

BOOK NEWS

Organize for Disaster: Prepare Your Family and Your Home for Any Natural or Unnatural Disaster

*Author: Judith Kolberg
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Organize for Disaster: Prepare Your Family and Your Home for Any Natural or Unnatural Disaster captured my attention because, as a professional organizer, I am already quite organized. I wanted to assess how much I have done to protect my family against disasters and how much I still needed to do. This book is intended to act as a resource in helping Americans to prepare for disasters and emergencies. As an organizer, I found that this book gives a whole new depth to harm mitigation.

The chronically disorganized, their loved ones, and professionals who work with them can use this book as a reference tool to gauge just how prepared they are for emergencies and disasters. Use this book in conjunction with the Clutter–Hoarding Scale (C–HS) to create an in-depth client needs assessment and project guidelines.

This book addresses a wide range of topics in the disaster and emergency preparedness arenas, including first aid and what copies of which documents to have and where to find and store them.

In the book's introduction, Kolberg writes, "[This book] closes the gap between awareness and implementation," and notes, "you'll learn what disaster provisions to have on hand, and you'll have actual shopping lists to make purchasing them simple. You'll know what provisions to store away and you'll have actual storage ideas. You'll know what plans your family needs to write up; and you'll have actual sample plans, forms, and checklists to

assist you." As Kolberg points out, your home, vehicle, family, friends, and pets can be affected in many ways by disaster.

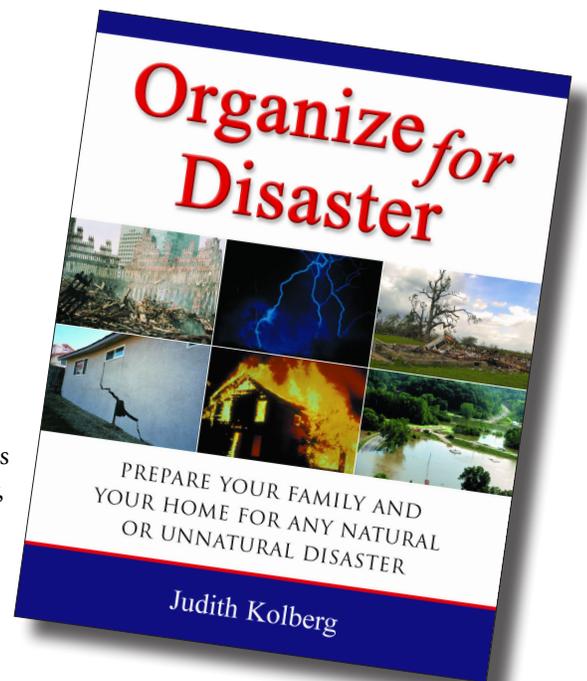
This book is written in sections focusing on preparing, living through, and dealing with the aftermath of disasters. You can read it all the way through or use it as a reference tool. Filling out the charts in the book and having them accessible during disasters can be rewarding, and the checklists included throughout the book can be used to create a comprehensive plan.

The resources guide on page 135 should be a staple of every home, as it's extremely useful for both everyday organization and disaster/emergency preparedness. In addition, the "What Kids Can Do" sections in each chapter are brilliant.

For the chronically disorganized, the book stresses how decluttering is just one part of emergency and disaster planning. Clutter can hinder the ability of responders entering the premises. It can also slow the process of getting out during emergencies and disasters. This once again proves why organizing your home or hiring professionals to help is so important.

The author stresses the importance of making sure your household management team is prepared for disaster and everything has been maintained properly in anticipation, and includes specific information for those who live in high-rise buildings.

The "Safely Evacuating and



Escaping From Your Home" chapter talks about where to seek shelter, what to take, and when to leave, including information on evacuating pets. Kolberg includes an evacuation checklist form in the appendix. She also includes information on what to do when you return to your home.

Kolberg talks about keeping safe from fire, wind, trees, lightning, electrocution, earthquakes and floods, acts of terrorism, utility malfunctions, and other home hazards. The "Mitigation and Home Hazard Hunt Checklist" included in the appendix again emphasizes how professional organizers can help before, during, and after emergencies or disasters.

Throughout the entire book, there are links to various websites with more specific information on disaster and emergency topics by the experts like The American Red Cross, FEMA, NOAA, and Homeland Security. The author's extensive communication with many experts in their fields is evident in this resource-filled book.

Book reviewer Sherri Papich owns Organize Your Life, LLC, in Buffalo, NY. Contact her at sherri@youcanorganizeyourlife.com.