FLANK.bg

CIVIL PREPAREDNESS

READY FOR THE FIRST 72 HOURS OF A CRISIS

A practical civil protection guide for disasters, accidents, crises and military threats



112 The single European emergency number. Free, 24 hours a day, no code needed.

Print it, fill it in and keep it with your documents.

Edition 1 · November 2026

How to use this booklet

This booklet brings together the essentials of Flank's civil preparedness guides. It is made to be read without power or internet: print it, fill in the blank fields and keep it where you can find it in the dark.

OFFICIAL INSTRUCTIONS COME FIRST

Instructions from civil protection, your municipality and other authorities always take precedence over the general advice here. If the authorities order an evacuation, leave. If they tell you to stay inside, stay.

How it is organised

☐ **Essential.** The minimum to start with (in bold).

☐ **Additional.** Depending on your household, the season and your means.

OFFICIAL An instruction from civil protection or another authority.

PRACTICAL TIP Flank's own advice: modest and safe.

The instructions follow official sources; the main ones are listed on page 23.

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Fill in by hand: the family plan (pages 14 and 15) and your personal details and wallet card (page 22).

In an alarm: the first minutes

1. **Stay calm.** Check yourself and the people around you for injuries.
2. **If you hear a siren, go indoors** and turn on the radio or TV for instructions.
3. **Follow the instructions** on BNT, BNR, from your municipality and in BG-ALERT messages on your phone.
4. **112 is for emergencies:** a danger to life, health or property. Do not call to ask what is going on: the line must stay free.
5. **Never** use a generator, grill, camping stove or a gas, coal or charcoal appliance in a closed room or garage: carbon monoxide kills.

IF TOLD: STAY INSIDE

Close the windows and doors, turn off ventilation and air conditioning, seal the gaps with wet towels and do not go out.

IF TOLD: EVACUATE

Turn off the gas and power, take your backpack and leave quickly, as agreed in your family plan, by the route you are given.

Siren signals in Bulgaria

Signal	How it sounds	When it is used
National alarm signal	3 minutes of wailing, the tone changing in steps	In a disaster
All clear	2 minutes of a steady tone	In a disaster
Air danger	3 minutes of wailing, the tone rising and falling smoothly	When needed
Air danger all clear	2 minutes of a steady tone	Once the danger has passed

The signals are broadcast by sirens, by BNT, BNR and other radio and TV stations, by local radio relay points and by local systems at hazardous sites. The sirens are tested from time to time, and the tests are announced. For the current schedule and recordings of the signals, see the civil protection page (QR code below, in Bulgarian) or follow BNT and BNR.

PRACTICAL TIP

Listen to the recordings so you recognise the signals. If you hear a siren outside an announced test, go indoors and turn on the radio.

Civil protection: the signals, recordings and tests (in Bulgarian)
mvr.bg/gdpbzn/footer/info-center/pravila-signali/signali

The first 72 hours

In a major disaster the emergency services are stretched, and help may take hours, sometimes days, to arrive. That is why the European Commission encourages every household to be able to cope on its own for at least 72 hours, and its October 2026 guidelines describe 72 hours as a minimum starting point, not an upper limit. Civil protection advises keeping food and water for 72 hours in an evacuation backpack (also known as a go bag or bug-out bag).

Being prepared does not mean that a specific threat is expected. It helps in a flood, an earthquake, a storm, an accident or simply a long cut in water and power.

Three things to start with

A plan
Who does what, where you meet, phone numbers on paper.
page 14

Supplies at home
Water, food, medicines, light, a radio.
pages 5 to 10

Evacuation backpack
Packed in advance, so you can leave in minutes.
page 11

What your supplies should cover

Food, drinking water, heating or cooling, lighting, medicines, hygiene and access to information. Add cash and a family plan with a meeting point.

Step by step: 3, 7, 14, 30 days

72 hours	7 days	14 days	30 days
The minimum recommended in the EU	One week	Water for two weeks, if possible	A long-term goal, not an official norm
11.4 L and 9 meals per person	**26.6 L and 21 meals per person**	**53.2 L and 42 meals per person**	**114 L and 90 meals per person**

Thirty days is not an official norm; it is the longest horizon in Flank's calculator. Sweden advises its citizens to prepare for at least a week, and notes that 72 hours is better than nothing.

> **PRACTICAL TIP**
>
> Build up gradually: add one or two long-life items you already eat on each shop. When the news is worrying, do not stockpile: top up only what is missing, in normal amounts.

People with additional needs

People with disabilities face greater risk: their supplies include extra medicines, backup power for assistive and medical devices, and a plan for who will help if usual support stops. Think of babies (food, nappies), older neighbours and pets.

Water

The reference figure is **3.8 litres per person per day** (one US gallon) for drinking, cooking and basic hygiene. Flank's calculator assumes 2 L of that is for drinking. It is a starting point for planning, not an exact requirement for everyone.

Water in total	3 days	7 days	14 days	30 days
1 person	**11.4 L** 3 × 5 L	**26.6 L** 6 × 5 L	**53.2 L** 11 × 5 L	**114 L** 23 × 5 L
2 people	**22.8 L** 5 × 5 L	**53.2 L** 11 × 5 L	**106.4 L** 22 × 5 L	**228 L** 46 × 5 L
3 people	**34.2 L** 7 × 5 L	**79.8 L** 16 × 5 L	**159.6 L** 32 × 5 L	**342 L** 69 × 5 L
4 people	**45.6 L** 10 × 5 L	**106.4 L** 22 × 5 L	**212.8 L** 43 × 5 L	**456 L** 92 × 5 L
5 people	**57 L** 12 × 5 L	**133 L** 27 × 5 L	**266 L** 54 × 5 L	**570 L** 114 × 5 L
6 people	**68.4 L** 14 × 5 L	**159.6 L** 32 × 5 L	**319.2 L** 64 × 5 L	**684 L** 137 × 5 L

At 3.8 L per person per day, of which 2 L for drinking; next to the litres: 5 L bottles, rounded up. The same sums as the calculator on flank.bg.

Who needs more

- In hot weather the need can double; more with physical effort too.
- People who are ill, pregnant or breastfeeding, and children.
- Babies: ready-to-use infant formula.
- If your fluids are restricted, ask your doctor.

DOGS (OPTIONAL)

The calculator adds 0.065 L per kilogram of body weight per day: the upper end of a general guideline for a healthy dog in normal conditions. Example: 20 kg for 3 days = 3.9 L. Dogs only: for cats and other animals, ask a vet.

How to store it

- Safest is commercially bottled water, unopened and in date.
- Your own containers: food-grade, tightly capped, unbreakable, never used for chemicals; washed and sanitised.
- Cool and dark, away from fuel and cleaning products (10 to 21 °C).
- Replace water you have bottled yourself every 6 months.
- Water in the boiler and pipes can be used for household needs once you have switched off the power and gas to the boiler.

Practical tip: round up, and keep your supply in several smaller containers, each labelled with the date it was filled.

If the water may be unsafe

- Follow the water utility's and the health inspectorate's instructions exactly.
- A rolling boil kills bacteria, viruses and protozoa. Keep it boiling hard for 1 minute. Let cloudy water settle first, or filter it through a clean cloth.
- Boiling does **not** remove chemicals. Floodwater is not safe to drink. After an industrial accident, wait for the authorities' instructions.
- Without power, boil water outdoors only: burning fuel indoors gives off carbon monoxide.

Food

The calculator counts **meals, not calories**: three per person per day. A number of meals is easier for planning the shopping at home.

Meals	3 days	7 days	14 days	30 days
1 person	9	21	42	90
2 people	18	42	84	180
3 people	27	63	126	270
4 people	36	84	168	360
5 people	45	105	210	450
6 people	54	126	252	540

What food

Food that is filling, keeps at room temperature and can be eaten as it is or with a little water:

- tinned meat, fish, beans, vegetables and fruit;
- dry breakfast cereals, muesli, bars, nuts and dried fruit;
- long-life milk and juice in cartons;
- pasta and rice, if you can cook them safely.

Buy food you already eat. Do not forget a manual tin opener. When water is short, avoid very salty food.

Rotation

Check the dates every 3 months and mark the date on the packaging. New items at the back, older ones at the front; cook from your supply on ordinary days.

Special needs

Plan for special diets, allergies and baby food. With diabetes, coeliac disease or another diet, discuss your supply with your doctor. And long-life food for your pets.

COOKING WITHOUT POWER: OUTDOORS ONLY

Charcoal grills and camping stoves are for outdoor use only: never in the home, the garage or on an enclosed balcony. Put the stove on a flat, non-flammable surface, with something nearby to put out a fire. Tinned food can be eaten cold.

The fridge after a power cut

If the door stays closed	Food stays safe for about
Fridge	**4 hours**
Full freezer	**48 hours**
Half-full freezer	**24 hours**

The fridge should be at 4 °C or colder, the freezer at −18 °C or colder. After 4 hours without power, throw out meat, fish, eggs, milk and leftovers. Throw out food with an unusual smell or look, food that touched floodwater, and swollen tins. Never taste food to check it. **When in doubt, throw it out**.

Medicines and first aid

Put together two first aid kits: one at home, in a fixed place everyone knows, and a small one for the backpack. The best-stocked kit is of little use if nobody knows how to use it.

The home kit

The basics for a family of four:

- [ ] **plasters in several sizes (about 25) and adhesive tape**
- [ ] **sterile gauze pads (5 each in two sizes) and 2 compress dressings**
- [ ] **2 roller bandages and 2 triangular bandages**
- [ ] **antiseptic wipes (5)**
- [ ] **2 pairs of non-latex gloves**
- [ ] **emergency blanket**
- [ ] breathing barrier with a one-way valve
- [ ] instant cold compress
- [ ] mercury-free, non-glass thermometer, tweezers
- [ ] short first aid instructions

Which non-prescription medicines to add, ask your pharmacist or GP. For the backpack: smaller amounts of the same (plasters, gauze, a bandage, wipes, gloves, an emergency blanket).

Your own medicines

- Your own medicines are among the essentials in the evacuation backpack.
- Agree with your doctor or pharmacist how much to keep in reserve. Do not stockpile on your own or change your treatment yourself.
- Keep copies of prescriptions and a list of medicines, doses and allergies, on paper and on your phone.
- Remember glasses, hearing aid batteries and supplies.

REFRIGERATED MEDICINES IN A POWER CUT

If the power is off for a day or longer, throw these medicines out unless the label says otherwise. If a life depends on such a medicine, use it until a new supply is available, and replace it as soon as possible. Ask your doctor in advance how long yours will last.

Knowing matters more than the kit

The Bulgarian Red Cross runs first aid courses (for learner drivers, at work, for childcare). If you took a course years ago, refresh it.

FOR A SERIOUS INJURY

The first step is always **112**. The operator will tell you what to do until the team arrives. Do not enter a dangerous area to reach someone who is hurt.

Check the kit twice a year, in April and October, and replace anything used or out of date straight away.

Hygiene without running water

Washing hands with soap and disposing of excreta safely are among the practices that most directly limit disease in disasters. Without water the toilet cannot be flushed, and if you keep using it the sewer soon blocks.

Hands

- Make a temporary hand-washing station with a large water container and wash your hands with soap for at least 20 seconds.
- After the toilet, after changing a nappy, before food, and before and after caring for someone who is ill.
- Without soap and water: hand sanitiser with at least 60% alcohol, though it works less well on visibly dirty hands.
- Do not dip your hands in a basin of water that has already been used.

Water for drinking and for washing

Of 3.8 L a day, the calculator sets aside 2 L for drinking and 1.8 L for cooking and hygiene. Keep the drinking water separate.

An emergency toilet

1. Turn off the toilet's water supply and empty the bowl.
2. Put two bin bags, one inside the other, in the bowl under the seat.
3. In the inner bag: cat litter, peat, sawdust or another absorbent material.
4. Tie the full bag tightly (a double knot).

Keep the bags in a bin with a tight lid, away from children, animals, water and food. Your municipality will say how to dispose of them.

CLEANING SAFELY

Never mix bleach with ammonia or another cleaner. Ventilate, wear gloves and eye protection. If the water utility announces a sewer failure, do not run water into the toilet or sinks until it says it is safe.

When to see a doctor

With diarrhoea after a disaster, drink safe water or oral rehydration solution and go to the nearest health facility; a baby keeps breastfeeding. Also get help if a wound turns red, swells or oozes.

- [ ] **Soap, a container with a lid, hand sanitiser and wet wipes**
- [ ] **Strong bin bags and ties for at least a week, a bin with a lid**
- [ ] **Household gloves**
- [ ] Cat litter or sawdust; sanitary pads, nappies, incontinence products

Power cut

THE BIGGEST DANGER: CARBON MONOXIDE

A generator, petrol engine, charcoal grill, camping stove or gas lamp is **never** used in the home, basement, garage or camper. A generator runs only outdoors, at least 6 m from windows, doors and vents; an open window does not make it safe. Do not heat your home with a gas oven. Headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea and confusion can be signs of poisoning: get to fresh air and call 112.

Light

- A torch for each member of the household and spare batteries.
- Battery lamps instead of candles: less risk of fire.
- A candle only on a non-flammable base, never unattended, and ventilate.

Warm and cool

- In the cold: gather in one room, close the doors, ventilate regularly; layers, blankets, sleeping bags.
- In the heat a fan alone does not protect you; drink water and stay in the coolest room.
- If your home gets too cold or too hot, go to relatives or to a place the authorities have opened.

Water, food, devices

- Keep the fridge and freezer closed (see page 6).
- In many blocks of flats a pump lifts the water to the upper floors and stops with the power. Before an announced cut, fill some containers.
- Refrigerated medicines and powered medical devices: plan with your doctor in advance.
- Unplug devices to protect them from a surge when the power returns.
- Stay away from fallen power lines; report them on 112.
- A little cash: cash machines may not work.

PRACTICAL TIP

A head torch keeps your hands free; keep a torch by every bed. Leave one lamp switched on so you know when the power is back. Look in on neighbours who live alone, especially if they rely on a lift, a medical device or electric heating.

- [ ] **A torch for everyone and spare batteries**
- [ ] **A battery-powered carbon monoxide alarm, or one with a backup battery**
- [ ] **A battery or wind-up radio, a charged power bank**
- [ ] **Blankets, sleeping bags, warm clothes**
- [ ] A fridge thermometer

Without power or internet

When the power, the internet or the mobile network fails, a battery radio is often the only way to hear official information. Official warnings are broadcast by sirens, by BNT and BNR, by other radio and TV stations and by local radio relay points.

The radio

- Battery, wind-up, solar or a combination; spare batteries kept outside the set.
- It should receive FM. If you can, medium wave too (MW, labelled AM on some sets): BNR broadcasts its Horizont programme from the Vidin 1 transmitter on 576 kHz. Reception is not certain everywhere in the country, so FM comes first.
- Switch it on once a month; take the batteries out if it will not be used for a long time.

Stations I can receive at home

BNR

Local radio

BG-ALERT on your phone

Warnings arrive with no app and no mobile data, but only if there is a mobile network in the area. Do not count on getting a message in every emergency.

- **iPhone** (iOS 16.6 or later): Settings › Notifications › BG-ALERT.
- **Android** (made after September 2020, shipped with Android 11 or later): Settings › Safety & emergency › Wireless emergency alerts. Menu names vary by manufacturer.
- For national tests, switch on the "Test signals" channel too.

Details: bg-alert.bg (Information › Devices and operating systems, in Bulgarian).

Your phone when networks are overloaded

- Keep calls for emergencies; text messages may be more reliable. Agree now who texts whom to say "I'm OK".
- Write important numbers on paper too: a flat phone takes its contacts with it.
- A power bank of about 10,000 mAh usually gives 1 to 2 full charges; recharge it every few months.
- Download an offline map of your area and check it in flight mode. Keep a paper map too, with your home and meeting points marked.

> **CHECK BEFORE YOU SHARE**
>
> In a crisis false information spreads easily. Be wary of forwarded messages with no author, photos without a date or place, and anything that urges you to act at once. Check on the institution's website.

Evacuation backpack

A bag packed in advance, so you can leave home within minutes. It should hold a first aid kit, a torch, a phone charger, a radio, and food and water for 72 hours. A backpack, not a suitcase: your hands stay free. One for each member of the household.

WATER AND FOOD

- [ ] **Drinking water, 2 L**
- [ ] **Water filter or purification tablets**
- [ ] **Ready-to-eat food for one day ×3**
- [ ] Metal cup and cutlery (optional)

DOCUMENTS AND CASH

- [ ] **Copies of documents in a waterproof pouch**
- [ ] **Cash in small notes**
- [ ] **Important numbers and addresses on paper**

CLOTHING AND WEATHER PROTECTION

- [ ] **Rain jacket or hooded coat**
- [ ] **Warm layer: fleece or jumper**
- [ ] **Spare socks**
- [ ] Spare underwear

LIGHTING AND POWER

- [ ] **Headlamp with spare batteries**
- [ ] **Power bank and phone cable**

COMMUNICATIONS AND NAVIGATION

- [ ] Battery or wind-up radio
- [ ] Paper map of the area and a compass
- [ ] Offline maps downloaded to the phone
- [ ] Whistle

FIRST AID

- [ ] **First aid kit**
- [ ] **Your regular medication and copies of prescriptions**
- [ ] Emergency foil blanket

HYGIENE

- [ ] **Personal hygiene kit**
- [ ] Hand sanitiser and wet wipes
- [ ] Toilet paper
- [ ] FFP2 masks (optional)

ESSENTIAL TOOLS

- [ ] Multitool or folding knife
- [ ] Lighter and matches in a waterproof bag
- [ ] Cord, 10 m (optional)
- [ ] Duct tape (optional)
- [ ] Light tarp or poncho (optional)
- [ ] Sleeping bag

PERSONAL NECESSITIES

- [ ] Spare glasses or contact lenses (optional)
- [ ] Notebook and pen
- [ ] Food, water and lead for a pet (optional)

One person, 72 hours, on foot, spring or autumn: about **10.2 kg** by the tool's approximate weights. In winter add: warm hat and gloves, thermal base layer. In summer: sun hat, sunscreen. By car: extra water, 5 l, blanket. For a family: children's things: food, nappies, a favourite toy.

HOW HEAVY

Water for 72 hours by the calculator is 11.4 L, so over 11 kg. On foot, carry at least the drinking water for the first day and a way to treat water, and keep the full supply at home or in the car. Flank's tool flags a pack over 12 kg per person: a guide, not a rule. Weigh it and take a half-hour test walk.

Where and when

Always in the same place by the door; everyone knows where. Check it twice a year, in April and October, and swap the seasonal clothes. Children: a card with their name, date of birth, address and a parent's phone.

Documents, cash, clothing

Documents left at home can be destroyed, and replacing them is sometimes difficult. So put a waterproof pack with the family's important documents and money in the evacuation backpack.

Which documents

- **Identity:** ID card, passport, driving licence, vehicle documents.
- **Family:** birth, marriage and death certificates.
- **Health:** insurance, vaccinations, medicines, your doctor's details; copies of prescriptions.
- **Home and insurance:** policies, rental and property contracts.
- **Finances:** bank accounts, income, taxes; a will and powers of attorney, if any.

The set is personal. Keep certificates as originals; a copy is enough for an ID card, passport and licence. A copy helps you replace a document, but does not stand in for the original with the authorities.

Cash

A reserve in small notes and coins in case digital payments stop. Cash machines and cards may not work just when you need to buy food or fuel. Be able to pay in more than one way and know your PINs.

There is no official amount. As a guide, work out the household's food, medicines and fuel for at least a week.

PRACTICAL TIP

One folder you can grab in one go. The digital copy encrypted or protected by a strong password, never sent by email or chat. Some of the cash in the backpack's envelope, the rest in another safe place.

Clothing for the road

- [ ] **Layers: a base, a warm and an outer layer**
- [ ] **Sturdy shoes that are already worn in**
- [ ] **Two pairs of spare socks in a plastic bag**
- [ ] **A waterproof jacket or raincoat**
- [ ] **A hat and gloves (and a scarf in winter)**
- [ ] A dry set of underwear in a separate bag
- [ ] In summer: light clothes, a wide-brimmed hat, sunscreen
- [ ] A reflective vest or band
- [ ] **A spare change for each child, checked for size**
- [ ] Easy-to-put-on clothes for older relatives

Everyday carry and the car

Most emergencies do not find us at home. A few light things in your pocket, bag or car help when the power is off, the network is down or a road is closed, until you get home or to a safe place.

URBAN EDC

- [ ] **Phone with emergency contacts**
- [ ] **Compact power bank and cable**
- [ ] **Small flashlight**
- [ ] **Mini first aid kit: plasters, bandage, gloves**
- [ ] **Identity document**
- [ ] **Some cash**
- [ ] **Your regular medication for the day**
- [ ] Offline maps on the phone
- [ ] Notebook and pen
- [ ] Whistle
- [ ] Bottle of water
- [ ] Energy bar (optional)
- [ ] Face mask (optional)

WORK EDC

- [ ] **Phone with emergency contacts**
- [ ] **Phone charger and cable**
- [ ] **Small flashlight**
- [ ] **Your regular medication for the day**
- [ ] First aid kit
- [ ] Notebook and pen
- [ ] Whistle
- [ ] Bottle of water
- [ ] One day of non-perishable food
- [ ] Comfortable shoes for walking home
- [ ] Jacket or rain jacket
- [ ] Small battery radio (optional)
- [ ] Multitool (optional)

VEHICLE EDC

- [ ] **Car charger and cable**
- [ ] **Small flashlight**
- [ ] **Vehicle first aid kit**
- [ ] **Water, two 1.5 L bottles**
- [ ] **Reflective vest and warning triangle**
- [ ] Cash for fuel and the road
- [ ] Paper road map
- [ ] One day of non-perishable food
- [ ] Blanket, hat and gloves (winter)
- [ ] Ice scraper (winter)
- [ ] Tow rope and jump leads
- [ ] Multitool (optional)

These lists include no weapons or means of self-defence. The lighter the kit, the more likely it is to be with you when you need it.

What Bulgarian law requires

- [ ] **A warning triangle, a first aid kit and a reflective vest (Road Traffic Act, art. 139(2))**
- [ ] **A fire extinguisher with a service sticker (art. 139(8) and (11))**
- [ ] **From 15 November to 1 March, winter tyres or a tread of at least 4 mm (art. 139(1)(4))**

Requirements as of 25 November 2026; they change, so check the current text or ask the traffic police (KAT).

IF YOU ARE STRANDED

When stuck in snow, do not leave the car unless you have to, and put a brightly coloured garment where it can be seen. Never sit in a car with the engine running if the exhaust is blocked: clear it first. Run the engine only briefly, and never in a closed garage.

PRACTICAL TIP

Fill up when the tank reaches half (and keep it full when an evacuation is likely). Keep the vest inside the car, not in the boot.

Family emergency plan

Every family should have a disaster plan: relatives' phone numbers, a meeting point and evacuation routes. Fill it in together.

1. Talk at home about the emergencies most likely where you live and what each person does in them.
2. Choose two meeting places: a safe place near home and a meeting point outside your neighbourhood, with their addresses.
3. Agree on a relative or friend who lives in another area, through whom everyone passes on news.
4. Think about children at school, people with additional needs and pets.
5. Give everyone a copy and go over the plan together twice a year, in April and October, when you also check your emergency bag.

Household members

Medical details help rescuers and relatives if you cannot speak for yourself.

1

Name _____ Year of birth _____

Conditions and allergies _____ Medicines and doses _____

Additional needs (mobility, aids, hearing, sight) _____

2

Name _____ Year of birth _____

Conditions and allergies _____ Medicines and doses _____

Additional needs (mobility, aids, hearing, sight) _____

3

Name _____ Year of birth _____

Conditions and allergies _____ Medicines and doses _____

Additional needs (mobility, aids, hearing, sight) _____

4

Name _____ Year of birth _____

Conditions and allergies _____ Medicines and doses _____

Additional needs (mobility, aids, hearing, sight) _____

Contacts

Name	Who they are	Phone

Family plan: meeting and evacuation

Contact outside the area

Someone who lives elsewhere: if you are separated, everyone calls them and they pass on the news.

Name

Phone

Address

Meeting place near home

A safe place everyone can reach on foot, such as a school yard or a park.

Place

Address and how to get there

Meeting point outside the neighbourhood

If the area has to be left, for example a relative's home in another town.

Place

Address and how to get there

If you have to evacuate

You leave when the authorities say so; the plan saves you time.

Where we will go (address)

Route and a back-up route

How we will travel

Who collects the children from school or nursery

Pets: who takes them and where they go

Where the documents and the emergency bag are

Who turns off the gas, electricity and water

Important numbers

For example your GP, the school, work, the electricity or water emergency line.

Who	Phone
Emergencies	**112**

Emergency number 112: dialled without a code, around the clock and free of charge. Last edited: _____

Earthquake

Earthquakes cannot be predicted, so protection lies in preparation. Aftershocks often follow, sometimes days or months later.

Before

- Move or secure heavy objects that could fall; heavy and breakable items on low shelves.
- Agree on the safest places: under a sturdy table or by an interior wall, away from windows.
- Learn how to turn off the gas, water and power.
- A backpack, a family plan, a whistle.

During

Drop to your hands and knees

Cover your head and neck, under a table

Hold on until the shaking stops

- Do not run outside or stand in a doorway.
- Outdoors: away from buildings, poles, trees and power lines.
- In a car: pull over, stop, set the handbrake. On public transport, wait inside.
- With a cane: sit on a chair or bed and cover your head; lock the wheels of a wheelchair or walker.

After

- Check yourself and those around you; watch out for glass and debris.
- If you leave home: turn off the gas, water and power, and do not use the lift.
- If you smell gas: turn off the main valve, do not strike matches or touch light switches. Only a professional turns the gas back on.
- Do not enter damaged buildings; go back only if walls and floors are not sagging.
- Stay away from affected areas and from the beach; keep up hygiene, do not drink water from unchecked sources.
- If trapped: cover your nose and mouth, tap on a pipe or wall.

TICK OFF

- ☐ **I have moved or secured heavy objects that could fall**
- ☐ **I know the safest places in each room: under a sturdy table or by an interior wall**
- ☐ **I know where the gas, water and electricity shut-offs are and how to use them**
- ☐ **The emergency backpack is ready: first aid kit, torch, radio, charger, food and water for 72 hours**
- ☐ **We have agreed a meeting place and written down our close contacts' numbers**

Flood

Water can rise slowly or quickly, and flash floods can come without warning. Find out the risk where you live from your municipality or the river basin directorate.

NEVER THROUGH MOVING WATER

Do not walk or drive through a flooded road or moving water: **turn around and take another route**. About 15 cm of moving water can knock a person down, and about 30 cm can sweep a car away. Even water below the car's axles is no sign that crossing is safe: the road may be undermined beneath the water, the current is stronger than it looks, and hazards cannot be seen.

When the water is coming

- Turn off the gas and power; move valuables up high.
- Take your backpack and leave, as agreed in your family plan. When ordered, leave at once and do not drive around barriers.
- Near a river or in a gully: go to higher ground at once; not under or on bridges, underpasses or flyovers.
- If you cannot get out: the top floor, the roof as a last resort, and call for help on 112. Not a closed attic.
- A car in fast-moving water: stay inside; if water comes in, get onto the roof.
- Animals you cannot take: open the doors of the rooms they are in.

After the flood

- Return when the authorities say it is safe. Go in by daylight, with a torch, not a candle.
- Do not wade through floodwater: it is contaminated and may be live.
- Turn off the main switch only from a dry spot; have an electrician check the wiring. Wet appliances can cause shocks or fire.
- If you smell gas: close the valve, open the windows, leave without making sparks.
- Throw out food that touched the water, and swollen tins. Do not drink water with an unusual colour, smell or taste.
- Clean-up: gloves, boots, a mask; children and people with asthma stay out of it.

TICK OFF

- [ ] **I have checked with my municipality or the river basin directorate whether I live in a flood-risk area**
- [ ] **My documents and insurance policy are in a waterproof pouch, with password-protected copies**
- [ ] **We have a family plan with a meeting place and evacuation routes**
- [ ] **The disaster backpack is ready with food and water for 72 hours, a first aid kit, torch, radio and charger**
- [ ] **I know how to turn off the gas and electricity at home**

Industrial (chemical) accident

A hazardous substance leaks from a plant, a store or a vehicle. Some toxic substances have no smell: do not wait to notice something, follow the authorities' instructions. Warnings come by radio and TV, sirens and BG-ALERT.

AT HOME: STAY INSIDE

- Stay calm and warn the people around you.
- Turn off ventilation and air conditioning.
- Close windows, doors and vents and seal them with wet towels, blankets or curtains.
- Do not go outside.

Choose a room with few or no windows, if possible with water and on an upper floor; plastic sheeting and tape on the windows. You may need to stay inside for hours, sometimes days.

OUTSIDE: ACROSS THE WIND

Leave the contaminated area at once, moving **perpendicular to the direction of the wind**, and protect your airways with a mask or cloth. A car may not be airtight enough.

The aim is to get out of the cloud, not to move along with it. Instructions for the specific accident (direction, route, assembly point) take precedence.

Decontamination after leaving the area

1. Take off your clothes and shoes, put them in a plastic bag and seal it; quickly, within the first 10 minutes if you can. Cut off clothing that goes over the head.
2. Rinse your mouth and eyes, wash your body with soap and water and put on clean clothes: lukewarm water, for at least 2 to 3 minutes, without scrubbing.
3. If your eyes sting: rinse them for 10 to 15 minutes, no eye drops. Put the bag inside another bag, and keep it out of ordinary waste until the authorities say what to do.
4. Wash food that was outdoors thoroughly and remove its outer layer. If you have symptoms: 112.

What not to do

- Do not leave your shelter, even to help others, until the authorities say it is safe.
- Do not go to fetch children from school: they may be sheltered where they are.
- If you have swallowed the substance, do not make yourself sick.

TICK OFF

- ☐ **I know what the "National alarm signal" and the all-clear signal sound like**
- ☐ **My phone receives BG-ALERT warnings**
- ☐ **I have a battery radio and know which station to tune to**
- ☐ **I know how to switch off ventilation and air conditioning at home**

Radiation emergency

The measures to protect the population are set in advance in the disaster protection plans and are applied on the order of the National Headquarters: sheltering, iodine prophylaxis and evacuation. The first instruction is to stay calm.

How you will know

Across the country: sirens, BNT, BNR and other radio and TV stations, local radio relay points. Follow BNT and BNR. BG-ALERT is a warning channel, but do not count on a message in every emergency.

ONLY IN THE 30 KM ZONE AROUND THE KOZLODUY NPP

A separate signal: a long siren wail followed by a spoken message with one of four instructions: wait for information, take shelter, take iodine prophylaxis or evacuate. Follow BNR Horizont and BNT.

If you were outside

Removing your outer layer of clothing can remove up to 90% of radioactive material; shower with soap and water. Hand sanitiser does not protect. In the Kozloduy area the advice also includes: keep shoes and outer clothes apart, and clean with a damp cloth rather than sweeping.

Food and water

Food and water that stayed indoors are safe. Do not eat from the garden until the authorities say it is safe. In the Kozloduy area: water only from closed, approved sources.

GET INSIDE, STAY INSIDE, STAY TUNED

- Bring the family and the pets inside.
- Close the doors and windows, draw the blinds.
- Turn off air conditioning and ventilation.
- Seal the room you have chosen; keep a radio or TV in it.
- Do not leave the shelter until you are told to.

The nearest building, away from windows, with more walls between you and the outside; usually for at least 24 hours.

IODINE TABLETS: ONLY WHEN ORDERED

Do not take potassium iodide unless ordered to: taking it on your own can harm your health. It protects only the thyroid and is not an antidote; iodised salt does not replace it.

EVACUATION: ONLY WHEN INSTRUCTED

Do not leave the area unless ordered. In the zone, the start, means and direction are announced by radio and by sirens.

112 is for urgent help and reporting emergencies, not for information about the radiation situation.

Evacuate or stay inside

The right choice depends on the danger and the place, so the decision is taken by the authorities. When a hazardous substance leaks, the air outside may be more dangerous than the air in your home.

Stay inside	Leave
Most often in: a release of chemical or other hazardous substances, heavily polluted air, a radiation emergency.	**Most often in:** a flood, a large fire, a risk of collapse, or on the authorities' order.
☐ **Bring everyone in, pets too; lock the doors**	☐ **Turn off the gas and power**
☐ **Turn off ventilation and air conditioning**	☐ **Take your backpack, leave as in your family plan**
☐ **Close and seal windows, doors and vents**	☐ **In good time, by the recommended routes, not by shortcuts**
☐ **An interior room with the fewest windows; water, food, medicines, a torch, a radio**	☐ A note of when and where you went; a lift for neighbours without a car
☐ **Do not go out until the authorities say so**	☐ **Never through fast-moving water**

PRACTICAL TIP

Choose the room for staying inside now and keep wide tape and plastic sheeting in it. The backpack stays in one place by the door.

PEOPLE WHO CANNOT LEAVE ALONE

Agree in advance who will collect a relative or neighbour with limited mobility; if needed, tell the municipality or 112. Medicines and aids are taken first.

Going back home

Only when the authorities say it is safe. Keep away from fallen wires and flooded roads. Never go back into the affected area to fetch belongings or to see what is happening.

Shelters

Shelters are inspected twice a year, and the number that can be used changes: do not rely on old lists or unofficial maps. Ask your municipality or district administration which shelter is designated for your address.

Designated shelter for my address

Room for staying inside at home

Checklists

Tick in pencil and repeat the check twice a year, in April and October.

My home is ready for 72 hours

- [ ] **I have written my relatives' phone numbers on paper**
- [ ] **The household knows the meeting point**
- [ ] I know where the nearest shelter or safe place is
- [ ] **I have water for 3 days for every member of the household**
- [ ] **I have food for 3 days that needs no cooking**
- [ ] **I have a torch, a battery-powered radio and spare batteries**
- [ ] I have a charged power bank for my phone
- [ ] **I have agreed a reserve of regular medicines with my doctor**
- [ ] I have cash in small notes and coins
- [ ] **The evacuation backpack is packed and easy to reach**
- [ ] Copies of documents are in a waterproof pouch
- [ ] I have planned for children, older people and pets
- [ ] I check the supplies' expiry dates twice a year, in April and October

Twice-yearly check

- [ ] **Water bottled at home has been replaced (every 6 months)**
- [ ] **Food is in date; anything used has been replaced**
- [ ] **Torch and radio batteries work; spares are in date**
- [ ] **The power bank is charged**
- [ ] **First aid kit: out-of-date and used items replaced**
- [ ] **Medicines and prescriptions are up to date**
- [ ] **Documents, copies and phone numbers are up to date**
- [ ] Children's clothes and shoes in the backpack still fit
- [ ] Seasonal clothes have been swapped
- [ ] **The family plan has been reviewed together**

Last check (date)

Personal details and contacts

Medical details help rescuers and relatives if you cannot speak. Fill this in by hand and keep it with your documents.

Name _____ Year of birth _____

Address _____

Phone _____ GP and phone _____

Conditions and allergies _____

Medicines and doses _____

Special needs (mobility, aids, hearing, sight) _____

Emergency contacts

Who	Phone
Emergencies	**112**
Emergency contact (ICE)	
Contact outside the area	
Emergency line: electricity	
Emergency line: water	
Municipality or mayor's office	
School, kindergarten or work	

IN AN EMERGENCY **112**

Name _____

Emergency contact (ICE) _____

Meeting point _____

Conditions and allergies _____

Medicines _____

WALLET CARD

Cut along the dashed line (85 × 54 mm, the size of a bank card; print at 100% scale) and keep it in your wallet. Write your closest contacts' numbers on paper too: a phone can run flat.

Everyday carry: page 13.

Sources and publication details

Each guide on flank.bg names its own sources and when they were checked; the main ones are below (Bulgarian documents are in Bulgarian).

Bulgarian institutions and organisations

Chief Directorate Fire Safety and Civil Protection (GDPBZN), Ministry of Interior mvr.bg/gdpbzn/info-center/pravila-povedenie/pri-zemetresenie
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National Institute of Geophysics, Geodesy and Geography, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (NIGGG-BAS) ndc.niggg.bas.bg
Bulgarian Red Cross redcross.bg/files/9992-food-water-2023.pdf
Bulgarian Red Cross redcross.bg/activities/activities4

BG-ALERT: devices and settings, bg-alert.bg
Road Traffic Act, art. 139: required vehicle equipment

European and international

European Commission: Preparedness Union Strategy (2025); guidelines on self-sufficiency for at least 72 hours, SWD(2026) 826
World Health Organization: boiling water, hygiene in emergencies, potassium iodide
MCF (Sweden), **BBK** (Germany), **DSB** (Norway): home preparedness, water, food, hygiene, documents, cash
FEMA, Ready.gov, **CDC** and the **American Red Cross** (US): supplies, first aid kits, power, earthquakes, floods, chemical and radiation emergencies
National Weather Service (US): water for dogs; **Washington State Department of Health**: emergency toilets

GDPBZN: rules of conduct (in Bulgarian)
www.mvr.bg/gdpbzn/info-center/pravila-povedenie

The guides with all their sources
flank.bg/en/preparedness

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This booklet is not an official document of any public authority and does not replace the instructions of GDPBZN, your municipality or other authorities. Quantities are planning guides, not medical norms; for medicines, rely on your doctor and pharmacist. The instructions quoted belong to the institutions named.

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Preparedness is not fear.
It is responsibility.

112 When life, health or property is in danger.

Flank's guides and tools for a crisis
flank.bg/en/preparedness

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The authorities' instructions always take precedence over the general advice in this booklet.