

Emergencies, Accidents & Incidents

Emergency Preparedness

As we all know, emergencies can happen. Girl Scouts need to receive proper instruction in how to care for themselves and others in emergencies. They also need to learn the importance of reporting any accidents, illnesses, or unusual behaviors during Girl Scout activities to adults. To this end, you can help girls:

- Know what to report to adults. See the Emergency Management Plan on page 3.
- Establish and practice procedures for weather emergencies. Certain extreme weather conditions may occur in your area. Please consult with GSNorcal for the most relevant information for you to share with the troop or group.
- Establish and practice procedures for such circumstances as fire evacuation, lost persons, and building-security responses. Every girl and adult must know how to act in these situations. For example, you and the girls, with the help of a fire department representative, should design a fire evacuation plan for meeting places used by the group.
- Assemble a well-stocked first aid kit that is always accessible. First aid administered in the first few minutes can mean the difference between life and death. In an emergency, secure professional medical assistance as soon as possible, normally by calling 911. [**SAFETY-WISE: First Aid & First Aiders**]

Emergency Checklist (use to help the girls develop an emergency plan)

Girls can and should help develop the emergency plans. Younger girls, with adult guidance, could brainstorm safety rules, and older girls could develop the entire emergency plan. Use the following list to assist you.

- Make sure all drivers and adults in attendance understand the GSNorCal emergency management plan and specific procedures for this activity.
- Ensure that all girls understand expectations and rules—for example:
 - Should they stay with a certain adult?
 - Where is it OK to go? With whom?
 - Are you using the buddy system? Who is their buddy?
 - What should they do if they become separated from the group?
 - What are the bathroom procedures?
- All adults should have a copy of the [Council Emergency Cards](#) and troop emergency contact information.

- Design a plan for managing emergency situations, defining how each possible emergency would be handled (by whom, who would be notified—when and how) including consideration of:
 - Natural hazards (lake, cliffs, etc.).
 - Natural disasters (earthquake, storms, floods, fire, etc.).
 - Each program activity
 - Injuries or medical emergencies
 - Lost children
 - Strangers or intruders
- Establish and communicate an emergency evacuation plan with all participants. Let them know who is in charge in these situations prior to the event. Should cars back into parking spots? Where should participants go?
- Specific emergency plans for each trip should include evacuation plans in situations where girls have been dropped off. This is especially important if there are not enough vehicles on site during the event/activity to evacuate all participants.
- Establish a security plan including adult supervision and placement of adults
- Establish an emergency communication system. Who should be notified in case of an emergency?
- Establish an at-home **emergency contact person** as outlined in STEP 2 of the Outings, Trips and Travel Checklist. [[SAFETY-WISE: Outings, Trips, and Travel Checklist](#)]
- Determine how parents/guardians will be communicated with in the event of an emergency.

GSNorCal Emergency Management Plan

Although we all hope the worst never happens, when accidents and/or fatalities occur, you must observe GSNorCal procedures. At the scene of an accident, first provide all possible care for the sick or injured person. Follow established GSNorCal procedures for obtaining medical assistance and immediately reporting the emergency. To do this, you must always have the names and phone numbers of parents/guardians, and emergency services such as the police, fire department, or hospital emergency technicians and the council emergency number of 1(877) 636-1912 on hand.

After receiving a report of an accident, council staff will immediately arrange for additional assistance at the scene, if needed, and will notify parents/guardians, as appropriate. If a Girl Scout needs emergency medical care as the result of an accident or injury, first contact emergency medical services, and then follow council procedures for accidents and incidents. Your adherence to these procedures is critical, especially with regard to notifying parents or guardians. If the media is involved, let council-designated staff discuss the incident with these representatives.

GSNorCal Emergency Management Plan

Emergency Number: 1 (877) 636-1912

In line with recommendations from Girl Scouts of the USA, our council has developed a plan and a team to help respond to any emergency needing the attention of more than local troop or service unit personnel. Such emergencies are incidents of a serious nature that occur during Girl Scout activities.

An emergency is defined as any of the following:

- A fatality or serious injury requiring urgent or emergency medical treatment
- A traffic accident involving Girl Scouts during Girl Scout activities
- An illness serious enough to require hospitalization
- Any situation which involves law enforcement officers
- Allegation of child molestation or rape
- Lost participant
- Kidnapping
- Allegation of tampering with products sold
- Threat of legal action
- Other occurrences that may have adverse media or legal implications

If you become aware of any incident related to the above:

1. Remain as calm as possible. Find out as much information as quickly as possible about the situation.
2. Instruct someone to call 9-1-1 if needed. Obtain the name and phone number of a contact person (if not yourself).
3. Give priority attention to providing all possible care for the injured. Secure emergency medical professionals, ambulance, and police as appropriate.
4. In the event of a fatality or other serious accident, notify the police. Retain a responsible person at the scene. See that no disturbance of the victim or surroundings is permitted until police have arrived.
5. Ascertain whether a parent has been notified — but if a serious injury or fatality, get directions from council emergency contact before notifying parents.
6. Notify the council of the emergency. Call **(877) 636-1912**. The council answering service will contact the appropriate council staff, who will evaluate the level of additional council support required. Always be sure to leave a phone number where you can be reached. Carry the [Media Information Sheet](#) with you and fill out as directed by the Emergency Team member to give to the media. Refer all media inquiries (press, radio, TV) to the council. Use the emergency number noted above and either the council's Communications Manager or an alternate council spokesperson will respond to all media inquiries.
7. Complete the [Accident/Injury Report Form](#) or [Incident Report Form](#) within 24 hours of the incident and submit copies of the Health History Form, membership registration form (if registered with offline paper registraion), and Permission Form to the risk Management team a insurance@gsnorcal.org.
8. Be sensitive to the fact that those involved in a traumatic situation may need further support. Contact your VSM (GSNorCal staff member) if additional assistance is needed.