

September 2026

National Preparedness Month



Phillips County Emergency Management

Home Emergency Kit (72-Hour Kit)

Water & Food

Water (1 gallon per person, per day, for 3 days)
Non-perishable food (3-day supply)
Manual can opener
Pet food and water (if applicable)

Lighting & Power

Flashlights
Extra batteries
Portable phone chargers/power banks

First Aid & Health

First aid kit
Prescription medications (7-day supply)
Over-the-counter medications
Extra eyeglasses or contact lens supplies
Personal hygiene items
Hand sanitizer and disinfecting wipes

Tools & Safety

Multi-tool or basic tool kit
Fire extinguisher
Matches or lighter (stored safely)

Important Documents

Copies of IDs
Insurance policies
Medical information
Emergency contact list
Cash (small bills)
House and vehicle spare keys



12 WAYS TO PREPARE

☐ Sign up for Alerts and Warnings	☐ Make a Plan	☐ Save for a Rainy Day	☐ Practice Emergency Drills	☐ Test Family Communication Plan	☐ Safeguard Documents
☐ Plan with Neighbors	☐ Make Your Home Safer	☐ Know Evacuation Routes	☐ Assemble or Update Supplies	☐ Get Involved in Your Community	☐ Document and Insure Property

Did You Know?

- Nearly every emergency begins as a local emergency. Your preparedness during the first 72 hours can make a significant difference.
- A flashlight is safer than candles during a power outage and greatly reduces the risk of house fires.
- Keep at least one gallon of water per person, per day, for at least three days. Don't forget water for pets.
- Your emergency kit isn't "set it and forget it." Check batteries, medications, and expiration dates every six months.
- The best time to make an emergency plan is before you need one. Decide where your family will meet and who to contact if you're separated.

Skunks prepare for winter by eating extra food to build up heavy layers of body fat, searching for safe underground dens, and lining their shelters with dry leaves and grass. Instead of true hibernation, they prepare to enter a deep, lethargic sleep state called torpor when severe cold arrives

Even Animals Prepare for Winter



Snowshoe hares and weasels: Change their fur color from brown to white for camouflage in the snow.



Aquatic Turtles: Snapping turtles and painted turtles burrow deep into the mud at the bottom of local ponds and lakes. They transition to a low-oxygen survival mode, absorbing small amounts of oxygen directly through their skin until the ice melts.

Phillips County

Preparedness Myth vs. Fact

Myth: "I'll have plenty of warning before every disaster." **Fact:** Some emergencies, such as fires, hazardous incidents, or tornadoes, may leave only minutes to react.

Myth: "I can just buy supplies when something happens." **Fact:** Stores often sell out quickly before or immediately after an emergency.

Myth: "My pet will be fine." **Fact:** Every emergency plan should include food, water, medications, carriers, and identification for pets.

Quick Preparedness Tips

- Save important phone numbers in your cell phone—and write them down in case your battery dies.
- Keep your vehicle's gas tank at least half full during severe weather season.
- Store copies of insurance policies, IDs, and important documents in a waterproof container or secure digital location.
- Include prescription medications, eyeglasses, and pet supplies in your emergency kit.
- Sign up for your local emergency notification system before severe weather strikes.
- Charge your phones and backup battery packs whenever severe weather is in the forecast.



Preparation Innovation: The Cooler Trick

The Setup: The resident routinely froze extra water bottles ahead of storm season.

The Action: When the grid went down, they transferred food and ice blocks into insulated coolers.

The Result: Zero spoiled groceries and ice-cold drinking water on hand until power returned.

When the Square Burned: A Phillipsburg Emergency 120 Years Ago

Long before modern fire engines, hydrants, tankers, mutual aid agreements, and emergency-management plans, Phillipsburg faced a disaster that threatened the heart of the community.

In 1906, a fire broke out in Gingle's Restaurant on the south side of the Phillipsburg square. The fire was discovered around 1:00 Sunday morning and quickly spread through the wooden buildings surrounding the square. By the time the fire was under control, ten businesses had been destroyed, including restaurants, offices, shops, a hotel, and the local telephone office. Only a couple of buildings on that side of the square escaped major destruction.

The firefighters of 1906 faced a problem that will sound familiar to anyone involved in emergency response today: resources were limited. According to the City of Phillipsburg's historical account, the only firefighting equipment available was a hose cart equipped with a hand pump.

And the community had already experienced another infrastructure problem just three years earlier. In 1903, a severe windstorm blew down Phillipsburg's wooden water tower, shutting off the town's water supply. The city eventually replaced it with a steel standpipe.

More than a century later, the equipment has changed dramatically, but the lesson has not.

Emergencies still expose weaknesses in our infrastructure and resources. Water supply, communications, equipment, trained personnel, transportation, and mutual aid all become critical when an incident lasts longer or becomes larger than expected.

The firefighters of 1906 could not have imagined modern pumpers, tankers, SCBA, radios, thermal cameras, or anhydrous ammonia response plans. But they understood something that remains true today: when an emergency happens, you have to work with the resources you have—and the time to identify your limitations is before the fire starts.

History isn't just about what happened. Sometimes it's a reminder of why we prepare.

"When danger arrives, you stare the beast in the eyes and don't back down. But what if that danger is a snowstorm? Nature has a way of winning.

Unless you're prepared. An emergency kit in your vehicle won't stop the storm—but it might help you make it home."