



# Disaster readiness - response - recovery

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*For immediate release*

## Take inventory, protect records as part of disaster preparedness

A key to preparing for the potential property loss or damage incurred by floods, storms, hurricanes and other disasters is to organize and protect family papers and valuable records. North Carolina Cooperative Extension recommends that you act now to keep your family records safe.

Begin by making an up-to-date household inventory. Don't overlook tools stored in the garage, lawn furniture or food in the freezer. You may want to include a video or photographs in your inventory.

An accurate inventory will help you determine if you have enough insurance to cover the contents of your home. Keep the inventory current. Give additional copies of the inventory to your lawyer, the administrator of your will, a business associate or trusted family member who doesn't live in your home.

Second, put the household inventory and other valuable records in a safe deposit box or in a waterproof, fireproof, locked box. In your safety deposit box, include all your important documents, including stocks, financial records, and bond certificates; important receipts and bills of sale; personal property and real estate records, including deeds, titles and leases; a list of insurance policies; your household inventory; military service records; contracts, including promissory notes; copyrights and patents; birth certificates, adoption and custody papers; copies of your wills; passports and citizenship papers; religious records; death certificates; income tax returns that document large transactions and unusual losses or deductions; marriage certificates and divorce decrees; Social Security cards; and retirement papers.

In waterproof, fireproof, locked box in your home, keep guarantees and warranties, driver's license numbers, educational records, income tax returns for past 3 years, employee benefits records, appliance manuals, health records, current bank statements, insurance policies, rental property records, loan payment books, safe deposit records and inventory of items, credit card numbers and bank account numbers.

More information on disaster preparedness can be obtained from your county Cooperative Extension center or the Web at <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/disaster>.