



Amarillo Area Office of  
Emergency Management



*Jaycie Hubner*

# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS GUIDE





# WELCOME TO YOUR EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS GUIDE

Living in a vibrant community like ours comes with the responsibility of being prepared for the unexpected. Whether it's a natural disaster, power outage, or other emergencies, knowing what to do in advance can make a world of difference.

This guide is designed to empower you, as a valued member of our community, with the knowledge and resources needed to navigate emergencies effectively. We've drawn upon national preparedness strategies outlined in Presidential Policy Directive 8 (PPD-8) and the National Incident Management System (NIMS) established by PPD-5. These frameworks promote an "all-hazards" approach, ensuring we're ready for anything that comes our way.

The Amarillo Area Office of Emergency Management (Amarillo Area OEM) shares this commitment. Our mission is to keep you informed, coordinate emergency responses, and work tirelessly to minimize risks to life, property, and the environment.

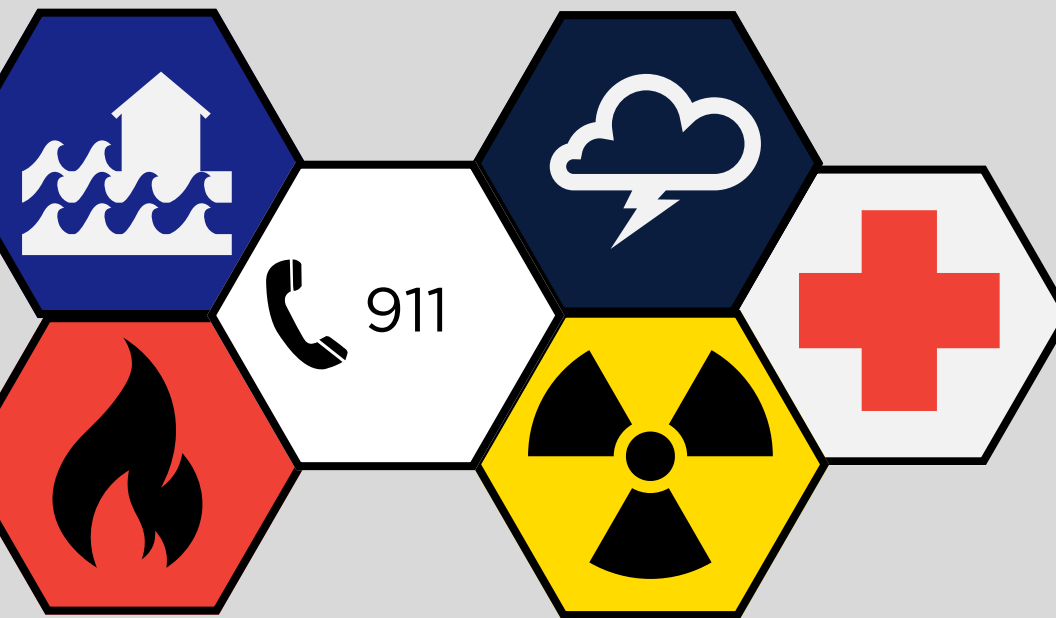
However, effective preparedness requires a two-way street. By actively engaging with this guide and participating in community preparedness initiatives, you become a vital partner in building a more resilient and prepared Amarillo Area.

Together, informed planning and open communication can significantly impact how we weather any storm. Let's get started on preparing for a safer tomorrow!



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## WHAT IS A DISASTER?

A disaster is a serious event that overwhelms a community's ability to cope. It can strike suddenly, like an earthquake, or unfold gradually, like a drought. Natural hazards like floods or fires can cause disasters, and human actions can too, through accidents or spills. Disasters damage property, cause economic loss, and can injure or kill people. By being prepared, communities can weather these storms and recover more quickly.

**Preparedness Matters!**

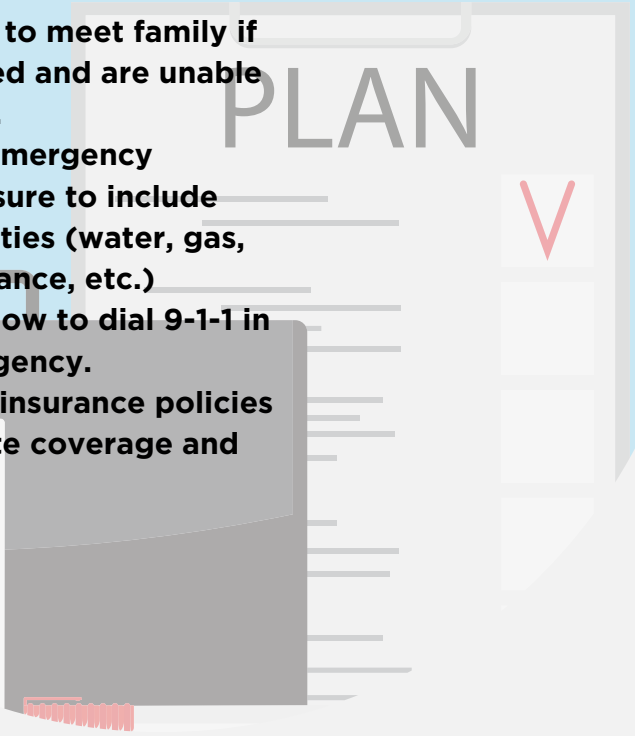
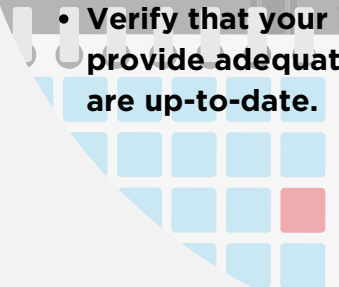
# **DEVELOPING AN EMERGENCY PLAN**

**Your family may not be together when a disaster strikes so it is important to plan in advance:**

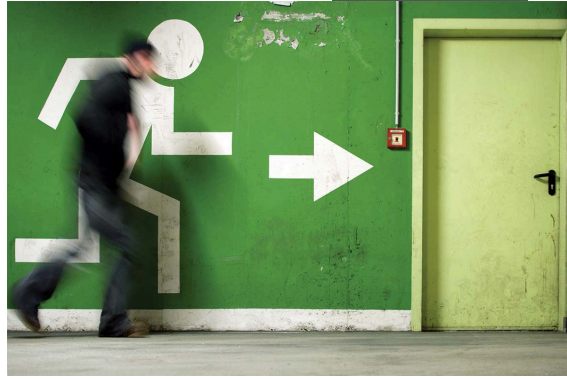
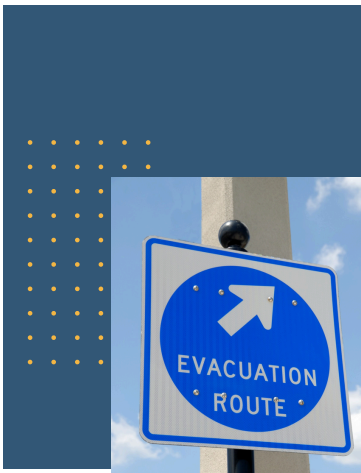
- **How will you get to a safe place;**
- **How will you contact one another;**
- **How you will get back together;**
- **What will you do in different situation?**

**Things to consider:**

- **Set up locations to meet family if you are separated and are unable to contact them.**
- **Create a list of emergency numbers; make sure to include contacts for utilities (water, gas, electricity, insurance, etc.)**
- **Teach children how to dial 9-1-1 in case of an emergency.**
- **Verify that your insurance policies provide adequate coverage and are up-to-date.**

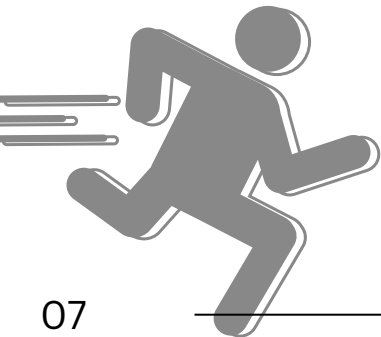
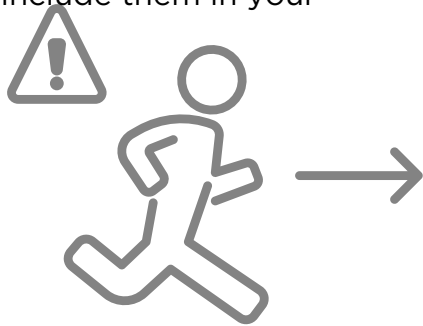




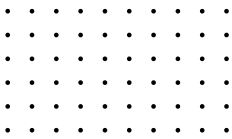


## EVACUATING YOUR HOME

- Plan and discuss a possible evacuation plan with your family.
- Make a list of places that you would go if asked to evacuate.
- Have a disaster supply kit ready to go.
- If you have pets, include them in your evacuation plan.







# FAMILY COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

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Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so plan how you will contact one another.

Think about how you will communicate in different situations.

Designate meeting places if your home must quickly be evacuated.

Complete a contact card for each adult family member. Keep these cards handy in a wallet, purse, or briefcase. Additionally, complete contact cards for each child in your family and put the cards in their backpacks or book bags.

Ask your children's day care or school for their emergency plan. Facilities designed for children should include identification planning as part of their emergency plans.

On a sheet of paper, list your designated meeting places, your friends and family in town (with their addresses and phone numbers), a neighborhood contact, and an out-of-town contact.



# TAKE SHELTER VS SHELTER-IN-PLACE



Here's a quick explanation of the difference between "**Take Shelter**" and "**Shelter-in-Place**":

## Take Shelter:

- This means finding a designated safe location during a severe weather event, like a tornado or hurricane.
- You might be advised to seek shelter in a basement, storm cellar, or interior room away from windows.
- This usually involves leaving your current location to find a more protected area.

## Shelter-in-Place:

- This refers to staying inside a building you're already in to avoid a hazardous material, like a chemical spill or airborne contaminant.
- The goal is to create a barrier between yourself and the outside danger.
- You would seal windows and doors, and possibly use ventilation systems if instructed.

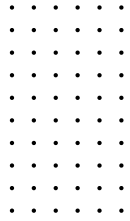
## In short:

- Take Shelter: Find a safe place from the elements (usually involves leaving your current location).
- Shelter-in-Place: Stay inside and seal yourself off from a hazardous material outside.



# OUTDOOR WARNING SYSTEM

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## Sirens

Often referred to as “Tornado Sirens” the Amarillo Area Outdoor Warning System currently has approximately 100 sirens in the network.

## What to do when you hear a siren?

If you hear a warning siren, it is alerting you to a hazard that has or is occurring. Seek shelter and turn on the radio, TV, AMA Alerts app, or NOAA All-Hazards Radio to find out more information.

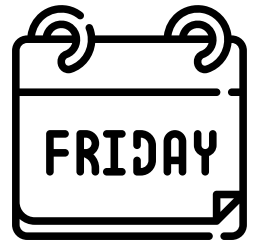
**NEWS**

**ALERT**

## When are the sirens activated?

Sirens will be used to alert community members in the case of:

- Tornadoes
- Hail (in excess of 2 inches)
- Hazardous Materials
- Civil Emergencies
- Other Hazards
- Testing
  - Last Friday of every month at 11:30 AM unless postponed.
  - If postponed, check social media pages to find out why.



# NOTIFICATION TOOLS



## NOAA All-Hazards Radio

A NOAA All Hazards Radio is a special radio that broadcasts weather information and warnings directly from the National Weather Service (NWS) office in your area. It's a lifesaver during severe weather events because it provides:

- **24/7 Updates:** It broadcasts weather information around the clock, so you'll always have the latest forecast.
- **Emergency Alerts:** Most importantly, it can warn you about dangerous weather emergencies like tornadoes, floods, and hurricanes even if the power goes out in your area. The radio will emit a loud alarm to get your attention.
- **All-Hazard Coverage:** It goes beyond weather and can also provide warnings about other hazards like earthquakes, chemical spills, or evacuations.

These radios are easy to use. They typically have a knob to tune to the NOAA weather frequency for your area (which you can find online or by contacting your local NWS office) and an alert button to turn on or off the emergency alert tones. Some models are portable, while others are for home use.

# NOTIFICATION TOOLS



If you're a resident of Potter or Randall counties, please sign up for our emergency alerts system. These alerts will share important information related to public safety, inclement weather, and more.

It's easy to sign up for these alerts, and you'll get useful information direct to your phone. You can even download the Everbridge app on your iPhone or Android to get alerts through the app.

AMA Alerts is for everyone including families, businesses, Faith communities, non-profits, and volunteers! It is completely customizable: Up to 5 addresses, i.e. school, work, and home; Pick from weather, traffic, public safety, elections, news, and more; Create a "Do Not Disturb" Timeframe; Receive Geo-targeted weather alerts. You get to choose up to 10 delivery methods for notifications including: mobile phones, home phone, email, text messaging and more!

You are also able to talk directly to your Emergency Management official, Amarillo Area OEM!

## **Types of Alerts:**

- Emergency Alerts
- Public Safety
- Missing Person
- Amber Alerts
- Silver Alerts
- Inclement Weather
- Police Notifications
- Crime Activities
- Emergency Preparedness Drills/Exercises
- Functional Needs Registry for Residents with Access and Functional Needs
- General County News and Information
- Transportation Information and Alerts
- Election Updates

**To Sign-up visit :**  
**[www.amarilloalerts.com/alerts](http://www.amarilloalerts.com/alerts)**

# HAZARDS IN YOUR AREA

The Amarillo Area is unique location on the High Plains brings a diverse mix of weather hazards. Here's a breakdown of what to keep on your radar:

- Severe Thunderstorms (Spring & Summer)
- Heatwaves (Summer)
- High Winds (Year-round)
- Winter Storms (Occasional)

By understanding these potential hazards, you can take proactive steps to stay safe. This includes:

- Monitoring weather forecasts
- Having a home emergency plan
- Building a preparedness kit



Thunderstorms



Tornadoes



Flooding



Wildfires



Fires



Extreme Heat &  
Cold



Hazardous Materials



Pantex Plant



Wind



# THUNDERSTORMS

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All thunderstorms are dangerous and can produce damaging winds, large hail, flash flooding, and the potential for tornadoes.

Lightning is always associated with thunderstorms and is one of the leading causes of storm-related fatalities.

To prepare for a thunderstorm, you should do the following:

- Postpone outdoor activities.
- Remain indoors until storms have subsided.
- At home, secure objects outside so that they cannot blow away or cause damage.
- Unplug electronic equipment before the storm arrives to avoid damage from an electrical surge.

The 30/30 Rule:

- When you see lighting, count the time until you hear thunder.
- If this time is 30 seconds or less, seek proper shelter.
- If you cannot see the lighting, just hearing the thunder is a good back-up rule.
- Wait 30 minutes or more after hearing the last instance of thunder before leaving shelter.

# TORNADOES



Tornadoes are swirling columns of air that reach from a thunderstorm down to the ground. They're incredibly dangerous because of their:

- **High Winds:** Tornadoes pack incredibly strong winds, sometimes exceeding 200 miles per hour. These winds can tear buildings apart, uproot trees, and throw debris around like missiles.
- **Sudden Formation:** Tornadoes can form very quickly, giving little warning before they strike.

Here's how to stay safe from tornadoes:

- **Be Prepared:** Know where your nearest safe shelter is, like a basement or interior room. Have a NOAA All Hazards Radio to receive weather warnings.
- **Tornado Watch:** This means conditions are favorable for tornadoes. Stay informed and listen for updates.
- **Tornado Warning:** This means a tornado has been spotted or indicated by radar. Take shelter immediately! Get to your designated safe spot, lie low, and cover your head with your hands.
- **Stay Away From Windows:** Flying debris is a major threat during tornadoes. Avoid windows and exterior walls.

Remember, a little preparation and knowing what to do during a warning can significantly increase your chances of staying safe during a tornado.



# FLOODING

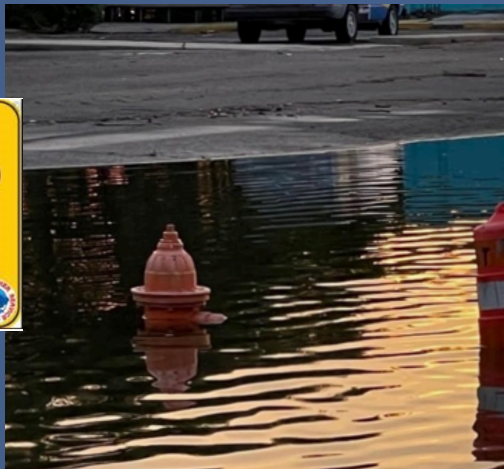
Flooding occurs when water overflows onto land that's normally dry. It can happen quickly from heavy rain or burst levees, or develop slowly from rising rivers or melting snow. Here's why flooding is dangerous:

- **Fast-Moving Water:** Even a few inches of moving water can knock you off your feet and sweep you away. Six inches can be enough for a car to float.
- **Hidden Hazards:** Floodwater can hide electrical wires, sewage contamination, and sharp objects, posing a serious risk of injury or electrocution.
- **Structural Damage:** Flooding can weaken buildings and bridges, making them unsafe.

Here are some key safety tips for floods:

- **Never Drive Through Floodwaters:** "Turn Around, Don't Drown!" Just six inches of moving water can be deadly.
- **Evacuate When Instructed:** If there's a flood warning or evacuation order, follow instructions from officials immediately.
- **Move to Higher Ground:** If you can't evacuate, get to higher ground inside your home or another building. Don't climb into an attic unless it has an escape route in case the roof collapses.
- **Stay Away From Power Lines:** Treat all downed power lines as live and dangerous.

By following these steps and staying informed about flood risks, you can significantly increase your chances of staying safe during a flood event.





# WILDFIRES

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## Causes of Wildfires:

- Lightning strikes are a natural cause, but most wildfires are human-caused. This can be accidental, from unattended campfires or discarded cigarettes, or intentional, like arson.

## The Dangers of Wildfires:

- **Rapid Spread:** Wildfires can move incredibly fast, driven by wind and fueled by dry vegetation. This makes them difficult to control and can lead to sudden changes in direction.
- **Extreme Heat:** Wildfires generate intense heat that can burn structures, injure or kill people caught in the open, and even create fire tornadoes.
- **Smoke Inhalation:** Smoke from wildfires can be thick and filled with harmful pollutants, causing respiratory problems for people downwind, even far from the fire itself.

## Staying Safe from Wildfires:

- **Be Prepared:** Clear brush and flammable materials around your home to create a firebreak. Have an evacuation plan and assemble a wildfire emergency kit.
- **Stay Informed:** Pay attention to local fire danger warnings and evacuation orders.
- **Evacuate When Instructed:** Don't hesitate to leave if there's a wildfire threat. Getting trapped in a fast-moving fire can be deadly.
- **Create a Defensible Space:** If time allows and it's safe to do so, remove flammable materials near your home and create a firebreak around your property.

# FIRES



## Staying Safe and Prepared:

- **Prevention is Key:** Most fires are preventable. Practice safe cooking habits, avoid electrical overloading, and keep flammable materials away from heat source.
- **Smoke Alarms:** Install smoke alarms on every level of your home and test them regularly. Early detection is crucial.
- **Escape Plan:** Have a fire escape plan for your home and practice it with everyone in your household. Identify two exits from each room and a meeting place outside.
- **Get Low, Go Fast & Get Out:** During a fire, stay low to the ground where the air is clearer. Move quickly to your exit and get outside. Never go back inside for belongings.
- **Call 911:** Once you are safely outside, call 911 immediately!

## The Dangers of Fire:

- **Fast-Moving and Spreading:** Fires can grow rapidly, especially indoors, filling rooms with smoke and heat in a short amount of time.
- **Intense Heat:** Fires can reach extremely high temperatures, causing severe burns and structural damage.
- **Toxic Smoke:** Smoke inhalation is a major threat in fires. It can contain harmful chemicals that can irritate the lungs and even be deadly.

**By following these tips and taking fire safety seriously, you can significantly reduce your risk of a fire and be prepared to escape safely in case of emergency.**

# EXTREME HEAT WARNING

## Extreme Cold Weather Alert

## EXTREME HEAT & COLD

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The Amarillo Area experiences both scorching summers and occasional frigid winters.

By understanding the extremes and taking proper precautions, you can stay safe and enjoy all that this unique climate has to offer.

### Extreme Heat:

- **Dangers:** Heatstroke, dehydration, heat exhaustion.
- **Stay Safe:** Stay hydrated, limit strenuous activity outdoors, wear loose, light-colored clothing, spend time in air conditioning.
- **Prepare:** Check on vulnerable neighbors, stock up on non-perishable food and water in case of power outages, have a working air conditioner or cooling fan.

### Extreme Cold:

- **Dangers:** Hypothermia, frostbite, exposure.
- **Stay Safe:** Wear layers of warm clothing, cover exposed skin, avoid venturing outside during blizzards, stay informed about weather warnings.
- **Prepare:** Insulate your home, have a winter storm kit with blankets, flashlights, and extra batteries, keep your car winterized with antifreeze and extra blankets.

# HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

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- ☑ Hazardous materials, also known as “Hazmat” are any substances that can pose a threat to human health or the environment. These materials can be:
  - **Toxic**: Poisonous and can cause serious illness or death if inhaled, ingested, or absorbed through the skin.
  - **Flammable**: Can easily ignite and cause explosions of fires.
  - **Corrosive**: Can eat away at skin, eyes, and metals.
  - **Reactive**: Can undergo violent reactions when mixed with other materials.
  
- ☑ **The Dangers of Hazardous Materials:**
  - **Immediate Health Effects**: Exposure to hazmat can cause a range of health problems depending on the material, including respiratory problems, burns, poisoning, and even death.
  - **Long-Term Health Risks**: Some hazardous materials can cause long-term health effects like cancer or birth defects.
  - **Environmental Damage**: Hazmat spills can contaminate air, water, and soil, harming wildlife and ecosystems.
  
- ☑ **Staying Safe around Hazardous Materials:**
  - **Be Aware**: If you live near an industrial area or work with chemicals, be aware of the potential hazards and safety procedures.
  - **Follow Safety Instructions**: Always wear recommended personal protective equipment (PPE) when handling hazardous materials and follow all safety data sheets (SDS) for proper storage and disposal.
  - **Evacuations**:
    - If there is a hazmat incident and authorities instruct you to evacuate, leave the area immediately.
    - Follow designated evacuation routes and do not stop to collect belongings.
  - **Shelter-in-Place**:
    - In some cases, sheltering in place may be safer than evacuating, especially if the release is contained or the outdoor air is more hazardous than the sheltered area.
    - If instructed to shelter-in-place, close and seal all windows and doors, turn off ventilation systems, and stay inside until authorities give the “all clear”.

# **PantEX** PLANT

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## **About**

The Pantex Plant, located Northeast of Amarillo, Texas, is the nation's primary facility for the final assembly, dismantlement, and maintenance of nuclear weapons. Pantex is one of six production facilities in the National Nuclear Security Administration's (NNSA) Nuclear Security Enterprise.

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## **Notification**

Warning sirens, the Emergency Alert System (EAS), and NOAA All-Hazards radios will be activated by local emergency management officials to inform the public of emergency at the Pantex Plant.

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## **The Emergency Planning Zone (EPZ)**

If you live in the EPZ and are advised to evacuate:

- In the event of a radiological emergency, a Community Reception Center may be established. The primary location for the Amarillo Community Reception Center is situated at the Tri-State Fairgrounds, located at Grand Avenue and East 3rd Avenue in Amarillo
- Take any medications, baby items, and important documents that you may need.
- Do not eat, drink, or smoke until advised that it is safe to do so.



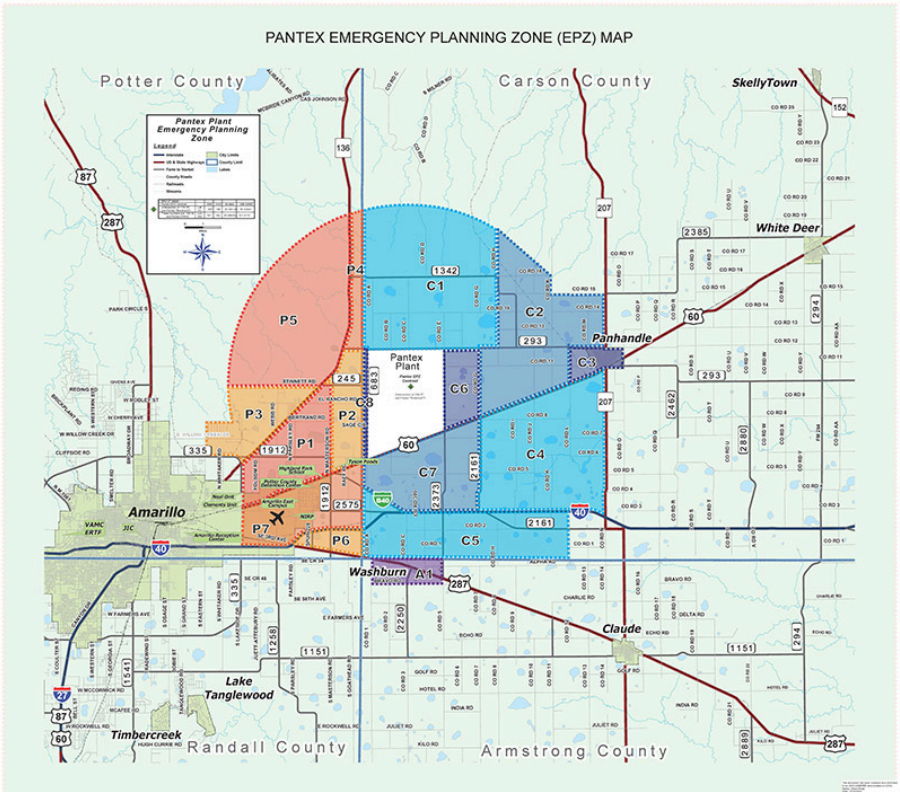
For more information visit:  
[www.pantexepz.com](http://www.pantexepz.com)

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## The Emergency Planning Zone (EPZ)

In the unlikely event of an incident at Pantex, it is important to get radioactive material off your body as soon as possible to lower your risk of harm.

- Removing radioactive material from a person, object, or place is called decontamination. Decontaminating yourself will lower your exposure to harmful radioactive material.



For more information visit:  
[www.pantexepz.com](http://www.pantexepz.com)



# COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT)

## ✓ What is CERT?

- CERT is a national program sponsored by FEMA that is designed to help provide basic disaster preparedness and response training to people and their communities.
- The CERT concept was developed and implemented by the Los Angeles Fire Department in 1985. After the Whittier Narrows earthquake in 1987 helped confirm the need for training civilians to meet their immediate needs.
- A typical CERT class includes 24 hours of training covering:
  - Disaster Preparedness
  - The National Incident Management System (NIMS)
  - Basic First-Aid
  - Small-Fire Suppression
  - Light Search & Rescue Techniques
  - Disaster Psychology
  - Terrorism Awareness
  - CERT Organization



**TO SIGN UP!  
SCAN HERE**

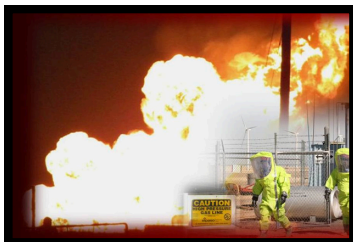


# LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE (LEPC)

The Potter & Randall County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) is a group that supports emergency planning for chemical hazards in the community. They work to achieve the following goals:

- Provide information: The LEPC educates local government and the public about potential chemical hazards in the area.
- Coordinate planning: They work with different groups in the community, including government agencies, private industry, and organizations, to create a coordinated plan for responding to chemical emergencies.
- Address concerns: The LEPC addresses citizen concerns about chemical hazards.

The LEPC supports emergency planning for chemical hazards and provides local government and the public with information about possible chemical hazards. We work together to achieve goals that help our community prepare for emergencies through education and coordinated planning.



## Open Meetings:

The LEPC follows the Texas Open Meetings Act, which means their quarterly meetings are open to the public. This allows for transparency and community involvement in their work. Open Meetings are held on the Third Thursday every quarter.



**FOR MORE  
INFORMATION**

## About Us:

The Amarillo Area OEM is your local resource for emergency preparedness and response. We're an inter-jurisdictional agency working to keep the communities of Amarillo, Potter County, Randall County, and Canyon safe.

Our mission is to be proactive in reducing the risks associated with emergencies and to effectively respond when disaster strikes. We achieve this through:

- **Comprehensive Planning:** We develop and maintain hazard assessments and mitigation plans to address potential threats in the Panhandle region.
- **Community Coordination:** We work collaboratively with city and county departments, emergency response agencies, and other organizations to ensure a whole-community approach to emergency management.
- **24/7 Emergency Response:** Our Duty Officer is available around the clock to coordinate emergency response efforts and escalate situations as needed. We also activate the Emergency Operations Center (EOC).
- **Public Education and Outreach:** We keep the community informed through social media and by maintaining the Amarillo Outdoor Warning Siren System, a network of over 100 sirens designed to alert residents of potential emergencies.

We are committed to keeping our community safe and prepared for all types of emergencies. By working together, we can build a more resilient Amarillo Area.

**Director of  
Emergency  
Management**

**Deputy Director  
of Emergency  
Management**

**Office  
Manager**

**Operations  
Manager**

**AIP Planner -  
Pantex Liaison**

**Technical  
Hazards  
Coordinator**

**Emergency  
Management  
Planner**

**Siren  
Technician**

## Mission Statement

Communicate and coordinate with our community and provide a comprehensive emergency management program to reduce the risk of loss of life, property, and environmental impacts from all-hazards events.



## Vision Statement

To not only be a shining example of emergency preparedness for the Panhandle and the State of Texas, but to be a leader in the emergency management industry.

# IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS & WEBSITES

- 9-1-1
- Police/ Fire Non-Emergency - 806.378.3038
- Amarillo Area OEM - 806.378.3004
- Poison Control Center - 800.222.1222
- Doctor - \_\_\_\_\_
- Hospital - \_\_\_\_\_
- Road Conditions - \_\_\_\_\_
- Utilities - \_\_\_\_\_
- Water - \_\_\_\_\_
- Electricity - \_\_\_\_\_
- Gas - \_\_\_\_\_

Family Planning Resources (FEMA) - [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)

City of Amarillo - [www.amarillo.gov](http://www.amarillo.gov)

Amarillo Area OEM - [oem.amarillo.gov](http://oem.amarillo.gov)

Potter County - [www.potter.co.tx.us](http://www.potter.co.tx.us)

Randall County - [www.randallcounty.com](http://www.randallcounty.com)

City of Canyon - [www.canyontx.org](http://www.canyontx.org)

National Weather Service Amarillo - [www.weather.gov/ama](http://www.weather.gov/ama)

FEMA - [www.fema.org](http://www.fema.org)

U.S. Fire Administration - [www.usfa.dhs.org](http://www.usfa.dhs.org)

Citizen Corps - [www.citizencorps.gov](http://www.citizencorps.gov)

U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention - [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

U.S. Department of Energy - [www.energy.gov](http://www.energy.gov)

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission - [www.nrc.gov](http://www.nrc.gov)

Institute for Business and Home Safety - [www.disastersafety.org](http://www.disastersafety.org)

Pantex EPZ - [www.pantexepz.com](http://www.pantexepz.com)

Amarillo Area CERT - Facebook 'Amarillo Area CERT'