READY AT HOME · VOLUME 0

Start Here

Household plan & emergency numbers

How the series works and where to start
Ireland's most likely emergencies, ranked
Your household plan, numbers and yearly check-up



THE SERIES

0 Start Here	**1** Just Add Water	**2** Power Cuts & Storms	**3** Water & Sanitation	**4** Cooking & Warmth	**5** First Aid	**6** Symptoms & Home Care	**7** Home Systems & Repairs
8 Fire Safety & Security	**9** Communications	**10** Grab Bags & Kits	**11** Pantry & Stockpile	**12** Outdoor Skills	**13** Kids, Morale & Wellbeing	**14** Offline Knowledge &	**15** Other Emergencies

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1. How the series works

Ready at Home is a set of short handbooks you can print, punch and keep in one folder. Each volume stands on its own, but they all link together. Start with this one: it helps you work out what matters most for your household, then points you to the right volume.

Vol	Handbook	Read it when...
0	**Start Here**	Household plan & emergency numbers
1	**Just Add Water**	Home-dehydrated emergency meals
2	**Power Cuts & Storms**	Getting through long outages
3	**Water & Sanitation**	Storing, treating, toilets
4	**Cooking & Warmth**	Without mains power
5	**First Aid**	Step-by-step emergency care
6	**Symptoms & Home Care**	Red flags, minor illness, medicines
7	**Home Systems & Repairs**	Shut-offs, leaks, storm damage, floods
8	**Fire Safety & Security**	Alarms, escape plans, extinguishers
9	**Communications**	Family plan, radios, signals
10	**Grab Bags & Kits**	72-hour, car, child & pet kits
11	**Pantry & Stockpile**	A 30-day food store you rotate
12	**Outdoor Skills**	Fire, shelter, knots, navigation
13	**Kids, Morale & Wellbeing**	Keeping people okay
14	**Offline Knowledge & Media**	Libraries, maps & media without internet
15	**Other Emergencies**	Radiation, chemicals, heat, illness, cut off

The three things that matter most

- **Water.** You can't flush, wash or cook without it. Store it first (Vol 3).
- **Warmth and light.** Irish emergencies are mostly winter storms. Plan for a week without power (Vols 2, 4).
- **Knowing what to do.** Basic first aid and a family plan are free and make the biggest difference (Vols 5, 9).

What's actually likely in Ireland

Prepare for the emergencies you're most likely to face, not the dramatic ones. In January 2025 Storm Éowyn cut power to hundreds of thousands of homes; in Mayo many households were still without electricity a week later, and some rural homes waited more than two weeks. Long power cuts are the single most useful thing to plan for in the west of Ireland.

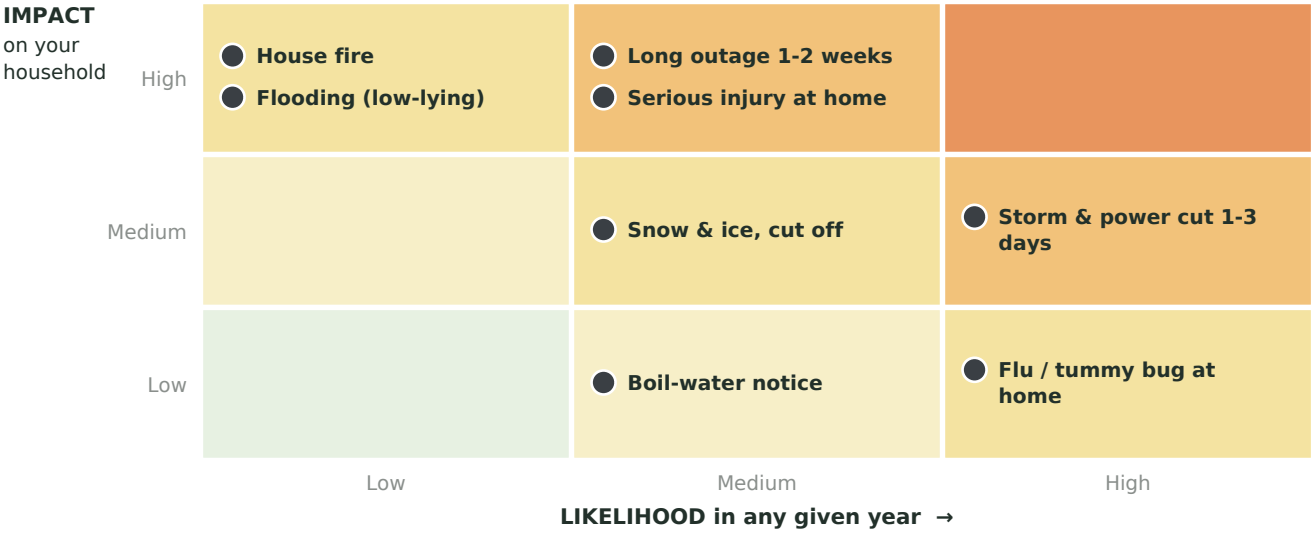


Figure 1. A rough guide for a rural or small-town household in the west. Move the dots for your own situation (e.g. if you're on a well, a power cut also means no water).

2. How prepared do you want to be?

Work up in stages. Each level builds on the last, and Level 1 can be done in a weekend for under €100.

Level 1
72 hours

- 3 days of water (9 L/person)
- Torch + spare batteries per person
- Power bank charged
- 3 days of no-cook food
- Battery or wind-up radio
- First-aid kit
- Cash (€100-200)
- This plan filled in

Level 2
1 week

- Water for 7 days or a way to treat it
- Camping stove + fuel
- One warm room plan
- Power station or big power banks
- 7 days of meals (Vol 1, 11)
- Grab bags packed
- Medicines buffer agreed with GP

Level 3
2 weeks +

- Water filter + rain collection
- Dehydrated meal stock
- 30-day pantry rotation
- Solar charging
- Off-grid comms (Vol 9)
- First-aid course done
- Offline library and maps (Vol 14)
- Neighbour network

Figure 2. Readiness levels. Most households should aim for Level 2.

Your first weekend: 10 jobs

☐ Fill in the household plan (next pages)	☐ Save emergency numbers in every phone
☐ Find the water stopcock, gas valve and fuse board (Vol 7)	☐ Test smoke and CO alarms
☐ Store 9 litres of water per person	☐ Put a torch by every bed
☐ Charge and label power banks	☐ Buy a battery/wind-up FM radio
☐ Set aside 3 days of no-cook food	☐ Put €100-200 cash somewhere safe

3. Household emergency plan

Fill this in by hand, keep one copy in this folder and one in each grab bag. Take a photo of it on every phone.

People in the house

Name	Date of birth	Medical conditions / allergies	Medicines & doses	Mobile

Key contacts

Who	Name	Phone	Notes

Include: GP, out-of-hours doctor, pharmacy, vet, two nearby neighbours, an out-of-area contact (a relative in another county everyone checks in with), school or crèche, work, your county council, insurance policy numbers.

Where things are in our home

Water stopcock (inside) _____

Water stopcock (outside / road) _____

Gas meter & shut-off valve _____

Oil tank & valve _____

Fuse board / main switch _____

Well pump / pressure switch (if any) _____

Torches & batteries _____

First-aid kit _____

Grab bags _____

Stored water _____

Spare keys _____

Important documents _____

Emergency cash (and any kept with family elsewhere) _____

Meeting points

1. Just outside the house (fire) _____

2. In our area (can't get home) _____

3. Out of area (evacuation) _____

Out-of-area contact person _____

Special needs to plan for

Medical equipment needing power _____

Medicines that must stay cold _____

Mobility / hearing / sight _____

Babies & young children _____

Pets & animals _____

Elderly neighbours we check on _____

4. Keeping it current

A plan only works if the batteries are charged and the food is in date. Tie these jobs to dates you'll remember, like the clock changes.

Monthly	Test smoke & CO alarms. Eat 2-3 stored meals and replace them. Charge power banks, lanterns and the power station to 80-100%.
Every 3 months	Check grab bags (clothes still fit, batteries, phone chargers). Run the radio and torches. Rotate bottled water you've opened. Check medicine expiry dates.
Every 6 months (clock change)	Refill stored tap water. Review this plan with everyone. Practise the fire escape route. Check the first-aid kit.
Every October	Winter-ready: heating oil or fuel stocked, gutters cleared, outdoor taps lagged, chimney swept, grit/salt in, car winter kit in the boot.

Figure 3. The yearly maintenance rhythm.

When a warning is issued

Met Éireann issues **Yellow**, **Orange** and **Red** weather warnings. Treat them as triggers:

YELLOW	Be aware. Check the forecast, charge everything, fill water containers, bring in loose garden items.
ORANGE	Be prepared. Fill the bath, move the car away from trees, check on neighbours, plan to stay in, get cash, top up fuel.
RED	Take action. Stay indoors. Don't travel unless your life depends on it. Follow instructions from Gardaí and the council.

Figure 4. Turning weather warnings into actions.

Training worth doing

- A first-aid course (Irish Red Cross, Order of Malta, St John Ambulance, or your workplace).
- A CPR/defibrillator session (Irish Heart Foundation runs free community sessions).
- Find out if your area has a Community First Responder group, or join one.

Emergency numbers & the series

Service	Number	Use it for
Emergency services	**112 or 999**	Ambulance, Garda, fire, coast guard. Works from any phone, any network.
ESB Networks	1800 372 999	Power cuts, fallen or damaged lines (24/7)
Gas Networks Ireland	1800 20 50 50	Smell of gas (24/7). Call from outside the house.
Uisce Éireann (Irish Water)	1800 278 278	Water outages, burst mains, boil-water notices
HSELive	1800 700 700	Health service information
Public Poisons Line	01 809 2166	Advice if someone has swallowed or touched something harmful (8am-10pm daily)
Samaritans	116 123	Anyone struggling to cope (24/7)
Text About It	Text HELLO to 50808	Free text support (24/7)
Childline	1800 66 66 66	Children and young people up to 18 (24/7)
Your county council		Roads, flooding, local emergency centres
Met Éireann	met.ie / Met Éireann app	Weather warnings

Numbers checked November 2026. Write in your county council's number above, and your own local numbers (GP, out-of-hours doctor, pharmacy, vet, neighbours) in Volume 0.

The Ready At Home series

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This series gives general preparedness guidance. It is not a substitute for professional medical, electrical, gas or structural advice, or for a certified first-aid course. In an emergency, call 112 or 999 and follow the call-taker's instructions.

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