

# ARE YOU FARM AND RANCH READY?

## *Be prepared to meet and defeat disaster*

By Ron Cunningham

Even with all of the modern advantages we have today, many of us may still be at much higher risk from disasters.

Farmers and ranchers live 5, 10, or 20 or more miles from emergency responders who can help, hence putting them and their families at a much higher risk to disasters than city dwellers.

What happens if a winter blizzard hits?

What happens in the event of wild fires, forest fires, structure

fires, floods, or losing electricity for days?

Are you ready for the next disaster?

Better yet, are you *prepared* for the next disaster?

Put together emergency kits for homes and vehicles: non-perishable food, bottled water or juice, jerky, nuts, and candy bars can be life-saving staples. Have a flashlight and extra batteries and extra warm, dry clothing in all kits for every family member. Extra coats, gloves, insulated coveralls,

insulated winter boots and caps could save lives.

Have and keep a good supply of medications to treat a broad range of injuries and for normal prescribed needs (see sidebar page 11 for suggested first aid kit contents). Your medications are extremely important for you and your family's health.

Have a home evacuation plan in case of fire and practice evacuation. Decide in advance where you will meet after an evacuation. Firewise Wyoming has a one-page

planning sheet at [www.firewisewyoming.com/EP\\_Chk1st.pdf](http://www.firewisewyoming.com/EP_Chk1st.pdf).

Cell phones are popular methods of keeping in touch and doing business. More importantly, a cell phone can help others find you if stranded or lost. Most new cell phones are GPS tracked, so use them! Call before you leave on a trip or to take care of ranch work to let someone know you are going so they will know when to expect your arrival. Develop a farm or ranch emergency plan. Decide who is in charge. If something happens

to that person, who is the next person to make decisions?

Keep vehicles well-maintained and in good repair. Good tires and chains can be extremely valuable. Don't forget good wipers pay dividends. Keep vehicles, tractors, and equipment full of gas and ready to use. Even owning a snowmobile or a 4-wheeler could save a life in a blizzard or flood when other vehicles cannot get to you.

Being prepared pays dividends during disasters. Collect your dividends by being prepared.

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