

# BE READY!

An Emergency Guide for DC Kids



Government of the District of Columbia  
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An Emergency Guide for DC Kids



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## MEET THE COMMANDER READY TEAM

Meet Reggie, Rachel, and their dog, Rodney. They are the Commander Ready Team. They are always prepared for the unexpected, and their job is to teach kids like you how to prepare for emergencies.

You can join the team—this guide will show you how. Also, don't forget to look for the Commander Ready Team in your school.

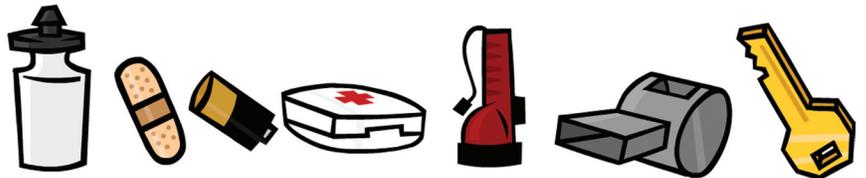


Remember, you can **Be Ready!** for anything!

## BE READY!

Reggie, Rachel, and Rodney are ready for any emergency because they do three things:

1. Make a Plan.
2. Make a **Be Ready!** Kit.
3. Stay Alert.



You can **Be Ready!** too. Keep reading, and the Commander Ready team will show you how.

### 1. Make a Plan

The Commander Ready Team always has a “just-in-case plan” for emergencies. To make your own plan, sit down with your family and talk about these things:

- *What you should do.* Discuss the different types of emergencies and how you should respond to each.
- *Who you should call if you get lost or separated from your family.* Choose two people—one person who lives in DC, and one person who lives outside the District. Memorize the phone numbers of both people. Then write them down on the **Be Ready!** Pocket Cards in the back of this guide.
- *Where you should meet in your neighborhood.* Choose a safe spot near your home, like a neighbor's house.
- *Where you should meet outside your neighborhood.* In case you can't return home right away after an emergency, choose a friend or relative's house outside your neighborhood.





You can also **Be Ready!** by doing these things right now:

- Learn how to dial 911 and make long-distance calls.
- Program emergency numbers into all phones. Ask your parents for help.
- Map out exit routes from your neighborhood. (Check out page 8.)

## 2. Make a **Be Ready!** Kit

In an emergency, you might have to leave your home for a while—or you might have to stay in your home until the emergency is over. Either way, it's smart to put together a **Be Ready!** Kit so you have everything you need.

You can help your family make the kit. Help them put the following items in a backpack, duffle bag, or suitcase with wheels. Keep it in a safe place where you can find it easily.



Have a family scavenger hunt to find items for your **Be Ready!** Kit. Break up into two teams and see how many items each team can find around your house!

- At least a three-day supply of water (one gallon per person per day). Store in sealed, unbreakable containers.
- A three-to five-day supply of non-perishable canned food, and a non-electric can opener
- Flashlight
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio
- Extra batteries
- Wrench and/or pliers to turn off utilities
- Whistle to signal for help
- First aid kit, medications, and prescriptions
- Extra set of eyeglasses, or contact lenses and solution
- Rain gear, sturdy shoes, and a change of clothing
- Blankets, bedding, and/or sleeping bags
- Extra set of house keys
- Local maps
- Cell phone charger
- A copy of this guide
- Protective dust masks (called N95 masks, which are available at hardware stores)
- Plastic sheeting, duct tape, and scissors to shelter in place
- Tools: screwdrivers, waterproof matches, a fire extinguisher, flares, plastic storage containers, needle and thread, pen and paper, a compass, garbage bags, moist towelettes, and regular household bleach





**Don't forget to make an emergency kit for your pet.** Include an ID collar and rabies tag, carrier and leash, medications, newspapers and plastic trash bags, veterinary records, and at least a two-day supply of food and water.



### 3. Stay Alert

The Commander Ready Team stays aware of their surroundings wherever they go. Here's what they do—you can do these things too!

- *Follow your instincts.* If something doesn't feel right, or if you feel worried or uncomfortable, leave the area right away.
- *Know where to go.* When you're in a building, look around and remember where the exit signs are located.
- *Speak up.* Report strange behavior and suspicious packages to a trusted adult.



**You can also make your own kit.** Pack it with a blanket and a few toys, books, or other fun things that make you feel like you're at home!

## WHAT WOULD REGGIE, RACHEL, AND RODNEY DO?

The Commander Ready Team has a "just-in-case plan" for all sorts of different emergencies.

### Staying Put—Shelter in Place

In some emergencies, it isn't safe to be outside. If this happens, the best thing to do is "shelter in place". This means staying inside a safe building until the emergency is over.

If you are asked to shelter in place:

- *Go to a room with as few doors and windows as possible.*
- *Look for official information on TV, radio, or the Internet.*
- *Use your **Be Ready!** Kit.*



## Moving Out—Evacuation

In some emergencies, you may be told to leave your home, school, or neighborhood. The Commander Ready Team calls this evacuating.

You might walk to another neighborhood during an evacuation.

- *Follow directions.* Listen to emergency officials or other trusted adults.
- *Wear comfortable shoes and clothing.*
- *Take your **Be Ready!** Kit with you.*



You might also be evacuated by car or other vehicle. There are many streets that will lead you out of the city, and all of them are marked with special evacuation signs. If possible, take your **Be Ready!** Kit with you.



**During an emergency, always listen to emergency officials to know what you should do. You can also get information in these ways:**

- Visit <http://alert.dc.gov>, the official DC emergency website.
- Listen to these radio stations:
  - WTOP 103.5 FM
  - WMAL 630 AM
  - WPRS 104.1 FM
  - WJZW 105.9 FM
  - WKYS 93.9 FM
  - WPGC 95.5 FM
- Check your phone's voicemail for Emergency Voice Alerts, which are official voice messages telling you what to do.
- Look for DC's Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT). They are volunteers who will be wearing green hats and vests.
- Get information from TV and radio news broadcasts, news websites, or newspapers.



## Thunderstorms: If Thunder Roars, Go Indoors

Thunderstorms can produce heavy winds and lightning. If you hear thunder:

- *Get inside a building or car.*
- *Never stand under trees.*
- *Get out of the water.* Stay away from pools and beaches.
- *Get down.* If you can't find shelter, squat down. Put your hands on your knees and your head between them.
- *If you're inside, keep away from windows and doors.*

## Tornadoes: Seek Shelter Immediately

Tornadoes are dangerous because they can lift and move heavy objects. If you hear a tornado warning or see a tornado forming:

- *Go inside a building right away.*
- *Get out of your car.* Lie face down in a low area (like a ditch) and cover your head with your hands.
- *Go to the basement or rooms near the center of your house or apartment building.*
- *Stay away from doors and windows.*

## Flash Flooding: Stay High and Dry

Flash Flooding can be very dangerous because of strong, swift currents.

- *Move to higher ground.*
- *Avoid moving water.* Never walk or drive through puddles or moving water.
- *Move to the highest room of your house.*



**A Severe Weather Watch** means that severe weather may develop and you should watch for further warnings. **A Severe Weather Warning** means a storm is coming —go inside right away!

## Winter Storms: Bundle Up

Winter Storms can include heavy snow, ice, freezing temperatures, and dangerous wind chills.

- *Stay indoors during the storm.*
- *Dress warmly.* Even after the storm is over, wear a hat, mittens, layers of clothing, and waterproof jackets.
- *Go inside often to warm up.*
- *Be aware.* If you start to shiver, or if your nose, fingers, toes, or ears start to feel numb or turn pale, go inside right away and tell an adult.

## Heat Waves: Stay Cool

It can get really hot during the summer in DC! Follow these steps to stay cool:

- *Stay indoors.*
- *Turn on an air conditioner or fan.*
- *Drink plenty of water.*
- *Use sunblock.*



## Fire: Get Out Fast!

If there's a fire in your house, it's important to get out fast. Follow your escape plan and never stop to bring anything with you.

- *Stay low to the floor.* The safest air is down low.
- *Touch doors before opening them.* A hot door means there may be fire on the other side. Try to get out another way.
- *Meet your family at your safe place and call 911.*
- *Stay outside.* Don't go back for anything!

**Stop, Drop, and Roll:** If your clothes catch on fire, stop, drop to the ground, and roll over and over to smother the flames.



### Did you know that you can help make your home safer from fire?

- *Never touch matches, lighters, or candles.*
- *Never put anything over a lamp, like clothes or a blanket.*
- *Don't touch radiators or heaters.*
- *Don't cook alone or without asking an adult.*
- *Never touch electrical cords or stick anything into an electrical socket.*
- *Remind your parents to put smoke alarms in your home, especially outside bedrooms. Remind them to replace the batteries twice a year.*
- *Make a fire escape plan with your parents:*
  - *Make sure everyone knows two ways to get out of each room in your house.*
  - *Pick a safe place outside the home to meet your family after you get out.*



## Power Outages

- *Use a flashlight.* Never use candles—they are a fire hazard.
- *Turn off and unplug appliances and electric equipment.* This includes computers, air conditioners, and TVs.
- *Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible.*



## Diseases and Colds

To help keep yourself healthy:

- *Wash your hands regularly.*
- *Don't share food, drinks, or utensils.*
- *Cover your nose and mouth while sneezing and coughing.*

### Check Out these Websites!

More **Be Ready!** Info: <http://ready.gov/kids>

Fire Safety Info: <http://usfa.dhs.gov/kids>

Staying Safe Info: <http://mcgruff.org>







# Emergency Information Form

Sit down with your family and fill out the following forms. Post the Emergency Information Form on your refrigerator or by a telephone. Carry your **Be Ready!** Pocket Card with you in your backpack or wallet.

## Emergency Information Form

### Important names and telephone numbers:

Our Doctor: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Our Pharmacy: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Our Family's Out-of-Town Contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Our Neighborhood Meeting Place: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Our Out-of-the-Neighborhood Meeting Place: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_



### Fill out the following for each family member:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Important Medical Information: \_\_\_\_\_  
Emergency Telephone (cell): \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Important Medical Information: \_\_\_\_\_  
Emergency Telephone (cell): \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Important Medical Information: \_\_\_\_\_  
Emergency Telephone (cell): \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Important Medical Information: \_\_\_\_\_  
Emergency Telephone (cell): \_\_\_\_\_



### Be Ready! Pocket Cards



My Out-of-Town Contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Our Neighborhood Meeting Place: \_\_\_\_\_  
Out-of-Neighborhood Meeting Place: \_\_\_\_\_

My Parents: \_\_\_\_\_  
Their Cell Phones: \_\_\_\_\_



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My Out-of-Town Contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Our Neighborhood Meeting Place: \_\_\_\_\_  
Out-of-Neighborhood Meeting Place: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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Out-of-Neighborhood Meeting Place: \_\_\_\_\_

My Parents: \_\_\_\_\_  
Their Cell Phones: \_\_\_\_\_





### Be Ready! Activity

Circle all the objects pictured here that make Reggie, Rachel, and Rodney prepared for an emergency. The first object—a flashlight—is circled for you! (Check out the answers at the bottom of the page.)



### BE READY! CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that

\_\_\_\_\_

is hereby an official member of  
THE COMMANDER READY TEAM!

Reggie, Rachel, and Rodney congratulate you on reading this guide and completing the activities. Now you will be prepared for all sorts of emergencies. Remember, always **Be Ready!**



Reggie Rachel 



Answers: flashlight, can of food, dog collar, first aid kit, whistle, water bottle, batteries, key, band aid, radio, dog food and medicine, smoke detector.

