

- ✓ Get a kit
- ✓ Make a plan
- ✓ Stay informed

Knowing what to do during an emergency is an important part of being prepared. Be informed about what kinds of threats could affect where you live. The Ready Virginia Web site, www.ReadyVirginia.gov, offers information about what emergencies can happen in Virginia and what to do if they happen.

Before, during and after a disaster, it is critical that you listen for the most local, up-to-date information from emergency officials. Through your local media, local, state and federal government partners will give you critical instructions, such as:

- Any orders to evacuate
- Details about evacuation routes
- Locations of evacuation shelters
- How to safely stay where you are
- Where to find assistance
- Weather warnings and watches

Make sure your battery-powered radio is working in case the electricity goes out, and have extra batteries on hand.

Get weather alerts and Emergency Alert System messages.

A National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration broadcasts weather watches and warnings from local National Weather Service offices 24 hours a day. In addition to weather alerts, the network also sends environmental and public safety alerts.

These broadcasts cannot be heard on a simple AM/FM radio receiver. There are, however, many options that range from handheld units to desktop consoles that can receive NWS messages. Receivers can be found at many retail outlets and offer different features, such as:

Tone alarm: A tone sent with a NWS message will activate a weather radio, even if the audio is turned off. This is especially useful for warnings which occur during the night when most people are asleep.

SAME technology: SAME, or Specific Alert Message Encoding, allows you to specify the particular area for which you wish to receive alerts. Since most NWS transmitters are broadcasting for a number of counties, SAME receivers will respond only to alerts issued for the area (or areas) you have selected. This minimizes the number of alarms for events that are outside your area.

Selectable alerting of events: While SAME allows you to specify a particular area of interest, some receivers allow you to turn off the alarm for certain events, such as coastal events if you live inland.

The NOAA broadcast network covers all major metropolitan areas and many smaller cities and towns. Go to www.weather.gov to learn more.

If you live within 10 miles of either the North Anna or the Surry Power Station, the Emergency Alert System will provide you with emergency information in case of a radiological incident. A list of local EAS television and radio stations is available in your telephone directory in calendars distributed in the area by Dominion Virginia Power. Visit Dominion's Web site for more information about radiological preparedness: www.dom.com.