

# Ready or Not: Finances and Insurance

UC ANR emergency information and resources—before, during, and after

**MARISA NEELON**, UC Cooperative Extension (UCCE) Nutrition, Family, and Consumer Sciences Advisor in Contra Costa County;

**MARY L. BLACKBURN**, UCCE Nutrition, Family, and Consumer Sciences Advisor in Alameda County;

**HAWAU BOJUWON**, UCCE Nutrition, Family, and Consumer Sciences Advisor in Kern, Inyo, and Mono counties;

**KATIE (CATHRYN) JOHNSON**, UCCE Nutrition, Family, and Consumer Sciences Advisor in the Central Sierra—El Dorado, Amador, Calaveras, and Tuolumne counties;

**YU MENG**, UCCE Youth, Family, and Community Advisor in Imperial County;

**DIANE L. METZ**, Emeritus UCCE Nutrition, Family, and Consumer Sciences Advisor in Solano and Yolo counties



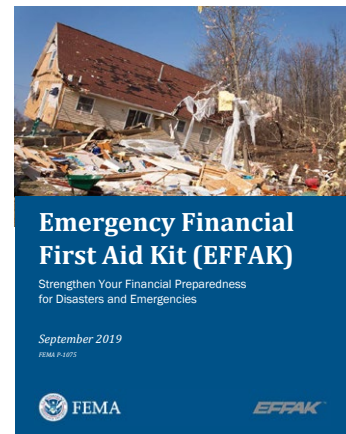
## Get ready, be ready

When natural disasters, economic emergencies, or public health emergencies strike, you may have little time to prepare and act. This issue of *Ready or Not* provides eight steps to financial preparedness.

### **Step 1.** **Keep personal, financial, and insurance files current**

FEMA's Emergency Financial First Aid Kit (fig. 1), [ready.goefault/files/2020-03/ready\\_emergency-financial-first-aid-toolkit.pdf](https://ready.goefault/files/2020-03/ready_emergency-financial-first-aid-toolkit.pdf), provides worksheets to help you gather and record your personal, financial, and insurance information in one document. Save an electronic copy of the worksheets that is backed up to a source outside the home. Store paper copies in a fire-proof and waterproof box at home or in a safe deposit box, or give a paper copy to a trusted person.

An ADA PDF/UA WCAG 2.0 AA compliant version of this publication will be published in 2024. For more information contact: [anrcatalog@ucanr.edu](mailto:anrcatalog@ucanr.edu)



**Figure 1.** The Federal Emergency Management Agency produces the Emergency Financial First Aid Kit to help people in their financial preparations for disasters and other emergencies.

### **Step 2.** **Keep important items in your wallet**

Carry a form of identification, such as your driver's license; a debit card or credit card; and a medical insurance card.

**Step 3.****Protect yourself from identity theft**

Safeguard your social security number, account numbers, and passwords. Shred any documents containing personally identifying information when they are no longer needed. If you suspect your information has been compromised, the federal government's identity theft website, [identitytheft.gov](https://www.identitytheft.gov), can help you report the theft, create a recovery plan, and take action.

**Step 4.****Inventory your valuable property**

Document each item in your house, including the garage and yard if your home includes those, with photos or videos—and note a description, date purchased, original cost, model, and serial number for all the items. Store the inventory electronically or print a paper copy and update it as needed.

**Did you know?**

“Strong” passwords are often long, random, and hard to remember, and you shouldn't use the same password twice. Get creative when creating passwords (e.g. Get\_Cre@t1ve) and store them by using a secure online service or in a secure location at home.

Password:

**Step 5****Be prepared to go at any time**

Keep a small amount of cash in a secure place in case you are unable to access your bank or ATM. Keep your car's fuel tank full in the event you need to evacuate.

**Step 6.****Maintain an emergency savings account**

You may need to cover 3 to 6 months of expenses during and after a disaster, economic emergency, or public health emergency. Creating a household budget assists in determining a savings plan. A variety of online tools are available to help in creating budgets and savings plans, including those at [americasaves.org](https://americasaves.org) and [mymoney.gov](https://mymoney.gov).

**Did you know?**

Basic homeowner's insurance does not cover damage from flooding or earthquakes. You will need to purchase additional coverage.

**Step 7.****Make sure you are adequately insured**

Check your home or renter's, medical, auto, life, disability, and long-term care insurance policies and record account numbers and contact information to keep in a secure place with other important documents. If you are not insured, make plans to obtain basic coverage for your property and health.

**Step 8.****File property insurance claims promptly**

Even if you are not sure if the claim will be covered, take photos or videos of the damaged property before you begin any cleanup or repairs. Obtain two to three written estimates from contractors and ask for references. Some insurance companies will provide you with a list of preferred contractors.



### Did you know?

You can check the status of a contractor license with your state's licensing board for contractors and contact the Better Business Bureau ([bbb.org/](https://bbb.org/)) for membership and company ratings.

### For more information

Your county UC Cooperative Extension office may be able to advise you on preparing for emergency situations. Remember that being prepared will speed up the recovery process.

**Ready.gov, Emergency Financial First Aid Kit:**

[fema.gov/emergency-financial-first-aid-kit](https://fema.gov/emergency-financial-first-aid-kit)

**Be Prepared for a Financial Emergency fact sheet:**

[ready.gov/sites/default/files/2020-03/fema\\_be-prepared-financial-emergency.pdf](https://ready.gov/sites/default/files/2020-03/fema_be-prepared-financial-emergency.pdf)

**IdentityTheft.gov:** [identitytheft.gov/](https://identitytheft.gov/)

**America Saves:** [americasaves.org/](https://americasaves.org/)

**MyMoney.gov:** [mymoney.gov/](https://mymoney.gov/)

**Better Business Bureau:** [bbb.org/](https://bbb.org/)

**Do 1 Thing, Small steps towards being prepared for an emergency:** [do1thing.com/individuals](https://do1thing.com/individuals)

### About this publication

The Ready or Not Emergency Preparedness Newsletter Series is a resource for individuals and families. Each newsletter addresses a specific topic on how to prepare for a disaster. The series include the following issues: 1: Planning for an Emergency; 2: Safety Considerations; 3: Food and Water; 4: Emergency Considerations for Children and Families; 5: Finances and Insurance; and 6: Time to Clean Up.

For more information about this publication, visit [ucanr.edu/sites/CNH](https://ucanr.edu/sites/CNH).

To order or obtain UC ANR publications and other products, visit the UC ANR online catalog at [anrpublications.org](https://anrpublications.org). Direct inquiries to

UC Agriculture and Natural Resources  
Publishing  
2801 Second Street  
Davis, CA 95618

E-mail: [anrcatalog@ucanr.edu](mailto:anrcatalog@ucanr.edu)

©2024 The Regents of the University of California. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>, or send a letter to Creative Commons, PO Box 1866, Mountain View, CA 94042, USA.

Publication 8722

ISBN-13: 978-1-62711-212-3

Photo credits: p. 1—ChayTee, istockphoto.com; p. 2 (bottom)—Roberto Jimenez, istockphoto.com.

The University of California, Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR) prohibits discrimination against or harassment of any person in any of its programs or activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender, gender expression, gender identity, pregnancy (which includes pregnancy, childbirth, and medical conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth), physical or mental disability, medical condition (cancer-related or genetic characteristics), genetic information (including family medical history), ancestry, marital status, age, sexual orientation, citizenship, status as a protected veteran or service in the uniformed services (as defined by the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 [USERRA]), as well as state military and naval service.

UC ANR policy prohibits retaliation against any employee or person in any of its programs or activities for bringing a complaint of discrimination or harassment. UC ANR policy also prohibits retaliation against a person who assists someone with a complaint of discrimination or harassment, or participates in any manner in an investigation or resolution of a complaint of discrimination or harassment. Retaliation includes threats, intimidation, reprisals, and/or adverse actions related to any of its programs or activities.

UC ANR is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment and/or participation in any of its programs or activities without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age or protected veteran status.

University policy is intended to be consistent with the provisions of applicable State and Federal laws.

Inquiries regarding the University's equal employment opportunity policies may be directed to: Affirmative Action Compliance and Title IX Officer, University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources, 2801 Second Street, Davis, CA 95618, (530) 750-1343. Email: [titleixdiscrimination@ucanr.edu](mailto:titleixdiscrimination@ucanr.edu). Website: [https://ucanr.edu/sites/anrstaff/Diversity/Affirmative\\_Action/](https://ucanr.edu/sites/anrstaff/Diversity/Affirmative_Action/).

An electronic copy of this publication can be found at the UC ANR catalog website, [anrpublications.org](https://anrpublications.org).



This publication has been anonymously peer reviewed for technical accuracy by University of California scientists and other qualified professionals. This review process was managed by UC ANR Associate Editor for 4-H Youth Development Dorina M. Espinoza.

web-04/24-LC/SO