

FAMILY EMERGENCY PLAN

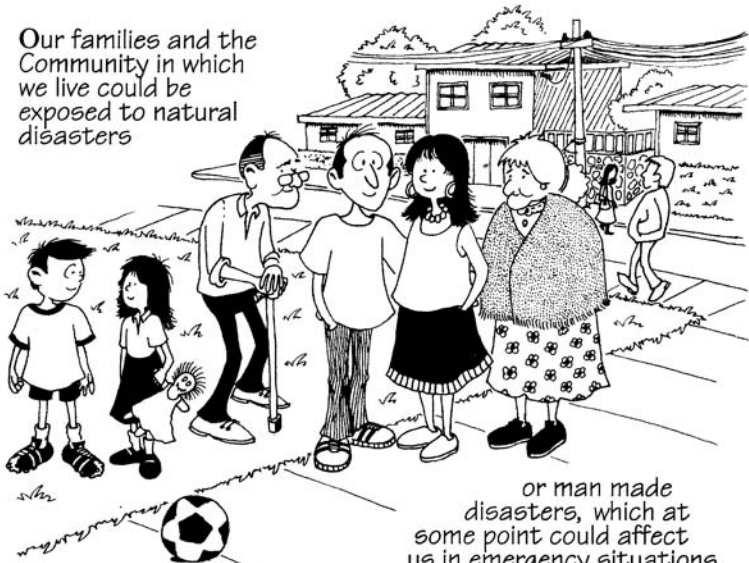


National Emergency Management Agency
Ministry of National Security



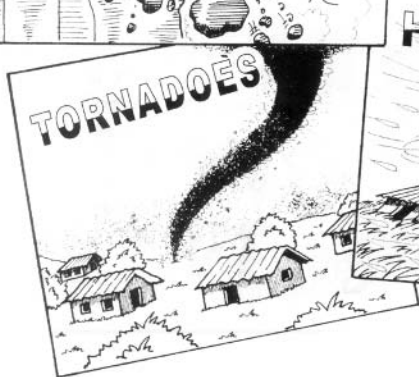
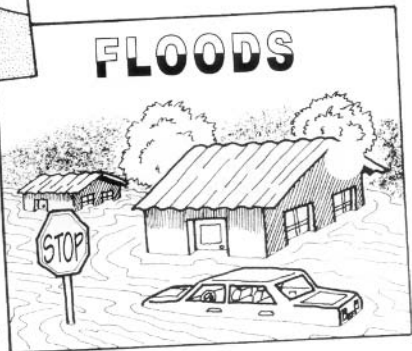
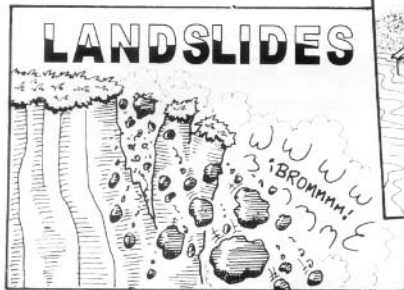
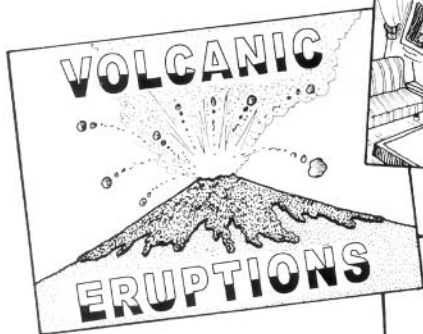
FAMILY EMERGENCY PLAN

Our families and the
Community in which
we live could be
exposed to natural
disasters

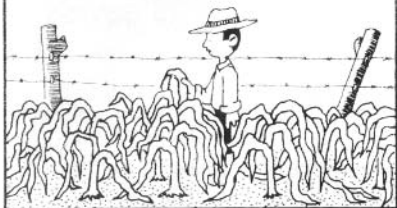


or man made
disasters, which at
some point could affect
us in emergency situations.

Natural Disasters
such as:



DROUGHT



Although phenomena such as drought, flooding and landslides are defined as "natural disasters" in some instances they could be the results of inadequate use of natural resources.

Man-made disasters such as:

**DEFORESTATION
OR FOREST FIRE**



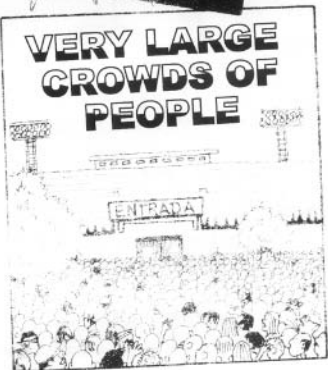
Explosions

i BOMMM!

FIRES



**VERY LARGE
CROWDS OF
PEOPLE**



It's important to note that our country is situated in a region exposed to various hazards.



In other words we are surrounded by potential danger.

NO!

There is no need to panic

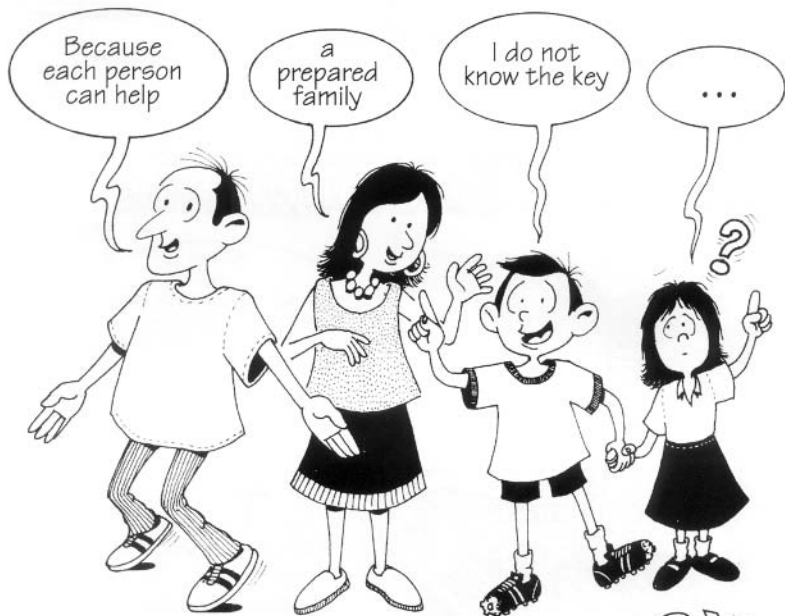
This should not prevent us from living normal and quiet lives.

On the contrary we should adopt ways and attitudes to change our normal living habits... This way we will be better prepared when an emergency occurs or better still avoid hazards or reduce their effects.

So what should we do?



The best starting point is to begin to organise ourselves in our own family...



So we achieve this with the participation of all family members

A FAMILY EMERGENCY PLAN

The following guide is offered to assist

STEPS TO DEVELOP A FAMILY EMERGENCY PLAN

1. FAMILIARIZE OURSELVES WITH OUR SURROUNDINGS



When we spend too much time in the same place, it becomes so familiar that there are details and things which we do not notice

The type of house living conditions and where the house is constructed are factors which determine the type of vulnerability and risk

for this reason it would be advisable to check the area and conditions in which we live, taking into account the following.

Type of housing

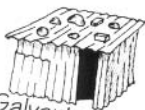


Let us determine the type and conditions of our house:

Type of construction and materials used.



Wood



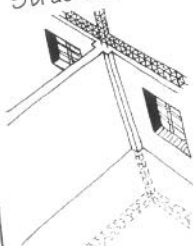
Galvanised Sheets

Concrete Blocks



CONDITION OF MAINTENANCE

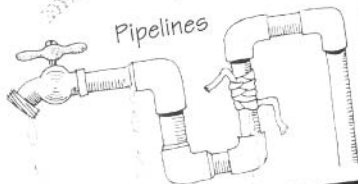
Structures



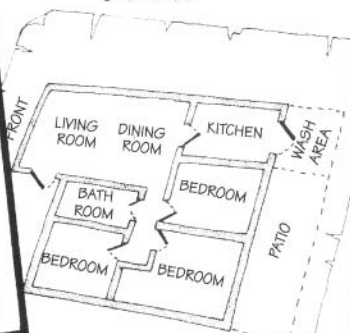
Electrical Installations



Pipelines



DISTRIBUTION OF SPACE



Where the furniture and household items are located (and other large household items)



Storage of dangerous substances and materials



(* The dangerous or harmful material should be stored in places where they will not be of danger to anyone.

Location of the house

We have taken into consideration where our house is situated in relation to hazards with potential danger such as:

- Rivers, Streams and Channels
- Factories
- Slopes, Hillsides
- Very big trees or trees in bad condition
- Building or construction sites in bad shape
- Electric cables
- Reclaimed land / Landfill
- Other dangers



Characteristics of our community



Are there emergency institutions (Police, Red Cross, Fire Department, Health Centres) and where are they located.?

Which are the safest places to be in case of emergency?

Which are the entry and exit routes in our community and alternatives we can use?

What type of organizations are there in the community to assist in disasters?

After checking our house and analyzing our community we will be able to identify:

The hazards that exist in our community

The ones to which we are exposed.

How prepared we are in case an emergency occurs



2. DEVELOP A PLAN OF ACTION

This could be a very interesting activity in which the whole family can participate since we have to know it well.

THE TASK IS TO DECIDE

What measures are we going to take in order to avoid the emergency and/ or its impact

And what are we going to do? How are we going to do it during and after the emergency?

You don't necessarily need to be a specialist to be prepared. All you need to be is informed and well organized.



It is
Better to
Prevent...

The plan should not only be for emergency situations but also to improve our living conditions and make our home a safer place.

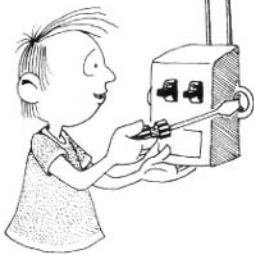
Reinforce Structures



Are there some repairs or changes needed to reduce the impact of an event.

If in doubt about the construction of your house consult an expert in construction. Never listen to those who are giving unsolicited advice.

Repair installations



Remove or fix accessories, etc..



And be prepared just in case...

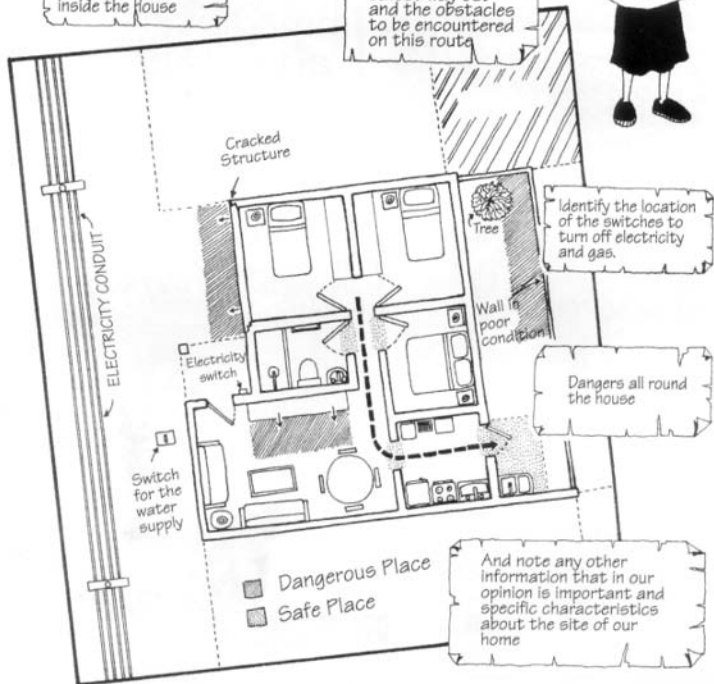
In order to know what to do in an emergency let us follow the following steps:

With the information gathered from our homes let's make a plan of the house and its immediate surroundings indicating the following:



The safest and most dangerous parts inside the house

The easiest and safest way out and the obstacles to be encountered on this route



Identify the location of the switches to turn off electricity and gas.



Make this plan visible with colour and different symbols that are easy to understand, for example the danger in red, safe place in yellow and arrows to show evacuation route

The first thing to do is ensure that all family members are safe...

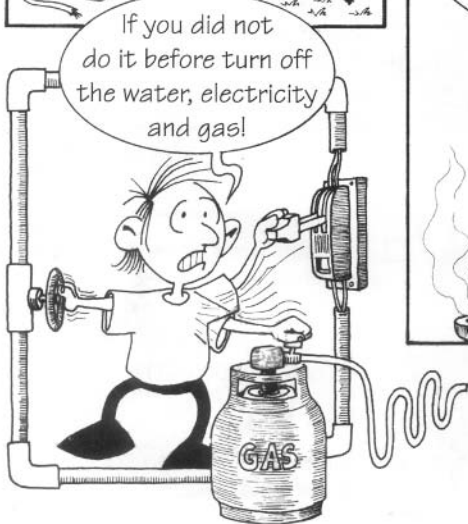
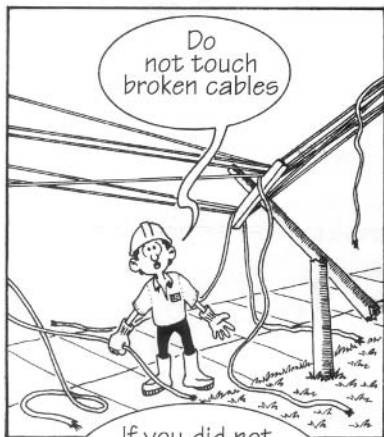
What to do immediately after the emergency?

Take into account that an emergency to some persons is unexpected and they react differently...

It is also important to help others to stay calm especially those who are most affected

ALSO

Depending on the type of Emergency



Contact the emergency committee in your community



3. OTHER VERY IMPORTANT MEASURES



It is clear that in the case of a fire you have to evacuate the house but in other types of emergencies it depends on a number of factors...

Taking into account the information about the house and its surrounding we can decide depending on the following factors.

- Possible area of protection in the house
- The dangers in the areas that surround the house
- Time needed to go to a safe place



If we decide that the safest thing to do is leave the house, we have to establish the following.

How to leave in a safe and orderly manner



Taking into account special needs of members of the family (babies, elderly or disabled)



Decide before hand where to meet, how to get in touch with each other if one of you is not at home when the emergency strikes.



Emergency Supplies



Ah!
and let us not forget that



These supplies should be checked and changed regularly

Directory Telephone numbers and addresses for emergencies



It is convenient to make and have handy a list with the following information



- Telephone and addresses of emergency services, fire, police, doctor, red cross, nurse.
- Telephone and addresses of public utilities (Water, Electricity etc.)
- Telephone and addresses of schools and workplaces as well as places where family members visit regularly.

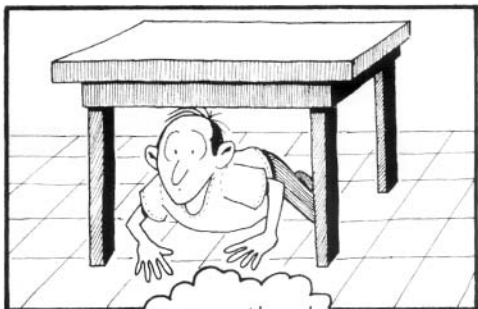
Responsibilities of family members

We have to decide clearly, who is in charge of what during an emergency taking into account that it could happen while we are at home or far away from it.



How are we going to behave during different types of Emergencies

We have to decide on a series of ideal behaviour and concrete actions imagining all the possible situations that might present themselves in different types of emergencies



or an earthquake



If there is a hurricane



If there is a land-slide

COMMON RESPONSES TO ANY TYPE OF DISASTER



The first recommendation and one of the most important is always to stay calm!

You must not let fear overcome you!

HELP

During an emergency, we must think clearly what we are going to do since fear does not allow you to reason...

Never run!

This causes panic and can also cause accidents during an emergency

You must act quickly without rushing!



Apply the security measures which were designed in the plan of action and try out in simulations with the family.

In other words...

Oh! and Mrs. Browne says that we should not spread false rumours or repeat unconfirmed information like our neighbour did, saying that an earthquake was coming and that it would swallow us all and better be sorry than...

**DO NOT
SPREAD
RUMORS!**



**Listen to the
radio and
do not use
the phone.**

When it's important the radio stations will provide the correct official information to the community.

Unless you are able to handle a real emergency

TESTING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PLAN

The plan must be written to ensure that each family member knows it. In order to see if it works we must test it

Image a certain situation and what could happen

For this let us do a simulation



When I say "now" let's pretend it is shaking



NOW



Paul went the wrong way out. He went the dangerous way

Danielle started to run instead of walking



After the exercise we must have an evaluation of what happened: How we acted compared with the plan and what came out ok and above all everything needs to be corrected, changed or adjusted.

Good, now that
we have our

FAMILY PLAN FOR EMERGENCIES

Discuss it
with the
neighbours

Let us
invite other
families to do
their own plan

Start a
community
emergency
organisation





Illustrations, Diagrams and Assembly

JORGE MORALES (*tenguei*)

Text

Training Department
National Emergency Commission

Editing

ROLANDO DURÁN VARGAS
GERARDO QUIRÓS CUADRA
DANIEL ROJAS CONEJO
LORENA ROMERO VARGAS

National Emergency Commission

P.O. Box 5258-1000- SanJose Costa Rica

Telephone: 220-2020

Fax: 220-2054 1st Edition 1992 2nd Edition 1994

English version produced by CDERA
funded by ECHO May 2000



National Emergency Commission



LINKING EFFORTS