

Tech Tips

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Emergency Preparedness Mobile Apps

By Harris R. Greenberg

In October 2018 the Rossmoor Emergency Preparedness Organization (EPO) launched a new web site (www.rossmoorepo.org) that has an extensive collection of resources for emergency preparedness and emergency response. Check the EPO's website homepage for information on upcoming meeting times, locations, and topics.



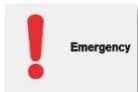
Here are some specific mobile apps from the *American Red Cross* you may want to consider:



First Aid - Get instant access to information on handling the most common first aid emergencies.



Pet First Aid - Be prepared to help your furry friends with veterinary advice for everyday emergencies.



Emergency - This all-inclusive app lets you monitor more than 35 different severe weather and emergency alerts.



Earthquake - Receive notification when an earthquake occurs. You may also want to consider non-Red Cross earthquake alert apps, like "I Felt That", or "Quake Feed".

The Red Cross has other apps that may be useful including one that teaches preparedness to children ages 7 to 11 called **Monster Guard**. (www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/mobile-apps)

The **Red Cross Safe and Well web site** (safeandwell.communityos.org) lets you register your own "safe and well" status, or check on the status family and friends who have registered. You can also call 1-866-GET-INFO to check on someone's status or register yourself and your family.

The **FEMA mobile app**, available at www.fema.gov/mobile-app lets you receive real-time alerts from the National Weather Service for up to five locations nationwide. Learn emergency safety tips for over 20 types of disasters, including fires, flooding, hurricanes, snowstorms, tornadoes, volcanoes and more. **This app also helps you locate emergency shelters and disaster recovery centers** where you can talk to FEMA staff.

Sign up for mobile alert messages from **NIXLE**

NIXLE is a nationwide service that provides useful alerts from your local public safety departments. For Rossmoor specific alerts, go to Rossmoor.com, scroll to the bottom of the homepage and click "Nixle" in the alphabetical listing under "Quick Links". Another way to sign up for Rossmoor or nearby city alerts is to send a text message containing the Zip Code (94595 for Rossmoor) to 888777 to OPT-IN for text-message alerts.

Use a radio or mobile radio app to listen to emergency announcements

Residents in the Rossmoor area should tune in to KCBS – 740 AM or 106.9 FM for up to date emergency announcements and instructions.

Text messages may get through in an emergency even when phone calls can't

Immediately following an emergency, it is highly likely that the phone lines and cell towers (if they are still standing) will be overloaded and you won't be able to call because "all circuits are busy". However, text messages take up much less bandwidth than phone calls and also use a different transmission method, so there is a much better chance that text messages will get through when a phone call won't.

Power sources & backups for mobile devices in an extended power outage

There are several options: 1) A crank-operated radio or flashlight that includes a USB charging port can recharge your mobile devices; 2) Portable solar panels designed for camping that have USB charging ports; 3) A cell phone car-charger (or a USB cable on newer cars), as long as your car is accessible and still running; 4) Portable power banks can recharge your cell phone or mobile device a few times.

How to get into your garage when the power is out

Here is a link to a video that shows how to get into a vault-type garage door (typical in Rossmoor) when the power is out: www.maddendoor.com/garage-door-help-videos.

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