THE CIVIL PROTECTION HANDBOOK FOR FAMILIES

PROTEZIONE CIVILE NAZIONALE

Published by

Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri
Dipartimento della Protezione Civile

Presidency of the Council of Ministers of Italy
Department of Civil Protection
Via Ulpiano, 11 – Via Vitorchiano, 2 - Rome
Phone: +39 06.68.201 – www.protezionecivile.it
comunicazione@protezionecivile.it
Download available on the website www.protezionecivile.it

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PIANO
DI
PRO

If you are aware of the possible hazards concerning the territory where you live, if you know how and where to get information, if you know how to get organized in order to face a critical moment, you live in a safer way and the Civil Protection can function at its best. Indeed, because you are the first player in this system: you are the one who must know how to be vigilant, to give warning, to cooperate with rescue services. When an emergency occurs – nearly always in a sudden and unpredictable way – you and your family may have to confront difficult and dangerous situations on your own, even if only for the response time needed by rescue workers to reach you and assist you. A lapse of time that may be short or long, depending on the scale of the emergency and on the environmental conditions you find yourselves in. It is therefore essential to know what to do and how to act in such situations.
The purpose of this handbook is to help each member of your household (from children to grandparents) to perform his/her Civil Protection role to the best of his/her ability.
Read it carefully: it provides suggestions and answers; it explains what to do and how; and, above all, it points out both dangerous and proper actions for you and those around you.
Remember: we all are the Civil Protection.

The Civil Protection

In Italy the Civil Protection is a "national service" organized on four levels of competence and responsibility, thus conceived to identify all the solutions to different problems. The first level is municipal: the Mayor is the first Civil Protection authority within the Municipality, the one closest to citizens; her task is to give warning and to face the initial difficult moments or very localized situations, using the resources and manpower at his disposal. If the Municipality is unable to cope with the emergency on its own, the Province, the Government's territorial Offices – i.e. the Prefectures – and, subsequently, the Region intervene in favour of the areas affected by the disaster by activating all the intervention means available. In the event of more serious and widespread emergency situations, the national level steps in: in that case, the intervention becomes the direct responsibility of the Prime Minister, assumes the direct responsibility of the interventions, operating through the Department of Civil Protection.

At each level, the Civil Protection makes use according to need of all local and central resources: all the bodies organized by the State are a part of the National Service, from the Fire Brigade to the Police Force, from the Armed Forces to the Forestry Corps, from Traffic Wardens to the Red Cross, from the scientific community to the Alpine Rescue Service, from the National Health Service to paramedics and ambulances. In addition, the Civil Protection Voluntary Organizations have assumed a particularly significant role, and have grown in all Italian regions, both in numbers and in terms of operational capacity and specialization.

Each fire-fighter, police officer, soldier, volunteer and nurse represents the Civil Protection system. These are the "professionals" who watch over the conditions of our daily life, 24 hours a day and all the year round. But remember: you and your household are the first organizational element of the Civil Protection.

The Civil Protection is changing from a "rescue machine" which intervenes only after a disastrous event, to a monitoring, forecasting and prevention system of the national territory and its hazards. This transformation has involved the main scientific and technical bodies that operate in Italy, at all levels of the system.

A network of "Monitoring Centres" covering the whole national territory has been created: it starts with those networks monitoring potential risks and reaches all regional structures, all the way to the central level. This network provides useful data to decide possible interventions, to inform citizens, to reduce response time and, most of all, to try and prevent disasters.

Civil Protection and Family Units

In order to be efficient and effective during interventions, our structure mostly needs two conditions:
- to be credible and trusted by all citizens;
- each household must feel part of the system and not a passive user.
The most "civil" and useful way of facing topics that concern everyone's safety, with serenity and awareness, is to make your family an active subject of Civil Protection. It is neither difficult nor too demanding!
How? By creating together with all the members of your household a "Civil Protection Family Plan" which entails five fundamental chapters:

1 KNOWING THE RISKS

2 KNOWING HOW TO GET INFORMATION

3 GETTING YOUR FAMILY ORGANIZED

4 KNOWING HOW TO ASK FOR HELP

5 EMERGENCY AND DISABILITY

PROTEZIONE CIVILE NAZIONALE

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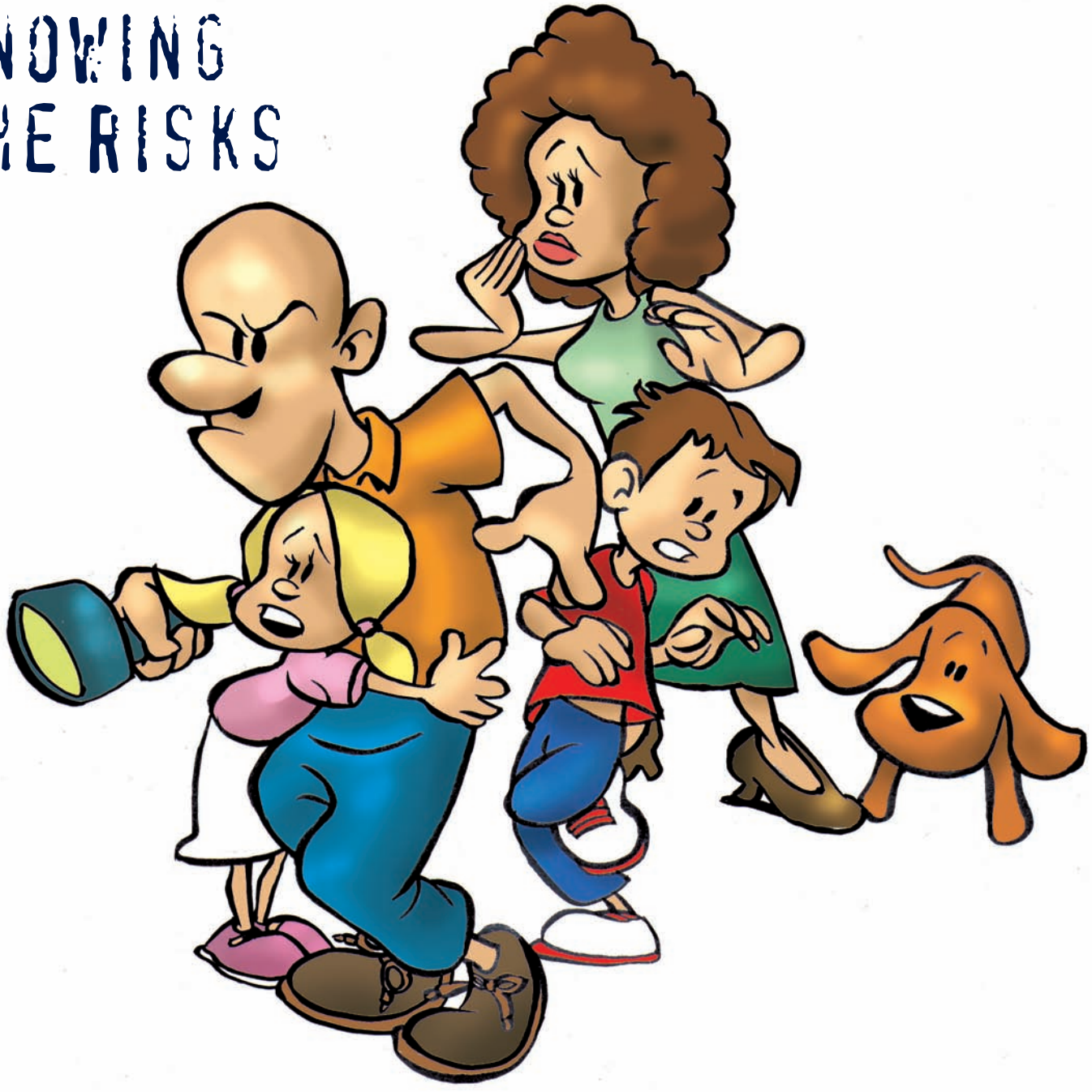
1 KNOWING THE RISKS



EARTHQUAKES

The seismic hazard in a given area may be measured by the damage we can expect following an earthquake, within an established amount of time. It may be expressed in terms of casualties, economic cost, and damage to buildings. Hazard and danger are not the same thing: the danger is represented by the earthquake that could hit a given area (the cause); the hazard is represented by its possible consequences, that is by the damage we can expect (the effect). In fact, the definition of hazard includes dangerousness, as well as the territorial characteristics.
SEISMIC HAZARD = EARTHQUAKES x VULNERABLE BUILDINGS x EXPOSED PROPERTY

What does seismic hazard depend on?

To determine the hazard level of an area it is necessary to know its seismicity, that is how often earthquakes occur and how strong they are, but also the way humans have built their works, which are the vulnerable properties and their numbers, and the population density. In point of fact, given the same frequency and intensity of earthquakes, the hazard is nonexistent where there are no buildings, exposed properties, nor population; whereas areas which are densely populated or characterised by buildings with little resistance to the jolts of a seismic wave, pose a high hazard.

How do we protect ourselves from earthquakes?

Earthquakes cannot be avoided. The only weapon to reduce the seismic hazard is prevention, which comprises: making a complete seismic classification of all Municipalities; building according to

specific earthquake-proof technical regulations; acting appropriately; and working out municipal emergency plans which are necessary to organize prompt assistance for the population involved.

Major Italian earthquakes in the 20th century

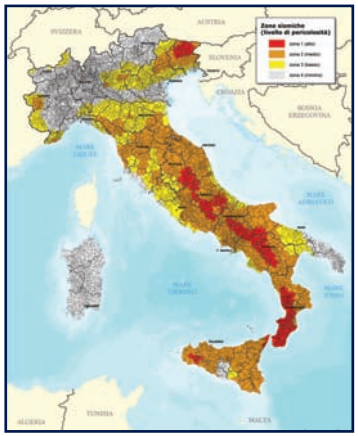
Date	Epicentre Area	Intensity	Magnitude
8th september 1905	Calabria	X	7.1
28th december 1908	Reggio C. – Messina	XI	7.2
7th june 1910	Irpinia	IX	5.9
13rd january 1915	Marsica	XI	7.0
29th june 1919	Mugello	IX	6.2
7th september 1920	Garfagnana	X	6.5
23rd july 1930	Irpinia	X	6.7
21st august 1962	Irpinia	IX	6.2
15th january 1968	Belice	X	6.2
6th may1976	Friuli	IX-X	6.5
23rd november 1980	Irpinia	IX-X	6.9
26th september 1997	Umbria-Marche	IX	5.8

What is the seismic classification?

Based on the frequency and intensity of past earthquakes, interpreted in the light of modern techniques analysing dangerousness, the whole national territory has been classified in four seismic areas. These provide for ever-increasing action levels that must be taken into account when designing buildings (maximum levels for Area 1). The territorial classification began in 1909 and has been updated numerous times up to the current one, provided for in 2003 by Prime Ministerial Ordinance.

Getting to know the seismic zonation of your Municipality

Adopting the territorial seismic classification is incumbent on the Regions by law. Starting from the Prime Ministerial Ordinance (n. 3274/03), each Region has drawn up its own lists where each town is given a precise assignation to one of the four seismic areas. It is possible to examine the seis-



Area 1 → It is the most dangerous area, where strong earthquakes can occur. It includes 716 Towns.

Area 2 → The Towns inserted in this area may experience quite strong earthquakes. It includes 2.324 Towns.

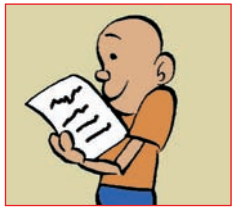
Area 3 → The Towns inserted in this area can be subject to moderate quakes.

Area 4 → It is the least dangerous. In the Towns inserted in this area possible seismic damage is low. It includes 3.427 Towns.

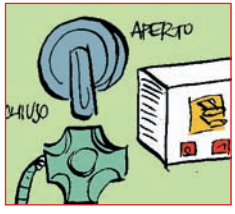
mic classification of your town, by checking the website www.protezionecivile.it. In the towns classified as seismic, anyone building a new house or working on an already existing one must respect earthquake-proof regulations, according to specific criteria for planning and erecting buildings.

WHAT TO DO...

before the earthquake



INQUIRE ABOUT THE SEISMIC CLASSIFICATION OF THE TOWN WHERE YOU LIVE → You must know which building regulations to adopt, who to ask and which measures are provided for in case of



GET TO KNOW THE LOCATION AND HOW TO CLOSE WATER AND GAS TAPS, AND HOW TO TURN OFF THE LIGHT SWITCHES → Such installations could sustain damage during the earthquake

AVOID KEEPING HEAVY OBJECTS ON HIGH SHELVES → Secure the heaviest furnishings to the wall because they could fall on you

KEEP A FIRST-AID KIT AT HOME... → an electric torch, a battery-powered radio, a fire extinguisher and make sure that every family member knows where they are kept

during the earthquake

IF YOU ARE INDOORS TAKE SHELTER IN A DOOR OPENING... → inside a bearing wall (the thickest ones) or under a beam because these can protect you from possible cave-ins

SEEK SHELTER UNDER A TABLE → It is dangerous to stay near pieces of furniture, heavy objects or windows that could fall on you

DO NOT RUSH TO THE STAIRS AND DO NOT USE THE LIFT → Sometimes the stairs are the weakest part of a building and the lift can get stuck and prevent you from exiting

IF YOU ARE IN A CAR, DO NOT STOP NEAR BRIDGES, BEACHES OR GROUNDS SUBJECT TO LANDSLIDES → These could develop cracks, collapse or be hit by tsunami waves

before the earthquake

AT SCHOOL OR AT YOUR WORKPLACE ASK IF THERE IS ANY EMERGENCY PLAN → Because by following instructions you can help manage the emergency

during the earthquake

IF YOU ARE OUTDOORS, STAY AWAY FROM BUILDINGS AND ELECTRIC CABLES → They could collapse

after the earthquake

CHECK THE STATE OF HEALTH OF PEOPLE AROUND YOU → You can help those in difficulties and facilitate rescue operations

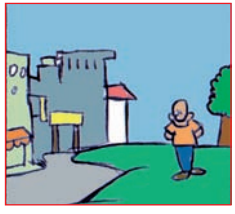
STAY AWAY FROM INDUSTRIAL PLANTS AND ELECTRIC CABLES → Accidents could occur

DO NOT TRY TO MOVE SERIOUSLY INJURED PEOPLE → You could worsen their conditions

STAY AWAY FROM LAKESHORES AND BEACHES → Tsunami waves can hit the shores

GO OUT CAUTIOUSLY ALWAYS WEARING SHOES → In the street you could hurt yourself with broken glass or rubble

DO NOT GO WALKING AND LOOKING AROUND → But rather reach the waiting areas pinpointed by the municipal emergency plan because it is important to avoid dangers



GO TO AN OPEN SPACE, FAR FROM UNSAFE BUILDINGS → They could fall on you

AVOID USING YOUR TELEPHONE AND CAR → It is necessary to keep the phone lines and roads free not to hinder rescue operations

VOLCANIC ERUPTIONS

Volcanic eruptions occur when the magma (solid, liquid and gaseous material at high temperature) from the inside of the Earth comes out to the surface.

A first general classification of volcanic eruptions distinguishes between effusive (lava flow) and explosive (with magma fragmentation into shreds of various sizes called pyroclastic rocks). There are various types of volcanic eruptions, each of which may pose different dangerous phenomena: 1. lava flow; 2. fall of coarse material (volcanic bombs and blocks of various sizes); 3. fall and deposit of fine material (ashes and lapilli); 4. pyroclastic flows; 5. gaseous emissions; 6. mudflows. The most dangerous among these phenomena are pyroclastic flows and mudflows.

The length of volcanic eruptions may vary from a few hours to tens of years (the Kilauea Volcano in the Hawaii Islands has been erupting since 1986). Eruptions can occur from the same volcanic dent (e.g. the Vesuvius) or from dents opening in different places (e.g. the Campi Flegrei and Etna), and the volumes of lava that they can emit are very variable.

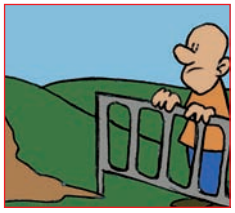
Unlike other natural phenomena such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions are usually foreseeable,

thanks to distinctive precursory phenomena that can be detected by monitoring networks created for such purpose.

WHAT TO DO...

if you live or find yourself in a volcanic area

INQUIRE ABOUT THE EMERGENCY PLAN OF YOUR MUNICIPALITY → In order to act adequately and carry out possible evacuation operations



DURING THE ERUPTION OBEY THE PROHIBITION TO ENTER THE AFFECTED AREAS → Although eruptions seem spectacular and generate curiosity, these places are dangerous

FOLLOW EXCLUSIVELY THE INSTRUCTIONS INDICATED BY CIVIL PROTECTION AUTHORITIES → During critical situations unfounded news may easily be given, thus hindering the rescue intervention

IT IS DANGEROUS TO GO NEAR CRATERS EVEN WHEN THE VOLCANO IS NOT ACTIVE → Sudden explosive phenomenon and/or gaseous emissions are always possible

in case of lava flow

DO NOT APPROACH AN ACTIVE LAVA FLOW EVEN IF IT IS FLOWING DOWN REGULARLY → They are very hot, release gases, and can cause falling incandescent rocks and sudden explosions

EVEN AFTER THE ERUPTION HAS ENDED DO NOT WALK ON THE SURFACE OF A LAVA FLOW → The flows retain their heat for years

in case of falling "volcanic bombs"

INQUIRE WHETHER THE AREA WHERE YOU ARE IS SUBJECT TO FALLS OF COARSE MATERIAL → It is a highly destructive phenomenon for buildings which cannot therefore constitute a shelter

EXAMINE THE EMERGENCY PLAN OF YOUR MUNICIPALITY AND GET READY FOR A POSSIBLE EVACUATION → The preventive departure from the affected area is the only possible defence

in case of falling volcanic ashes

STAY HOME WITH CLOSED WINDOWS AND CHECK THE DEPOSIT ON YOUR HOUSEROOF → Volcanic ash is heavy and its build-up could cause the roof to crack or cave in

OUTDOORS WEAR A RESPIRATOR AND PROTECTIVE GLASSES AND DRIVE CAREFULLY → Ashes provoke trouble to the respiratory system and to the eyes, and causes the road surfaces to become slippery

in case of gaseous emissions

AVOID STOPPING OR CAMPING IN VOLCANIC AREAS AND DO NOT ENTER UNDERGROUNG PLACES → Carbon dioxide is an odourless gas heavier than air and is lethal in high concentration

DO NOT THINK THAT YOU ARE SAFE IF YOU STOP FAR FROM THE CRATER → Gaseous emissions can reach even distant areas

in case of pyroclastic flows

GET READY FOR A POSSIBLE EVACUATION → The only defence from this type of flow is the preventive departure from the area at risk

in case of mudflows

FOLLOW THE CIVIL PROTECTION PLAN WHICH PINPOINTS THE WAITING AREAS AND MOVE AWAY FROM THE AREAS AT RISK → Fine ashes can trigger dangerous mudflows that pour along watercourses

LANDSLIDES

The process of a landslide can be explained as follows: the material making up a slope, an escarpment or a rock face is attracted downwards by the force of gravity and stays in that position until factors such as the nature of the ground or rock, the shape or profile of the slope, and the amount of water present keep it balanced. Just think of a sandcastle: if you do not add a little water to unite the grains it will never hold up, but if you add too much it collapses! The same happens along slopes: they need the right amount of water not to slide down. There are numerous and often combined causes that bring about the destabilization process of a versant. In addition to the amount of water or snow fallen, deforestation and fires also cause landslides: in point of fact, on wooded slopes the tree roots consolidate the ground and absorb excess water. The actions of Man on the terrain have provoked landslides in the past and could provoke them again in the future. For instance, the action of digging at the foot of a slope or halfway up a hillside to build roads or constructions may cause the ground to subside. Italy's Alpine and Apennine terrains, as well as coastal ones, are generally exposed to landslide risk due to the nature of rocks and inclination, which can give the slope a certain instability called relief energy. Furthermore, the climatic characteristics, the yearly distribution of precipitations, as well as the deep territorial transformation brought about by human activities that are often lacking common sense and respect for the environment (building roads, ski slopes, new settlements, etc.) all contribute to the increasing vulnerability of the terrain.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE INVOLVED IN A LANDSLIDE

If you are indoors

DO NOT RUSH OUTSIDE, STAY WHERE YOU ARE → By staying inside the building you are more protected than outside

TAKE SHELTER UNDER A TABLE, BELOW THE ARCHITRAVE OR NEAR THE BEARING WALLS → They protect you from possible cave-ins

STAY AWAY FROM WINDOWS, DOORS WITH GLASS AND CUPBOARDS → They could fall and hurt you

DO NOT USE LIFTS → They could get stuck and prevent you from exiting

If you are outdoors

MOVE AWAY FROM BUILDINGS, TREES, STREETLIGHTS, ELECTRIC CABLES AND TELEPHONE LINES → They could fall down and hurt you

DO NOT WALK OR DRIVE ALONG A ROAD WHERE A LANDSLIDE HAS RECENTLY SLIPPED → It is unstable material that could start moving again

DO NOT VENTURE OUT ON THE LANDSLIDE BODY → The material of a landslide, even if stable in appearance, can hide dangerous underlying holes

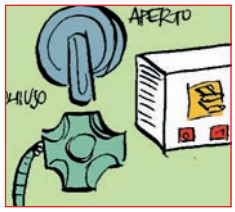
DO NOT ENTER HOUSES INVOLVED IN THE LANDSLIDE BEFORE A THOROUGH ASSESSMENT BY EXPERTS → They could have sustained structural damage and be unsafe

FLOODS

The catchment basin is the area delimited by elevations which take on the name and function of a "divide", dividing rainwater among different basins. Part of the rain falling inside a catchment basin will be detained by the ground and vegetation, part will seep down to feed underground strata, and the rest will reach the watercourse flowing in the basin. Each basin has a specific capacity for optimizing its regime; if precipitations are very heavy or prolonged, the amount of water reaching the watercourse may increase significantly. The river then swells up to full spate. In these conditions, if the water flow meets a narrowing in the river-bed caused sometimes merely by the obstruction of a bridge archway due to amassed trees and other materials carried by the current, it either causes the riverbanks to collapse, in one or more locations, or else, at the end of its journey it meets with a breaking sea at the mouth of the river, the water level will exceed the banks and the water will start to overflow, thus flooding the surrounding ground, the countryside and towns. Flooding is not the only damage connected to inundations: if the water erodes the ground on which it flows, it will carry soil, rocks and trees downstream, thus originating the so-called "torrential lava". Along the way water can erode the riversides and undermine whole slopes, causing landslides, causing the cave-in of buildings along the shores, sweeping away infrastructures, bridges, roads and anything not fixed to the ground, from cars to buses, from lorries to people. A flood can be very dangerous; however, it represents a deadly threat only to those who do not know it and do not act with great caution.

DURING THE FLOOD

If you are at home



IF YOU HAVE TO LEAVE YOUR HOME, TURN OF THE GAS TAP AND DISCONNECT THE POWER → These installations could get damaged during the disaster

DO NOT FORGET TO CARRY YOUR DOCUMENTS AND USUAL MEDICINES → They can be essential should you not be able to reach your home for a long period of time

WEAR CLOTHES AND SHOES THAT PROTECT YOU FROM WATER → It is important for you to keep warm and dry

IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO LEAVE YOUR HOME GO TO THE HIGHEST FLOORS AND WAIT FOR RESCUE WORKERS → This will prevent you from being carried away by the flood

DO NOT USE THE TELEPHONE UNLESS YOU REALLY NEED TO → You will thus avoid congesting the telephone lines which are necessary to organize rescue operations

If you are outdoors

DO NOT, FOR ANY REASON, CROSS A BRIDGE OR GO NEAR RIVERS, TORRENTS, SLOPES, ETC. → Floodwaters could sweep you away

FOLLOW CAREFULLY THE ROAD SIGNS AND ANY OTHER INFORMATION ARRANGED BY AUTHORITIES→ In this way you will avoid going to dangerous areas

IF YOU ARE DRIVING DO NOT BLOCK THE STREETS→ These are necessary for rescue services to operate

DO NOT GO DOWN FLOODED STREETS, UNDERPASSES OR SUBWAYS→ Water could be deeper and faster than it appears and the water level could jam your car

PAY ATTENTION TO THE INSTRUCTIONS PROVIDED BY AUTHORITIES→ They manage the emergency and coordinate rescue teams

AFTER THE FLOOD

DO NOT USE WATER UNTIL IT IS DECLARED DRINKABLE AGAIN AND DO NOT EAT ANY FOOD EXPOSED TO THE FLOOD→ They could contain pathogens or be contaminated

DO NOT USE ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES BEFORE A TECHNICIAN HAS CHECKED THEM→ If they have been damaged they could cause a short-circuit

CLEAN AND DISINFECT ALL SURFACES EXPOSED TO THE FLOOD→ Noxious substances or pathogens could be present on them

SEAQUAKES OR TSUNAMIS

A seaquake is a succession of very long waves which are generated in the sea and spread at high speed. While approaching the coasts, the waves decrease in speed and length, while gradually increasing in height until they flood the coast with often devastating effects.
Seaquakes can be caused by submarine earthquakes, by submarine volcanic eruptions, or by landslides occurring or flowing in the sea.

CAUTION!

If you feel an earthquake, see an explosive eruption on a volcanic island, notice a large landslide flowing into the sea, or observe the sudden, inexplicable withdrawing of the sea from the coast

IF YOU ARE ON SHORE MOVE AWAY IMMEDIATELY TOWARDS HIGHER GROUNDS→
The higher you are, the lesser probabilities that the wave can reach you and sweep you away

IF YOU ARE ON A BOAT MOVE AWAY IMMEDIATELY TOWARDS THE DEEP, OPEN SEA→The effects of a seaquake impact on the coast, while in the open sea those same waves could be barely perceptible

ROAD CONDITIONS

Users travelling by different means (by road, railway, air, watercourse, intermodal) can be exposed to dangers or serious trouble caused either by events connected to transport activities themselves (accidents, prolonged road blocks, traffic jams etc.), or by particularly unfavourable weather conditions (snow, fog, heavy precipitation, etc.). At present, in Italy, passengers and goods travel mainly by road. Over the past thirty years in particular, car and lorry traffic has more than tripled, and the trend for the immediate future shows further increase.

Travel and information

It is a good idea for road users to inquire about weather and/or road conditions, both prior to setting out on a journey and during the journey itself. To that end, it is advisable to tune in to radio stations that broadcast news and updates: ISORADIO, pertaining to the Italian motorway authorities, RAI stations broadcasting the "Onda verde" news bulletin, and local radio stations. Most motorway companies provide real-time news about road conditions on their websites and, in some cases, even allow access to web cams placed along roads; some companies also have a toll-free number. Another important source of information comes from the Traffic Police's Departmental Operations Centres and from the Motorways Operations Centres, managed by 'Polstrada' together with road companies.

IN CASE OF UNFAVOURABLE WEATHER CONDITIONS

(snow, ice, wind, fog, heavy precipitations, etc.)

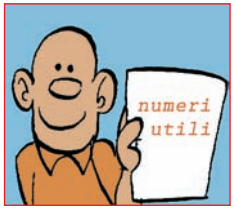
ALL TRAFFIC REGULATIONS ARE DESIGNED FOR YOUR SAFETY → They show how to act cautiously and sensibly for safe driving

MAKE SURE YOU HAVE ENOUGH FUEL TO COPE WITH POSSIBLE PROLONGED STOPS→ Without fuel the critical situation would become even more dangerous

ROAD CONDITIONS CAN WORSEN AND EVEN BECOME CRITICAL DUE TO HEAVY RAIN, SNOW AND FOG→ Always remember that your goal is for you and other travellers to reach your destination safely

IF YOU ARE TRAVELLING WITH CHILDREN, AGED OR SICK PEOPLE, BRING WHAT CAN MAKE THEM MORE COMFORTABLE DURING STOPS CAUSED BY TRAFFIC JAMS→ Because your passengers have special needs

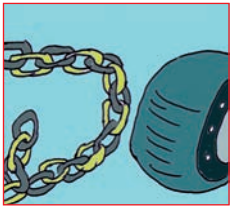
INQUIRE BEFOREHAND ABOUT WEATHER AND TRAFFIC CONDITIONS BY LISTENING TO THE RADIO→ Road conditions change constantly



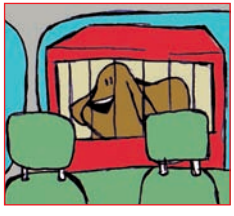
MAKE SURE YOU HAVE USEFUL NUMBERS TO ASK FOR INFORMATION AND/OR HELP→ You could need immediate assistance

IF NOT STRICTLY NECESSARY, POSTPONE YOUR DEPARTURE UNTIL THE CRITICAL SITUATION TAKING PLACE HAS IMPROVED→ It is better not to take unnecessary risks

TAKE GREAT CARE OVER THE PROPER SEATING OF CHILDREN AND MAKE SURE THEIR SEAT BELTS ARE FASTENED→ Their safety depends on your care



DURING HEAVY SNOWFALLS DO NOT DRIVE WITHOUT SNOW CHAINS OR SNOW TYRES→ There is a high risk of loosing control of your car



PLACE ANIMALS IN CAREFULLY PRE-ARRANGED SPACES→ In case of sudden braking or accident their reaction could be unpredictable and therefore very dangerous

SNOW AND AVALANCHES

Avalanches are critical events caused by a sudden stability loss of the snow present on a slope, followed by a downward sliding of the mantle of snow affected by the fracture.
In other terms, it is the fast gravitational sliding of a mass of snow down a mountain slope. The breaking can be either natural or provoked.
In the first case, the avalanche can be caused by factors such as the weight of freshly fallen snow or a rise in temperature.
In contrast, there are two types of provoked fractures: they can be accidental, i.e. caused unintentionally by people walking or skiing on a slope covered with fresh snow and whose weight provokes an avalanche. Or they can be planned, for instance in ski resorts when dangerous slopes are cleared by means of explosives.

IF YOU ARE INDOORS

IF YOU ARE OUTDOORS

In case of heavy snowfall and/or high avalanche risk

DO NOT GO OUT → Buildings are usually safe places, whereas there are more dangers outdoors

PICK OUT A SAFE PATH TO REACH A SHELTER→ Find a shelter, even just a big boulder or an old mountain refuge. The shortest route to reach the shelter is not necessarily the safest one

KEEP UP TO DATE BY LISTENING TO THE WEATHER FORECAST→ You can get useful information on weather conditions and the situation of the mantle of snow

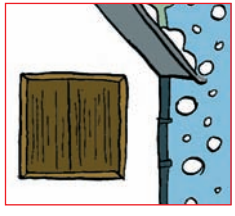
INFORM YOUR FAMILY OR FRIENDS ABOUT YOUR PRESENT LOCATION→ If someone knows where you are, he/she will not worry, and will also be able to send help in case of need

IF YOU HAVE TO GO OUT, AVOID DANGEROUS AREAS→ The risk is higher near gullies, exposed slopes and peaks. There are relatively safe places known by those who live in the mountains

DO NOT MOVE AROUND DANGEROUS OR LITTLE KNOWN AREAS→ Venturing out in dangerous places is sensible only in extreme cases and for good reasons; when in doubt, it is preferable to wait until conditions improve

IF YOU HAVE TO GO OUT, AVOID DOING SO WHEN THE DANGER IS GREATER→ Poor visibility, wind during a snowfall or a sharp rise in temperature right after a snowfall can increase the risk of avalanche

OBEY THE SIGNS FOUND IN SKI DISTRICTS→ Do not ski off-piste where it is forbidden as it can be very dangerous in case of avalanche



IF THE BUILDING WHERE YOU ARE IS AT RISK, CLOSE THE SHUTTERS→ An avalanche can break doors and windows; by keeping the shutters closed you will increase the strength of the building

A PAGER, AVALANCHE PROBE AND SNOW SHOVEL→ These are essential instruments that you must carry when hiking or skiing in areas at risk

IF YOU ARE ON A CHAIR LIFT OR IN A CABLE CAR

IF YOU ARE STUCK, STAY CALM AND WAIT FOR HELP→ A sudden movement could make you fall

LIFT THE SAFETY BAR ONLY WHEN YOU ARE TOLD→ The safety measures in place at your arrival will help prevent accidents. The staff is trained to intervene promptly in case the installation stops

ALWAYS LOWER AND CLOSE THE SAFETY BAR PROPERLY→ It protects you from falling in case of sudden movements

DO NOT MAKE ANY RASH MOVEMENTS → They could cause dangerous swaying motions

LOOK AFTER CHILDREN→ Being small, they could easily slip from the chair

IN CASE OF STOPPAGE, DO NOT GET OFF BY YOURSELF→ It is an unnecessary risk: a rescue team is on its way

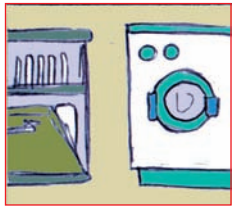
WATER SHORTAGE

An emergency water shortage situation occurs when the water demand on the part of citizens is higher than the supply: in this case, the users' demand cannot be met. The causes can be: natural, for example during a lengthy period of low precipitations; caused by human activities, such as polluted springs or wells; or accidental, for example due to the bursting of pipe-lines. In order to respond promptly in the event of a water shortage, the Civil Protection carries out a periodical monitoring of water supplies, in cooperation with all the bodies that normally manage water resources. In case of a shortage that prevents to meet the demands for the various uses (for population, agriculture and industry), the Civil Protection works together with the Institutions and Governmental Bodies concerned to define and implement the necessary measures to cope with critical situations and avoid additional negative consequences, such as possible blackouts. In particular, when there is a shortage of drinking water, the waterworks company carries out a contingency plan that may provide for added supplies through the distribution of bottled water or water-supply trucks; at the same time, there is a cutback on consumption by means of water rationing and conservation. In case of a serious emergency, the individual daily amount that must be guaranteed has been estimated at a maximum of 50 litres of drinking water. Under normal conditions and in most of Italy, drinking water is available to all without any particular restrictions. However, water is a limited resource. It is therefore important for families to learn how to use it judiciously, avoiding waste, and getting ready to face possible situations of a temporary water shortage in order to minimize potential inconveniences and sanitary problems.

WHAT TO DO...

to economize on water in general

IF THE WATER METER RUNS WHEN TAPS ARE CLOSED, THERE IS A LEAK IN THE WATER SYSTEM → In this case, contact a qualified repairman



ALWAYS USE THE WASHER AND DISHWASHER WITH A FULL LOAD→ You save on water and electricity

USE TOILETS THAT HAVE TANKS WITH TWO FLUSHES→ You can save up to 60% compared to a tank with one toilet flush

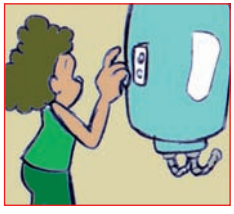
WHEN YOU GO ON HOLIDAYS OR LEAVE YOUR HOME FOR A LONG PERIOD OF TIME→ Turn off the main tap

WATER YOUR PLANTS IN THE MORNING OR AT SUNSET→ This will reduce the amount of water evaporating due to the heat of the sun

to use it during a water shortage

IN CASE OF RESTRICTIONS ON CONSUMPTION, USE WATER STRICTLY FOR ESSENTIAL NEEDS→ For example, do not water your garden or wash your car

PRIOR TO THE CUT, STOCK UP ON A MINIMAL AMOUNT OF WATER FOR BATHROOM AND KITCHEN→ It is essential to cope with the period of the cut



TURN OFF THE ELECTRIC WATER HEATER→ Turn it on again only when the supply is back to normal to avoid damaging it

BEFORE DRINKING TAP WATER, CHECK ITS ODOUR AND COLOUR→ If it looks or smells strange, sterilize or boil the water

MAKE SURE THE TAPS ARE TURNED OFF WHEN THERE IS NO WATER→ Both to avoid waste and to prevent flooding when the water will be back

HEAT WAVES

The World Health Organization has highlighted that climatic variations, especially those connected to global warming, may cause serious health problems for people deemed at risk due to age, to a particular frailty or illness, and to socio-economic, cultural and environmental conditions.
In the summertime, specific weather conditions produce heat waves, which may represent a health hazard and are especially noticeable in large urban areas.
Heat waves are characterized by high, above average temperatures that can last for days or weeks with high humidity levels. During heat waves, not all people living in cities are hit in the same way: among the elderly, the most at risk are people suffering from chronic diseases, those living in isolation or residing in poorer neighbourhoods. The number of people at risk is increasing because of the ageing population and the gradual increase of senior citizens living on their own, often in total isolation.

A national plan to prevent the effects of heat waves on our health

Since summer 2004, the Italian Department of Civil Protection has activated a "National warning system to prevent the effects of heat on our health" in all major urban areas. In point of fact, heat waves and their health consequences can be forecasted in advance: by developing specific preventive measures aimed at the weakest segments of the population, it is possible to reduce the effects of heat on people's state of health.
In the summertime, in all major Italian cities, a news bulletin is broadcast daily concerning graduated risk levels, underlining harmful effects for the next day and the two following days.
The bulletin is sent to the various local operations centres. It is their task to coordinate prevention interventions designed especially for those people most at risk (the elderly, chronic invalids) with the help of social and health services personnel.

WHAT TO DO...

during a heat wave

IF POSSIBLE DO NOT GO OUTDOORS FROM 12 P.M. TO 6 P.M. → These are the hottest hours of the day

AVOID DRINKING ALCOHOL, HAVE LIGHT MEALS, EAT FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLES→ Alcohol and heavy foods increase heat production inside your body

HAVE COLD SHOWERS AND BATHS → To lower your body temperature

WEAR LIGHT, COMFORTABLE CLOTHES IN NATURAL FIBRES→ Clothes in synthetic fibres prevent perspiration and thus loss of heat

SHADE YOUR WINDOWS WITH SHUTTERS, VENETIAN BLINDS OR CURTAINS→ To prevent rooms from becoming overheated

MAKE SURE THAT RELATIVES, NEIGHBOURS AND FRIENDS LIVING ON THEIR OWN ARE IN GOOD HEALTH, AND OFFER THEM YOUR HELP→ Because many people suffering from heat waves are alone

DRINK A LOT OF WATER. THE ELDERY MUST DRINK EVEN WHEN THEY DO NOT FEEL THIRSTY→ Even if you are not thirsty, your body could need water

SPEND AT LEAST A FEW HOURS IN AIR-CONDITIONED PLACES→ To reduce exposure to high temperatures

FOREST FIRES

A forest fire can be defined as "a fire which tends to spread over wooded and bushy areas or over farmland, wild country and pastures in proximity to those areas".
In order for a fire to develop, three elements known as the "fire triangle" must be present: combustible (dry grass, leaves, wood), comburent (oxygen) and heat (necessary for the combustible to reach lighting temperature).
Special weather conditions (e.g. very hot and windy days in a period of low precipitations) can facilitate the swift spreading of a fire.

The causes of a fire can be:
NATURAL, such as lightning. These are the least frequent of all.
MAN-MADE, caused by human activities. These can be:
→ accidental, for example in the case of a short-circuit, overheated engines, sparks from work tools, etc;
→ unintentional, such as some farming and pastoral activities, irresponsible conduct in tourist areas, incautious tossing of burning material (matches, cigarettes, etc.);
→ arson, when the fire is set deliberately by humans for a wide variety of reasons (revenge, spite, protest, property speculation) in order to cause damage.
Unfortunately, these are the most frequent causes of forest fires.

HOW TO ACT...

to avoid forest fires

DO NOT THROW AWAY CIGARETTE BUTTS OR MATCHES THAT ARE STILL LIT → They can set fire to the dry grass found on the escarpments along roads, railways, etc.

IT IS FORBIDDEN AND DANGEROUS TO LIGHT A FIRE IN THE WOODS→ Use only specially-equipped and designated areas. Never leave the fire unattended and make sure it is completely out before leaving

IF YOU NEED TO PARK YOUR CAR, MAKE SURE THAT THE EXHAUST PIPE DOES NOT TOUCH ANY DRY GRASS→ A very hot exhaust pipe could easily set the dry grass on fire

DO NOT LEAVE YOUR RUBBISH IN THE FOREST OR IN ILLEGAL DUMPING GROUNDS→ It could contain dangerous combustible materials

DO NOT BURN STUBBLE, STRAW OR OTHER RESIDUAL AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS→ The fire could get out of control in a matter of minutes

when there is a fire

IF YOU SEE FLAMES OR EVEN JUST SMOKE CALL 1515 IMMEDIATELY TO RAISE THE ALARM → Do not assume that others have already called. Provide all necessary information to locate the fire

LOOK FOR A SAFE ESCAPE ROUTE: A ROAD OR WATERCOURSE. DO NOT STOP IN PLACES LOCATED DOWNWIND FROM THE FIRE→ You could get trapped by surrounding flames and be unable to escape

LIE DOWN IN A PLACE WHERE THERE IS NO VEGETATION THAT COULD CATCH FIRE→ Smoke tends to rise. In such a position you can avoid inhaling it

IF YOU HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE, TRY TO PASS THROUGH THE FIRE WHERE IT IS LESS INTENSE IN ORDER TO REACH THE AREA THAT WAS ALREADY BURNT→ You will then be in a safe place. BUT REMEMBER: ONLY IF YOU HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE

A FIRE IS NOT A SHOW. DO NOT STOP ALONG THE ROADS→ This would hinder rescue operations and communications that are essential to manage the emergency

DOMESTIC FIRES

How to prevent fires

It is essential to follow some simple rules which may be summarized as follows:
→ do not smoke in bed; → do not leave pots unattended on lit burners and keep all combustible materials away from the cooker; → have a qualified technician routinely check the heating system, the flue and the stove; → keep matches and lighters away from children; → keep flammable liquids away from heat sources; → do not use gas or open fire equipment (including fireplaces) in rooms lacking adequate ventilation.

How to proceed in case of fire

To deal with the outset of a fire, it is sufficient to follow some simple advices:
→ if a pot catches fire, simply put it out by covering it with a lid to smother the flames; → if the clothes you are wearing catch fire do not run around (air feeds the fire!), instead, you must take off your clothes or try to smother the flames by rolling on the ground or covering yourself with a blanket; → if an electrical appliance or part of an electrical system catches fire, switch off the power before attempting to put it out.
Remember: never use water to put out a fire caused by an electric source: you could get a strong electric shock! Similarly, water should not be used to put out fires involving petrol or oil because these substances float on water and could spread the fire to other places.

HOW TO ACT DURING A DOMESTIC FIRE

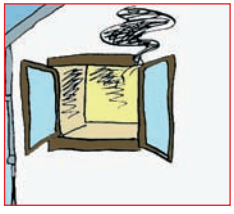
IF POSSIBLE, GET OUT OF THE HOUSE OR TRY TO REACH A SAFE PLACE → In this way you will avoid inhaling smoke and being caught up in the fire

IF YOU FEEL UNWELL, CALL 118 IMMEDIATELY→ You may have been poisoned by smoke or other substances present in the room

IF THERE IS SMOKE IN THE ROOM, FILTER THE AIR BY BREATHING THROUGH A CLOTH (PREFERABLY WET) AND LIE DOWN ON THE FLOOR → The air is more breathable at ground level

LOOK AFTER PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT SELF-SUFFICIENT AND, IF POSSIBLE, HELP THEM REACH A SAFE PLACE → They might be unaware of the danger

IF THE FIRE IS OUTSIDE THE DOOR, TRY SEALING ALL SLITS WITH CLOTHS, PREFERABLY WET ONES → You will prevent the smoke from seeping into the room and help the door contain the fire



ENTER THE ROOMS INVOLVED IN THE FIRE ONLY AFTER THEY HAVE COOLED DOWN AND HAVE BEEN VENTILATED→ It is fundamental to thoroughly ventilate the rooms for a few hours

IF YOU LIVE IN A BLOCK OF FLATS, REMEMBER NEVER TO USE THE LIFT IN CASE OF FIRE → The lift could get stuck and trap you inside

BEFORE GOING BACK INTO YOUR FLAT CHECK WITH THE FIRE BRIGADE→ There could still be potentially dangerous situations

IF YOU ARE IN A CROWDED PLACE, MOVE TOWARDS THE CLOSEST EMERGENCY EXIT WITHOUT SHOVING OR SHOUTING → These exits are designed for the swift evacuation of all people!

FOOD PRODUCTS THAT HAVE COME INTO CONTACT WITH HEAT OR SMOKE FROM THE FIRE ARE NO LONGER EDIBLE→ They may have been spoilt or contaminated

BLACKOUTS

What are they?

A blackout is a power outage.
It can either be local, if it only concerns a very limited area, or widespread, if it affects one or more Municipalities or much wider areas, even reaching regional or national dimensions as it happened on the 23rd September, 2003 in Italy.
It may be caused by a cut or sudden overload of the electric system, brought about by a failure in a power plant or in the grid.

Important

If a member of your family needs life-saving electromedical equipment, always keep the telephone number of the emergency healthcare services handy.

HOW TO ACT DURING A BLACKOUT

MAKE SURE YOU ALWAYS HAVE AN ELECTRIC TORCH AND A BATTERY-POWERED RADIO → The electric torch allows you to move around, while the radio allows you to get information and updates about the ongoing emergency

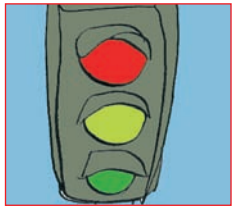
DO NOT USE THE LIFT→ There is a danger of getting trapped inside

BE CAREFUL WHEN USING CANDLES AND OTHER TYPES OF LIGHTING SUCH AS GAS LAMPS, OIL LAMPS, ETC. → If the open flame comes into contact with flammable materials it can provoke a fire

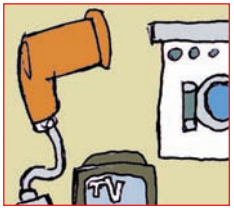
IF YOU ARE STUCK IN A LIFT, DO NOT TRY TO GET OUT AT ALL COSTS→ There is plenty of air because lift cars are not air-tight

DO NOT OPEN THE DEEPFREEZER AND REFRIGERATOR UNNECESSARILY → Foods contained inside may get spoilt and become a health hazard

DO NOT USE YOUR TELEPHONE EXCEPT IN AN EMERGENCY→ It is important not to congest telephone lines since they are needed for rescue services



IF YOU ARE IN THE STREET, BE CAREFUL AT CROSSROADS→ If the traffic lights are out, some drivers may manoeuvre in an incorrect or unpredictable way



WHEN THE POWER IS BACK, DO NOT USE YOUR HOUSEHOLD ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES ALL AT ONCE→ Not to overload the power lines

INDUSTRIAL HAZARDS

An industrial hazard entails the possibility that, due to an accident in an industrial plant, there may be subsequently a fire, an explosion or a toxic cloud, involving one or more dangerous substances with potentially harmful effects on the population or the environment.
These effects are mitigated by the implementation of suitable contingency plans, both internal (drawn up by the industry to cope immediately with the accident) and external (drawn up by the Authorities to face the possible consequences on the surrounding areas). The external plans provide for adequate self-protection measures and for the appropriate actions that the population must take.

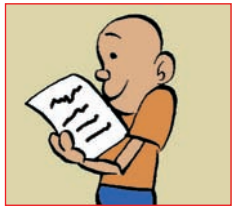
Recommendations

If you reside in an area with industrial plants, inquire with the Mayor of your Municipality if they appear on the list of installations at risk, for which there are contingency plans in case of an accident. You can also obtain this information by checking the internet website of the Ministry of the Environment. The list of industrial plants at risk of serious accidents can be found at the following URL:
www.minambiente.it/Sito/settori_azione/iar/stabilimenti/stabilimenti_italia.asp
For cases of fires and/or explosions, please read the recommendations provided in the relevant chapters.

Evacuation

When there is a high contamination risk, the Authorities in charge of managing the emergency may order an evacuation according to the pre-arranged external contingency plan, which also provides instructions on the evacuation procedures and information on the collection points.

IN CASE OF AN INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENT

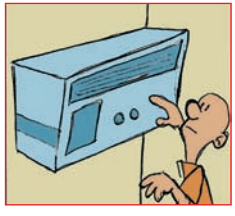


FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS FOUND ON THE PUBLIC INFORMATION LEAFLETS ISSUED BY THE MAYOR → Know the safety measures and the best conduct to adopt

KEEP UP TO DATE BY LISTENING TO THE RADIO AND WATCHING TV→ To learn about the ongoing situation and about the instructions issued by the competent authorities regarding what to do until the all-clear signal

IF THE PLANT IS EMITTING TOXIC SUBSTANCES→ Take shelter indoors

PAY ATTENTION TO THE INFORMATION GIVEN BY THE AUTHORITIES VIA MEGAPHONES, SIGNALS AND OTHER MEANS → They can provide useful information, both on which measures to take and on the current situation



TO REDUCE EXPOSURE TO SUBSTANCES → Close doors and windows blocking all narrow openings with wet cloths, switch off air conditioners and ventilators in order to prevent the outside air to filter inside

AFTER THE ALL-CLEAR SIGNAL, VENTILATE ALL ROOMS AND STAY TUNED TO THE LOCAL RADIO STATION → To ensure a proper exchange of air and to follow post-emergency developments

FLU EPIDEMICS/PANDEMICS

Flu

The flu is an acute respiratory disease caused by an infection from influenza viruses; it develops primarily in the wintertime. It represents a significant public health problem due to its omnipresence and infectiousness, its possible complications, and given the presence of animal reservoirs.
The virus responsible for the flu enters the body through the respiratory system and is highly contagious. In Italy, some flu epidemics occur, infecting on average 5 million people.
Influenza viruses are characterised by a marked propensity to change in such a way as to bypass the protective barrier of people's resistance to infection. This entails that the defences designed to fight against the influenza virus spreading during a given year may prove ineffective against the virus circulating the following year. For this reason, the composition of the flu vaccine needs to be updated every year, and the vigilance of healthcare services is fundamental to prepare an effective vaccine for the following winter.

Pandemic

A flu pandemic is the spreading of a new influenza virus throughout the world population. It can spread very quickly since it is a new virus and nobody has yet developed the specific immunity to this infection. Pandemics develop at unpredictable time intervals. During last century there was the Spanish flu in 1918, the Asian flu in 1957 and the Hong Kong flu in 1968. In case of a pandemic, the health Authorities inform the public regularly via radio, television and newspapers, indicating which measures must be taken to protect public health.

Getting vaccinated - especially for people at risk - is the best way to prevent and fight against the flu for 2 reasons:

1) because you decrease significantly the probability of catching the disease;
2) because, in case flu symptoms develop, these will be less serious and the risk of complications will decrease.

HOW TO ACT IN CASE OF AN EPIDEMIC/PANDEMIC

CONSULT YOUR FAMILY DOCTOR OR THE PREVENTION DEPARTMENT OF YOUR LOCAL HEALTH AUTHORITY (ASL) → To obtain reliable and updated information on the vaccine and the disease

FOLLOW THE HEALTH AUTHORITIES' INSTRUCTIONS SCRUPULOUSLY→ Because, in case of a pandemic, some special measures may be necessary to ensure your safety

INQUIRE IF YOU FIT IN THE CATEGORIES AT RISK FOR WHOM VACCINATION IS RECOMMENDED→ Some people are more vulnerable than others to the virus

IF YOU HAVE THE SYMPTOMS SEE YOUR DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY→ A prompt diagnosis helps your recovery and reduces the risk of contagion for others

GET VACCINATED ONLY AFTER HAVING CONSULTED YOUR DOCTOR OR LOCAL HEALTH AUTHORITIES (ASL) → The vaccine protects from the virus; however, it may be unadvisable for some people

TAKE CARE OF YOUR PERSONAL HYGIENE AND KEEP YOUR HOME AND WORK ENVIRONMENTS CLEAN→ To reduce the risk of infection

CHECK THE INSTITUTIONAL WEBSITES AND READ THE OFFICIAL BULLETINS→ To keep up to date with the ongoing situation

IF YOU ARE LIVING WITH A SICK PERSON, DO NOT SHARE PERSONAL OBJECTS→ To avoid contagion

TERRORIST ATTACKS

The international events of the past few years have raised the attention level towards a possible risk deriving from terrorist attacks. This problem concerns primarily our national security system, which is involved mainly in the prevention of such risk.
However, it is important to at least know the basic concepts pertaining to the actions we can take to protect ourselves and others should an event of this type occur. It is a complex and delicate problem. Nevertheless, though we do not intend to replace the experts on this matter, we believe it is useful to provide a few elements that are by now agreed upon at an international level. In this context, we will only refer to events involving a large number of people.
We do not aspire in any way to cover all aspects; but we deem that it is better to speak about it and suggest a few simple precautions without alarmism, rather than avoiding any responsibilities. This includes the use of illustrations that may seem inappropriate for such delicate matters.
Any criticism or disapproval regarding this particular detail will nonetheless be positive: the suggestions provided will be remembered more easily should they become necessary. In many Italian cities, the competent Prefectures organize training operations for this type of risk as well. It is valuable to follow these activities without interfering with the professionals, but keeping up to date, also to understand the commitment and attention given to the problem.

Biological agents

Biological agents (viruses, bacteria, fungi, toxins) are commonly present in nature. However, some can be spread deliberately and with criminal intent by diffusing them in the environment or by contaminating food and water. Biological agents can infect people or animals through the skin (via abrasions and wounds), by inhalation, or through food and drink (by ingesting contaminated food or water).
Among the biological agents that may be used for terrorist attacks some are contagious (e.g. plague and smallpox), while others are not (e.g. anthrax and toxins). For certain agents there are specific treatments that can be administered in case of exposure to the infection or when the contagion has occurred. Specific vaccines are available only for a few agents.

A biological attack may not be immediately noticeable since the symptoms become manifest at different times depending on the incubation period of the disease.
It is therefore possible that the Local Health Authorities, with the aid of their surveillance systems, may detect the sudden appearance of diseases with unusual or rare symptoms, among small of large groups of people, and consequently raise the alarm.
However, establishing exactly which disease it is, how to treat it and who is in danger may require a certain amount of time.

Therefore, it is fundamental to follow the official news broadcast on the radio and TV or published on institutional websites. Do not give credence to rumours that cannot be verified, or be influenced by conjectures that could be manipulated by anybody seeking publicity. What matters is giving and getting answers to the following questions:
→ Have you been or are you still in the danger area?
→ What are the signs and symptoms of the disease?
→ Where can you get medical assistance if you feel ill?
→ Are there medicines or vaccines available?
→ Who should provide them and where?

Chemical substances

Unlike biological attacks, the release of chemicals usually produces immediate effects.
For many chemical agents there are specific antidotes which can eliminate or reduce the symptoms. It is important to bear in mind that some chemicals require decontamination. If a contaminated person comes into contact with other people, he/she could in turn contaminate them. In a context of real risk, it can be assumed that a chemical attack has occurred when several people suffer from excessive lacrimation, tremors or contractions, choking, have difficulty breathing and/or lose motor coordination.
Remember that the effects are not always preceded by an explosion and that many chemical agents are colourless and odourless.
Treatment: in the event of an attack, rescue will be immediate and the healthcare team sent to the site will administer the specific antidote. For any further information or if you have any doubts, please contact the Poison Control Centre closest to your city.

Radioactive materials

Radioactive material can be dispersed intentionally in two ways → 1) by releasing radioactive sources in public places; → 2) by using conventional explosives mixed with radioactive material ("dirty bomb"). Radioactivity cannot be perceived through our 5 senses. Radiations rarely cause immediate symptoms, except in case of strong exposure at close range from the source. Health risks derive from the possibility of developing diseases in the years following the exposure. In the event of deliberate release of radioactive substances, only the actual finding of the source or a specific claim can lead to determine the event. With a "dirty bomb", an explosion occurs just like in a conventional attack: rescue workers will determine whether any radioactivity is present in the area concerned. As with any emergency, the Local Authorities may not be able to provide immediate information on the ongoing situation. In any case, it is important to watch TV, listen to the radio and check institutional websites.

Treatment: there are no antidotes for radioactivity. If you are certain or if you suspect that you have been exposed to radiations, you must contact your family doctor and your Local Health Authorities (ASL) for periodical check-ups.

Explosive substances

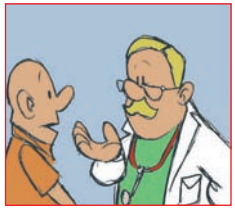
Explosions are characterised by a sizeable release of energy in a relatively short time, following which a pressure wave is generated. The greatest damage is caused by an explosion occurring in closed-in places, where it will probably bring about fire, smoke emissions, the collapse of whole structures or parts of buildings. You should take similar measures to those recommended in case of a fire or earthquake. Explosions taking place in crowded and/or closed-in locations always create a lot of panic. In consideration of this, let us remind you that the majority of public places that are often crowded (underground, theatres, etc.) have emergency plans, and the staff is trained to cope with such situations.

In case of an attack, the first operations units to intervene (the Police Force, Fire Brigade, and Health Emergency Service "118") carry out a coordinated response to manage the event. The effectiveness of the response depends both on a prompt intervention, and on the accuracy and completeness of the information given to rescue workers on site. Therefore, it is important that all those present at the event cooperate, if possible, with the competent Authorities.

HOW TO DEFEND YOURSELF AGAINST ATTACKS

In case of a declared biological emergency

ASSESS WHETHER YOU BELONG TO THE CATEGORY CONSIDERED AT RISK OR IF YOU HAVE BEEN OR STILL ARE IN THE AREA THAT AUTHORITIES CONSIDER UNSAFE → To implement appropriate safety measures



ASK YOUR FAMILY DOCTOR OR THE PREVENTION DEPARTMENT OF YOUR LOCAL HEALTH UNITS (ASL) FOR ADVICE→ To clear any doubts and get assistance from the competent health facilities

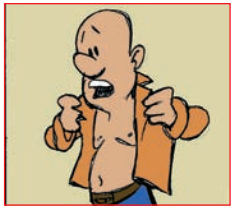
IF YOUR SYMPTOMS ARE THOSE DESCRIBED AND YOU FALL WITHIN THE CATEGORY DEEMED AT RISK, SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE→ To protect yourself and those with whom you come into contact

TAKE CARE OF YOUR PERSONAL HYGIENE AND DISINFECT YOUR HOME AND WORK ENVIRONMENTS→ To prevent germs from spreading

In case of exposure to biological agents

FOLLOW THE ADVICE OF YOUR FAMILY DOCTOR AND OF THE LOCAL HEALTH AUTHORITIES → These cases always require specialist measures

In case of a suspected attack with chemical substances



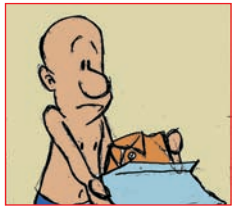
IF YOU FEEL ANY SYMPTOMS, REMOVE YOUR CLOTHES IMMEDIATELY WHILE TOUCHING THEM AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE→ Some chemicals act when in contact with the skin for a certain amount of time. Chemical agents can contaminate skin even through clothes

WHILE WAITING FOR RESCUE WORKERS, STAY IN THE AREA BUT MOVE AWAY FROM THE SOURCE EMITTING THE TOXIC SUBSTANCE→ It is essential that qualified personnel take care of you

USE THE DECONTAMINATION FACILITY PROVIDED BY RESCUE SERVICES; IF NONE IS AVAILABLE, WASH YOURSELF THOUROUGHLY BUT WITHOUT SCRUBBING → This helps to remove or at least to dilute the chemical agents contaminating the skin

In case of a confirmed attack with radioactive materials

IF YOU ARE OUTDOORS, COVER YOUR MOUTH AND NOSE, TRY TO PROTECT YOUR SKIN AND FIND A SAFE SHELTER IN A CLOSED-IN PLACE→ The exposure level increases as you get closer to the source and decreases if you are in a protected location



REMOVE THE OUTER LAYERS OF YOUR CLOTHES AND PUT THEM IN A PLASTIC BAG IF POSSIBLE → This can help reduce the level of contamination significantly

USE THE DECONTAMINATION FACILITY PROVIDED; IF NONE IS AVAILABLE, WASH YOURSELF THOROUGHLY → To get rid of the contaminated dust from your skin

IN CASE OF EMISSION INSIDE THE BUILDING WHERE YOU ARE, COVER YOUR MOUTH, NOSE AND SKIN, AND GET OUT IMMEDIATELY → The level of contamination decreases if you cover the parts of your body that can come into contact with the substance (nose, mouth, skin)

IF THE RELEASE OCCURRED OUTSIDE AND YOU ARE IN A CLOSED-IN SPACE, SWITCH OFF ALL AERATION SYSTEMS AND TRY TO SEAL ALL OPENINGS → If you are in a protected space, the level of exposure and the risk of contamination decrease

In case of an attack with explosives

USE THE EMERGENCY EXITS IMMEDIATELY → They are the best routes to reach a safe place

DO NOT USE LIFTS → The explosion may have damaged them

DO NOT SCREAM OR SHOVE. IF POSSIBLE, HELP THOSE AROUND YOU (ESPECIALLY ELDERLY PEOPLE AND CHILDREN) → You help to reduce the panic effect

DO NOT CALL RESCUE SERVICES UNLESS YOU ARE SERIOUSLY INJURED→ To help rescue workers focus on the most serious cases

FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS GIVEN BY RESCUE WORKERS→ Rescue workers will provide you with instructions and assistance to cope with the situation

In case of fire and/or smoke

DO NOT OPEN THE DOOR IF IT IS VERY HOT; INSTEAD, LOOK FOR ANOTHER EXIT→ Hot doors indicate that there is a fire inside, with a sizeable emission of gas and vapours

IF THERE IS SMOKE, GET DOWN ON YOUR HANDS AND KNEES AND CRAWL → Smoke is hot and thus tends to rise

IF THERE IS SMOKE AND/OR DUST, COVER YOUR MOUTH AND NOSE WITH CLOTHES, BETTER IF WET→ In this way, you inhale a reduced amount of smoke and/or dust

If you are trapped

IN CASE OF DUST, COVER YOUR MOUTH AND NOSE WITH ANYTHING AVAILABLE→ In this way you will inhale a reduced amount of dust

ALERT OTHERS OF YOUR PRESENCE BY KNOCKING ON A PIPE OR WALL→ To get the rescue workers' attention

ONLY SHOUT AS A LAST RESORT TO GET THE RESCUE WORKERS' ATTENTION→ By shouting, you could inhale an excessive amount of dirty air and increase the feeling of panic and anxiety

And whatever the case may be...

IF YOU GO TO AN EMERGENCY ROOM ON YOUR OWN, FOLLOW THE SIGNS AND INDICATIONS CAREFULLY→ Hospitals set up specific procedures in order to receive people involved in an emergency. Make sure this has been done, cooperate with health authorities, give information, and help to keep the order

COOPERATE WITH THE AUTHORITIES→ Tell the competent Authorities what you have witnessed and remember to limit the use of mobile phones to facilitate emergency communications

WAIT FOR RESCUE WORKERS BEFORE LEAVING THE SCENE→ They could provide you with very useful information and assistance, and you could contribute towards managing the emergency more efficiently

2 KNOWING HOW TO GET INFORMATION

In order to organize a good "Civil Protection Family Plan", you need to know not only the risks that may affect the areas where you live, work or travel, but also how to obtain accurate information to keep up to date with any emergency situations and with useful instructions that must be followed during a disaster.
There are at least three levels of information with which your household should be familiar:

→ information included in the Civil Protection Municipal Plans and, in some cases, in the Regional Plans;
→ statements regarding the forecasting and prevention activities of the Civil Protection;
→ information addressed to citizens by the Civil Protection during an ongoing emergency.

1. Civil Protection Municipal Plans and other planning documents

Every Italian Municipality must draw up a Civil Protection Municipal Plan. This document includes a lot of information, some of which concerns all citizens directly:

→ information regarding the safe areas to get to within the municipality in case of an emergency;
→ evacuation procedures;
→ routes to follow to reach safe areas;
→ strategies set up by the Mayor for possible emergencies within the municipal territory.

By taking an active interest in the Civil Protection Municipal Plan, by viewing it and becoming familiar with it, you could also give a "civic" push to those competent Authorities that have not drawn up a Plan yet, or have not recently updated it.

2. Statements on the Civil Protection forecasting and prevention activities

The network of national and regional "Monitoring Centres" ensures a continuous service capable of providing the authorities in charge of Civil Protection at all levels with all available data in order to decide what to do in case of a probable emergency.
This data concerns weather conditions and the probability that these could cause emergency situations, for example a hydrogeological one, or situations posing a particular health hazard, such as "heat waves" during the hottest summer days. It also concerns the state of volcanoes, the risk of seaquakes, or the development of conditions that are particularly conducive to forest fires. When a critical situation is expected, this information is broadcast on TV and radio news programmes. Moreover, you can find it in newspapers, on the websites of the various national and regional Civil Protection bodies, or even on the websites of the scientific institutes that cooperate with different levels of the National Service.

3. News and information about the emergency provided by the Civil Protection

One of the fundamental tasks of the Civil Protection is to inform citizens of any possible emergency and to provide them with useful instructions to cope with a crisis. In order to do this efficiently at the national, regional and local levels, Civil Protection officials generally make use of the media – press agencies, newspapers, television and radio – which are the information channels generally used by the population. When an emergency is in progress, the Civil Protection favours communication by means of radio and television which, unlike newspapers, allows citizens to follow the development of the situation in real time and to receive continual updates. For this reason, the Civil Protection recommends that each household have at least one battery-powered radio; this will work even in case of a power cut. You can also use your car radio as it is not powered by the electric network. Another means available thanks to modern technology and already tested by the Civil Protection are text messages (SMS) sent to all mobile phone users in the crisis area. In this case, mobile phones become (without any invasion of privacy) a precious tool to convey crucial information needed to make the right choices and decisions about how to act in a potentially delicate situation.

A final remark you may find useful:

During an emergency, when faced with a tragedy or disaster, everyone feels the need to analyse, to make comments and conjectures, or to give explanations. And it is normal for the media to relate everything and give space to all opinions.

However, in order not to be mislead by mistaking an expert's personal opinion for an official directive or instruction, it is important to learn to recognize those who speak on behalf of the Civil Protection; these officials are the only reliable source of information regarding the segments of the population involved in an emergency situation. Moreover, they are the only ones with specific responsibilities towards you.

3 GETTING YOUR FAMILY ORGANIZED

It is a good rule to prepare – without getting frightened pointlessly – for a possible emergency, so as to face it while keeping the inevitable discomforts to a minimum. When we go on holiday, we all take time to pack our luggage, to check that we have not forgotten our documents, money, medications or anything else we may need during our trip or vacation. It is important for you and your household to devote as much attention to a few preparations for emergency situations, during which it could become necessary to leave your home. You would certainly not wish for or look forward to such "departure", which is much more difficult to deal with than leaving on holiday, especially since you may have to leave in a great hurry or even immediately. In the same way, it is wise and judicious to prepare for the opposite situation, i.e. being forced to stay in your home without going outside for a longer period of time than usual. Good family planning for emergencies can be summarised in five points.

1. Prepare a list of information on all the members of your household

In an emergency, it can be very useful for each family member to carry a list of all the other people in the household, including personal data, telephone or mobile phone numbers where they can be reached, as well as basic medical information (blood type, diseases, allergies, medications they are taking, etc.). This kind of list can be of great help to rescue workers to find missing persons, reunite family members during or after evacuations, and provide medical assistance when necessary.

2. Make out a list of the essential materials for an emergency

In case of evacuation, you will have to gather everything that your family members (including children) may need in great haste. It is a good idea to make out a list of the most important materials during an emergency, to be kept in a place known by all, which includes all the bare essentials. From time to time check that all the items mentioned on the list are in your home, easy to find and in working order. This will make it easier, in case of an emergency, to fill a bag for each family member, containing what is needed, without forgetting anything.

At the very least, the list should contain the following items:

→ clothing: at least 1 change of clothes per person, which should be comfortable, suited to the season, and should always include a raincoat and windbreaker

→ basic equipment: matches, electric torch with spare batteries, cloths, nylon bags, adhesive tape, disposable plates, tumblers and cutlery, knife, tin and bottle openers, gas cooker

→ food and drink: water (at least 1 litre/day per person) and non-perishable foods such as: energy bars,

dried fruit, salt, sugar, tea, coffee, precooked or freeze-dried foods, etc
→ essential medicines, a photocopy of the corresponding medical prescriptions and a first-aid kit
→ spare keys
→ money and telephone cards
→ photocopies of the most important identification documents

3. Stock up on food and staple commodities

If, instead of having to evacuate in a hurry, your household were forced to stay at home without ever going out for a longer period than usual, your house would become a shelter that must be well-equipped. Make sure that you always have a stock of food and staple commodities that will allow your family unit to be self-sufficient for as long as possible and that will even permit you to offer shelter to other people in case of an emergency.
Over and above the usual food supplies, ensure that there is plenty of drinking water, either bottles of mineral water or tanks. In fact, drinking water is the most important item to have at home in the event of an emergency: the water system could be damaged, or the waterworks could become contaminated. Before starting to use tap water again, inquire with the Civil Protection authorities in charge of the emergency about possible restrictions and necessary treatments.

4. Locate in advance a place where you can stay temporarily

Together with your family, select a place where your household can spend a few days in case of an evacuation, for example with friends or relatives.

5. Designate a contact person for emergencies

This person should live outside of the area where you reside. Each family member can contact him/her during an emergency to obtain information on the development of the ongoing situation or on other family members that may have been separated from the rest of the family. It is useful to refer to a person living outside of the area affected by the emergency because it may be easier to communicate with someone away from the area involved in the disaster than with people in your own area.
By following these five simple steps, you can be certain that your family unit is a small, well-organised civil protection team, ready for any emergency!

4 KNOWING HOW TO ASK FOR HELP

In any emergency situation, the first enemy that must be overcome is time: all the efforts of those who manage emergencies are directed towards reducing the time of intervention and first aid.

Those who know how to get help correctly contribute towards reducing the time required to intervene.

For this reason you should remember the following:

→ when calling for help, provide the most accurate information possible about the situation: give your precise location, explain what is happening, what you see around you, and how many people seem to be involved in the emergency;

→ if you are able to identify the type of emergency accurately, call the emergency number corresponding to the rescue unit most suitable to the situation: the Fire Brigade for fires, 118 for medical emergencies, 1530 for emergencies at sea, and so on;

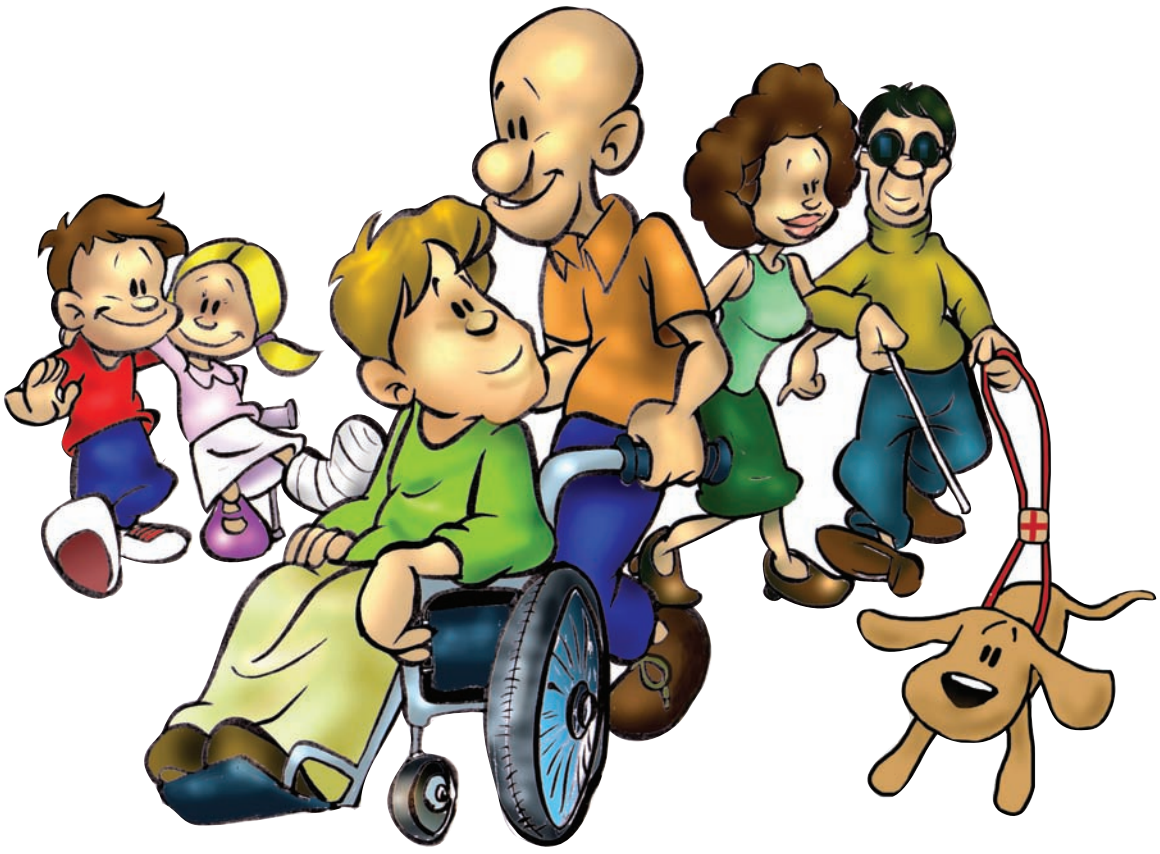
→ keep a list of emergency numbers handy – near the telephone, in your pocket or wallet, or stored on your mobile phone – to call the national services responding to three-digit or four-digit numbers, as well as the local services responding to telephone numbers in your city, province and region;

→tell whoever answers your call only the essential things: do not keep the line engaged for more time than just the bare minimum because this can make it impossible for other people in the same situation to call for assistance;

→ if you are unable to call – telephone lines may be out of use or the cellular telephony network could be overloaded, thus making your mobile phone useless – signal your location in any way possible depending on your situation, then wait for rescue workers and keep calm; there are many ways in which an emergency situation is reported, and one of the main objectives of rescue workers is to find you as quickly as possible.

When you communicate this way, you are helping those whose task it is to rescue you more than you think.

5 EMERGENCY AND DISABILITY

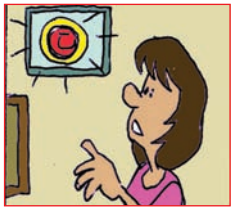


In family units where there are disabled people, the "Civil Protection Family Plan" must be complemented with some specific considerations which take into account their special needs. In fact, assisting a disabled person in an emergency situation requires some particular precautions.
The suggestions included in this section should and do concern us all, even if no disabled person lives in our household: during an emergency, we may have to assist not only our own family, but also our friends, colleagues, acquaintances, neighbours, classmates, or even people in need that we meet by chance. Everyone should know at least the basics to be able to assist disabled people.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES WHEN ASSISTING PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY (PERMANENT OR TEMPORARY)

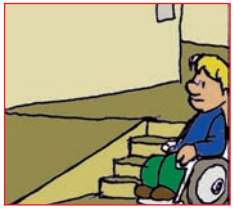
If disabled people live with you and your family

EXAMINE THE EMERGENCY PLANS (FROM THE MUNICIPALITY, SCHOOL, WORKPLACE) AND PAY ATTENTION TO THE MOST CRUCIAL ASPECTS TO ASSIST DISABLED PEOPLE→ in order not to have doubts when dealing with the situation



SEE ABOUT INSTALLING SIGNAL ALARMS (ACOUSTIC, OPTICAL MECHANICAL, TACTILE ETC.) THAT THE DISABLED PERSON CAN UNDERSTAND→ so that he/she may be able to react to the emergency autonomously, within the bounds of his/her capacities

CHECK THE LOCATION OF THE MAIN ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS IN YOUR AREA (STAIRCASES, STEPS, NARROW PASSAGES, PERCEPTIONAL BARRIERS, ETC.) → They all create obstacles to a possible evacuation



LOCATE AT LEAST ONE ACCESSIBLE ESCAPE ROUTE TOWARDS A SAFE PLACE→ so that you will not have to improvise during the emergency

During the emergency

ENCOURAGE THE DISABLED PERSON TO ACTIVELY COOPERATE WITHIN THE BOUNDS OF HIS/HER ABILITIES → so that he/she is confident of being able to overcome the situation, thus avoiding loss of time and unnecessary actions

IF THE DISABLED PERSON IS ABLE TO WALK AUTONOMOUSLY→ even if with limitations and using aids, then accompany this person (without carrying him/her), while acting as a protection from the crowd, from people who could push or knock him/her down

Assistance and types of disability

Assisting a person with a motor disability

If the person can leave by means of a wheelchair:
make sure that the route is free of possible architectural barriers;
in case of obstacles such as stairs, help the disabled person in the following way:
place yourself behind the wheelchair; hold the handles to tilt the chair backwards at an angle of about 45°, then tackle the obstacle while keeping the inclined position until you reach a safe and flat place. Remember to always negotiate the obstacle going backwards!
If you need to carry a person who cannot cooperate:
do not pull his/her joints because you could cause damage, but rather grip either the shoulder girdle (the shoulder joints) or the pelvic girdle (the pelvis and hip joints).

Assisting a person with a sensorial disability

Hearing-impaired people

→ Make lip-reading easy to avoid misunderstandings and to facilitate assistance:
→ when you speak, do not move your head and place your face at the person's eye-level;
→ speak clearly, if possible with a correct pronunciation, using short sentences at a normal pitch (there is no need to yell);
→ write in block letters the words or names you are unable to communicate;
→ stay within a maximum distance of one and a half metre.
Even people with a hearing aid may have difficulty understanding all spoken words, so you should use the same precautions.

Visually-impaired people

→ Make your presence known and speak in a clear voice;
→ explain the exact danger situation;
→ try not to alternate speaking with a third person;
→ describe beforehand the actions that must be taken;
→ lead the person along the route in the most suitable way, he/she slightly behind you and

leaning on you by placing a hand on your shoulder;

→ communicate any obstacles such as stairs, doors or other types of obstruction;

→ if you are accompanying more than one person with the same difficulties, help them to hold hands with each other;

→ once you have reached a safe place, do not leave the person before making sure he/she is with someone.

In case of a visually-impaired person with a guide dog

→ Do not pet or offer the dog any food without the owner's permission;

→ if the dog is wearing a harness it means that it is working: if you do not want the dog to lead its owner, ask for the harness to be removed;

→ make sure the dog is brought to safety with its owner;

→ if the owner asks you to take care of the dog, always hold it by the leash, never by the harness.

Assisting a person with a cognitive disability

Remember that people with learning disabilities:

could have difficulty carrying out complex instructions that include more than a short sequence of simple actions;

in danger situations, they may cooperate little or not at all with the person assisting them.

Therefore:

make sure that the person has understood the situation of danger;

accompany the person if you notice problems with the sense of direction;

use simple gestures or symbols that are easy to understand;

try to interpret any possible reaction;

in case of aggressive behaviour, give precedence to protecting the person's physical safety. If it is the only possible solution, use coercive intervention.

USE APPROPRIATE TRANSPORTATION TECHNIQUES

In case there is only one rescue worker

USE THE "CRISS-CROSS GRIP" (A TECHNIQUE WHICH IS RECOMMENDED BOTH FOR THE SAFETY OF THE GRIP AND FOR THE RESCUE WORKER'S PROTECTION) BY PERFORMING THE FOLLOWING STEPS:

→ help the disabled person cross his/her forearms on his/her torso
→ place yourself behind him/her
→ slip your hands under his/her armpits and grab his/her forearms
→ pull upwards, using your strength on the arms and shoulders, and lift the person's whole torso

In case there are two rescue workers

IF YOU NEED TO CARRY A COLLABORATIVE PERSON ALONG A ROUTE THAT IS NOT PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT, PROCEED AS FOLLOWS:

→ place yourselves one on each side of the person who needs assistance
→ get hold of his/her arms and wrap them around your shoulders
→ hold on to your partner's forearm
→ link your arms under the person's knees
→ lift him/her and move away from the danger zone

IF YOU NEED TO CARRY THE PERSON IN NARROW PASSAGES

The rescue worker at the back must use a "criss-cross grip" while the one at the front must hold on to the person between the knees and the glutei

IF YOU NEED TO PASS THROUGH CRAMPED PASSAGES

To pass through very low and narrow passages, the rescue worker will have to use a dragging transportation technique, also very useful in case you have little strength left

PIANO
FAMILIARE

To the reader

You have glanced through this handbook written to help you create your "Civil Protection Family Plan". At this point, after having read it, it will be clear that this is not required by the regulations and directives currently in force. It is not a compulsory task or an obligation for you, but rather an invitation to become familiar with the fundamental elements of civil protection, which can help you make your daily life better and safer for your whole family, both in the area where you live, and in the places where you work and travel.

I hope that the basic concept of the "family plan" is now clear to you: each citizen is a subject and player in the National Civil Protection System, because those who know how to act in a knowledgeable and cautious manner during situations involving risks – whatever these may be – contribute decisively to protecting themselves, while simplifying the rescue workers' task.

I am certain you are now convinced that it is neither wise nor useful to ignore the risk, to pretend that the dangers do not concern us, to imagine that disasters and emergencies cannot affect us. It is much better to be aware of the situations that could involve us, so as to know what to do if the need arises, and to get organised in some small ways in order to be ready to cope even with particularly difficult situations.

In this exercise of awareness and common sense, of knowledge about both risks and territory, of prudence, of information on the way the Civil Protection operates, every citizen and family can, with great ease, give a demonstration of "civil" sensitivity, by contributing in the first person towards a higher level of safety and, ultimately, towards a more serene life for all. This wish for harmony with all citizens has lead us – in the Valle d'Aosta Region – to choose the logo "We are the Civil Protection" to characterise our work, without any distinction of role or function.

Good luck to all the families that will work to create their own "Civil Protection Plan": welcome in our midst!

siamola
PROTEZIONE CIVILE

Silvano Meroi
Director of Valle D'aosta Civil Protection

Recently, we have seen in Italy an increasing number of books, internet websites and multimedia products designed to provide pupils in schools, university students and citizens with a better knowledge of Civil Protection. I believe this is further confirmation that the Civil Protection National Service, drawn up by law as a system with widespread participation, is by now an important reality: Mayors are ever more conscious of their responsibilities, many Regions have reached organisational levels, technical and scientific capabilities, as well as operational capacities that allow them to manage their territorial issues; volunteers have demonstrated an extremely valuable degree of training, competence and efficiency. All of this is combined with the "historic" ability to take action of the various institutional components such as the Police Force, the Armed Forces and the Fire Brigade.

The events of recent years, the progress of the system, the efficiency shown not only during national emergencies, but also in European and international ones, attest to this process in which the whole Country is taking up the increasingly difficult challenge of offering citizens a level of Civil Protection that is adequate to the wide range of possible risks and to the constant rise of needs and expectations.

The publishing initiatives mentioned at the beginning are part of this dynamic process: local and central Authorities are realising – as they become gradually aware of their role and responsibility – that, no matter how virtuous and committed their actions may be, these will never be sufficient to manage the multitude of situations that the Civil Protection must face, unless they are supported, bolstered and complemented with a better knowledge and a true Civil Protection "culture" among the population. Indeed, the citizen is the main and most fundamental subject within this original system. In the areas where people are informed about the risks, know how to act in an emergency, and feel part of a reality which they trust, often to the point that they join Voluntary Associations, the Civil Protection reaches high levels of efficiency and effectiveness. It also expresses, through the synergy created between the rescue worker and the person who requires assistance, the full potential of its "civil" dimension, that is to say an activity done by many in favour of everyone, and whose reason for existence is drawn from a shared culture of citizenship. In short, this means that the right to protection goes along with the duty of being well-informed and knowledgeable, which also facilitates the task of those who risk their life for others.

This initiative of the Italian Department, which has made forecasting and prevention a cornerstone of its strategies and not just a topic for conferences or debates, fits into this multi-faceted framework. Inspired by one of the many training operations carried out every year all over Italy, more and more often with other European partners,

we have created this handbook to define, with simple concepts, the criteria, methods and actions to take in order to avoid unnecessary anxiety or, even worse, an excessive feeling of security, by involving the core of any civil protection plan: the family level.

In a recent document, the Autonomous Valle d'Aosta Region had already chosen the family as the recipient of a clear and explicit invitation to become a conscious, well-informed interlocutor, possessing the cultural tools to understand all types of risks and capable of acting in the most appropriate manner, in any situation. Therefore, this document and the idea of targeting the family, was born as a joint venture between the Civil Protection Department and the Regional Board of the Valle d'Aosta Region, which was willing to "tamper with" its own work, accepting and agreeing on cuts and additions so as to make it truly valuable for the whole Country. It is with great pleasure that I mention this attitude, which I consider indicative of the mature relations between the various Governmental Bodies that share, at different levels, in a common responsibility towards citizens.

In such a delicate and difficult sector, today more than ever there is a need for synergy, for teamwork, and for the willingness to question ourselves each day. It is necessary to set aside any kind of selfishness or self-promotion, and to build a system in keeping with the daily lesson given by our Head of State. The Italian Civil Protection system represents a unique situation, followed as an example by other European Countries, and which can play, with all humility, a decisive role in destroying the resignation and fatalism felt towards the reckless actions of men or the reactions of a planet and nature that have been too often violated.

Building a system means working together: from the individual citizen to families and institutions. Even this simple document can serve this purpose. It will be updated and enhanced thanks to the criticism, comments and suggestions provided by "family units", and we are convinced that it can also represent the basis for an ever more fruitful dialogue.

In the end, I hope that this small joint initiative will mark the beginning of other joint efforts "between equals" within the National Service. The beneficiaries will be citizens and families, whose attitude towards the Civil Protection indicates increasing interest, demands and expectations.

This demand can be met in a way that is simple, effective and within our reach: we only need to do our job well, to accept our responsibilities for what they are, and to take up a daily challenge in which the stakes are the safety of citizens, as well as the ability to bring to light all that is truly "civil" in this life we share, in this extraordinary country called "Italy".

Guido Bertolaso

Chief of Civil Protection Department of Italian Governement

USEFUL NUMBERS

Fire Brigade	115
Ambulance	118
Police	113
'Carabinieri' Corps	112
Financial Police and Customs Officers	117
National Forestry Corps	1515
Port Authorities	1530
Civil Protection Department	0668201
Municipal Civil Protection	
Regional Civil Protection	
Emergency Medical Service	
Hospital	
Family Doctor	
Gas Installation	
Electrical System	
Waterworks	
Temporary Reception Point	
Contact Person in Case of Emergency	

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PROTEZIONE CIVILE

PROTEZIONE CIVILE NAZIONALE

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I.P.

Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri
Dipartimento della Protezione Civile

Presidency of the Council of Ministers of Italy
Department of Civil Protection
Via Ulpiano, 11 – Via Vitorchiano, 2 - Rome
Phone: +39 06.68.201 – www.protezionecivile.it
comunicazione@protezionecivile.it
Download available on the website www.protezionecivile.it