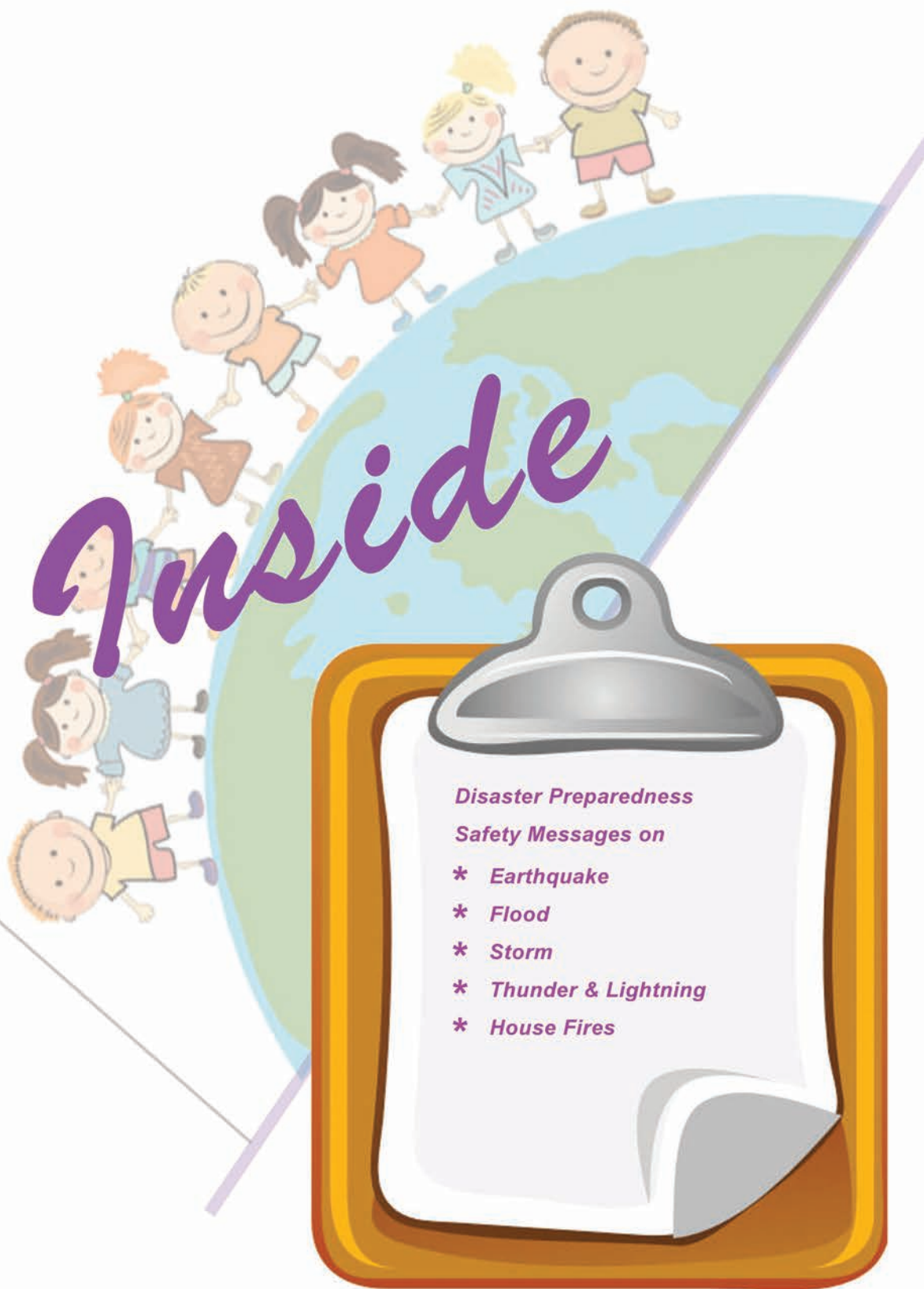




*Together  
towards a  
safer world*

# **HANDBOOK ON DISASTER PREPAREDNESS**



# Inside

*Disaster Preparedness*

*Safety Messages on*

- \* *Earthquake*
- \* *Flood*
- \* *Storm*
- \* *Thunder & Lightning*
- \* *House Fires*



**D**o you know how to protect yourself during an earthquake, flood, storm, fire?

You've probably heard lots of conflicting information over the years regarding the safety measures that need to be taken during a disaster.

This handbook is a guide to help you to cope with disasters, especially with regard to what you should do before, during & after a catastrophic event.





In recent times, the governments of various countries have realized the importance of disaster management and have taken up various initiatives for awareness generation and capacity building of the masses to cope with the negative impact of any disaster. The Government of India formulated the Disaster Management Act in 2005 to accelerate the development efforts by offsetting the negative impacts of disasters.

Under this Act, Disaster Management Authorities have been constituted at the National, State, District and Local level. Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) has been fully operational in the state of Assam since the year 2010.

The Authority (ASDMA) has taken up a number of initiatives for preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery against disasters such as earthquake,

flood, thunderstorm & Lightning, erosion and landslides. In its effort to develop the capacity of different stakeholders, a number of trainings/ workshops/ awareness generation activities have been organized. Integration of emergency helpline numbers, Operationalization of 24x7x365 State Disaster Response and Information Centre/ District Disaster Control Rooms, Research and study on various disasters related to Assam and their Mitigation measures in collaboration with knowledge institutions like Columbia University (U.S.A.), Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Assam Engineering College etc. are other endeavours for realization of the vision of a 'State Prepared' and a 'Safer Assam'.

This handbook is an effort to put together the Dos and Don'ts as a ready reference to be followed before, during & after any disaster.



### **DISASTER PREPAREDNESS:**

Assam is a multi-hazard prone state, vulnerable to both natural and manmade disasters. While disasters are inevitable, its losses can be reduced through mitigation and preparedness measures.

#### ■ **Disaster Plan:**

For any Disaster, make a Disaster Preparedness Plan. One common thread you will see in almost every section of this handbook is that you will need a disaster plan to cope with any kind of disaster. Therefore, you should be familiar with it before the disaster, and be ready to act on it in case the emergency occurs. A disaster or emergency plan for your family or co-workers can be the difference between you meeting up in a secure location or being lost, unable to find one another. It should incorporate detailed information about your residence, office, school and also a map of the surroundings. The Plan should take into account the total number of persons in your family, office & educational institute (list exact no. of children, women & disabled) along with the doors, windows and marked exit routes of the building which can be used in case of emergency.



The disaster preparedness plan should be made collectively in consultation with family members, colleague in office & all groups in educational institutes. It should include information like the location of the fire extinguisher, first aid box, disaster kit and a pre-decided meet-up point for all after safe evacuation.



- A '**Disaster Kit**' comprising of essential items such as water bottle, medicines, non-perishable food items (biscuit, chira), torch along with a set of battery, sanitary supplies etc. is a 'MUST' item which should be properly kept in handy place. A detailed list of what all should be kept in a 'Disaster Kit' may be found in the website [72hours.org](http://72hours.org) of the City of San Francisco, America. The website also has special tips for the children, disabled, senior citizen, pets etc.

### Indicative List of Essential Supplies for a Disaster Kit



- ✓ **A 3 day supply of water (4 litres per person per day) & non-perishable food items (biscuits, chira, etc.).**
- ✓ **One set of clothing, footwear, blanket or sleeping bag per person.**
- ✓ **A first aid kit that includes your family's prescription medications.**
- ✓ **Emergency tools including a radio, flashlight and extra batteries.**
- ✓ **An extra set of car keys & credit card or travellers' cheque (if available).**
- ✓ **Sanitary supplies.**
- ✓ **Special items for infant, elderly or disabled family members.**
- ✓ **An extra pair of glasses.**

- Keep the most important documents, like birth certificates, passports, land/property documents, fixed deposit documents etc. in a safe place in case you need to grab them and leave the house in an emergency. Create a home inventory of all items in your house and keep it with those documents. Make digital copies of important documents etc. and put them on a flash drive or in e-mail just in case you lose the original copies. Use portable/fireproof safe box to secure the documents.
- Make sure you have a well-stocked go-bag that will keep you safe, warm, fed, and any medical needs you have taken care of for a few days. Include things like emergency food and water, radio, batteries, extras of any prescriptions you take, and even a charged cell phone just for dialling emergency helpline numbers. [72hours.org](http://72hours.org) guide (may be found in the website) says that you should prepare to take care of yourself for at least 72 hours without any help in case of an emergency.



## HANDBOOK ON DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

- Make sure you and your family have a planned and practiced escape route from your home, and a place you all agree to meet up if something terrible happens. Whether it is a burglar or a fire, everyone in your home should know the fastest way out of the house safely. Escape ladders from high windows are good investments, but if you live in an apartment building or high-rise, memorize the fastest route to a stairwell. Know about all the Fire Exits in your building and the fastest way to reach an exit. Practice your escape route with your family so everyone is clear on it. However, in case of an earthquake, it is not advisable to try to run out of a high rise or tall building. Instead, one should immediately take cover under a sturdy bed, table or any other furniture following the Drop-Cover-Hold technique.
- Every office or work place should have a Disaster Plan. Everybody in your office should know the closest staircase & evacuation routes from workplace and pre-selected meet-up locations outside of the office building. Safety Mock Drills should be held regularly in any workplace and employees should learn how to react and what to do in case of an emergency. Everyone in an office or in a family should know where the First Aid kit is kept & make sure that the medicines in the First Aid kit are usable (check expiry dates).

If everyone in a family or in an office is aware of these and everybody acts on a carefully chalked out Disaster Plan in case of an emergency, then casualties and losses may be reduced & mitigated.

**FAMILY PREPAREDNESS PLAN**

Emergency Meeting Place \_\_\_\_\_ Outside home

Meeting Place \_\_\_\_\_ Outside your neighbourhood

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Family Contact \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Outside the city





# EARTHQUAKE

*Image Courtesy: Google Images*



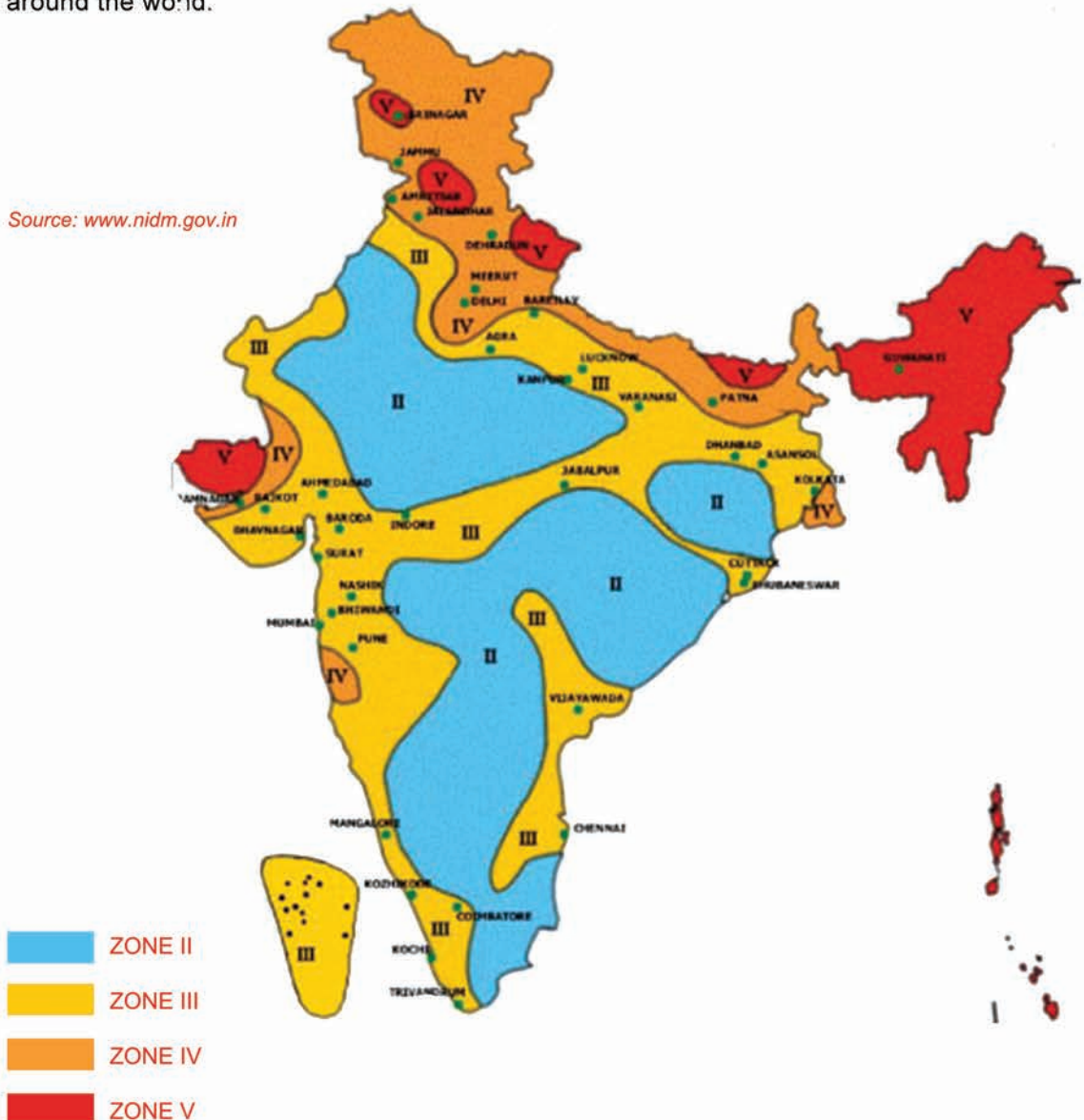


## HANDBOOK ON DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Assam falls under Seismic Zone V and therefore the entire landmass of Assam is prone to Earthquakes of moderate to very high intensity. If you want to know if there is any seismic activity in your area, you may check out the websites of the Global Seismic Hazard Assessment Program and the United States Geological Survey (USGS). The USGS also has a live map of seismic activity around the world.

It is possible to know beforehand where in the world earthquakes are likely to happen but, it is just not possible to predict when it will happen and what magnitude it will be. Because of this, preparation is critical. If you know what to do & what not to do and prepare beforehand, it will not only save your life but also that of your dear ones.

Source: [www.nidm.gov.in](http://www.nidm.gov.in)



### Before an earthquake

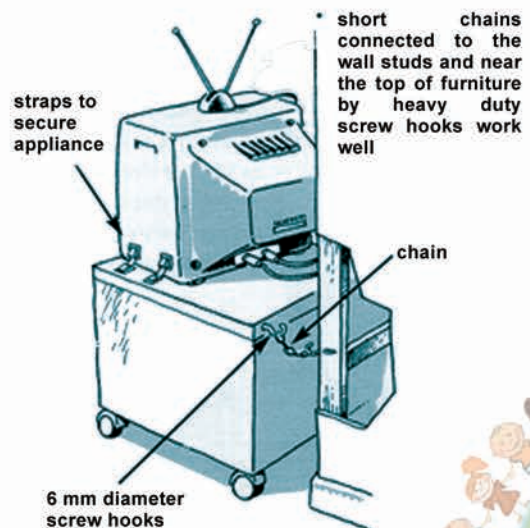
#### Avoid Earthquake Myths and Learn What You Should Really Do:

There is nothing you can do to actually avoid the effects of an earthquake. All you can really do is to make sure you understand the difference between a minor one and a serious one, and prepare accordingly. Here are some tips for earthquake preparedness—

- \* Make sure you have a disaster plan. As with other disasters, a disaster plan for an earthquake is also important. However, because earthquake can strike suddenly and without warning, and in some cases it can lead to other problems like fires etc., it's critical to have a

comprehensive disaster plan for your household and family, and to have practiced it, so that it is second nature when you need to act on it.

- \* Give your home an earthquake check-up. Check for hazards, fasten shelves to wall studs, and store breakables & poisons in cabinets that latch shut so they will not fall out and onto someone in case of an earthquake. Put heavy objects on lower shelves, and secure heavy furniture, either by fastening it to the wall or blocking rollers so that they will not slide around. Make any structural repairs to the walls or foundation that may be necessary.

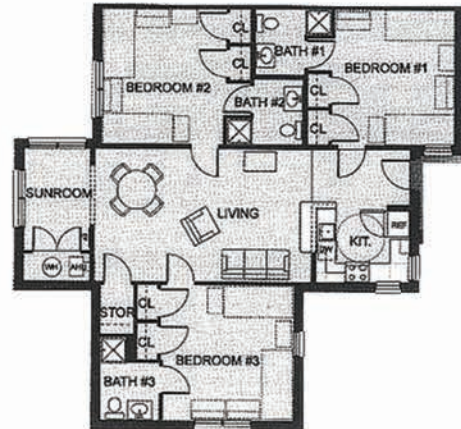


## HANDBOOK ON DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

- \* Practice drills with your family (or co-workers). Know where the utility shut-off switches are in the house, and time yourself getting from your bedroom out of the house to a safe location. Time yourself doing the same again, but shutting off utilities and grabbing your Disaster Kit, documents, and checking on family members along the way. In a real emergency, you may not have time for any of that, but it is important to see if it is possible.



Image shows students practising Mock Drill in School



- \* Familiarize yourself with common earthquake myths. Earthquake myths abound and many may divert from taking the safety measurements in an emergency. For example, you may have heard that in an earthquake you should stand in a doorway to protect yourself from collapsing walls. That is not true at all. Doorframes in most homes are lightly constructed and will collapse easily. You should only stand in a doorway if you know for fact that it is sturdy and load-bearing in your home. Other myths, like "earthquakes only happen in the morning," and "hot and dry equals earthquake weather," are all similarly false. The idea that you should shelter next to furniture instead of under it is also not true. Finally, do not assume that earthquakes may happen only in a particular place or area and all other places are safe.



**During an earthquake**

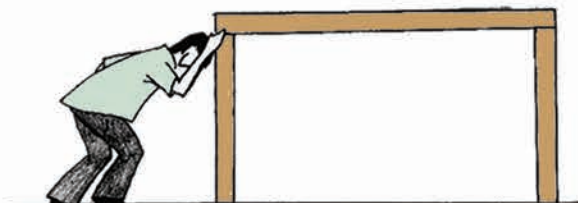
**Get Under Something Sturdy or Find an Open Space**

Most earthquake-related deaths and injuries come from flying debris, collapsing walls & structures and falling objects. Your first priority in an earthquake should be to minimize personal injury. Here's how—

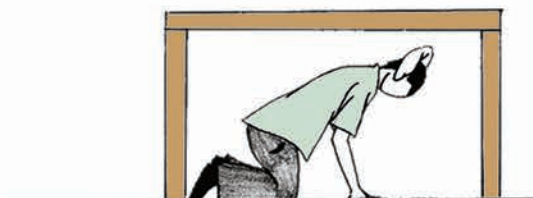
\* Shield yourself or take shelter under sturdy furniture. The old "get under your desk" rule is a good one, but only if your desk is sturdy enough to take the impact. If you can, get underneath and hold on. If you are in bed, try to

cover yourself (specifically your head) with pillows and hold on to the bed.

\* If you're indoors, stay put and try to stay clear of obvious hazards like windows, hanging fixtures, shelves, or anything that is already loose and might collapse. Otherwise, if you are in bed, stay there and shelter. If you are at your desk, get under it. Unless you feel your current location is particularly hazardous, do not attempt to move to another room or evacuate outdoors.



DROP



COVER



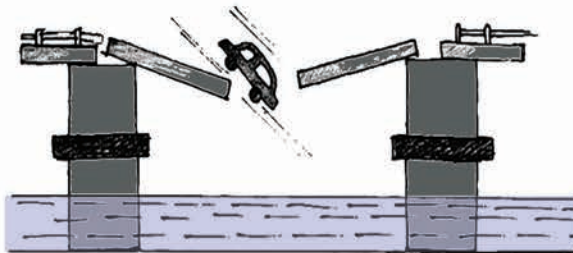
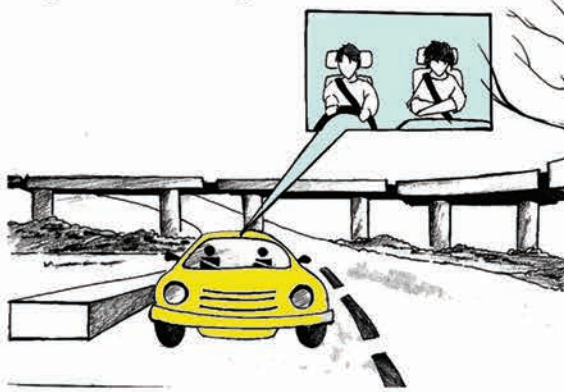
HOLD



IF YOU ARE ON A BED COVER HEAD

### During an earthquake

\* If you're outdoors, get away from tall objects that may collapse. This includes buildings, trees, utility poles, streetlights, construction equipment — anything tall that might fall from the shaking or rolling. Try to get to as clear and open a place as possible e.g. a park or parking lot. Once you are in the open, get on the ground and hang on.



\* If you are in a vehicle, stop quickly, but try to stay clear of those tall objects as it might collapse onto your car. Stay in the car and shelter in place. When the earthquake has passed, tune to emergency radio and be careful of bridges, ramps, or other structures that may have been damaged.

Again, your primary goal in an earthquake is to stay put and avoid any personal injury. Moving around only puts you at greater risk, and in an emergency situation, you need to make sure that you take care of yourself—you'll be no help to others if you are hurt or killed on the way to help a family member.

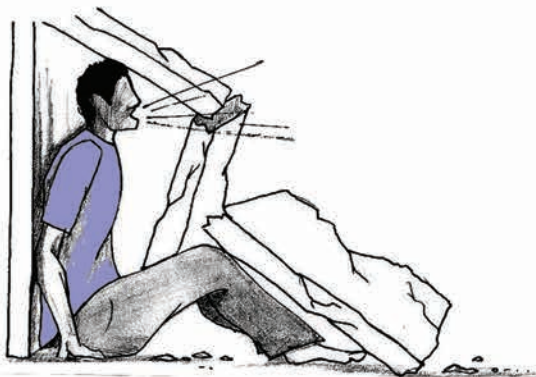


### **After an earthquake:**

#### **Avoid Damaged Structures and Watch for Aftershocks**

After an earthquake has passed, do not immediately assume that the danger is gone. In some cases, damaged structures can fall well after the shaking has stopped, or there may be other hazards in or around your home or office to deal with. Assess the situation, and execute on your disaster plan. Meet your family or co-workers in a safe space, away from damaged buildings and other hazards like hanging wires, fires, falling glass or uneven ground. Be prepared for aftershocks, which can be just as dangerous (or more so to damaged infrastructure) than the original quake.

If you're trapped under debris, make as much noise as possible so that the emergency services can get to you. Tap on pipes, whistle, shout—just make sure not to inhale dust or debris that may be around you.



Cover your mouth with clothing to filter out some of the dust. If you can move or see a path out, try to get out, just be careful not to move anything that might cause other debris to fall on you.

Once you are safe, administer first aid to those who need it, and listen to the radio for emergency broadcasts. Be prepared to move to higher ground if you live on the coast and the earthquake may have triggered a tsunami. If the quake was minor, inspect your home and property to make sure you do not have ruptured gas lines, dangling wires or tree limbs, or any other hazards that need to be addressed before you can go back into your home. If you think your home is damaged, call the appropriate service provider to inspect it properly.





**FLOOD**



## HANDBOOK ON DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

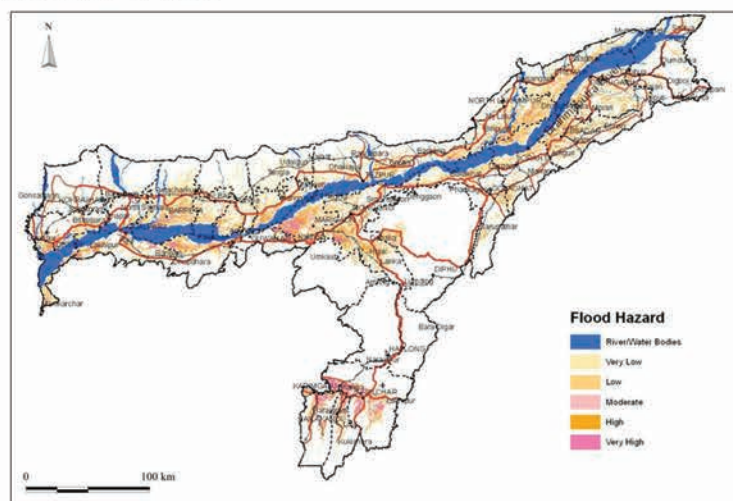
Floods can happen on regular schedules or they can be complete surprises. Flooding is a little more predictable than the other disasters, but not necessarily. Flash flooding can occur in areas even when there has been no rain. With planning and research beforehand you can be better prepared to deal with floods.

The Government of Assam, in recent times, has taken up a few significant initiatives to reduce the loss due to floods in Assam. One such initiative is the development of the Flood Early Warning System (FLEWS) by North Eastern Space Application Centre (NESAC) with support from ASDMA. The Brahmaputra Board, Central Water Commission (CWC), North Eastern Electric Power Corporation (NEEPCO), Assam Water Resources Department (AWRD) and Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) are the other stakeholders in this project. So far, 15 districts have been covered under this project where issue of flood

alert has been possible up to the District / Circle Office / Gaon Burha level with lead time of 7-18 hours. Research related to flood and the flood plains of the Brahmaputra and the Barak rivers, data collection and analysis of the same, innovation of flood mitigation measures, construction of permanent flood shelters in vulnerable areas are some of the other initiatives of Assam State Disaster Management Authority to combat the negative impacts of flood in Assam.

The Flood Hazard Atlas prepared by the National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) with support from ASDMA has been validated by all the Deputy Commissioners of the districts of Assam which can be of immense use in Flood Risk Assessment, Planning and implementing necessary long term mitigation measures for minimizing the impact of floods in the State. Stay prepared for flood and stay safe during flood.

### FLOOD HAZARD MAP OF ASSAM





### Before flood

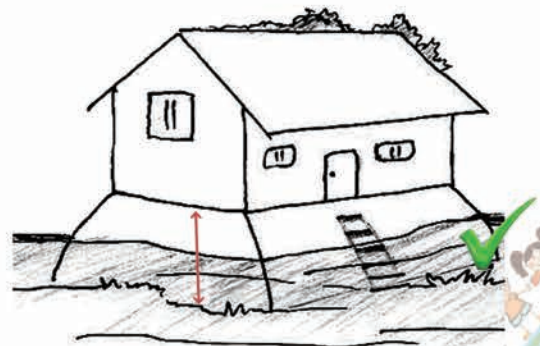
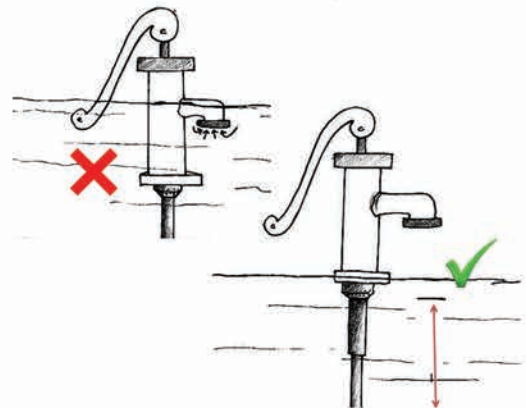
#### Find High Ground, Get Ready to Leave

With floods, preparation is absolutely the 'key to cope'. Flooding can go from a trickle to multiple feet in no time, and at times floods can wash away buildings, bridges etc. in minutes. Here's how to prepare for floods—

- \* Make sure you have a disaster plan: Specific gear will not generally help you in a flood, but things like food and fresh water, medication, water purification tablets, first aid kit etc. put together in a previously made 'Disaster Kit' will definitely help you to survive till the availability of external help at hand.

What is more important in this case though is that you have a 'Disaster Plan' that you and others can put into motion quickly to get out of a dangerous area and take shelter in previously selected higher ground. It is essential to practice your escape plan with family members so that you can get to a meet-up point quickly and safely in case of flood.

- \* Know the Highest Flood Level for your area. Raise the plinth level of your house if it is in a flood prone area. Also raise the height of the tube well before the onset of the flood season and put additional rings in the ring well.



### Before flood

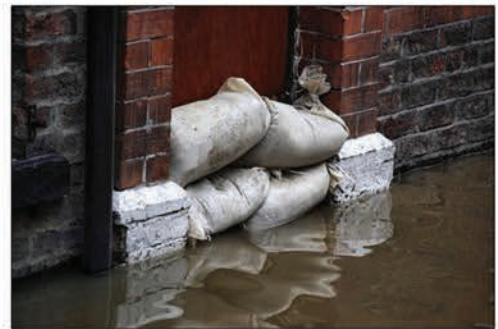
- \* Put your valuable documents in plastic cover/ polythene bag, seal it and keep it in a safe place

### When you hear a flood warning or if flooding appears likely:

- \* Prepare to evacuate immediately with essential medication, valuables, personal papers etc. in waterproof bags in the emergency kit to the pre-identified shelter or safer place.
- \* Raise furniture, clothing and valuables onto beds, tables and to the top of the roof (electrical items highest) so that they are safe from floodwater.
- \* Lock your home and take recommended/known evacuation routes for your area.



- \* Whether you leave or stay, put sandbags in the toilet bowl and over all laundry / bathroom drain-holes to prevent sewage back-flow.



- \* Turn off power.
- \* Do not give any importance to rumours and don't panic
- \* Keep tuning to your local radio/TV for updated bulletin.

### During a Flood:

\* Do not walk through moving water or inundated roads as few inches of water can make you fall down and fast-moving water can carry a person off quickly. If you have to walk through water, look for where the water isn't moving. Use a stick to check the firmness of the ground in front of you. Stay away from streams, sewer drains, and manmade channels or drainage canals.



\* If you have to evacuate your home, turn off utilities and move critical items to the highest possible point. Do this only if you have time. Make sure you know where gas, water, and power cut-off valves are, and disconnect any appliances you can. Of course, do not touch any wires, plugs, or other electrical equipment if you are wet or standing in water.

\* If you are driving, do not pass through standing water or water where you cannot see the bottom. Six inches of water will reach the bottom of most cars, causing control issues. If that water gets into the engine, your car will stall. A foot of water is enough to float a car or truck. Two feet will carry almost any vehicle off, including SUV (Sports Utility Vehicles). Do not be deceived by what looks like a little water either—the road underneath may have washed away, making it deeper than it appears, especially at night. Do not risk your vehicle or your life. Pull over, drive around, or get out and get to higher ground.



**During a Flood:**

- \* In unplanned cities like Guwahati, Urban Flash Floods create havoc many a times. Do not walk or drive through water in case of a flash flood. Be aware of manholes and drains etc.



- \* Do not allow children to play in and around flooded areas
- \* Keep your food covered, do not take heavy meals.
- \* Help the officials/volunteers distributing relief materials.
- \* Do not touch any electrical equipment with wet hand.



**During a Flood:**

- \* Be careful of Snakes as snakebites are common during floods.



- \* Do not go near submerged transformers/ electric poles/ electric wires etc.



- \* Do not get into water of unknown depth and current



- \* Do not attempt to swim/ cross rivers or flowing stream



- \* Use sandbags or pillows or rugs to fill the airspace of a door during rising flood.



- \* Drink boiled water.



### **After flood:**

Many of the rules post-flood are the same as during a flood. Just because the water starts to recede does not mean that flood is over. Don't walk into moving or deep water just because rushing water has receded.

Keep in mind that any flooded area is prone to additional flooding if conditions improve. Even a little rain can turn a once flooded area into a sudden flash flood.

Also, floodwaters may have swept debris and other hazardous materials into an area. Look out for glass, downed power lines, ruptured gas lines and damaged buildings etc. Floodwater itself can be contaminated by gasoline, oil, sewage, or other chemicals — another reason to stay out of any of it, even if it's standing water. Do not return to a flooded area until authorities indicate that it is safe.



- \* Use bleaching powder to disinfect your well and also to disinfect your surroundings.
- \* Maintain general cleanliness and hygiene. Boil water and vegetables and greens properly. Keep your food covered. Use soaps to wash hands before eating and after using toilets.
- \* Ensure hygienic disposal of human and animal excreta and garbage.
- \* In case of diseases such as diarrhoea, jaundice, malaria etc. associated with contamination of water and creation of mosquito breeding sites during flood, contact your ANM/AWW for ORS and treatment immediately.





# **STORM**

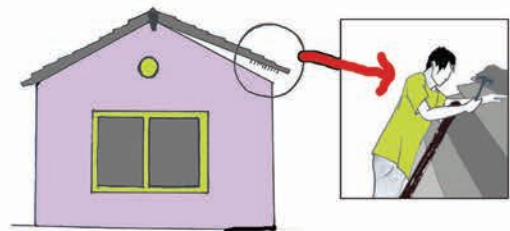


Strong winds from a storm can damage or destroy vehicles, buildings, bridges, and other outside objects, turning loose debris into deadly flying projectiles. Usually strong winds coupled with severe rain and sometimes hailstorm is experienced in Assam during the months from March to May, known as 'Bordoisila' in local tradition. Every year storm causes property and human loss in the state of Assam. More than 40 people died and 8 were missing in Ferry Accident in 2012 in the Brahmaputra River at Medartari Ghat in the Dhubri district. Therefore, although storm is a regular occurrence in the state of Assam, precautions should be taken to cope up with any kind of emergency related to storm. The following tips should be followed to prepare for the storm season—

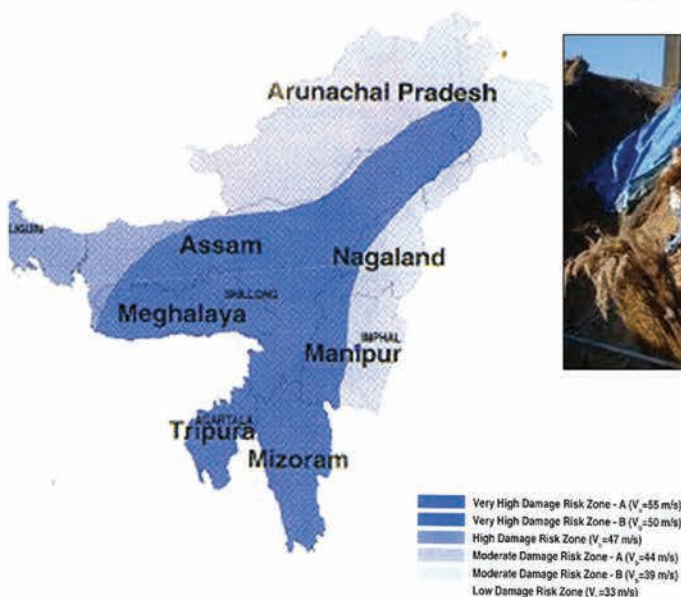
### Before the storm:

Check and repair the roof, doors, windows etc. of your home ahead of the storm season.

- \* If your house has a tin roof, check for loose nails, holes, leaks and rusty areas and do the repair works.



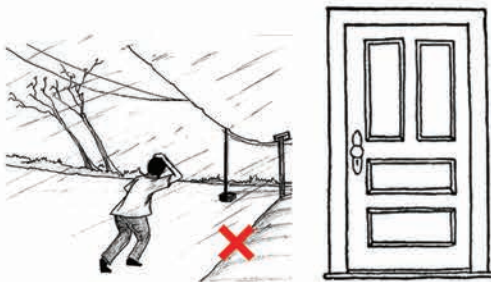
- \* If your house has a thatched roof, check for the damages done by growth of algae and moss, rodents, birds and previous storms; and re-thatch, strengthen and replace the broken bamboo.





### Before the storm:

- \* If the door and window latches of your house are not working and there are cracks/gaps in the window or door panels, do the repair and replacement works ahead of the storm season.
- \* Remove dead branches or dying trees, broken tin, iron etc. from your yards which could blow about and cause damage to your house.



### During the storm:

- \* Do not venture out and stay indoors during a storm.
- \* Do not take shelter in small sheds and under isolated trees.
- \* If you are outside, take shelter in a safe structure.
- \* Do not go for fishing in the river if you see dark clouds in the sky.
- \* If you are driving, stop your car and park in a safe place away from tall objects, power lines, hoardings, street lamp posts, trees etc



### During the storm:

#### If you commute by a ferry:

- \* Listen to the weather forecasts regularly.



- \* Know the carrying capacity of the ferry and avoid boarding an overloaded ferry.



- \* Avoid boarding a ferry if you see dark clouds in the sky accompanied by strong winds.

### After the storm:

- \* After the storm is over, clean up the surroundings of your home so that flies, mosquitoes and disease spreading germs cannot breed in puddles of water and garbage around.
- \* Be careful, immediately after a storm and also when you try to clean up the damage. Many injuries after storms happens as people step on nails or broken glass.
- \* If your house has been damaged by storm, get the house assessed by an experienced person or a qualified engineer and get it repaired before entering the house again.



# **THUNDER AND LIGHTNING**



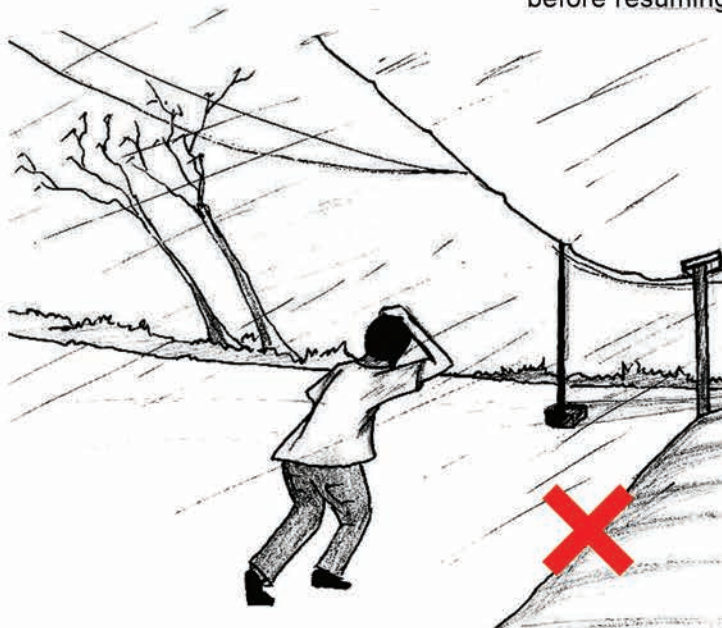
Lightning strikes are electrical discharges on a massive scale between the atmosphere and an earth-bound object. They mostly originate in thunder clouds and terminate on the ground, called Cloud to Ground (CG) lightning. Although "a lightning strike" is commonly used to describe all lightning, it is rather erroneous and misnomers as only about 20% of all lightning events worldwide are CG.

In a fraction of a second, lightning heats the air around it to incredible temperatures—as hot as 54,000 °F (30,000 °C). The heated air expands explosively, creating a shockwave as the surrounding air is rapidly compressed. The air then contracts rapidly as it cools. This creates an initial CRACK sound, followed by rumbles as the column of air continues to vibrate.

### **During Thunder & Lightening:**

Here are some important rules to remember about lightning and thunderstorm safety:

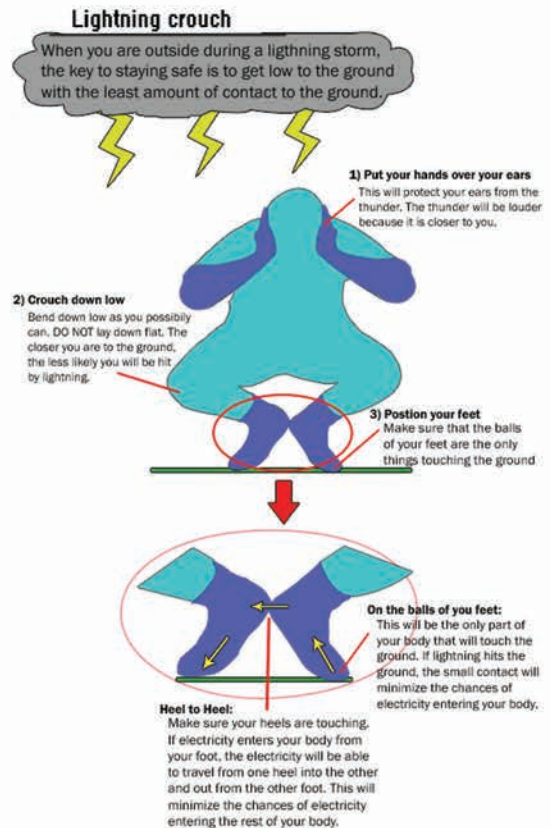
- \* First rule of lightning safety: No place outside is safe in case of a thunderstorm.
- \* If thunder clouds are anywhere near, you should not be outside. Lightning can travel long distances. It does not have to be raining overhead for lightning to strike. Do not wait until the "last minute" to seek shelter. You do not want to be a victim of a "bolt from the blue."
- \* Remember the 30/30 rule: If it takes under 30 seconds to hear thunder after seeing the flash, lightning is near enough to pose a threat; after the storm ends, wait 30 minutes before resuming outdoor activities.



### During Thunder & Lightening:

- \* If you are outside, go inside an enclosed building. You are also fairly safe in a vehicle, if the windows are up and you do not touch any metal and stay away from windows etc.
- \* Do not take cover under an open house or a bus stop where all four sides are open and only the roof stands over your head.
- \* Unplug all electrical equipment such as television, refrigerator, computer etc. Do not use telephone and other electronic appliances.
- \* Stay away from water. Do not take bath or use running water during lightning and thunderstorm.
- \* If you do not have shelter, do not stand under a tree. Stay away from other tall things like utility poles and flag poles. Stay away from metal objects, such as metal bleachers and fences.
- \* Learn about the emergency services in your area and keep handy the emergency helpline numbers.
- \* Listen to weather forecasts and stay alert.

If you are outside and have no other choice, give yourself the best chance by going to the lowest spot you can find. Do not lie down on the ground. Crouch down with only your shoes making contact with the ground.



Learn how to give first aid and C.P.R. (Cardiopulmonary resuscitation) to a victim in case of a heart attack or intermittent breathing caused by injury due to lightning and thunderstorm. Remember, lightning strike victims carry no electrical charge and should be attended to immediately.



# **HOUSE FIRES**



## HANDBOOK ON DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

House fires are deadly, killing hundreds of people every year in the State alone and the important fact is that they're almost always preventable. Still, while prevention is the key, it's what you do in the middle of a fire that may save your life. Unlike other disasters that give you warning and time to get away, a fire isn't nearly as forgiving. Here's how to prepare, and what to do in case of fire.

### **Before fire:**

#### **Preparation is everything.**

Remember, a house fire isn't just one thing—it is a deadly mixture of things: Smoke and toxic gases, lack of oxygen, crippling heat, scorching flames, and a lack of light are all dangerous on their own, and a house fire offers every single one of them. It's important to be prepared and act quickly if a fire occurs.

- \* Make sure you have a disaster plan: As explained before, make sure you have a disaster plan which also incorporates various measures to be taken in case of house fire. Immediately dial 101 or 108 in case of a fire incident and ask for help.
- \* Evacuation: Your plan in the case of a fire should largely consist of an evacuation plan that you've

practiced. Everyone in your household or office should be well versed in it, and you should have meet-up or rally points set at a safe distance from your home or office. Make sure you have multiple ways out of each room, even if that means you need collapsible fire ladders for upper-floor windows. If you live in an apartment building or high-rise, memorize the fastest way to the nearest stairwell, by sight and by feel. You should be able to get there even if you can't see - which you may not be able to due to darkness or smoke etc. in case of a fire.



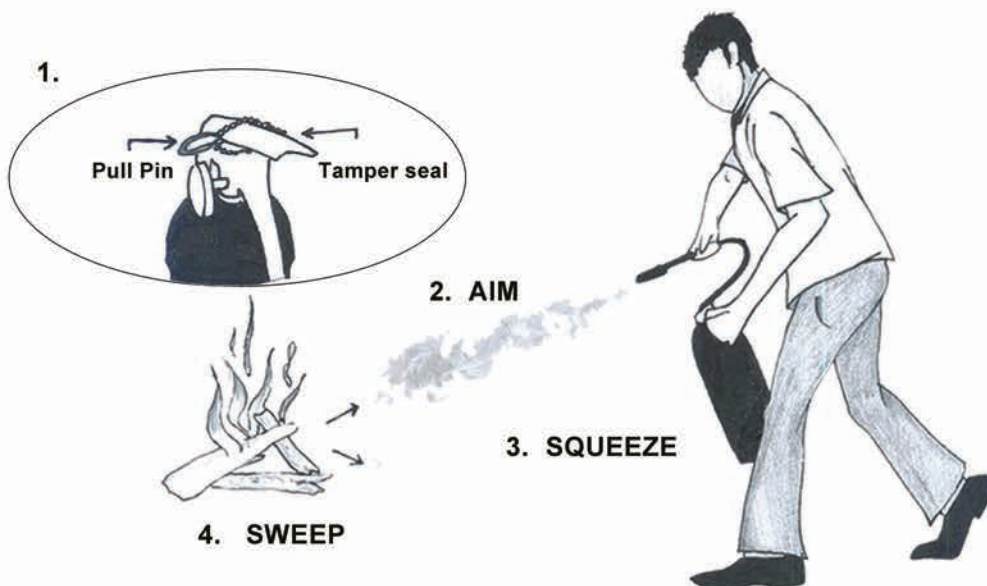
- \* Make sure you can open windows, screens, security bars, and doors. You and everyone in your household should be comfortable opening security bars on windows, screen doors, anything that might slow down your exit from a burning building

### Before fire:



\* Install smoke alarms in your house and change their batteries regularly. Dual-sensor smoke detectors are best, as they feature both ionization and photoelectric smoke sensors. If they're wired to the power in your home, that's best, but they should also have battery backups. Change those batteries regularly—every year is a good guideline. Don't let cost hold you back. While you're getting smoke alarms, get a carbon monoxide detector too.

- \* Do not tamper with smoke detectors, carbon monoxide alarms, fire alarms or sprinkler alarms
- \* Keep household fire extinguishers handy. If the fire is serious, do not try putting it out yourself. A household extinguisher can help keep a small fire from spreading, or help you clear a path to a safe area, but they are not for heroics. You may like to keep one in your bedroom and another in the kitchen in your apartment. If you live in a larger house, you may consider two on every floor, especially near bedrooms, kitchens, furnaces, or water heaters. Learn to operate them.





### During fire

- \* Get Low, Get Out. Evacuate calmly and quickly. If you encounter smoke during evacuation, stay low to the floor
- \* Get to the nearest exit immediately. If there is smoke in the air, get as low as possible where you may be able to breathe and feel your way out. If there is smoke blocking your door, open the window. Before opening any door, feel the door knob and the door body. If it is warm or there is smoke coming in from the other side, do not open the door—there may be a raging fire on the other side. Use your second exit, even if it is a window. If you have to open a door, open it slowly and be ready to shut it if smoke comes in.



- \* During a house fire, escape should be your top priority. You may only have seconds to get out safely. You likely will not have time to grab a go-bag, a Disaster Kit or run around the house collecting important items. Therefore, leave everything and get out as soon as possible. If a fire alarm has gone off in your building, you may have a few moments, but if there's a fire in your house, there's no time to waste.
- \* Once you're out, contact emergency fire services. Dial 101 or 108 for Fire Services. Don't wait to contact them inside the house. Get out first. If you cannot get to family members or pets on the safe way out, let them know when you call 101 or 108 and let them know where in the home they are so that they may be rescued by fire fighters.



- \* Do not go back into a burning building.

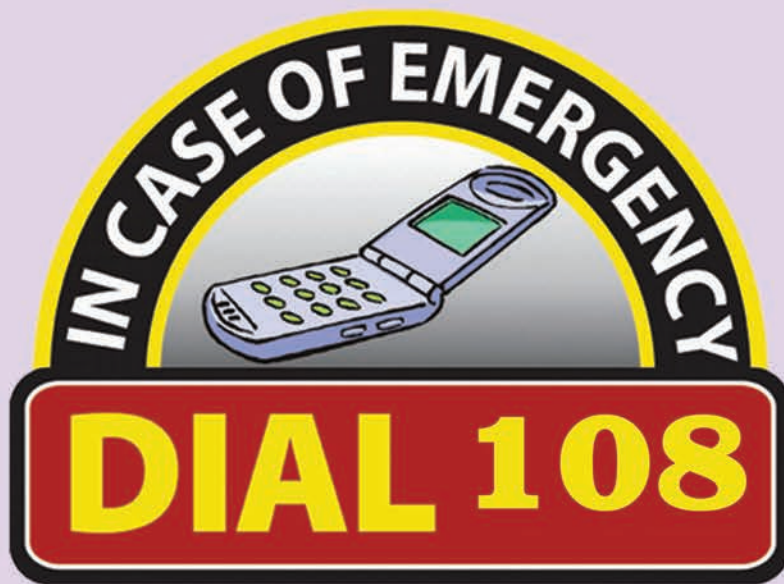
### **After fire:**

- \* Stay Safe and pick up the pieces.
- \* House fires are incredibly destructive. You likely will not be able to return to your home until well after the danger has passed. Wait for the fire department to tell you it is safe to return to your home. Contact your insurance company, landlord, Mortgage Company, or any other relevant agencies to let them know about the fire. When the fire department has given you the okay to go back inside, try to collect valuable

items like documents, records, or irreplaceable items and assess the damage. Before you leave a fire-damaged home, let the police know that you're leaving and the place will be unoccupied—fire damaged properties are often a target for burglars.

Rebuilding after a fire is a long and draining process. It is not something that happens in a day, or even a few weeks—it takes a long time. Be ready for a long process, and give yourself plenty of time to recover.

*You may contact Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) for information regarding any emergency or disaster, mitigation measures, Dos and Don'ts, contact numbers, address details etc. of any agencies/organizations/officials associated with Disaster preparedness, prevention and mitigation and recovery. 'Be safe' and 'Be prepared' by joining hands with the Authority in its awareness generation and capacity building initiatives towards the realization of a disaster resilient 'Safer Assam'.*



**Save ICE in your Mobile (In Case of Emergency) 108**



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