

## **ALLIANCE FOR REGULATORY COORDINATION**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Protect your family and your home from natural disasters.**

MADISON – During week two of Building Safety Month the Alliance for Regulatory Coordination joins the International Code Council in encouraging homeowners to be prepared for natural disasters such as floods, tornadoes, high winds, and wild fires.

#### **Be Prepared**

Here are a few tips to follow when preparing your family for any emergency.

- Develop a family disaster plan that includes a list of food and water supplies needed for each member of your family and supplies for your pets. Create a checklist of important things to do before, during and after a disaster.
- Review your evacuation route and emergency shelter locations with your family. Options for evacuation would include staying with friends and relatives, seeking commercial lodging, or staying in a mass care facility operated by disaster relief groups in conjunction with local authorities.
- Taking shelter is critical in times of disaster. Sheltering in place is appropriate when conditions require that you seek protection in your home, place of employment, or other location where you are when disaster strikes.

#### **Floods**

Devastating floods occur throughout the U.S. every year, including Wisconsin. Ninety percent of all presidentially declared natural disasters involve flooding. Flooding is usually divided into two categories: flash flooding and river flooding. Both can cause death, injury and property destruction. If you are building or retrofitting your home consider these recommendations:

- Elevating your home above the base flood elevation (the elevation associated with the "100-year flood") is the best method of protecting your home, and is a requirement for new homes.
- Wet flood proofing your home allows flood water to flow through the structure. An example of wet flood proofing is installing flood vents that create permanent openings in the foundation.
- Dry flood proofing your home prevents floodwaters from entering the building. An example of dry flood proofing is installing new brick veneer over asphalt coating and applying polyethylene film over existing walls.
- Construct non-supporting, break-a-way walls designed to collapse under the force of water without causing damage to the foundation.

## Tornadoes and High Winds

A properly built, high wind safe room can protect your family from the most intense tornadoes and can be incorporated into a planned build or renovation to create a multiuse space in your home, adding to its value.

- A safe room designed to meet standards set forth by the International Code Council and FEMA will offer lifesaving refuge for families in the path of high winds or tornadoes.
- Safe rooms can be located anywhere on the first floor of your home, in a basement or outside. A safe room can double as a closet, bathroom, laundry or even an outdoor room like a garden shed or pool house.

## Wildfires

Each year, thousands of acres of wildland and many homes are destroyed by fires that can erupt at any time of the year. Wildfires spread quickly, igniting brush, trees and homes. You can protect your home by following these tips.

- Prevent wildfire damage by developing a defensible space in your landscaping by clearing at least 30 feet around your home, or 50 feet around your home if you reside in a heavily wooded area.
- Plant fire-resistant, native vegetation and remove any dead or dying trees. Properly prune shrubs, and trim tree branches so they don't extend over a roof or near the chimney. Mow your grass and control the height and spread of ground covering vegetation. Keep plants at least 12 to 18 inches away from the house.
- When putting on a new patio deck, build from fire-resistant materials. On new and existing decks, create fire barriers around the deck base and clear vegetation at least 100 to 300 feet downhill from the deck base.
- Install only burning-brand, exposure rated (Class A, B or C) roof assemblies using materials such as asphalt shingles, slate or clay tile or metal roof coverings.

The [International Code Council](#) is dedicated to developing model codes and standards used in the design, build and compliance process to construct safe, sustainable, affordable and resilient structures. Most U.S. communities and many global markets [choose the International Codes](#).

The Alliance for Regulatory Coordination is a consortium of 16 business, professional, trade and advocacy organizations involved in building design, construction and regulatory services in Wisconsin. The Alliance seeks regulatory services provided in the most efficient manner possible while promoting the health, safety and welfare of Wisconsin citizens and visitors.

You can learn more about the Alliance for Regulatory Coordination at [www.4arc.org](http://www.4arc.org)