

Four Seasons Newsletter

JANUARY 2009

Preparedness and Mitigation Tips for Citizens

Preparedness and Mitigation

The Four Seasons Newsletter has been developed by the Local Emergency Planning Commission for Park County, through a grant from the State Hazard Mitigation Program, in an effort to provide every citizen the tools they need to prepare for and mitigate against emergency situations.

The information has been divided up by season for easy use and access. Since we are currently in our winter months, the next few pages outline various methods for citizens to be better prepared during our coldest months. This includes a winter preparedness kit and vehicle preparedness tools. Additionally, several tips are given to mitigate against an emergency, such as vehicle and home maintenance.

From there, we spend some time in Spring, where the sun warms the land and the snow melts. This section is dedicated to wildfire mitigation since Summer is just around the corner. Information is provided about slash programs and defending your home against wildfire. We also offer information about a new beetle kill program in Park County.

Next is the season most of you probably dream about all year—the Summer months



Ice Sculpture from the McCall Winter Festival

where fishing, hiking, camping and boating are the favorite past times. This section has a wealth of information about weather hazards, camping and hiking safety and altitude precautions.

Finally, we end the newsletter with the Fall Season, where most of you should be busy either winterizing your home before leaving for the season, or preparing for winter once again. This is also the season to think about flu shots so Public Health provides tips on healthy living and keeping yourself and your family safe year-round.

We hope you will find this newsletter beneficial throughout the year and welcome any comments or suggestions for the future.

Inside this issue:

LEPC Membership Info	1
Winter Preparedness	2
Spring Safety	4
Wildfire Mitigation and Evacuation Planning	5
Summer Fun Facts	8
Fall Tips and Tricks	10
Flu Precautions	11
Helpful Phone Numbers	12

LEPC Membership

The Local Emergency Planning Commission (LEPC) is looking for citizens, business owners, and emergency planners to join our meetings. Only through collaboration and planning will we be able to meet the needs of the citizens of Park County. With every new person who joins the LEPC, we see positive change and new ideas. Everyone has different experiences and insight, making a diverse group the most beneficial for

emergency planning. In 2009, we plan to meet every quarter, with meetings in between as needed for special projects. We work on various emergency planning and preparedness issues that affect the county as a whole. If interested in joining the LEPC, please contact Lori Hodges at (719) 836-4372 or by email at lhodges@parkco.us. We'd love to hear your ideas!



Snowstorm and Winter Weather Preparedness

Every year, people who have always dreamed of living in the mountains finally take the plunge, purchase property and move west. Sadly, after the first big winter, many of those same people give up their dreams of country living and move back to the city. This doesn't have to happen! It has been proven time and again that if you are properly prepared for the winter months, they will be less of a hardship and more enjoyable for the whole family.

The first step is to have a good understanding about Colorado weather and what to expect during the winter months. Talk to people who have lived in the area for several years and speak to neighbors about how the winter affects them. Does the wind create drifting snow in your area, or are you covered in trees minimizing the impact?

Do you live on a private road or a road that is not maintained by the county? If so, develop a plan for how you will get out of your home and driveway when the snow piles up. Anyone living in the mountains knows the importance of properly maintaining their vehicle and having 4-wheel drive to ensure adequate traction. Snowmobiles are an excellent recreational vehicle and can also be an alternate mode of transportation in an emergency.

Another well know fact about Park County is that the wind loves it here! The high country winds often gust in excess of 100 m.p.h, creating

blowing and drifting conditions that can be extremely hazardous. One of the worst winter conditions is a blizzard. The blowing snow can become very disorienting and people can easily become lost. If white-out or blizzard conditions exist, the best thing you can do for your family is to stay where you are. Do not go outside and do not drive in these conditions. To ensure you are never caught off guard by a quickly developing storm, ensure you have a car survival kit stocked and ready in your vehicle. It may be what saves your life.

90% of body head escapes from your head. If in cold weather, make sure to wear a hat to maintain proper body temperature.

It is imperative that citizens of Park County develop a plan for the health and safety of their family. In the following sections, we provide information about building an emergency preparedness kit in case you are snowed in at your home for an extended period. Additionally, several tips are provided about car safety and winter driving. Please take this information and discuss it with other family members. Develop a plan. Stay Informed. Have a safe winter.

Check with your insurance company about getting prescription medications delivered by mail. Some offer three-month supplies, which is often cheaper than paying month-to-month and guarantees you will have the medications you need if snowed in at your home for an extended period.

Vehicle Preparedness Tips & Survival Kit

- Always make sure your gas tank is at least 1/2 full
- If stuck with the vehicle running, ensure that the tailpipe is kept clear of snow and other obstructions.
- Keeping your tires properly inflated provides for better traction. Also, check the tread on your tires before the winter season begins.
- If out in the cold, do not drink alcohol. It gives you the sense of being warm without actually warming the body. This can be extremely dangerous.
- Check for road closure information before taking any extended trip.
- Always carry a winter car kit in your vehicle in case of an emergency.

Vehicle Survival Kit Contents

- First aid kit and manual
- Class ABC Fire Extinguisher
- Radio and Batteries
- Non-perishable food stored in a coffee can.
- Bottled water
- Bag of sand, shovel and tools
- Blankets and/or sleeping bag
- Sundry kit, paper and pencil, maps, tissues, pre-moistened towels, plastic bags
- Essential medications
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- Reflectors and flares
- Waterproof matches and candles
- Jumper cables



Home Emergency Preparedness Kit Contents

A disaster supply kit should contain items to provide for the basic needs of each member of the family in the event of an emergency. Each individual should customize the kit to meet his or her personal needs, but keep in mind that this reserve should be an all-hazards kit.

Nationally, it is recommended that each home have a 72-hour kit, but here in the mountains it is recommended that the kit provide all your basic needs for one to two weeks in the event of a blizzard or major storm that isolates you at home. Most families prefer to store their emergency supplies in one location that is relatively safe, yet easily accessible if evacuation is required. Items may be stored in a 32-gallon trash can, suitcase, duffle bag, backpack, footlocker or individual pack. The lists below will help ensure that your disaster supply kit includes all the essentials.

Emergency Needs

- Battery powered radio
- First Aid Kit and Manual
- Sleeping bags and blankets (wool and thermal)
- Manual can opener
- Waterproof/Windproof matches
- Non-perishable foods (at least two weeks worth)
- Flashlights
- Water storage (1 gallon/person/day)
- Water purification tablets
- Utility knife
- Emergency candles
- Extra eyeglasses / Contact lenses
- Essential medications
- Extra clothing and raingear
- Extra batteries
- Special items for infants, elderly or disabled members of your household.

Suggested Non-Perishable Foods

- Ready-to-eat goods in unbreakable containers
- Canned meats
- Canned Juices
- Canned fruits and vegetables
- Powdered milk
- Infant care foods
- Crackers
- Peanut Butter

- Pasta and Canned Sauce
- Freeze-dried and dehydrated goods.

Sanitation Kit

- Plastic bucket with lid
- Plastic bags with ties
- Disinfectant
- Paper cups and plates
- Personal toiletries
- Baby supplies
- Aluminum foil
- Paper towels
- Personal hygienic needs
- Plastic utensils
- Soap

Other Emergency Needs

- Pen and paper
- Money
- Personal identification
- Address and phone numbers
- Work gloves
- Basic tools
- Insurance company information
- Medical Insurance and other important papers

Don't forget supplies for your pets, including:

- Food for each pet for at least two weeks
- Water
- Large capacity self-feeder and water dispenser
- Medications / Medical Records
- Cat litter and pan
- Pet bed and toys
- Sturdy leashes, harnesses and carrier to transport pets safely
- Current photo of pet in case they get lost
- Contact information for your veterinarian.

When planning for your pets or livestock, remember that there may be times when you are unable to get home to care for them. In your planning process, designate someone who may be able to help, such as a neighbor. This will keep you from risking your life in extreme winter conditions to get home to care for your pet, while ensuring their safety as well.



The task of putting together an emergency kit often seems too daunting and costly for residents. But if a few items are purchased every time you go to the store, you will have a full kit in no time and you won't break the bank!





Spring Safety Tips

Ahh, Spring. Can you smell the flowers and feel the warmth in the air? Spring is a time of transition in Park County where people pack up their skis and get out their camping gear. It is also a period of transition for the environment. The warm air dries the land, melting the snow and causing the grasslands to grow. With this transition, citizens of Park County should evaluate their preparedness tools. Does your car kit have drinkable water, sunscreen and bug spray? Is your raingear in good condition and does it still fit? Most importantly, Spring is the time where we all have to increase our awareness of the dangers of fire, both structural and wildland. This section offers some tips to decrease the risk of fire around your home and tips on evacuation procedures for your family.

Mountain Pine Beetle Considerations

We all hoped the pine beetles that have been ravaging Summit County were going to pass us by—they didn't. Now we have to decide what course of action we want to take. The key word is *we*, the folks who live here. When strong willed people—and we have to be that sort to live in Park County—work together to address a problem, we can do great things. Government will not make the beetles go away, but government can be our partner as we collaboratively create a course of action.

Mountain pine beetle, or *Dendroctonus ponderosae*, as scientists know it, is native to the forests of western North America, and it is part of the natural cycle of the forest. However, one hundred years of fire suppression and ecological changes have contributed to the beetle's excessive spread, which state and federal foresters call "catastrophic." Outbreaks like this don't respect property lines: they are equally evident in the national forest, in mountain subdivisions, and in backyards in town. Foresters estimate that the beetles won't kill all of Colorado's 22-million acres of forest, but they could do away with most of the "pure lodgepole" stands, as well as kill many of the trees within mixed systems of lodgepole, spruce, fir and ponderosa pine.

When it comes to options to deal with the beetles, we have fire departments that are willing to be proactive; we have state and federal foresters who are willing to help. But, we need to be stewards of our private lands, as well. The

good news: programs around the county are already actively operating to help property owners take care of their land. One example is the burn pit at North-West Fire, which has accepted over 2000 loads of material this year. Good job!

The students at Edith Teter Elementary are learning about forest health and beetles, and on February 3rd they will become the teachers at a community forum starting at 4:15 in the school auditorium. They will have experts in forestry from the United States Forest Service on hand to answer questions. More importantly, this will also be an opportunity to discuss your ideas, to create a public forum to communicate our community values, and to help develop a plan of community action. This will not be a time for finger pointing, but a time for facing facts and finding a course of action we can agree upon, and garnering government support to address the challenges the beetles are creating.

The Coalition for the Upper South Platte (CUSP), working with our many partners, will help facilitate the forum and CUSP will be your liaison, working to communicate your community values, and the economic realities in Park County, while protecting the health of our community and insuring that your collaboratively agreed upon projects are implemented.

What can you do in the meantime? Create defensible space around your house and implement stewardship practices on the rest of your property. To learn more about these practices, contact CUSP at 719-748-0033, or your local fire protection district.

Wildfire Mitigation and Preparedness

As many residents are aware, the greatest natural threat in Park County is wildfire. Creating "defensible" or "survivable" space around structures can make the difference between returning to an intact home or a smoldering pile of ashes if a wildfire moves through the area. Neither wildland firefighting agencies nor local fire districts can adequately protect the growing number of structures in interface areas. **It is critical that private landowners take steps on their own to protect their property.** There are now many resources available to assist property owners, including a number of websites with excellent information on fire-

resistant building materials, landscaping techniques and evacuation procedures (see end of newsletter for more information).

While you may not be able to accomplish all the recommended measures, each will increase your home's, and your family's, safety. Start with the easiest and least expensive actions. Begin your work closest to your house and move outward. Keep working on the more difficult items until you have completed your entire project.

Defensible Space Management Zones

Defensible space is an area around a structure where fuels and vegetation are treated, cleared or reduced to slow the spread of wildfire towards the structure. It also reduces the chance of a structure fire moving from the building to the surrounding forest. Defensible space provides room for firefighters to do their jobs. Your house is more likely to withstand a wildfire if grasses, brush, trees and other common forest fuels are managed to reduce a fire's intensity. Creating an effective defensible space involves developing a series of management zones in which different treatment techniques are used. Develop defensible space around each building on your property.

Zone 1 is the area of maximum modification and treatment. It consists of an area of 15 feet around the structure in which all flammable vegetation is removed. This 15 feet is measured from the outside edge of the home's eaves and any attached structures, such as decks.

Zone 2 is an area of fuel reduction. It is a transitional area between Zones 1 and 3. The size of Zone 2 depends on the slope of the ground where the structure is built. Within this zone, the continuity and arrangement of vegetation should be modified. Remove stressed, diseased, dead or dying trees and shrubs. Thin and prune the remaining larger trees and shrubs.

Defensible Space Annual Checklist

- Trees and shrubs are properly thinned and pruned within the defensible space.
- Slash from the thinning is eliminated.
- Roof and gutters are clear of debris.
- Branches overhanging the roof and chimney are removed.
- Chimney screens are in place and in good condition.
- Grass and weeds are mowed to a low height.
- An outdoor water supply is available, complete with a hose and nozzle that can reach all parts of the house.
- Fire extinguishers are checked and in working condition.
- The driveway is wide enough. The clearance of trees and branches is adequate for fire and emergency equipment. (Check with your local fire district)
- Road signs and your name and house number are posted and easily visible. If you have a long driveway, the address should be marked at the road so that emergency responders can see the address.
- There is an easily accessible tool storage area with rakes, hoes, axes and shovels for use in case of fire.
- You have practiced family fire drills and your fire evacuation plan.
- Your escape routes, meeting points and other details are known and understood by all family members.
- Attic, roof, eaves and foundation vents are screened and in good condition. Stilt foundations and decks are enclosed,

Be sure to extend thinning along either side of your driveway all the way to your main access road. These actions help eliminate the continuous fuel surrounding a structure while enhancing safety and the aesthetics of the property.

Zone 3 is an area of traditional forest management and is of no particular size. It extends from the edge of your defensible space to your property boundaries. Specific thinning requirements will be dictated by your objectives for your land. However, most thinning should be done from below (leaving the biggest and best trees) and on an individual tree basis. Thinning improves the forest stand by removing trees that are damaged, infested with insects, infected by disease or are of poor form or low vigor.

Many Fire Districts have Slash Programs where they will collect slash from homeowners. Contact your local Fire District for information about your area.

Any approved method of slash treatment is acceptable for this zone, including piling and burning, chipping or lop-and-scatter. Always check with your local fire protection district for burn permits or information on current fire bans.

- screened or walled up.
- Trash and debris accumulations are removed from the defensible space.
- A checklist for fire safety needs inside the home also has been completed. This may be available from your local fire district.

Shutting Off Home Utilities

The American Red Cross and FEMA recommend you locate the central circuit breaker box and main water and gas valves. Responsible family members should learn how and when to turn off these utilities. Keep necessary tools nearby so they will be available when needed.

Remember, turn off utilities only if you suspect the lines are damaged or if you are instructed to do so. If you turn the gas off, you will need a professional to turn it back on.

Planning for Evacuations

For those who have been in Park County for many years, you were a part of the 2002 wildfire season that forced hundreds of people from their homes.

Having a plan is one of the most important steps you can take in disaster preparedness. Knowing what to do and how to do it can help your family manage disasters with less worry, fear and uncertainty. Below are several steps you can take to better prepare for an emergency evacuation from your home from either a structure fire or wildfire.

- Decide what you and your family would do in each potential emergency situation.
- Draw a floor plan of your home showing escape routes.
- Choose a place away from your neighborhood where family members can meet in case you are separated and cannot return home due to a disaster.
- Identify a friend or relative who lives out of the area for family members to contact if you are separated.
- Post emergency numbers by every phone and teach children how and when to dial 911.
- Know how to shut off the water, gas and electricity at the main switches in your home.
- Plan how to help elderly or disabled neighbors in a disaster.
- Check that your insurance policies are up-to-date and provide good coverage.

- Work with your neighborhood or HOA to develop local plans.

Having an evacuation kit ready to take with you at a moment's notice ensures that you will have necessary supplies no matter how fast you may need to evacuate, or how long you will be away from home. Pack supplies in duffel bags or backpacks and keep them in a designated place. Items to include in an evacuation kit may include:

- Important records, insurance documents, pictures of valuables.
- Photo identification
- Food and water for at least three days
- Pet carriers, leashes, food, and a place to house your pet.
- Clothes for at least three days
- Money
- Emergency contact information

**IF TOLD TO EVACUATE,
DO SO!**



Evacuation Considerations for People with Pets and Livestock

Pets—Many shelters do not allow pets, and those that do will require a pet carrier for the animals. Therefore, it is important to have a plan for your pets in the event of an evacuation. At a minimum, you should have a carrier for each pet. Second, you should find a neighbor you trust who can access your pets during an evacuation in case you are not at home. This will keep you from entering a dangerous situation and putting responders at further risk. Finally, talk to friends and family to see if they would be willing to keep your pets during an evacuation. Obviously, you will need to choose someone who does not live in your immediate area.

Livestock—For those with large animals, a plan is even more important because you cannot just pick up and go. Additionally, livestock removal takes people with a certain level of skills and knowledge about the animals, as well as large equipment such as trailers. Do you know who in your area has access to such equipment and skills? Have you developed a plan with your neighbors for the removal and housing of large animals? Livestock owners need to work together to ensure the safety of their animals. Since Park County is so diverse, no one option will work in every situation. If you need assistance with your plan, we have a few Animal Evacuation Groups that could help, as well as the Park County Fairgrounds Manager.

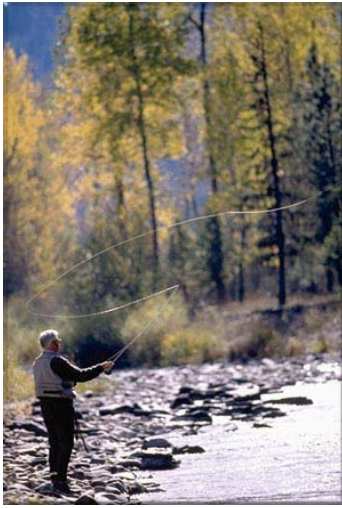
Evacuation Handout—Next Page

On the following page is a form that can be used in evacuations and should be placed near your evacuation kit. If time allows when evacuating (you have been given a warning that evacuations may be necessary), place this form in a front-facing window or on the front door and check off the items that you have completed before you leave. This will save valuable time for emergency responders when they come through your area. Instead of

having to stop at each home and go inside to check if everyone is out, they will have the information they need to move on to the next residence. Again, if responders are at your door and evacuation is necessary immediately, please leave the area as soon as possible. This is merely a tool for your use as time permits.

WE HAVE EVACUATED

- UTILITY MAINS HAVE BEEN SHUT OFF**
- PETS HAVE BEEN REMOVED FROM DANGER**
- THE HOUSE IS LOCKED**



Summer Camping and Hiking

Park County has some of the most beautiful hiking and camping in the State of Colorado. In order to enjoy this beauty, hikers and campers should take precautions to ensure the safety of their group. Simple precautionary measures will reduce the risk of being unprepared for a sudden change in the weather or if you come

across a curious bear or other seemingly innocent wildlife. Even the most experienced hikers first check in with park rangers to determine weather conditions and the potential of encountering wildlife.

Mountain weather is generally cooler, cloudier and windier than other places. Keep in mind that for every thousand feet of elevation that is gained along the Colorado hiking trails, the temperature will drop 5.5 degrees. Additionally, ultraviolet radiation increases about 26 percent at elevations between 5,000 feet and 14,000 feet. With this in mind, when you plan your hiking trip, be sure to pack for all types of weather conditions. Hydration is also crucial at the high altitude hiking trails. When you head out on your hike, be sure to bring plenty of water. A compass or a GPS will also come in handy. Basic Tips for Hiking the High Country:

- Make sure your vehicle is in good running order and your gas tank is full.
- Acquaint yourself with the area and specific trails you plan to hike so you can set a reasonable timetable for your hike. Many guidebooks include estimated times of trips.
- Develop an emergency plan before you start your trip. Make sure everyone knows what to do if they become lost or a medical emergency arises. Give children whistles with the instructions to "stop and blow" if they become lost.
- Check weather conditions before you leave. Leave your itinerary with someone you trust and check in with them upon your return.
- Dress in layers. Polyester clothing worn closest to your skin will trap warm air next to the skin and transfer or wick body moisture away. Always carry a poncho or other rain gear.
- Make sure that you bring plenty of sunscreen, no matter

the season. You can get a painful sunburn even in subfreezing temperatures.

- Wear sunglasses and a hat or visor when you hike, bike or paddle. Keep your eyes and face covered, especially during your first few days outdoors.
- Start out slowly, gradually increasing your pace and distance traveled. Let the slowest person in your hiking, paddling, or biking party set the pace. This is especially important when children are part of your group. Take frequent rests or vary your pace to recover from strenuous activity spurts. A steady pace will get you there with less discomfort than the sprint-and-catch-your-breath approach.
- Hike and travel in groups as much as possible, especially in hazardous terrain.
- Drink plenty of water. Three quarts per person per day is a good rule of thumb. Water is heavy to carry, but thirst on the trail is a hazard. Before a hike, drink some water so you're well hydrated and energized. Don't run out of water. Never drink your total supply between refills. Backcountry water supplies are unpredictable. It's better to arrive at a gushing stream with 1/3 quart of water left than to arrive at an empty streambed and have no water left at all. Treat or filter all water and rehydrate to your heart's content at the water supply.
- Pack carbohydrates-energy bars, granola, candy and fruit to provide an instant pick-me-up on the trail. Carry more food than you think you will need. It is better to bring extra snacks home with you than to go hungry.
- Bring a first-aid kit tailored to your outing.
- Pay attention to local regulations, especially concerning camp fires. In many desert or drought areas, fires are prohibited and you must use a camp stove.
- Do not place heating devices in your tent. (camp stoves). This causes a risk of asphyxiation and fire.
- When camping be Bear Aware. Do not leave food out where animals can get to it and dispose of all trash appropriately.
- Be aware of lightning, especially in the afternoons when above treeline. Colorado has very fast moving storms, so continue to be aware of changes throughout your trip.

Anyone planning to go Colorado hiking in the backcountry should consider purchasing the Colorado Outdoor Recreation Search and Rescue (CORSAR) card. CORSAR Cards can be purchased for \$3.00 at many local vendors, or by calling the Department of Local Affairs at (970) 248-7310. Purchasing the card provides funding for the volunteers who conduct search and rescue missions throughout all of Colorado's backcountry.



Altitude Considerations

A common scenario for paramedics who work in communities above 7,500 feet is to respond to a visitor of the area who has fainted. This is usually preceded by a long flight from sea level, an immediate drive to altitude, a few alcoholic beverages to celebrate being on vacation, and a night cap in the local hot tub. Each one of these steps creates a possibly dangerous situation for visitors of the area.

Many coming up to the mountains do not realize the effects of altitude on their bodies. Therefore, if you have family or friends that visit, here are a few tips to keep them healthy and feeling good during their visit:

- Drink three times the amount of water you would drink at sea level. It can take

up to one full month to acclimate to the high altitude. This will also help with the altitude headache.

- If coming from sea level, it is advisable to stay at least one night in the Denver area before travelling to altitude.
- Avoid alcohol for 24-48 hours
- Avoid activities that will cause dehydration, such as hot tubs or activities that are very strenuous for the first 24-48 hours.
- If experiencing chest pain, that is not altitude sickness. Seek medical care immediately.



CodeRED Emergency Notification System

Most residents have probably heard of Reverse 911, a system that will call your home phone number in the event of an emergency or evacuation. In Park County, we have a new system, called CodeRED, that allows us to contact residents at their homes, as well as any other number they require. This may include an out-of-state phone number at your second home, or a work phone number in the Denver area, or even a cellular phone. Our current address database is still being corrected, and will continue to go through this process until the addressing project is com-

pleted. Therefore, not every phone will be called in an emergency. If you would like to ensure you receive a call, or would like to add another phone number, you can register using the following methods:

- Visit the emergency management website for Park county at www.parkco.us/oem.htm. Click on the CodeRED logo and enter your information.
- Call (719) 836-4372 and have the emergency manager enter the information
- Email your name, address, and phone numbers to lhodges@parkco.us.

CodeRED allows multiple phones to be called in the event of an emergency, including cellular and work phones.

Register your numbers today!

Community Preparedness and Neighborhood Planning

Because of the rural nature of Park County, and the inability for emergency responders to get to some of the more secluded areas, it is important for neighborhoods and communities to work locally to solve unique preparedness and emergency planning issues. This may include setting up a phone tree system to contact neighbors, or finding out who in your area may need extra assistance during an evacuation. Every community is different and therefore, the solutions must come from the people who live in that area. Creating emer-

gency planning committees locally can help you work through some of the unique needs of the community and may improve relations between neighbors. If any Homeowners Association would like assistance with forming such a committee, or if they would like a presentation on neighborhood preparedness, please contact the Park County Emergency Manager at (719) 836-4372 or by email at lhodges@parkco.us.





Fall is the perfect time to ensure your propane tank is filled and ready for winter. For those who do not have the money to fill their tank, budget billing is often available. This allows you to pay monthly, ensuring your tank will always have more than a 1/2 tank.



Fall Considerations and Winterizing Your Home

Fall is a good time of year to start thinking about preparing your home for winter, because as temperatures begin to dip, your home will require maintenance to keep it in tip-top shape through the winter. Here are ten tips to help you prepare your home for winter:

Furnace Inspection

- Inspect your furnace and clean ducts. Stock up on furnace filters and change them monthly
- Remove all flammable material from the area surrounding your furnace

Get the Fireplace / wood burning stove ready

- Cap or screen the top of the stove or chimney to keep out rodents and birds
- If the pipe has not been cleaned in a while, call a chimney sweep to remove soot and creosote. It is recommended that chimneys and wood stoves be cleaned and inspected once a year.
- Buy firewood or chop wood and store in a place with easy access throughout the winter months
- Inspect the damper for proper opening and closing

Check the exterior, Doors and Windows

- Inspect exterior for crevice cracks and exposed entry points around pipes; seal them
- Use weather-stripping around doors to prevent cold air from entering the home and caulk windows
- Replace cracked glass in windows and, if you end up replacing the entire window, prime and paint exposed wood.
- If you have storm windows, install them.

Inspect Roof, Gutters and Downspouts

- Adding extra insulation to any attic will prevent warm air from creeping to your roof and causing ice dams
- Clean out the gutters and use a hose to spray water down the downspouts to clear away debris

Service Weather-Specific Equipment

- Drain gas from lawnmowers
- Service or tune-up snow blowers
- Replace wood rakes and snow shovels
- Sharpen ice choppers and buy bags of ice melt / sand

Check Foundations

- Seal up entry points to keep small ani-

mals from crawling under the house.

- Tuckpoint or seal foundation cracks.
 - Inspect sill plates for dry rot or pest infestation
 - Secure crawlspace entrances
- ### Install Smoke and CO Detectors
- Change your smoke detector and CO detector batteries. Buy extra batteries.
 - Install a carbon monoxide detector near your furnace and / or water heater
 - Test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors to make sure they work
 - Buy a fire extinguisher or replace an extinguisher older than 10 years.

Prevent plumbing freezes

- Locate your water main in the event you need to shut it off in an emergency
- Drain all garden hoses
- Insulate exposed plumbing pipes
- If you go on vacation, leave the heat on, set at least to 55 degrees

Prepare an emergency kit

- Buy indoor candles and matches/lighter for use during a power shortage
- Find the phone numbers for your utility companies and tape them near your phone or inside the phone book
- Buy a surge protector or battery back-up to protect your computer and sensitive electronic equipment
- Store extra bottled water and non-perishable food supplies (including pet food). See the winter section for a complete list.

If leaving for the winter

- Turn off your main water supply and drain all water pipes.
- Keep valves at all fixtures partially open to avoid build up of pressure
- Pour non-toxic antifreeze into all toilet bowls, sinks, tubs, showers, washing machine drains, and floor drains.
- It is a wise idea to turn off all non-essential electrical circuit breakers. Only leave on those circuits that control security lighting.
- Empty all perishable food from your refrigerator
- Turn off your natural gas or propane supply valve outside your home if possible.
- Contact your local fire or law enforcement agency for other tips for your area.

Flu Season and Healthy Living

Fall is the time of year to start thinking about getting your annual flu shot. The flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness and can lead to death. More than 200,000 people are hospitalized every year from flu complications and 36,000 people die from flu. Flu viruses spread mainly from person to person through the coughing or sneezing of people with influenza. Vaccination is the best method for preventing flu and its potentially severe complications. The “flu-shot” is an inactivated vaccine (containing killed virus) and does not cause the flu. The vaccine is approved for use in people 6 months of age and older, including healthy people and people with chronic medical conditions.

About two weeks after vaccination, antibodies develop that protect against influenza virus infection. This is important to note, as you are still susceptible to infection for several days after receiving the vaccine. October or November is the best time to get vaccinated, but getting vaccinated in December or even later can still be beneficial since most influenza activity

occurs in January or later in most years. Though it varies, flu season can last as late as May. Tips to keep germs at bay:

- Wash your hands frequently- if soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer.
- Do the elbow cough- cough into elbows, not hands where it’s more likely to spread bacteria and viruses through touch.
- Clean surfaces touched most frequently with disinfecting products: phone receivers, refrigerator, microwave and door handles, kitchen faucets, light switches and TV remotes.

Follow good health guidelines: Eat right, exercise and get plenty of sleep. This will help boost your immune system to help fight off the effects of colds and flu. Park County Public Health offers flu shots every October. If interested, call to make an appointment.

Everyone six months or older is encouraged to get a flu shot to decrease the spread of the flu virus

False Reporting Resolution

Park County faces many hazards throughout the year, including flooding, high winds, lightning, wildfires and winter storms. During emergencies, our responders must prioritize calls in order to respond to emergency situations where the health, safety, and welfare of Park County citizens and visitors is in immediate risk.

Last winter, the county received multiple calls for assistance from residents. Many of these were genuine emergencies, but many were not. We put responders lives at risk to go to a home that said they had run out of propane and had no way to heat their home, only to find that they have electric heat. We plowed roads for people who claimed an emergency, just to get their road plowed. This costs the county thousands of dollars and puts lives at risk when the conditions are poor. Therefore, the Board of Commissioners signed Resolution #2008-67 on September 11,

2008, stating that any person falsely reporting an emergency situation shall be charged the full amount of the costs incurred in responding to that emergency, including plowing costs, and responder expenses.

As always, if you have a genuine emergency, the county will do whatever it takes to respond and resolve the situation without additional cost to the citizen, other than ambulance fees if transported.



Volunteer and Training Opportunities

Below is a list of possible volunteer opportunities for citizens of Park County. This is not a comprehensive list, but it is a good start for those looking for a way to give back to the community:

- Emergency Services, Search and Rescue, Fire Districts, and SO Reserves.
- Shelter and Donations Management
- Language skills / interpretation
- Volunteer Coordination
- Special Needs Sheltering
- Animal Rescue / Animal Boarding
- Manpower
- Transportation assistance

- Communications Center / Call Center
- Additionally, there are many valuable trainings offered throughout the county year-round for citizens, including:
- Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) - teaches basic preparedness and mitigation techniques and gives you the tools to help during an emergency. The training is free and offered in the Spring and Fall.
 - CPR / First Aid—Many Fire Districts and Ambulance Services provide training in both CPR and First Aid, including the use of a defibrillator (AED).
 - Area specific emergency training—This is on an as requested basis and can be set up at any time of the year.



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MITIGATION TIPS FOR
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P.O. Box 1373
Fairplay, CO 80440

Phone: 719-836-4372
Fax: 719-836-3273
Email: lhodges@parkco.us

ECRWSS
POSTAL PATRON



Helpful Phone Numbers and Websites

American Red Cross

www.redcross.org

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

<http://www.cdph.state.co.us/>

Colorado Division of Emergency Management

<http://www.dola.colorado.gov/dem/index.html>

Colorado Department of Public Safety

<http://cdpsweb.state.co.us/>

Colorado Department of Transportation

<http://www.dot.state.co.us>

Colorado State Patrol

<http://csp.state.co.us/>

Colorado State Forest Service

<http://csfs.colostate.edu/>

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

www.fema.gov

Salvation Army

http://www.salvationarmyusa.org/usn/www_usn.nsf

USDA—United States Forest Service

<http://www.fs.fed.us/>

Coalition for the Upper South Platte

<http://www.uppersouthplatte.net/>

Fire Ban Information: (719) 836-4121, then press 6

Park County Emergency Management

www.parkco.us/oem.htm

(719) 836-4372

For information about local fire, law, and EMS

Park County Public Health

Fairplay Office (719) 836 4149 Bailey Office (303) 816-5970

Personal Preparedness Tools

Ready Colorado: <http://www.ready.gov>

Road Closure Information:

Road Line: (719) 836-4136

CDOT: Call 511 from any phone to get updated road reports or go to www.cotrip.org for more information