UMCOR responds to natural or civil disasters of such magnitude that they overwhelm a community’s ability to recover on its own. Through UMCOR, United Methodists extend loving care to people within the United States, as well as internationally. These beneficiaries are seen as partners, not victims, and UMCOR works to empower them. In its holistic response to disasters, UMCOR:

- Offers disaster preparedness training. In addition, UMCOR helps communities in the United States and abroad prepare for emergencies and to reduce the risk of disasters through a roster of training programs.
- Provides essential supplies and care—both physical and psychological—in the immediate aftermath of a disaster.
- Supports long-term rebuilding efforts and assists communities as they adapt.
- Financial Assistance. If the bishop of the affected conference contacts UMCOR, an solidarity/emergency grant may be sent right away, then the conference may apply for additional grants.
- Networking. Getting connected with NGOs, volunteers, experts, local government, and other organizations can help communities recover from disaster.

**UMCOR’s US Disaster Response**

When disaster strikes, it is local churches that provide the first response to their communities. This basic understanding—that disaster response is local—forms the foundation for UMCOR’s US disaster training and response.

**Keep Food Safe After A Disaster**

You could lose power for a few days after a disaster or severe winter weather. If the power goes out, it is important to know what to do with your refrigerated food.

If you lose power, keep your refrigerator and freezer door closed as much as possible to keep the inside cold. Throw away any food that has been exposed to temperatures 40 degrees or higher for two hours or more. A full freezer will keep the temperature for about 48 hours. Use coolers with ice if needed, and monitor your fridge and freezer temperatures with a thermometer. When in doubt—throw it out! Throw away any food that has an unusual odor, color, or texture.

Don’t forget about refrigerated medicine. If you lose power for more than a day, you should throw away any medication that should be refrigerated unless the label says otherwise. Make sure to check with your doctor to find out how long medication can be stored at higher temperatures before a disaster.

For more tips to keep food safe and survive after a power outage, visit: [https://www.ready.gov/power-outages](https://www.ready.gov/power-outages).

More ...
Prepare for a Power Outage

Severe winter weather may cause power outages. Are you ready if the lights go out? Prepare now to make sure you stay safe if you lose power.

- Make a list of anything you need that uses electricity; plan for batteries and other alternatives to meet your needs when the power goes out.
- Plan if you have medication that needs to be refrigerated. Talk to your doctor about what to do with medicine if you lose power.
- Make sure to have a flashlight and extra batteries at home.
- Have enough non-perishable food and water for your family.
- Keep mobile phones charged and gas tanks full.

For more information to prepare now, survive during, and be safe after a power outage, go to: https://www.ready.gov/power-outages.

Winter
General Preparedness

- Make a family emergency communication plan and include your pets.
- Identify an out of town emergency contact to coordinate information with family/friends.
- Check on neighbors and church members.
- Keep an emergency kit wherever you spend time: home, car, work etc.
- Download the FEMA App and set up local alerts
- Listen to local officials by radio, TV, or social media and take action.
- Practice your preparedness plans with a drill or exercise.
- Take a first aid class so you can help until first responders arrive. https://community.fema.gov/

Pet Preparedness
CPR and AED Awareness

More ...
Fire Safety

- Identify a meeting place for your family or anyone you live with.
- Don’t Wait, Check the Date – Replace Smoke Alarms Every 10 Years.
- United States Fire Administration Outreach Materials

Winterize Your Home

Winter weather can bring extreme cold, ice, snow, or high winds. If bad weather hits, is your home ready? Take time before winter weather arrives to winterize your home:

- Make sure your walls and attic have enough insulation. This preparation will help keep you warm in extreme cold. As a bonus, you can reduce energy waste and save on your electricity bills!
- Caulk and weather-strip your doors and windows.
- Keep indoor space heaters at least three feet away from anything that can burn.
- Never heat your home with a stove.

Learn more about winter weather safety here.

Winter Weather Resources

- Weather Ready Nation NOAA Winter Safety Resources
- According to Ready.gov, if you become caught in a storm while driving, decide whether to Stay or Go:

  STAY:
  - If stuck on the road to avoid exposure and/or when rescue is likely
  - If a safe location is neither nearby or visible
  - If you do not have appropriate clothing to go outside
  - If you do not have the ability to call for help

  GO:
  - If the distance to call for help is accessible.
  - If you have visibility and outside conditions are safe.
  - If you have appropriate clothing.
  - Once the storm has passed, if you are not already home, follow instructions from your local transportation department and emergency management agency to determine if it is safe to drive and, if so, which route will be safest for you to get home. Drive with extra caution.

Snowstorms & Extreme Cold

- Winter storms can cause power outages that last for days.
- Make an emergency kit for at least three days of self-sufficiency.
- Wear warm clothes in layers and change activities to stay safe.
- Never leave children or pets in a car.
- Winter Safety Social Media Toolkit
- Pet Preparedness Social Media Toolkit