

Mobile Apps for Emergencies

Mobile devices can be lifelines following disasters.

Home and safety preparations for those in a severe storm's path should include making mobile devices like smartphones for emergencies. Extreme weather and other major disasters can disrupt communication channels, your mobile devices could be tools to keep in touch with family, as well as with response and recovery efforts.

Create a texting phone tree. Create a network of contacts, so you can reach them quickly after any sort of extreme weather. Texting may be the only available form of communication. You can also check to see if text alerts are available through businesses and government agencies.

Utilize mobile banking apps. Use mobile banking apps during power outages and ATMs aren't accessible.

Take advantage of insurance apps. Many insurance companies allow their customers to file claims using their smartphones to quickly start the recovery process.

Have a car phone charger and spare battery. If power is out for an extended period, your car will be a valuable source of energy.

Have a back up. During a large-scale disaster it is possible that mobile networks can become overloaded or non-operational. Have a back-up like a battery powered or hand-crank NOAA weather radio to stay informed.

Use these smartphone apps to be prepared, remain connected and stay safe.

Note: This list of free mobile applications is provided to assist you with disaster preparedness. SCEMD does not endorse or promote any specific commercial product and it is recommended that you test mobile apps before a disaster occurs to find the best ones that work for you. If you find a free app that we should include on this list, let us know at pio@emd.sc.gov.

National Weather Service

The National Weather Service (NWS) provides weather, hydrologic, and climate forecasts and warnings for the United States, its territories, adjacent waters and ocean areas, for the protection of life and property and the enhancement of the national economy.

NOAA Weather Radio Apps

Android and iPhone

NOAA Weather Radio alerts directly to your smartphone.

FEMA

The FEMA App (smartphone app for mobile devices) contains disaster safety tips, interactive lists for storing your emergency kit and emergency meeting location information, and a map with open shelters and open FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs). The app is free to download through your smartphone provider's app store:

[Android devices](#)

[Apple devices](#)

[Blackberry devices](#)

[American Red Cross: Shelter View](#)

iPhone

When a hurricane or earthquake drives people from their homes, the American Red Cross steps in to provide shelter. That's great as long as you know where the shelter is. American Red Cross: Shelter View shows you where to go. Currently, this app is not available for Android, but you can still go online to search for a [Red Cross shelter](#).

[Dropbox](#)

Android and iPhone

Cloud storage for your important documents. Install the program on your PC or Mac, upload files to your folder, and they are instantly available on all your other computers. With the mobile app, everything can be found on your mobile devices as well.

[Brightest Flashlight Free](#) for Android

[Flashlight by Rik](#) for iPhone

These apps turn your phone's camera LED flashbulb into a flashlight.

[Life360](#)

Android and iPhone

A smartphone can be a personal GPS tracking device with this app. Life360 will show you where they are — right now — on a map. The family GPS tracking system can help you find your loved ones anywhere, get safety alerts to them, or call for help with the tap of a button. It also provides neighborhood safety monitoring.

[INRIX Traffic](#)

Real time traffic information. Free App for multiple mobile platforms.

[GasBuddy](#)

Android and iPhone

GasBuddy uses your GPS to display up-to-the-minute gas prices near you.

[Hands-Only CPR](#)

Android and iPhone

For an adult victim of cardiac arrest, the American Heart Association now recommends hands-only CPR. The official Hands-Only CPR app walks you through the two-step checklist: Call 911, start chest compressions. There's a (brief) video showing you how to restart that heart.

Additionally, for \$1.99, AHA's [Pocket First Aid & CPR](#) includes the same CPR info along with first aid advice for all sorts of situations.