

INSURANCE *Disaster Preparedness*

ARE YOU READY?

During the past decade, the U.S. has experienced significant shifts in the frequency, severity and location of natural disasters, but fewer than 22% of homeowners view changing weather patterns or disasters as an important factor when updating their homeowners insurance, according to the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC). With disasters on the rise, the NAIC urges consumers to consider their insurance risks and understand what is and is not covered in their current policies.

A NAIC survey revealed 56% of homeowners have not reviewed their insurance policies in more than a year. Research also indicates that 44% of homeowners have a home inventory, but more than 40% of those also have not updated their inventory in more than a year.

RISK PROFILE

Consumers should re-evaluate their risk profile annually to ensure their homeowners policy provides the protection they need. Consider the following:

- Am I now at risk? Are earthquakes, wildfires or other disasters now a threat? Do I need a flood insurance policy?
- What has changed in my home? Did the number of people (and belongings) increase or decrease? Have I made any major purchases?
- Have I updated my home with a kitchen renovation, new security system or other improvements?
- Should I be looking at different coverage? Can I save money by bundling my home and auto insurance?

KEEP YOUR FAMILY AND HOME SAFE

- Make sure you have bottled water, a first aid kit, flashlights, a battery-powered radio, non-per-



ishable food items, blankets, clothing, prescription drugs, eyeglasses, personal hygiene supplies and a small amount of cash or traveler's checks.

- Identify what storm shelter is available to your family and prepare an evacuation plan. Choose two meeting places: one right outside your home in case of a sudden emergency, such as a fire; and one

outside your neighborhood in case you can't return home.

- Re-evaluate your risk profile at least once a year to ensure your existing homeowners policy provides the protection you and your family needs. Plan to review your policy at the same time each year. Note that floods are not covered by a typical homeowners policy - you may need additional coverage.

- Take steps to mitigate some of the potential damage to your home from natural disasters. Begin with a survey of your home and the area around it to identify objects like yard debris that could compound damage to your home in high winds or under threat of wildfire.

- If you need to evacuate your home, turn off all utilities and disconnect appliances to reduce the chance of additional damage and electrical shock when utilities are restored.

- Keep a readily available list of 24-hour contact information for your insurance agent and insurance company. Make a list that includes your policy numbers, your insurance company insurance agent's phone numbers, website addresses, and mailing addresses. Check to see if your company or agent has set up an emergency information hotline in case of storm damage. Store this information, and a home inventory, in a waterproof/fireproof safe or a safe deposit box. Consider sending an electronic copy to someone you trust. If you have to evacuate your home, you want this information to be easily available to you.

- A home inventory can be invaluable when deciding how much insurance your life situation requires to adequately insure your home in the path of a natural disaster.

Consumers interested in insurance information specific to where they live should contact their insurance agent or the Wyoming Department of Insurance.



Wyoming Insurance Department
<http://doi.wyo.gov>
1 (800) 438-5768

This public service announcement is presented and paid for by the insurance companies licensed to do business in Wyoming in cooperation with the Wyoming Insurance Department. For more information on the state's insurance companies, including financial information, visit the Insurance Department website's "Company Financial Information" section.