



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Question: What is the emergency plan for Aiken County?

Answer: The Aiken County Emergency Management Division, in conjunction with the South Carolina Emergency Management Division (SCEMD) have developed an All Hazards Emergency Operations Plan for preparedness response, and recover from a disaster. For a copy of the plan, see http://www.aikencountysc.gov/Reference/EMD_AikenCountyEOP2014.pdf.

Question: How will I be warned of a disaster?

Answer: In the event of a local emergency in your neighborhood, such as a fire or gas leak, first responders may simply go door-to-door or use public address systems to let you know if you need to evacuate or take some other protective action. There are a number of other tools that emergency officials have to provide warning:

Code Red – An automated telephone based warning system designed to rapidly notify Aiken County residents of emergency situations. The Cod Red Weather Warning system is an integrated component that is also an automated telephone based system designed to notify Aiken County residents of impending severe weather. The weather notification system is an “op-in” system that is **free** to all Aiken county residents. To enroll: please visit <https://cne.coderedweb.com/Default.aspx?groupid=m1dnQAhpPstWsrZJuucfpQ%3d%3d>. Please take time to sign up today!

Emergency Alert System (EAS) – This is another method of using radio, television, and cable broadcasts to warn the public of an emergency. EAS is a system that gives emergency officials and the National Weather Service immediate access to broadcast stations. Unlike standard news releases, EAS broadcasts can be issued very quickly and they can be issued on all radio, television, and cable systems.

NOAA Weather Radio – This is a special consumer radio that will sound an alarm when triggered by emergency officials or the National Weather Service. The alarm is followed by an emergency message. NOAA Weather Radios are essential for preparedness. ***The Aiken County Emergency Management Division highly recommends that residents purchase a NOAA Weather Radio with S.A.M.E. technology. For additional information, please see <http://www.weather.gov/nwr/>***

Social Media – Other good sources of information include Twitter and Facebook.

News releases – If time allows, emergency officials may simply broadcast emergency information to the news media. However this method is primarily used for follow-up information to the public.

Question: Are there designated radio and television stations that broadcast disaster information?

Answer: Yes

- **Area Radio Stations :**WBBQ 104.3, WLJK 89.1, and WKXC 99.5
- **Area Television Stations :** WJBF (ABC) Channel 6, WRDW (CBS) Channel 12, WAGT (NBC) Channel 26, and WFXG (FOX) Channel 54

Question: What NOAA Weather frequencies cover Aiken County?

Answer: 162.450 MHz and 162.550 MHz

Question: How long will it take for help to arrive in a disaster?

Answer: The amount of time it takes for help to arrive in your community after a disaster will depend on the size and scope of the disaster. On any given day in Aiken County, we have enough first response personnel to handle a routine number of calls for help. But when disaster strikes, these personnel may be quickly overwhelmed. Emergency vehicles may be held up because of blocked or damaged roads and 9-1-1 and public safety communication systems may be damaged.

We have plans in place to mobilize local resources in Aiken County and to call on resources from surrounding counties through mutual aid agreements. Additional resources are available from the state and Federal government. But we know from actual disasters that it may take three days or longer for enough help to arrive to address everyone's needs. ***This is why the Aiken County Emergency Management Division strongly encourages all residents to be prepared to be on their own for at least three days.*** This is a realistic amount of time during which emergency services, utilities, and critical infrastructure will be disrupted. Also your family should develop a family emergency preparedness plan. For more information, see <http://www.ready.gov/make-a-plan>.

Question: Where are disaster shelters located in my community?

Answer: The American Red Cross, in conjunction with the Department of Social Services (DSS) is responsible for setting up shelters. The Aiken County Chapter of the American Red Cross has agreements for the use of certain schools, churches, and other buildings in the county. The locations of shelters will vary based on the type and location of the emergency event, the number of persons directly affected by the emergency, and the intended use of a shelter (e.g., a warming shelter versus a hurricane shelter). Shelter locations will be announced via the news media and by calling the Helpline by dialing 211 (<http://www.aikenhelpline211.org>)

Question: Are Aiken County Schools prepared for disaster?

Answer: Aiken County schools have worked hard to protect students from disaster. The Aiken County Public Schools District has a very good disaster plan in place. The Aiken County Emergency Management Division strongly encourages parents to ask school principals about their emergency plans. Do they have an updated emergency plan? Have they practiced the plan? What do they want you to do in the event of an emergency at the school?

Question: How can I prepare my workplace for a disaster?

Answer: Employers should know what they should do to protect their employees in an emergency. They should know how to exit the facility safely and the evacuation meeting locations (rally points).

Every workplace should have a 'facility emergency plan'. This is a plan for protecting the health and safety of building occupants. It should identify who is in charge, how to evacuate, how to respond to fires, medical emergencies, and disasters, how to report emergencies, and other essential items. Work with your employer to identify what planning and preparedness measures need to be in place. For additional information on workplace preparedness, please see <http://www.ready.gov/business>.

For additional information on workplace emergency planning please contact the Aiken County Emergency Management Division.