READY HOUSE: FAMILY PLAN

QUICK REFERENCE • FRONT • CASCADIA READY RADIO

WHY PHONES FAIL

- Cell towers run on backup batteries for about **4 to 8 hours**.
- A working tower can still fail when **everyone calls at once**.
- **Texts get through** when calls won't; they use much less of the network.
- **Internet phone service** dies when the power does. A **copper landline** keeps working.
- **AM/FM radio and NOAA Weather Radio** keep broadcasting on backup power.

THE CARD EVERYONE CARRIES

- An **out-of-area contact**, far enough away that the same disaster won't reach them. Everyone checks in with this one person.
- **Two meeting places**: one near home (for a house fire), one outside the neighborhood.
- **Who picks up the kids**, with two backup names.
- Your **check-in message**: name, where you are, how you are.

TEXT FIRST

"Dan, at the school, OK." Short, the same every time, understood right away.

- Send a sample check-in text so everyone knows what it looks like.
- Keep calls free for people who need to reach 911.

GET WARNINGS FOUR WAYS

SYSTEM	DEPENDS ON	DO THIS
Phone alerts (WEA)	A working cell tower	Make sure Government Alerts are on
NOAA Weather Radio	Batteries or a crank	Buy one with SAME; set your county code
County alerts	Signing up	Search "[your county] alerts"; register every adult
ShakeAlert (West Coast)	Your phone settings	Android built in; iPhone: MyShake app

RADIOS, SCAMS & YOUR CARD

READY HOUSE: FAMILY COMMUNICATION · BACK

FAMILY RADIOS

- **FRS radios:** no license, buy and use.
- **GMRS:** $35 license, no exam, lasts 10 years, covers your extended family.
- Real range: **0.5–1 mile** in town, **1–2 miles** in open suburbs, **20–50 miles** through a repeater.
- Agree on **one channel** for the family.

SET A FAMILY SAFE WORD

- Scammers can **copy a voice** from a few seconds of audio, and **fake caller ID**.
- Pick a **private word** only your family knows.
- No word? **Hang up** and call back on a number you already have.

FILL THIS IN · CUT IT OUT · CARRY IT

Out-of-area contact & phone: _____

Meeting place near home: _____

Meeting place outside the neighborhood: _____

Picks up the kids (1st / 2nd / 3rd): _____

Family radio channel: _____

County alert system: _____

DO THIS NOW

before you need it

TONIGHT

Write the contact card. Put a copy in every wallet, backpack and car.

THIS WEEKEND

Sign up for county alerts. Set up and test a NOAA Weather Radio.

WHEN YOU'RE READY

Get licensed for GMRS and pick a family channel. Set your family safe word.



Want the whole plan?

The Ready House Bible by Charlie Ramsey has the full plan, worksheets and checklists for every room of the house. Paperback and Kindle. General preparedness guidance. Always follow local officials and emergency managers.