



# Aging and Disability Resource Center of Trempealeau County

## Newsletter Issue: March and April 2022

### 2021 Senior Nutrition Consumer Survey Results

Trempealeau County conducted a comprehensive survey of our Home Delivered Meal and Senior Dining participants. Survey results were gathered by Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources (GWAAR).

For more information or questions, please contact Ashley at 715-538-2001 or 800-273-2001, select Option #1.

TREMPEALEAU COUNTY	
2021 Home Delivered Meal Satisfaction Survey Results	
We want to sincerely thank and recognize our amazing staff & volunteers who continued to deliver hot meals, safety checks & connectedness during the unprecedented COVID pandemic. They are true heroes!	
RISK FACTORS	SOLUTIONS
86% of participants live alone 60% lack companionship. 47% feel left out and 42% feel isolated often or some of the time. 74% said they had 0-3 visitors in the past week. (21% had none)	In-Person Delivery Provides: Something to look forward to (82%) Someone to talk to (77%) A sense of Safety & Security (51%) A Link to get information (41%)
FOOD SECURITY	HIGH QUALITY
The hot, balanced meal our program provides accounts for half or more of the total daily food intake for 67% of our participants!	92% of participants would recommend the program to others. 90% said the food usually or always tastes good and looks good. 87% said the hot food arrives hot and cold food arrives cold usually or always.

TREMPEALEAU COUNTY	
2021 Senior Dining Satisfaction Survey Results	
Socialization is one of the main purposes of the Older Americans Act Nutrition Program. During COVID the ability to meet in person was limited, this increased the risk for social isolation and negative health outcomes. Our programs play a vital role in keeping people socially connected.	
RISK FACTORS	BARRIERS TO ATTENDING
13% state sometimes or often feel they lack companionship 11% feel left out, 1% feel isolated often or some of the time even at our dining sites.	Advanced Reservations Schedule conflicts/Busy Don't want to attend alone Transportation
FOOD SECURITY	HIGH QUALITY
The hot, balanced meal our program provides accounts for half or more of the total daily food intake for 52% of our participants.	100% of participants would recommend the program to others. 100% said the food usually or always tastes and (92%) looks good.

### National Volunteer Week: April 17th - 23rd, 2022

This year's theme is Shining a Light on the People and Causes that Inspire Us to Serve. The ADRC would like to thank each and every one of our Volunteers. We would not be able to serve as many residents in the county as we currently do without you. We would like to recognize each of our volunteers listed below.

**Bonnie Johnson, Linda Ness, Kay Vold, Colleen Schwerke, Helen Beebe, Carol and Larry Myhre, Ron McKernan, Mike Lyga, Donnie Semb, Jerry Knudtson, Linda Schaefer, Loretta Schultz, Carmen Kuss, Richard and Janice Stendahl, Norm Dodge, Inez Semingson, Tom and Mary Ladwig, Mike Suchla, Amanda Hegge and Nancy Lyngen. Thank you for all you do for the residents of Trempealeau County!**

Are you looking for a purpose and are interested in making a difference in your community?

- The ADRC is looking for Volunteer Drivers, Home Delivered Meal Drivers and Senior Meal Site Volunteers
- Volunteer Drivers transport Trempealeau County Residents to medical appointments
  - Volunteer Home Delivered Meal Drivers deliver meals to homebound residents
  - Senior Meal Site Volunteers greet participants and assist with sign-in and registration

For more information on becoming a Volunteer, please contact Ashley at 715-538-2001, select Option #1.

# Get to know the ADRC

## What Services Do We Provide?

### Information, Assistance and Long Term Care Options

**Counseling** Information on resources and services available to support community members including information about long term care programs. Call and select Option #2

**Family Caregiver Support** Assistance locating caregiver resources such as respite, support groups, education, National Family Caregiver Support Program and adaptive equipment. Call and select Option #4

**Dementia Care Specialist** Supports for people living with dementia and their care partners in order to ensure the highest quality of life possible while living at home. Call and select Option #6

**Elder and Disability Benefits Counseling** Accurate, current information on private and public benefits and programs, Medicare, Medicare Part D, supplemental insurance, and Social Security. Call and select Option # 3 for Elder Benefits for those 60 and older, select Option #4 for Disability Benefits for those 59 and younger.

**Health Promotion and Prevention** Evidence based Strong Bodies, Powerful Tools for Caregivers. Call and select Option #2

**Nutrition and Transportation Services** such as Home Delivered Meals, Senior Dining Sites, Local Van Ride Services, Bus Services. Call and select Option #1

**Volunteer Opportunities** Home Delivered Meal Drivers, Volunteer Driver Program, Congregate Meal Sites, assist with Brain Health Classes and Memory Café. Call and select Option #1

**Youth in Transition** Information to persons under 17 years of age with disabilities as they transition into the adult long-term system. Call and select Option #2

## ADRC CONTACTS:

(715) 538- 2001

(800) 273-2001

### Option #1

Nutrition & Transportation - Ashley

### Option #2

Social Workers - Intake  
Laura, Michelle and Heather  
are ready to assist you

### Option #3

Elder Benefits Specialist - Rita

### Option #4

Disability Benefits Specialist &  
Caregiver Support Specialist - Shelly

### Option #5

Guardianship & Adult Protection  
Dana

### Option #6

Dementia Care Specialist - Becky

### Option #7

Supervisor of ADRC - Melissa

### Option #8

Administrative Specialist &  
Transportation - Sami



## Brain Health Check-Up Normal Aging or Something Else?

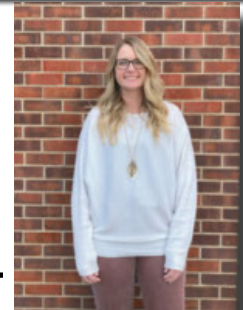
A brain health check-up is a wellness tool that helps identify possible changes in memory and cognition. We get preventative screens for other things, why not your memory too?

The tool creates a baseline of where a person is at so that future changes can be monitored. It's free, confidential, and only takes 10 minutes!

Call today to schedule! Appointments can be scheduled in your home, by phone or virtually.  
Call us at 715-538-2001, select Option #6.

# ADRC News

Hello everyone, I'm Sami Becker the new Administrative Specialist for the ADRC of Trempealeau County. I will be the first smiling face you see when you walk in the door. I've spent 10 years in the dental field and then was a Pharmacy Technician for 2 years. I live right here in Whitehall with my boyfriend Alex, and with two active kids you most likely will see me around at sporting and school events. In my free time I like to spend time with my family and friends, run, shop, and read. I look forward to being a part of the ADRC as we enter the New Year.



## **AARP Tax Services Changes**

Due to the volunteer shortage AARP **will not be providing tax preparation services in Trempealeau County in 2022.**

## **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE)**

### **What is the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program?**

The VITA program is a cooperative effort by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and many individual states, including Wisconsin. Volunteers trained by the IRS and the Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR) prepare basic income tax returns for free. Most VITA sites offer free electronic filing.

### **What is the Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) program?**

The TCE program is supported by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) Foundation. AARP's Tax-Aide volunteers are trained in cooperation with the IRS and DOR to prepare basic income tax returns for free. Most of these sites offer free electronic filing.

### **To find a VITA or TCE site near you, use one of the following methods:**

- Call (800) 906-9887
- Visit [irs.gov](http://irs.gov), keyword VITA
- Call "211" for a site near you
- Call (608) 266-2486

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# Caregiver Corner

## Caregiver Resource in Wisconsin - Trualta

By Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources, Inc.

With public health guidelines preventing the usual caregiver activities like support groups, caregiving classes, and conferences from proceeding as usual, Wisconsin caregivers now have access to a new educational support resource called Trualta. It is an online portal designed to help caregivers develop skills and find local resources, all from the comfort and safety of home. A limited number of the programs are also available in print.

Trualta gives you unlimited access to articles, videos, audio lessons, and printable tip sheets to improve your caregiving journey. You can develop skills and feel more confident in your ability to handle challenging care situations, including those related to personal care, safety, brain health, and even your own wellness.

You will have access to trainings from Teepa Snow, who teaches skills and techniques to improve your ability to care for someone with dementia. Alzheimer's Music Connect can also be accessed through the portal, which can improve the mood and behavior of someone with dementia. You can learn about strokes and how they affect a person's thinking, movement and communication. Skill development for providing hands-on care like shaving, showering and oral care are also covered. Topics such as Keep Your Cool, Caregiver Guilt and Balancing Work and Caregiving provide helpful tips for keeping yourself mentally and emotionally healthy as well as host of other topics related to caregiving; and new content is being added regularly.

With an on-demand learning library this big, you get to choose what you learn, how you learn, and when you learn. The lessons vary from 5 minutes to 2 hours, so you can pick what you want based on the time you have. With Trualta, you have access to materials any time of the day and anywhere you are, so you don't have to worry about fitting Trualta into your busy schedule. Once you create your Trualta account, you will continue to have access to the materials for the entire year.

Trualta is easy to use on a computer, laptop or tablet and is available at no cost to Wisconsin caregivers thanks to the National Family Caregiver Support Program. If you are interested in learning more about Trualta contact Shelly at (715) 538- 2001, select Option # 4. You can also register at <https://wisconsin caregiver.trualta.com/login>

## Community Events

Bells of the Bluffs Handbell Ensemble of Red Wing, MN  
Performing at Independence Opera House  
23688 Adams St, Independence, WI 54747  
Saturday, March 5, 2022 at 2:00pm  
Free and Open to Everyone, Sponsored by Independence Public Library



The ADRC and Independence Library are partnering to offer a fun afternoon of Bingo! Join us at the Opera House on March 22nd 1:30pm-2:30pm. Many games will be played in this hour time frame and prizes will be awarded!

23688 Adams St, Independence, WI 54747

Dementia 101 Presentation by Becky - Dementia Care Specialist  
Friday March 25th at 1:00pm to 2:00pm  
Blair Friendship 1st Foundation  
419 Urberg St Blair, WI 54616  
Informational and Educational Presentation; all are welcome



# Brain Health

## Virtual Support Groups:

Join two Dementia Care Specialists along with other caregivers virtually for relaxed open conversations about caring for someone living with dementia. We share stories, struggles, and successes during our scheduled time. We respect your valuable time and will stick to the one hour time slot.

**-Circle of Support: First and Third Monday of every month from 10:00am-11:00am, meetings will be held on Zoom.**

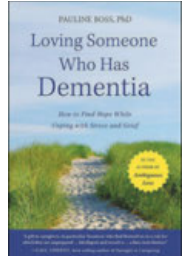
**-Thursday Evening Conversations: Every Thursday from 7:30pm-8:30pm, meetings will be held on Zoom.**

If interested, please call Becky Woodke, Dementia Care Specialist at 715-538-2001, select Option #6 to register.

## Virtual Lunch Bunch Book Club

Book: *Loving Someone who has Dementia* by Pauline Boss

April 5th, 12th, 19th and 26th from 12:00pm-1:00pm. The sessions will be held via Zoom. Book scholarships are available. If interested in joining, please call Becky Woodke, Dementia Care Specialist at 715-538-2001, select Option #6 to register.



## Savvy Caregiver Training

Are you caring for someone with Alzheimer's disease or other form of progressive dementia?

Savvy Caregiver is a proven curriculum developed by Dr. Kenneth Hepburn and colleagues at the University of Minnesota. Grounded in research this educational series teaches strategies, practical real-world skills, and helps to reduce stress, both in the caregiver and the person for whom care is being provided. Savvy Caregiver increases the caregiver's sense of competence, and well-being even though there may be little experience.

The course will cover:

- understanding the career of caregiving
- different types of dementia
- how the decline in cognition affects behavior
- dealing with the feelings that arise while caregiving
- fitting tasks and activities to the person's abilities
- decision making skills

March 21st - April 25th, 6 Mondays, 5:00pm-7:00pm Virtually. Please register online at

[www.adrconnections.org/registrations](http://www.adrconnections.org/registrations) You may also register by contacting Becky at 715-538-2001, select Option #6 or at [rebecca.woodke@co.trempealeau.wi.us](mailto:rebecca.woodke@co.trempealeau.wi.us)



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Ageing Disability Resource Ctr. of Trempealeau, Whitehall, WI

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# Water Assistance Application

By the GWAAR Legal Services Team

A new assistance program is available to help Wisconsin residents pay for home water utilities, but the application process can be challenging. Knowing what to expect in advance can help save time and frustration when applying for this benefit.




The Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) is a federally funded grant program being administered in Wisconsin by the Department of Administration through a contract with Energy Services, Inc. (the same organization that manages the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP)). The LIHWAP program can provide funding directly to water utilities to pay past-due residential water bills and prevent service disruptions. Depending on funding availability, some applicants may also qualify for prospective payments to prevent future service disconnections.

Applications for LIHWAP can be submitted by telephone at 833-426-9472, by email to support@wisconsinwater.help, or through an online application at <https://wisconsinwater.help/>. Applicants will need to be ready to complete an application for WHEAP assistance and will need to provide a Social Security number, proof of income, verification of rent expenses if applicable, and a copy of their most recent water bill. The online application allows for uploading of scanned documents, but also offers an option to receive an email link for uploading documents at a later time or from a different location. The upload link does expire after a time, so it's best to be prepared with scanned verification documents at the outset of the application process. Income eligibility limits are \$2,591.92 for a single person household and \$3,389.42 for a household of two. If you need assistance applying please contact the ADRC at 715-538-2001, select Option #2.

## COVID-19 Vaccine Update:

You can find a vaccination site by: Visit [vaccines.gov](https://vaccines.gov), Text your ZIP code to 438829, or call 1-800-232-0233. Are you unsure of current vaccine sites in Trempealeau County or need transportation to get your vaccine? Call the ADRC for assistance at 715-538-2001 or 800-273-2001, select Option #2.

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# Nutrition

## Almonds: A Handful Can Make a Difference

By American Dietetic Association

A little goes a long way when it comes to almonds, the most nutrient-dense nut ounce-for-ounce. A one-ounce serving of almonds (about 23) is an excellent source of vitamin E and magnesium, a good source of protein and fiber, and offers potassium, calcium, phosphorous, iron, and monounsaturated fat, giving you a lot of nutritional bang for only 160 calories.

What do the vitamins and nutrients in almonds do? Vitamin E is an important antioxidant that helps protect cells from everyday damage, while magnesium helps keep bones strong. Fiber is beneficial for the digestive system and heart health. Protein is an important building block of bones, muscles, hair, nails and skin and helps repair tissues in the body. The monounsaturated fats found in almonds are the natural “good fats” that may help lower cholesterol and keep your heart healthy when substituted for saturated fat in the diet.

Previous studies have shown that almonds play an important role in a heart-healthy lifestyle. According to research from the University of Toronto, eating a specific combination of heart healthy foods can help reduce LDL (bad) cholesterol levels as much as certain cholesterol lowering drugs. This special diet, called the Portfolio Eating Plan includes almonds, oatmeal, lean meats and fish. Patients who followed this diet the most closely lowered their cholesterol by more than 20 percent. Experts agree that diet and exercise are the first steps in reducing high cholesterol levels.

Correcting portion distortion: It's all in your hand. But how many almonds should you eat, and how do you measure the proper serving? Unlike foods such as apples or bananas, almonds don't come in a pre-portioned package. A good degree of “portion distortion” exists about the proper serving size. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005 and the MyPyramid food guidance system both recommend a one-ounce portion for almonds—or about 23.

Remember, for a healthy eating plan:

- Emphasize fruits, vegetables, whole grains and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products.
- Include lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs and nuts.
- Keep saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium) and added sugars low.

Give your body the balanced nutrition it needs by eating a variety of nutrient-packed foods every day. Just be sure to stay within your daily calorie needs.

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Recipe from Beneficial Bites

### **Recipe for: Almond Crusted Walleye**

1 1/2 cup sliced almonds

Zest of 1 lemon, finely grated (or 2 tablespoons lemon juice)

1/4 tsp. salt

1/2 tsp. black pepper

2lbs walleye fillets

3/4 cup flour

3 eggs, beaten

2 tbsp. butter

2 tbsp. olive oil



In a shallow bowl, combine almonds, lemon zest, salt, and black pepper. Roll each walleye fillet in flour, dip in beaten egg, then gently roll in almond mixture, covering both sides well with all three coatings. In large skillet, heat butter and oil until very hot. Reduce heat to medium and sauté fillets until crispy and brown, about 4 minutes on each side.

# Transportation

**ADRC Bus:** Did you know you can ride the ADRC Bus to run your errands, do your shopping or dine out? Our 8 – 9 passenger bus has a wheelchair lift and travels monthly to Eau Claire, La Crosse and Black River Falls. The bus requires a minimum of 3 passengers to operate. The cost is \$4.00 round trip.

**Upcoming ADRC Bus Schedule** for the following: La Crosse on 3/9/22 and 4/13/22, Eau Claire on 3/16/22 and 4/20/22, and Black River Falls on 3/23/22 and 4/27/22.

**Did you know, it is possible to get transportation for TEFAP Food Pantry in Whitehall on the 3rd Saturday of each month?**

**Volunteer Driver Program and Local Van Service** Are you in need of a ride to a medical appointment, grocery shopping or for running errands? The ADRC offers two programs for local transportation you might be eligible for.

• **Our Volunteer Driver Program** utilizes volunteers, using personal vehicles, to provide transportation exclusively to medical appointments. The cost is \$0.30 per mile. Miles are billed from the driver's home, to the appointment, back to the driver's home. The ADRC does its best to schedule the closest available driver; however that is not always possible due to driver availability and small pool of volunteer drivers.

• **Our Local Van Service** is available for local medical appointments, grocery shopping and errands. The cost is \$1.50 round trip. Appointment availability depends on driver availability.

The ADRC would love to be able to accommodate all ride requests, but due to the high need for rides and limited number of drivers, we do our best but we are unable to meet all needs. We are so thankful for our Volunteer Drivers, as we would not be able to offer the services we provide without them.

Contact Sami at 715-538-2001, select Option #8 to schedule a ride or bus trip. Please call as soon as possible, as capacity and schedules are limited.



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Aging Disability Resource Ctr. of Trempleau, Whitehall, WI D 4C 01-2048



# Resources to help engage, educate, register, and mobilize voters

Compiled by Greater WI Agency on Aging Resources, Inc.



## State of WI Elections Commission

<https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/>

When to vote, Where to vote, What's on my ballot, How to register to vote, Absentee voting



## State of WI Elections Commission

<http://bringit.wisconsin.gov/>

Do you have the right ID? How do you get an ID card? What are the exceptions to the law? Locate a DMV near you.



## <http://votesmart.org>

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## [www.nonprofitvote.org](http://www.nonprofitvote.org)

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<p><b>2022 Elections</b>                  Spring Election: 4/5/22                  Partisan Primary: 8/9/22                  General Election: 11/8/22</p>
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DHS Approved 4/22/2021

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# Senior Dining/Congregate Meal Sites

## **Current Meal Sites include:**

- Wanek Senior Dining in Arcadia, Wednesday & Friday, 11:30am–12:30pm. (Reservations required 24 hours in advance at 608-409-2470).
- Rainbow Restaurant in Blair, Monday-Friday, 11:00am–1:00pm.
- Sacred Heart Church in Pine Creek, Tuesday & Thursday at noon. (Reservations required 24 hours in advance at 608-539-5391).
- Boondocks Locker Room in Galesville, Monday-Friday, 11:00am–noon. (Reservations required 24 hours in advance at 608-582-4401).

The suggested donation is \$4 per meal, which is given at the meal site.

**Effective 3/1/2022, carry-out meals will no longer be an option at the Senior Meal Sites. If you are unable to dine-in, please call the ADRC to discuss the possibility of receiving a home delivered meal.**

Contact the ADRC at 1-800-273-2001, select Option #1 to speak with Ashley for more information regarding Senior Dining and Home Delivered Meals.

Pictures shown are from the Rainbow Restaurant in Blair.



## Menu Changes & Item Substitutions

Due to the ongoing pandemic and supply chain disruption, food product availability is becoming difficult for some of our meal providers. Ordered items are not always arriving as planned, causing the need for occasional last minute menu changes or item substitutions. We apologize in advance for any inconvenience this may cause.

## Home Delivered Meals

Friendly Reminder: You need to be home to accept your meal. If you will not be home for the meal delivery, you must cancel your meal according to the cancellation policy stated below, or make proper arrangements for someone to receive your meal and properly handle and store your meal. If you are not home to receive your meal, the driver will NOT leave the meal, and the Nutrition Program will implement its safety and wellness check procedures to determine that you are safe. We will communicate with the emergency contacts you have provided, or other service agencies including law enforcement, if necessary. By letting us know you will not be home when meals are delivered and making other arrangements for your meal, we can avoid this situation.

To cancel one or more days or to discontinue services, call Ashley at 715-538-2001, select Option #1 with a 24 hour notice. If you can't give a 24 hour notice we would still like to know if you will not be home so we know that you are safe. In the event that your meal was not cancelled with the 24 hour notice, the Nutrition Program still has to pay for the meal and you will be asked to contribute toward the cost of the meal. Exceptions can be made in emergency situations.



## From The Veteran's Service Office

### Particulate Matter and Burn Pit Exposure Claims now being processed with The Department of Veterans Affairs

The Department of Veterans Affairs began processing disability claims on Aug. 2 for asthma, rhinitis and sinusitis on a presumptive basis based on presumed particulate matter exposures during military service in Southwest Asia and certain other areas — if these conditions manifested within 10 years of a qualifying period of military service.

Particulate matter (predominantly burn pit) pollution is associated with chronic asthma, rhinitis and sinusitis for Veterans who served in the Southwest Asia theater of operations beginning Aug. 2, 1990 to the present, or Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Syria or Djibouti beginning Sept. 19, 2001 to the present.

Any veterans who believe they have a medical condition related to the exposure listed, and has qualifying service, should contact the Trempealeau County Veterans Office at 715 538-2311 ext. 217.

To read the full press release at <https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5699>

### Thank You

I wanted to take the time to thank all of those in the community that have donated medical equipment over the years. Because of your generosity, this program has been able to assist a large number of people in Trempealeau County. With that in mind, I would like to take the opportunity to encourage those who have borrowed equipment, and are finished with their use, to please return them to the veteran's office for others to use.

Additionally, if anyone in the community has medical equipment such as wheelchairs, walkers, etc., that they no longer have a need for, I humbly encourage you to consider donating those pieces of equipment to our program as well.

The medical equipment loan program is run completely on donations, and is repaired by our staff in house when our budget allows. All donations are greatly appreciated and will go to good use in the local communities.

Thanks for your continued support to the community of Trempealeau County.

Steve Young Trempealeau County Veterans Service Officer



# NEVER MISS A NEWSLETTER!

Sign up to have our newsletter emailed to you at [www.mycommunityonline.com](http://www.mycommunityonline.com)





# Get Prepared

## March is Spring and Flood Safety Month

By Ready.gov

Flooding is a temporary overflow of water onto land that is normally dry. Floods are the most common natural disaster in the United States. Failing to evacuate flooded areas or entering flood waters can lead to injury or death.

### **Floods may:**

- Result from rain, snow, coastal storms, storm surges and overflows of dams and other water systems.
- Develop slowly or quickly. Flash floods can come with no warning.
- Cause outages, disrupt transportation, damage buildings and create landslides.

### **If you are under a flood warning:**

- Find safe shelter right away.
- Do not walk, swim or drive through flood water. Turn Around, Don't Drown!
- Remember, just six inches of moving water can knock you down, and one foot of moving water can sweep your vehicle away.
- Stay off bridges over fast-moving water.



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## April is National Financial Capability Month: Financial Preparedness Tips:

By Ready.gov

Americans at all income levels have experienced the challenges of rebuilding their lives after a disaster or other emergency. In these stressful times, having access to personal financial, insurance, medical and other records is crucial for starting the recovery process quickly and efficiently.

1. Gather financial and critical personal, household and medical information.
2. Consider saving money in an emergency savings account that could be used in any crisis. Keep a small amount of cash at home in a safe place. It is important to have small bills on hand because ATMs and credit cards may not work during a disaster when you need to purchase necessary supplies, fuel or food.
3. Obtain property (homeowners or renters), health and life insurance if you do not have them. Not all insurance policies are the same. Review your policy to make sure the amount and types of coverage you have meets the requirements for all possible hazards. Homeowners insurance does not typically cover flooding, so you may need to purchase flood insurance from the National Flood Insurance Program.
4. For more helpful financial preparedness tips, download the Emergency Financial First Aid Kit (EFFAK) to get started planning today.

### **Scams related to COVID-19:**

Be cautious about sharing personal financial information, such as your bank account number, social security number, or credit card number. Do not click on links in texts or emails from people you don't know. Scammers can create fake links to websites. Visit government websites, like [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus), directly in your internet browser.

Know that the government will not text or call you about "mandatory online COVID-19 tests," outbreaks "in your area," mandatory vaccinations, or to sell you COVID-19 cures.

Remember that the government will not call or text you about owing money or receiving economic impact payments.

Be aware that scammers may try to contact you via social media. The government will not contact you through social media about owing money or receiving payments.

-If you have been exposed to COVID-19, a contact tracer from your local health department might call you to let you know and ask you to self-quarantine at home away from others. Discussions with health department staff are confidential. They will not ask for financial information.

-Keep in mind that scammers may try to take advantage of financial fears by calling with work-from-opportunities, debt consolidation offers, and student loan repayment plans.

Contact the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) at [ftc.gov/complaint](https://www.ftc.gov/complaint) if you receive messages from anyone claiming to be a government agent or if you believe you've been a victim of a COVID-19 related scam.