you share this information at a family meeting so everyone is informed and is aware of the location in your home that the Plan will be stored.

- Identify an out-of-town friend or family member who may be in a better position to communicate among separated family members. Be sure every member of your family knows the phone number and has a cell phone to call the emergency contact. In the event local phone service is down check with local police and emergency management for alternative communication.
- If you have a cell phone, program the person(s) as “ICE” (in case of emergency) in your phone. If you are in an accident, emergency personnel will often check your ICE listing in order to get a hold of someone you know. Make sure to tell your family and friends that you have listed them as your emergency contact.
- Teach family members how to use text messaging, which can often get around network disruptions when a phone call might not be able to get through.

## **Emergency Preparedness Checklist**

Children exposed to an emergency may exhibit different behaviors. Talk to your children; ensure them that they are safe. Have a family meeting to talk about what happened and encourage them to discuss any fears that they may be feeling. A key element is to ensure them that they are not responsible for what happened.

### **An “All Purpose” Checklist**

Use the following checklist to be sure that you are prepared for any type of emergency.

- Warm clothing that can be worn in layers
- Extra blankets/sleeping bags.
- Portable radio/flashlight/extra batteries
- First Aid kit
- An extra pair of glasses and other important family documents
- Non-perishable, high-energy food that can be eaten without cooking.
- A supply of water for drinking, cooking and bathing- gallon containers and or fill your tub.
- Extra towels or paper toweling
- Extra baby supplies, if caring for infants
- Prescription medication, create a list with the name and dosage information.
- Extra food and supplies for pets.
- A fully charged fire extinguisher and battery-powered smoke detectors work.

**MAKE A FAMILY PLAN**

There is a good chance your family may not be together when disaster strikes. It is critically important to plan how you will contact one another; how you will get back together; and what you will do in different situations. Remember cell phones and home phone service may not be functional.

## **Family Emergency Plan**

A Family Emergency Planning Tool is available at [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov). Work as a family to prepare a printable Comprehensive Family Emergency Plan. Use the Quick Share Application to assemble a quick reference list of contact information for your family, and a meeting place for emergencies.

You may also want to inquire about emergency plans at locations where your family spends time, such as work, daycare and school. If no plan exists, consider volunteering to help create one. Talk to your neighbors about how you can work together in the event of an emergency. You will be better prepared to safely reunite your family and loved ones during an emergency if you think ahead and communicate with others in advance. Make sure everyone is aware of older neighbors or those with special needs.

## **Planning to Stay or Go**

If you live near a brook, river or a lake, be aware that water can rise very quickly. Heavy thunderstorms, wind and the tides all can change the situation and create dangerous flooding. In a widespread emergency local emergency service may not immediately be able to provide updated information on what is happening and what you should do. During the 911 attack AM radio communication was

available. This often-forgotten method of communication can be extremely helpful. Two AM stations that may be helpful and do carry local information are 880 – 1010.

### **Emergency Information**

You may find the following online resources useful:

- Federal Emergency Management (FEMA)  
[www.ready.gov/naturaldisaster](http://www.ready.gov/naturaldisaster)
- National Weather Service (NOAA) [www.weather.gov/safety](http://www.weather.gov/safety)
- New Jersey Office of Emergency Management [www.read.nj.gov](http://www.read.nj.gov)
- River Edge Office of Emergency Management – Facebook

### **THE NEED FOR EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS SPECIAL NEEDS ASSISTANCE**

Pre-Planning for emergencies can be especially critical for residents with Special Needs.

Residents who need extra assistance during emergencies because of physical disabilities, advanced age, or other special needs should notify River Edge OEM by mailing the key information needed to:

River Edge Office of Emergency Management

705 Kinderkamack Road

River Edge, New Jersey 07661

Use the Special Needs Registry form. This form will be kept on file at the Office of Emergency Management.

Here are some important items for you to consider.

- If you currently use a personal care attendant obtained from an Agency, check to make sure the agency has special provisions for emergencies, like relocation.
- Meet with household members and your personal care attendant. Discuss the dangers of fire, severe weather or other emergencies that might occur.
- Learn what to do in case of power outages and personal injuries, know how to connect or start a back-up generator.
- If you or someone in your household uses a wheelchair or other mobility device, make sure more than one exit from your home is accessible in case the primary exit is blocked due to the emergency.
- Make sure those who may need to assist you in an emergency are aware of the operation of your special equipment.
- Arrange for a relative or neighbor to check on you several times each day during the emergency.
- Consider a medical alert system that will allow you to call for help if you are immobilized.
- Select one out of State and one local friend or relative for family members to call if separated during the emergency.

**DEPENDING ON YOUR PERSONAL SITUATION AN AUTOMATIC GENERATOR SYSTEM MAY BE THE BEST WAY TO ENSURE YOU HAVE THE POWER NEEDED AT ALL TIMES.**

## An “All Purpose” Checklist

Use the following checklist to be sure that you are prepared for any type of emergency.

- Warm clothing that can be worn in layers
- Extra blankets/sleeping bags.
- Portable radio/flashlight/extra batteries
- First Aid kit and prescription medications
- An extra pair of glasses and lists of important family papers to take with you.
- Non-perishable, high-energy food that can be eaten without cooking.
- A supply of drinking, cooking and bathing water
- Extra towels or paper toweling
- Extra baby supplies, if caring for infants
- Extra prescription medications and supplies, if caring for elderly or infirm
- Extra food and supplies for pets.
- A fully charged fire extinguisher and battery-powered smoke detectors work.



## STAY INFORMED

Before, during and after a disaster, it is critical that you seek out the most local, up to-date information from emergency officials. Public officials communicate emergency information to the public through various means, depending on the circumstances. Local media are often used to convey instructions from local, state, and federal government partners, such as:

- Orders to evacuate.
- Evacuation routes
- Locations of evacuation shelters
  - How to safely stay where you are
- Where to find assistance
- Weather warnings and watches

Some of the things you can do to prepare for the unexpected, such as making an emergency supply kit and developing a family communications plan, are the same for both a natural and man-made emergency. There are important differences among potential emergencies that will impact the decisions you make and the actions you take. Learn more about the potential emergencies that could occur where you live and the appropriate way to respond to them. Knowing what to do during an emergency is an important part of being prepared.

It is also important to know what kinds of threats could occur in the Bergen County area. Explore the **Are You Ready Disaster** links at [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) and <http://ready.nj.gov/plan/threats-emergency.html> to learn more about these threats and how to respond to them.

River Edge has a reverse 911 system referred to as the Emergency Notification System. It will leave messages on a landline or a cell phone. It is recommended that you register for this service by visiting <https://www.riveredgenj.org/REVERSE911>.

River Edge also has several ways to communicate to residents. Reverse 911, Nixle, and Community Bulletin Board sites.

### How to Stay Informed Borough of River Edge

Call Borough Hall for recorded messages at 201-599-6300

Bookmark [www.riveredge.nj.org](http://www.riveredge.nj.org) on your computer.

Visit Borough Hall or the River Edge Police Department to receive information in person.

Office of Emergency Management (OEM) [www.riveredge.nj.org](http://www.riveredge.nj.org)

Follow River Edge OEM on Facebook

River Edge OEM may distribute and post written information through our local houses of worship, local businesses and River Edge Borough buildings.

Register to receive text message alerts through Nixle by texting your zip code (07661) to 8887777 or visiting [www.nixle.com](http://www.nixle.com).

## WHAT TO DO?

### **Shelter Information Sheltering-In-Place Preparedness -What can we do, should we stay in place?**

Evacuation is not always the safest option in the event of a hazardous material or other type of emergency. Your home or workplace can be a haven from an emergency. Upfront preparations such as moving outside furniture into a closed shed or covering windows with material to protect them from high winds and flying debris are necessary as you may need time to make the proper decisions as well as the tools needed to install them at the first notice from Emergency Services.

Sheltering in Place means staying inside your home or other buildings until emergency officials give an “all-clear” signal. Sheltering in Place can be your safest option in some emergencies.

Sheltering in Place is most used for hazardous material emergencies but can also be used during some storms and police emergencies where evacuation and exposure to the outside can be life threatening. Other conditions that may warrant a call for sheltering in place may include severe windstorms and winter storms.

Prepare your home ahead of time. Choose a “safe room”, which is large enough to hold the number of people in your family, has access to water, and has few, if any, windows. A bedroom with an adjoining bath is a great place.

Prepare window coverings: windows should be sealed to prevent hazards from entering. Measure windows and skylights – cut plastic (adding 6” to the borders) to be placed over the windows. Label the sheets for each window. For serious wind conditions, think about something heavier to guard against broken glass entering the room (wood or heavy cardboard).

Prepare vent and door coverings: as with the windows, measure each air vent, door and any other openings leading outside the room; cut, label and store plastic sheeting.

During an emergency your decision to shelter in place may appear to be the best action for your family, but often the situation can change quickly and without warning for your safety and the safety of your family ALWAYS follow the directions of the appropriate emergency officials. Emergency officials remain in constant contact with all levels of emergency management agencies.

### **SHELTERING-IN-PLACE PREPAREDNESS**

The most important step in deciding to Shelter in Place is to have a complete list of everything you will need to do it.

The day of the emergency or the day before is already too late. The public information via government, the press, TV and cable news will start with notice of a storm or other problem several days early – this triggers people to go shopping for everything – this action will make it difficult at best for a last-minute decision.

The attached list covers many of the items that may be needed but only each family can know their own needs. Many of the items you would need are NOT PERISHABLE and can be purchased and stored over time.

## **Sheltering-In-Place Planning & Implementation Check List**

- Sheltering-in-Place preparations complement your other family emergency preparedness efforts.
- Make sure you have plastic sheeting for windows, doors, air vents, or other openings; you may want to pre-cut and label them.
- Include rolls of duct tape for the plastic sheeting.
- Bring along a first aid kit.
- Stay inside the enclosed building of your “safe room.” Bring pets inside.
- Close and lock all windows and doors. Close drapes or shades over all windows. Push wet towels under the doors to help seal against outside air, if appropriate.
- Turn off all heating/air conditioning systems, and switch inlets or vents to the closed position. Extinguish fireplace fires and close dampers.
- Seal bathroom exhaust fans or grills, range vents, dryer vents, and other openings (in shelter room only).
- Listen to the Emergency Alert System radio messages and follow the instructions. Other local stations may carry the instructions.
- Do not go outside or attempt to drive unless specifically told to do so. Evacuation procedures may vary by area and type of danger.
- Once the emergency has passed, ventilate your entire house.

## Evacuation

There may be conditions under which you will decide to leave or are ordered to leave. Follow these guidelines for evacuation:

1. Plan places where your family will meet, both within and outside of your immediate neighborhood. Use the Emergency Plan to decide these locations before a disaster.
2. If you have a car, keep a full tank of gas in it if an evacuation seems likely. Keep a half tank of gas in it all times in case of an unexpected need to evacuate. Gas stations may be closed during emergencies and unable to pump gas during power outages. Plan to take one car per family to reduce congestion and delay.
3. Become familiar with alternate routes and other means of transportation out of your area. Choose several destinations in different directions so you have options in an emergency.
4. Leave early enough to avoid being trapped by severe weather.
5. Follow recommended evacuation route. Do not take shortcuts; they may be blocked.
6. Be alert for road hazards such as washed-out roads or bridges and downed power lines. Do not drive into flooded areas or on closed-off roads.
7. If you do not have a car, plan how you will leave if you must. Decide with family, friends or your local town agencies.
8. Take your emergency supply kit unless you have reason to believe it has been contaminated.
9. Listen to a battery-powered radio and follow local evacuation instructions.

10. Remember that during an evacuation, only service animals may be permitted in public shelters. Plan for who will care for your pets in an emergency.

### **Shelter-In-Place DON'Ts**

1. Don't call the school to try to pick up your children. They will be safer sheltering in place at the school than they would be riding in your vehicle.
2. Don't leave your shelter until the "all clear" signal is sounded. – Don't risk your safety for pets. If they can't be found quickly, you'll have to shelter-in-place without them.
3. Don't call 911 unless it is a true emergency.
4. Don't wait until the disaster strikes to prepare. It's never too early!

### **If Time Permits**

Call/email your out-of-state contact in your family communications plan.

Secure your home by closing and locking doors and windows. Unplug electrical equipment.

Leave freezers and refrigerators plugged in unless there is a risk of flooding.

If you are instructed to, shut off water, gas and electricity before leaving.

Communicate with others that are aware of your plan and tell them where you are going and how you will stay in contact with them.

Check with neighbors who may need a ride.

## **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INFORMATION**

Several types of emergencies that may impact River Edge

### **Hazardous Materials**

Hazardous materials are part of our everyday lives. When properly stored and handled, products such as household detergents, swimming pool chemicals, lawn fertilizer, and propane grills provide us with enjoyment in a safe and healthy environment. However, because these and other products may be poisonous, flammable, or corrosive, the public must be protected in the event of an accident involving a hazardous material.

### **What Should You Do?**

- Store propane, gasoline, kerosene, or flammable materials in proper containers and away from your home.
- If you witness a hazardous materials incident, immediately call 911 and be prepared to tell them the exact location.
- Stay away from the scene of the incident. Stay upwind of the incident. Hazardous material may be explosive and can produce deadly fumes.
- If you are in a car, close the windows and shut off ventilation.
- Avoid contact with any spilled materials, airborne mist, or condensed solid chemical deposits.
- Do NOT eat any food or drink any water that may have been contaminated.
- Watch Public Access-TV Channel 77 (Cablevision) or Channel 34 (Verizon FIOS). Utilities Emergencies – Natural Gas



- If you smell a strong odor of gas, do not do anything that will cause a possible spark.
- Do not turn off (or on) any switches.
- Do not use the telephone.
- Do not try to fix the situation yourself.
- LEAVE your home IMMEDIATELY! Call 911 from a neighbor's house.

\*\*Please remember that loss of power to your home is not necessarily a life-threatening emergency. Please do not call 911 to find out when your power will be restored. Call your utility company directly. PSE&G can be reached at 1-800-436-7734 or Text 4PSEG (47734). If you have internet access, you can report a power outage at [pseg.com](http://pseg.com).

### Utilities Emergencies –Power Failure

A power outage can be caused by storm activity, equipment failures, or when a tree, animal or other object comes into contact with an electrical line. Once located, trouble spots can be isolated and repaired enabling service to be restored.

- Check with your neighbors. If you are the only one without power or only a few appliances won't work, check to see if a fuse is blown or a circuit breaker is tripped.
- Call 911 if a hazardous situation exists due to downed power lines such as electricity arcing in the road or on any property.
- Call PSE&G directly at 1-800-436-7734 to report a power outage that does not involve downed power lines or other hazardous conditions.
- Listen to updated new reports on a battery-powered radio. Announcements are often broadcast several times an hour

updating the public on information concerning the extent of the problem and the approximate time service will be restored.

- Turn off major appliances, like air conditioners, that should not be in operation when the power comes back on. Do leave a light on so you'll know when normal service has been restored. Do not use appliances if the light is dim, indicating low voltage.
- Open refrigerator doors and freezers as little as possible. Food will be kept for many hours if door opening is kept to a minimum.
- Stay away from downed power lines. Never touch them under any circumstances. Always assume they are energized and dangerous.

#### Utilities Emergencies-Water

Know where your water shut-off and hot water heater shut-off valves are in case of emergency.

In case of severe flooding, you should call 911 for assistance.

#### **Fire Emergency**

Every homeowner, apartment dweller or any business location should have a fire escape plan showing a way out of the building. If your smoke detector goes off, or if you notice a fire, remain calm. Do not try to fight a fire yourself. Leave the building get to safe place outside and Call 911 immediately.

- If your clothes catch fire: Stop where you are, drop to the ground, and roll over and over to smother the flames.
- If you live in a multiple dwelling or apartment complex, and the fire is not in your apartment, stay in your apartment, rather than enter smoke-filled hallways.

- If a fire breaks out in your house or non-fireproof apartment building, get out as quickly as possible.
- Feel doors with the back of your hand before you open them. If they are hot, find another way out. Stay as close to the floor as possible – smoke and heat rise, and the air is clearer and cooler near the floor. Close doors behind you.
- If you are unable to get out for any reason, stay near a window and close to the floor. Close the door and stuff the bottom with a towel to avoid smoke. If possible, signal for help by waving a cloth or sheet outside the window.
- Kitchen fires are the most common fire in the USA. Your best defense against injury or a large fire is to have working smoke detectors on every floor of your home or business. Change the batteries twice a year at daylight-savings time in March and November.

If you are in a building that is on fire do not stop to get anything, do not stop to call for help, call 911 when you get to a safe place, such as a neighbor's house. Provide the 911 operator with the address of the fire and any information about the number of people in the building who have not come out!

## **Pandemic**

You can prepare for an influenza pandemic now. You should know both the magnitude of what can happen during an outbreak and what actions you can take to help lessen the impact of an influenza pandemic on you and your family. This checklist will help you gather the information and resources you may need in case of a flu pandemic.

## **Plan**

- Store at least a 2-week supply of water and food. During a pandemic, if you cannot get to a store, or if stores are out of supplies, it will be important for you to have extra supplies on hand. This planning can be useful in all types of emergencies, such as long-term power outages, weather related disasters or other man-made situations.
- Check your regular prescription drugs to ensure a continuous supply.
- Have health supplies on hand, including pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, fluids with electrolytes and vitamins.
- Talk with family members and loved ones about how they would be cared for in they got sick, or what will be needed to care for them in your home.

### **Limit Spread of Germs and Prevent Infection**

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick and wear a mask over your mouth and nose.
- If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. This may prevent those around you from getting sick as well.
- Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose or mouth.

- Practice other good health habits. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

## **WEATHER INFORMATION DURING AN EMERGENCY**

### Winter Weather

#### Storms with Strong Winds

Sometimes winter storms are accompanied by strong winds, creating blizzard conditions with blinding wind-driven snow, severe drifting, and dangerous wind chill. These intense storms can knock down trees, utility poles and power lines. Storms near the coast can cause coastal flooding as well as river flooding, especially at high tides.

#### Extreme Cold

Extreme cold often accompanies a winter storm or is left in its wake. Prolonged exposure to the cold can cause frostbite or hypothermia and become life threatening. Infants and elderly people are most susceptible. Pipes may freeze and burst in homes that are poorly insulated or without heat.

#### Ice Storms

Heavy accumulations of ice can bring down trees, electrical wires, telephone poles and lines, and communication towers. Communications and power can be disrupted for days while utility companies work to repair the extensive damage. Even small accumulations of ice may cause extreme hazards to motorists and pedestrians.

## **During a Winter Storm**

The following are guidelines for what you should do during a winter storm or under conditions of extreme cold:

- Listen to your radio or TV for weather reports and emergency information. Have a portable AM Radio with extra batteries.
- Eat regularly and drink ample fluids.
- Avoid overexertion. Clearing snow can cause overexertion and bring on a heart attack –this is often a major cause of death in the winter.
- Watch for signs of frostbite: loss of feeling and white or pale appearance in extremities such as fingers, toes, earlobes, and the tip of the nose. If symptoms are detected, get medical help immediately.
- Watch for signs of hypothermia: uncontrollable shivering, memory loss, disorientation, incoherence, slurred speech, drowsiness, and apparent exhaustion. If symptoms are detected, get the victim to a warm location and remove wet clothing, warm the center of the body first, and give warm, nonalcoholic beverages, if the victim is conscious. Get medical help as soon as possible.

### **Clean up and return to normal after snowstorms.**

#### **Municipal Responsibility**

- DPW with the cooperation of residents will clear River Edge roads using the Odd/Even regulations. The removal of automobiles from the road are critical to a quick and efficient clearing of the streets.

#### **Resident Responsibility**

- Clear sidewalk for safe passage

- Follow the Odd/Even automobile parking process. All cars/vehicles must be removed from the roadways.
- Share your driveway with neighbors.
- Clear fire hydrants for quick access by the Fire Department. If a fire hydrant is located on any part of your curb line area, it is the responsibility of the homeowner or resident to clear it as soon as possible after the snow stops. A buried Fire Hydrant can cause a delay of getting water on to the fire quickly- --fire doubles in size every 30 seconds.

## **Floods**

The Borough of River Edge has streams, brooks and the Hackensack River throughout the community. Flooding is the most serious hazard for the Bergen County area. Many do not realize that flooding can occur anywhere and quickly.

### Factors Associated with Flooding

Streams and brooks through River Edge create a natural water system. Unfortunately, these locations place us in or near floodplains, which are land areas where bodies of water will spill over when it rains heavily.

### Suburban Flooding

Developed areas like River Edge cannot absorb as much rainfall as a natural area. Water runoff is faster and there is much more of it, creating very dangerous conditions. Normal drainage systems can be overwhelmed, causing flooding in areas outside of the flood plains.

**75% of flood fatalities are automobile related. NEVER drive around a barricade or through flood waters. Two feet of water will carry away most cars and SUVs. Just 6 inches of moving water can knock you down.**

### **Before a Flood**

To prepare for a flood, you should:

- Avoid building in a floodplain unless you elevate and reinforce your home.
- Elevate the furnace, water heater, and electric panel if susceptible to flooding.
- Install “check valves” in basement areas to prevent water from backing up into the drains of your home if sewer lines are overwhelmed with high volumes of rain or melting snow.
- Construct barriers to stop floodwater from entering the building.

### **During a Flood**

If a flood is likely in your area, you should:

- Listen to the radio or television for information. Be aware of the high and low timetable – available on the Weather Channel or search.
- Be aware that flash flooding can occur, if there is any possibility of a flash flood, be prepared to move immediately to higher ground. Do not wait for instructions to move.
- Be aware of streams, drainage channels, and other areas known to flood suddenly. Flash floods can occur in these areas with or without such typical warnings as rain clouds or heavy rain.

If you must prepare to evacuate, you should do the following:



- Secure your home. If you have time, secure outdoor furniture. → Move essential items to an upper floor.
- Turn off utilities at the main switches or valves. Disconnect electrical appliances.
- Do not touch electrical equipment if you are wet or standing in water.

If you must leave home, remember these evacuation tips:

- Do not walk through moving water. Six inches of moving water can make you fall.
- If you must walk in water, walk where the water is not moving rapidly.
- Use a stick to check the firmness of the ground in front of you.
- Watch for open manhole covers and curbside storm drains.
- If you can, wear boots or solid footwear.
- Do not drive into flooded areas. Follow all signs and do not drive into barricaded areas. If floodwater rises around your car, abandon the car and move to higher ground if you can do so safely. You and the vehicle can be quickly swept away.

After a Flood The following are guidelines for the period following a flood:

- Listen for news reports to learn whether the community's water supply is safe to drink.
- Avoid floodwaters; water may be contaminated by oil, gasoline, or raw sewage. Water may also be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines.
- Avoid moving water.
- Be aware of areas where floodwaters have receded. Roads may have weakened and could collapse under the weight of a car. →

Stay away from downed power lines and report them to the power company.

- Return home only when authorities indicate it is safe. – Stay out of any building if it is surrounded by floodwaters.
- Use extreme caution when entering buildings; there may be hidden damage, particularly in foundations.
- Damaged sewer systems are serious health hazards.
- Clean and disinfect everything that got wet. Mud left from floodwater can contain sewage and chemicals.

## **Hurricanes and Tropical Storms**

River Edge has experienced multiple tropical storms and hurricanes; we are vulnerable to the effects of a hurricane or tropical storm traveling inland.

### **Before a Hurricane**

To prepare for a hurricane you should take the following measures:

- Know your surroundings.
- Make plans to secure your property:
- Cover all your home's windows. Permanent storm shutters offer the best protection for windows. A second option is to board up windows with 1/2" marine plywood, cut to fit and ready to install. Tape does not prevent windows from breaking.
- Be sure trees and shrubs around your home are well trimmed so they are more wind resistant.
- Clear loose and clogged rain gutters and downspouts. o Reinforce your garage doors; if wind enters a garage, it can cause dangerous and expensive structural damage.
- Plan to bring in all outdoor furniture, decorations, garbage cans and anything else that is not tied down.

- Install a generator for emergencies.
- Consider building a safe room.

Hurricanes cause heavy rains that can cause extensive flood damage in coastal and inland areas. Everyone is at risk and should consider flood insurance protection. To learn more about your flooding risk and how to protect yourself and your business, visit the Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration at [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov) or call 1-800-427-2419.

### **During a Hurricane**

If a hurricane is likely in your area, you should:

- Listen to the radio or TV for information.
- Turn off utilities if instructed to do so. Otherwise, turn the refrigerator thermostat to its coldest setting and keep its doors closed. This will extend the time food can be stored without power and still be safe for consumption.
- Turn off propane tanks.
- Avoid using the phone, except for emergencies.
- Ensure a supply of water for sanitary purposes such as cleaning and flushing toilets. Fill the bathtub and other larger containers with water.
- Find out how to keep food safe during and after emergencies. Have several Styrofoam ice chests filled with ice prior to the start of the storm. Store in the coolest area possible.

You should evacuate under the following conditions:

- If you are notified to prepare to evacuate, be sure you know the location of the closest shelter in River Edge. If you do not have time to evacuate, you should follow these guidelines:
- Stay away from windows and glass doors.

- Close all interior doors – secure and brace external doors. o Keep curtains and blinds closed. Do not be fooled if there is a lull; it could be the eye of the storm – winds will pick up again.
- Take refuge in a small interior room, or hallway on the lowest level.
- Lie on the floor under a table or another sturdy object. After a Hurricane – Listen to the radio or TV for the latest updates.
- Purchase a batter operated AM radio – Stay alert for extended rainfall and subsequent flooding even after the hurricane or tropical storm has ended. – If you evacuated, return home only when officials say it is safe.

### **After a Hurricane**

- Listen to the radio or TV for the latest updates.
- Purchase a batter operated AM radio.
- Stay alert for extended rainfall and subsequent flooding even after the hurricane or tropical storm has ended.
- If you evacuated, return home only when officials say it is safe.
- Drive only if necessary and avoid flooded roads and washed-out bridges. Stay off the streets, if you must go out watch for fallen objects, downed electrical wires, and weakened walls, bridges, roads and sidewalks.
- Keep away from loose or dangling power lines and report them immediately to the power company.
- Walk carefully around the outside of your home and check for loose power lines, gas leaks and structural damage before entering.
- Stay out of any building if you smell gas. If floodwaters remain around or in a building or your home or if it was damaged by fire, only the authorities can declare it safe.

- Inspect your home for damage. Take pictures of damage, both building and its contents, for insurance purposes. If you have any doubts about safety, have your residence inspected by a qualified building inspector or structural engineer before entering.
- Use battery-powered flashlights in the dark. Do not use candles. Note: the flashlight should be turned on outside before entering – the battery may produce a spark that could ignite leaking gas, if present.
- Watch your pets closely and keep them under your direct control. Watch out for stray animals. Use a stick to poke through debris.
- Avoid drinking or preparing food with tap water until you are sure it is not contaminated.
- Check refrigerated food for spoilage. If in doubt, throw it out.
- Wear protective clothing and be cautious when cleaning up to avoid injury.
- Use the telephone only for emergency calls.
- NEVER use a generator inside homes, garages, crawlspaces, sheds or similar areas, even when using fans or opening doors and windows for ventilation. Deadly levels of carbon monoxide can quickly build up in these areas and can linger for hours, even after the generator has been shut off.

## High Wind and Tornadoes

Tornadoes are some of nature's most violent storms. Spawned from powerful thunderstorms, tornadoes can cause fatalities and devastate a neighborhood in seconds. A tornado appears as a rotating, funnel-shaped cloud that extends from a thunderstorm to the ground with whirling winds that can reach 300 miles per hour. Damage paths can be in excess of one mile wide and 50 miles long.

Some tornadoes are clearly visible, while rain or nearby low-hanging clouds obscure others. Occasionally, tornadoes develop so rapidly that little, if any, advance warning is possible.

Before a tornado hits, the wind may die down and the air may become very still. A cloud of debris can mark the location of a tornado even if a funnel is not visible. Tornadoes generally occur near the trailing edge of a thunderstorm. It is not uncommon to see clear, sunlit skies behind a tornado.

### Before a Tornado

Be alerted to changing weather conditions.

- Listen to radio or TV newscasts for the latest information.
- Look for approaching storms. Look for the following danger signs:
- Dark, often greenish sky
- Large hail
- A large, dark low-lying cloud (particularly if rotating)
- Loud roar, like a freight train
- If you see approaching storms or any of the danger signs, be prepared to take shelter immediately.

### **What is the difference between a Tornado Watch and a Tornado Warning?**

If you are under a tornado warning, seek shelter immediately!

Understand the difference between a tornado watch and warning. A tornado warning means a tornado has been spotted or indicated on radar and is occurring or imminent in your area.

A tornado watch means that weather conditions are favorable for a tornado to form.

## **Thunder and Lightning**

In the United States, an average of 300 people is injured and 80 people are killed each year by lightning. Although many lightning victims survive, people struck by lightning often report a variety of long-term, debilitating symptoms. Other associated dangers of thunderstorms include tornadoes, strong winds, hail, and flash flooding.

River Edge has installed a Lightning Detection System at our fields and parks throughout the town. If an audible signal and/or beacon is activated at one of these facilities, immediately seek shelter until the “all clear” signal is broadcast. Residents can register to receive lightning detection alerts by email or text message by signing up for e-notices and checking the “Lightning Detection Alert” box.

### **Lightning Safety Tips for Inside the Home**

- Avoid contact with corded phones.
- Avoid contact with electrical equipment or cords. If you plan to unplug any electronic equipment, do so well before the storm arrives.
- Avoid contact with plumbing. Do not wash your hands, do not take a shower, do not wash dishes, and do not do laundry. – Stay away from windows and doors and stay off porches.
- Do not lie on concrete floors or lean against concrete walls.

### **If a Thunderstorm is likely in Your Area**

- Postpone outdoor activities.
- Get inside a home, building or hard top automobile (not a convertible). Although you may be injured if lightning strikes your car, you are much safer inside a vehicle than outside.

- Remember, rubber-soles shoes and rubber tires do not provide protection from lightning. However, the steel frame of a hard-topped vehicle provides increased protection if you are not touching metal.
- Secure outdoor objects that could blow away or cause damage.

Use a corded telephone only for emergencies. Cordless and cellular telephones are safe to use.

- Unplug appliances and other electrical items such as computers and turn off air conditioning. Power surges from lightning can cause serious damage.

Stay away from:

- Natural lightning rods such as a tall, isolated tree in an open area.
- Open fields, lakes or rivers used for boating.
- Isolated sheds or other small structures in open areas.
- Anything metal – tractors, farm equipment, motorcycles, golf carts, golf clubs, and bicycles.

### **Excessive Heat**

Heat kills by pushing the human body beyond its limits. In extreme heat and high humidity, evaporation is slowed, and the body must work extra hard to maintain a normal temperature.

Most heat disorders occur because the victim has been overexposed to heat or has over-exercise for his or her age and physical condition. Older adults, young children and those who are sick or overweight are more likely to succumb to extreme heat.

Conditions that can induce heat-related illnesses include stagnant atmospheric conditions and poor air quality. Consequently, people living in urban areas may be at greater risk from the effects of a



prolonged heat wave than those living in rural areas. Also asphalt and concrete store heat longer and gradually release heat at night, which can produce higher evening temperatures.

### Take Protective Measures before Extreme Heat

To prepare before extreme heat, you should:

- Install window air conditioning snugly, insulate if necessary. Check ducts.
- Install temporary window reflectors (for use between windows and drapes), such as aluminum foil-covered cardboard, to reflect heat back outside.
- Weather-strip doors and sills to keep cool air in.
- Cover windows that receive morning or afternoon sun with drapes, shades, awnings, or louvers. (Outdoor awnings or louvers can reduce the heat that enters a home by up to 80 percent.)
- Keep storm windows up all year.

### **During a Heat Emergency**

The following are guidelines for what you should do if the weather is extremely hot:

- Stay indoors as much as possible and limit exposure to the sun.
- Stay on the lowest floor, out of the sunshine, if air conditioning is not available.
- Consider spending the warmest part of the day in public buildings such as libraries, movie theaters, shopping malls, and other community facilities. Circulating air can cool the body by increasing the perspiration rate of evaporation.
- Eat well-balanced light, and regular meals. Avoid using salt tablets unless directed to do so by a physician.

- Drink plenty of water. Persons who have epilepsy or heart, kidney or liver disease are on fluid-restricted diets; or have a problem with fluid retention should consult a doctor before increasing liquid intake.
- Limit intake of alcoholic beverages.
- Dress in loose-fitting lightweight and light-colored clothes that cover as much skin as possible.
- Protect your face and head by wearing a wide-brimmed hat.
- Check on family, friends and neighbors who do not have air conditioning and who spend much of their time alone.
- **Never leave children or pets alone in closed vehicles.**
- Avoid strenuous work during the warmest part of the day. Use a buddy system when working in extreme heat and take frequent breaks.

Emergency Generators for oxygen, mobility devices or other medical needs are not available in large numbers through the River Edge Emergency Services. It is strongly recommended that anyone with the need for a generator for medical requirements have one of their own and either have family or neighbors able to assist in the fueling and refueling of it. During emergencies fuel is often difficult to get --- if your generator is fueled with gasoline make sure you have a good supply, and it is safely stored away from the house.

The Special Needs Registry Form

The completed form can be mailed to

Special Needs Registry Coordinator  
River Edge Office of Emergency Management  
705 Kinderkamack Road  
River Edge, New Jersey 07661

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The Borough of River Edge has established a Residential Special Needs Registry for residents who may require special assistance during an emergency. This program and all information provided below are voluntary – all information will be kept in confidence and will only be used by public safety personnel for emergency planning and response operations.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Floor/Apartment: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe your special need or assistance that may be required during an emergency (ie. Oxygen, medical devise, mobility challenge):

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Is this need/assistance expected to be: \_\_\_ permanent \_\_\_ temporary,  
until: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you require electricity to operate a medical device? \_\_\_ yes \_\_\_no

In case of an emergency,

please contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Work: \_\_\_\_\_

In cause of an emergency does anyone (family member, neighbor, friend) have a key to your residence? \_\_\_ no \_\_\_ yes, as follows:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Floor/Apartment: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_