Protecting your property

Keep vital documents close at hand.

If you have to evacuate, you’ll want to take necessary and hard-to-replace documents.

Here’s a list of what should be in a waterproof, lockable container you can easily grab.

- Checkbook, savings account passbook
- Safe deposit box key
- Birth, death and marriage certificates, divorce decree
- Will and power of attorney
- Social Security card and records
- Military records
- Medical records (living will, health care surrogacy, etc.)
- Insurance policies
- Food stamps, WIC or other benefit cards and paperwork
- List of important phone numbers (relatives, bank and insurance company)
- Device on which you back up computer files just before you shut down the computer and evacuate
- Health insurance cards
- Retirement account records
- Recent pay stubs, in case you have to document employment to collect benefits
- Tax returns
- Car titles and registrations
- Mortgage deeds or rental agreements
- Warranties and receipts
- Credit cards
- Passports and green cards
- Home inventory (on paper, device or video; you should keep another copy in a safe place)
- A few family photographs or other memorabilia