

BE TECH READY

Technology has made it easier than ever to prepare for emergencies. Keep your gadgets protected and powered up in case of emergency. Make sure that you are tech ready:

- Download the Ready Georgia app to keep a copy of your family emergency plan and a list of supplies for your Ready kit.
- Use text messages, social media, and email to connect with friends and family during emergencies. Mobile networks can become overwhelmed during emergencies, making it difficult to place and receive phone calls. Texts require less bandwidth, which means they can be transmitted more reliably during times when many people are trying to use their mobile phones at the same time.
- Social media is an effective way to update family and friends during emergencies. Facebook's Safety Check feature allows users to post a status update indicating that they are safe during a time of disaster. The American Red Cross Safe and Well website has a similar function.
- Smartphones are a vital tool to receive emergency alerts and warnings, so it's important to make sure you can keep them powered up in an emergency.
- Prior to severe weather, make sure that all of your electronic devices are fully charged. If the power goes out, preserve battery power by minimizing device use. Keep a back-up power source on hand to recharge your phone so that you can stay connected even during an extended power outage.
- Keep a portable phone charger in your vehicle at all times, and consider purchasing a back-up power supply to keep in your vehicle as well.
- Store important documents in a secure, password-protected jump drive or in the cloud. There are a number of apps that make this easier than ever, using your phone's camera as a scanning device. Capture electronic versions of important documents such as insurance policies and identification documents.
- Back up your computer to protect photos and other important electronic documents.
- Scan old photos to protect them from loss.
- Sign up for Direct Deposit and electronic banking through your financial institution so you can access your payroll funds and make electronic payments wherever you are. Federal benefit recipients can sign up by calling 800.333.1795 or at GoDirect.org.

Learn more at GwinnettSafety411.com