

## **Important Documents for Emergency Conditions**

**By Joseph Parish**

You never know just when you will be required to evacuate a particular location due to emergency conditions. As a survivalist it is your responsibility to ensure that you are prepared for any sort of emergency that may occur, therefore having all your important information in one location is of prime importance.

Information can be stored in several ways. I personally use both methods as a backup system. The first way is the more conventional means where you have all your necessary documents and paper work in one specific location. The newer second way and the way that I use as a backup is to place scanned copies of all-important papers on a small portable flash drive. These drives typically cost in the vicinity of 10 to 12 dollars each and hold about 2 Meg of memory which is more than sufficient for your important documents.

If you choose to use the hard copy method you should select a good size waterproof plastic bag to place all your papers in. I have a see through plastic waterproof type bag that I place all my important papers into. The particular papers which I consider of value and therefore should be placed in the bag are as follows:

1. Legal documents such as marriage license, birth certificates or naturalization papers, wills, living trusts, powers of attorney, passports, stock certificates, bonds, automobile, boat and aircraft papers such as title and registration. All social security cards for all family members as well as any documentation in support of your social security or retirement benefits should be taken with you. Mortgage papers or rental contracts are important to prove where you lived prior to the emergency. An emergency out of town contact book is a great way to keep listings of friends and family members out of state. These books should include addresses and telephone numbers of all listings. Make sure you include some of your local information also such as your bank, landlord, insurance agent and doctor in this book. You should have appraisals for jewelry, antiques and art or any other valuables that you may be leaving behind. Include any adoption papers as well as child custody papers.
2. Immunization and vaccination papers for each member of the family. Open prescriptions from your doctor without a date that can be used anywhere in an emergency. You may wish to have an emergency health card for all members of the family. This card would tell health care providers important information about you such as allergies and drugs that you may be allergic to.
3. Insurance policies such as auto, home and life policies. If you have any other types such as pet life insurance or computer insurance make certain to include them also. You should have your driver's license and those of anyone else in the household who drives a vehicle.

4. Always maintain several hundred dollars in cash in your bag as you may not have time to go to the bank before you must evacuate the area. Make sure that you have your funds in small denomination's and not large bills such as 20's, 50's or hundreds. These will be very difficult to use in times of crisis. Keep your checking, savings and any other bank account information handy should you need it.
5. Several credit cards would be good to have also in your kit. If you do not have a credit card perhaps you may wish to consider a prepaid card. Prepaid cards for places such as Wal-marts, Sears and other department stores would not hurt to have in there also. In fact, I would recommend just about any types of gift cards that you can get your hands on.
6. Pre-paid telephone cards are another good thing to place in your bag. Get about 1 or 2 hours' worth at a minimum. A word of caution here is that you should see if your cards have expiration dates on them. If they do make sure you use them or cash them in on a new one before they expire.
7. You may wish to maintain a copy of your home inventory for insurance purposes. A CD with various photos of your inventoried items would prove very beneficial if you have to eventually file a claim.
8. Any types of important business documents such as LLC certificate of operation, copies of business license, tax papers for both personal and business.
9. If you have a pet or are planning on transporting one with you make sure that you have its vaccination record and any other information which may be deemed to be important should it be required.
10. If you have access to school records for your children you could possibly include them also in the event that you may be away from home for an extended length of time and the children will need to be placed in another school.

In addition to all of these documents I have placed many of mine of a flash drive where all I need to do is plug it into a USB port and I would have access to many of these items. The flash drive that I have is the key chain kind and I find that it works really great. Just remember to keep it current.

That about concludes the list but keep in mind it is far from complete. Give some serious thought to important documents that you may need and you are certain to come up with more.