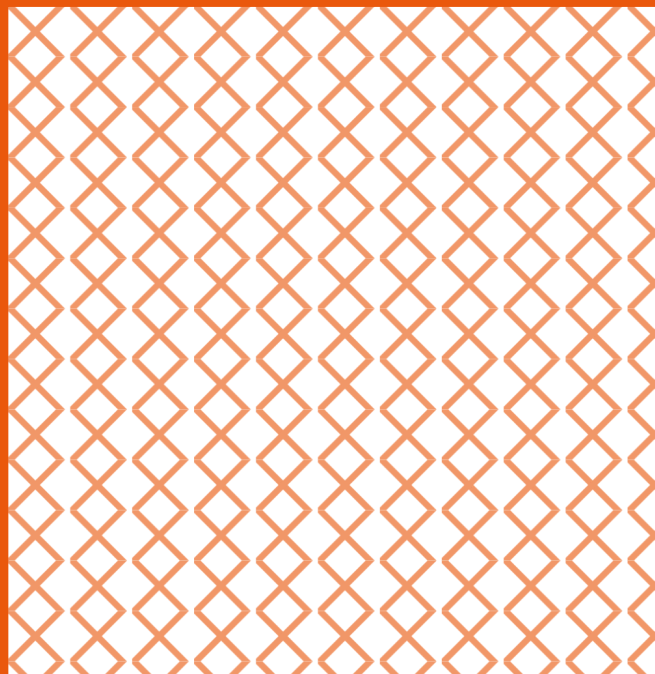




BATHROOM EMERGENCY GUIDE / BOOK 6 OF 11



The Orange Book — Hazards & Disasters

When nature or infrastructure turns hostile: leave or isolate the hazard first, classify symptoms second.

Actual emergency?

Stop reading and use the local emergency number. In the EU, call **112**. If calling is unsafe, get to a safer place or ask a trusted person to call.

What this book is for

- Is the source inside or outside?
- What do officials instruct now?
- Leave, shelter, move higher, or call?

What this book does

Room, building, air, wiring, and substance hazards, area-scale natural events, and official-warning response.

What it hands off

Does not authorize re-entry, improvised chemical treatment, or work on live systems. It cannot predict a live hazard.

Contents

- Orange Book — The Environment May Be Unsafe
 - Where is the source?
 - The five-second local-hazard gate
 - Smell is vivid evidence with poor calibration
 - Fire or smoke
 - Carbon monoxide
 - Gas smell or hissing
 - Chemical fumes, splash, or swallowed product
 - Electrical danger
 - Dependency modifiers during a hazard
 - The hazard handoff
 - After the immediate hazard
 - The world changed while you were on the toilet
 - First principle: identify the event
 - Earthquake
 - Severe wind and tornado
 - Flood
 - Fire and smoke
 - Gas, carbon monoxide, chemicals, and electricity
 - Power outage
 - Emergency water
 - Communication and rescue
 - After the event
 - Quick reference

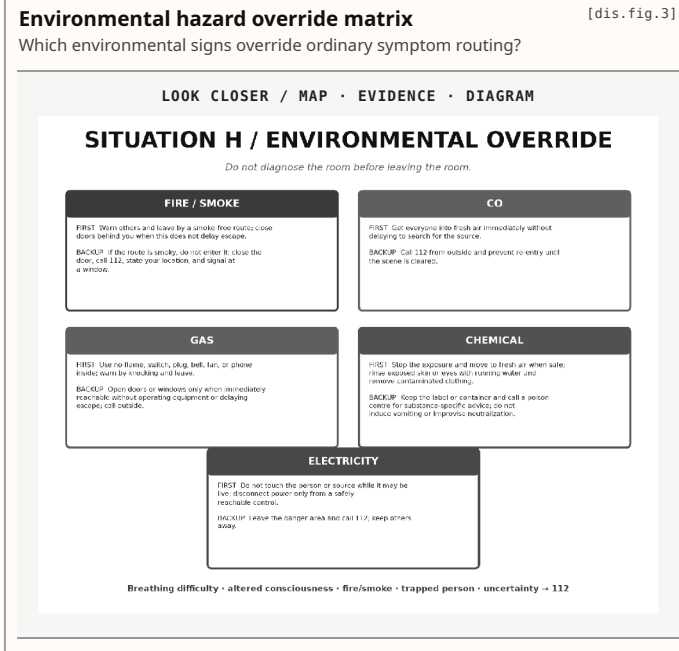
Orange Book — The Environment May Be Unsafe

Some emergencies are not primarily *inside a person*. The room, building, appliance, air, wiring, or substance is the problem. In those cases the guide changes order:

Leave or isolate the hazard first. Classify symptoms second.

Do not remain in a dangerous room to finish a checklist about the dangerous room. The checklist has no feelings and will cope.

- Bevoelkerungsschutz/Schutz-vor-geologischen-Gefahren/Erdbeben/erdbeben_node.html↵
12. Ready.gov, “Tornadoes”: basement or small interior lowest-floor room, away from windows. <https://www.ready.gov/tornadoes>↵
13. BBK, severe-weather guidance for storm, thunderstorm and hail: https://www.bbk.bund.de/DE/Warnung-Vorsorge/Vorsorge/Mit-Naturgefahren-umgehen/Unwetter/unwetter_node.html↵
14. BBK, “Schutz suchen”: higher floors protect during flooding, and a flooding basement must not be entered because of entrapment and electrocution risk. https://www.bbk.bund.de/DE/Warnung-Vorsorge/Vorsorge/Schutz-suchen/schutz-suchen_node.html↵
15. BBK, “Was tun, wenn es brennt?” https://www.bbk.bund.de/DE/Warnung-Vorsorge/Vorsorge/Brandschutz/_documents/feuer-verhalten_dossier2.html↵
16. UL Fire Safety Research Institute, Close Before You Doze / closed-door fire research. <https://closeyourdoor.org/>↵
17. BBK, “Vorsorge und Handeln bei Stromausfall,” including combustion and carbon-monoxide precautions during an outage: https://www.bbk.bund.de/DE/Warnung-Vorsorge/Vorsorge/Stromausfall/stromausfall_node.html↵
18. BBK, “Essen und Trinken bevorraten”: about two litres of water per person per day for drinking and cooking, planning for several days. https://www.bbk.bund.de/DE/Warnung-Vorsorge/Vorsorge/So-koennen-Sie-sich-vorbereiten/Bevorraten/bevorraten_node.html↵



The five-second local-hazard gate

[dis.2]

Use this branch for a source **in the room, building, appliance, or immediately around you**. For an area-scale event outside, use *Where is the source?* above and follow the current official instruction instead.

Use this branch before ordinary smell troubleshooting or calming:

SIGN	FIRST ACTION	BACKUP	DESTINATION
fire, visible smoke, smoke alarm	warn others; use a smoke-free exit; close doors behind you if possible	smoky route: stay behind a closed door, call, signal location	112
CO alarm or symptoms near combustion	everyone to fresh air immediately	call outside; prevent re-entry	112
gas smell, hissing, damaged gas line	no flame, switch, plug, bell, fan, or phone inside; knock, leave	call gas-network service or fire brigade from outside	local gas service / 112
unknown fumes, mixed cleaner, chemical splash	stop exposure; fresh air; rinse skin or eyes with running water	keep label; poison-centre advice	poison centre / 112
live current, sparking, electrical burning	do not touch a connected person or source; isolate power only if safely reachable	leave, keep others away	112

Uncertainty is not a sixth harmless category. If you cannot tell whether smoke, gas, electricity, or chemical exposure is dangerous, move away and call from a safer place.

Smell is vivid evidence with poor calibration

[dis.3]

Smell is excellent at demanding attention and poor at measuring concentration, toxicity, or distance. A weak odour can matter; a strong odour can be ordinary; habituation can make a persistent source disappear from awareness. Therefore a smell is a clue, not clearance and not permission to investigate from inside the plume.

First ask: **fire, smoke, CO alarm, gas, electrical burning, unknown fumes, chemical exposure, or symptoms?** If yes, maybe, or unclear, use **Situation H** and move away before troubleshooting.

Do **not** light a match to diagnose or “neutralize” an unknown smell. Do not operate switches when gas may be present. Do not mix cleaning products.

Smell decision tree

SMELL OR SIGN	SAFE FIRST ACTION	DESTINATION
gas / rotten egg, hissing	no flame, switch, bell, fan, or phone inside; knock, leave	Situation H → gas service / 112
smoke / burning plastic / electrical	leave; cut power only from a safely reachable control	Situation H → 112
sharp chemical / mixed cleaner / eye or airway irritation	stop exposure; fresh air; rinse exposed skin/eyes	Situation H → poison centre / 112
solvent / fuel	leave source area; prevent ignition	Situation H → specialist / 112 if danger
sewage / drain, no acute symptoms	run water into an unused trap; ventilate normally	plumber/building management if persistent
damp / musty	inspect moisture without disturbing heavy mould	landlord/building specialist; medical advice for symptoms
ordinary toilet smell	flush, close lid, ventilate, clean	no combustion-based innovation required
unexplained body or breath odour with illness	assess the person, not merely the smell	practice/116 117; 112 for severe signs

Where next?

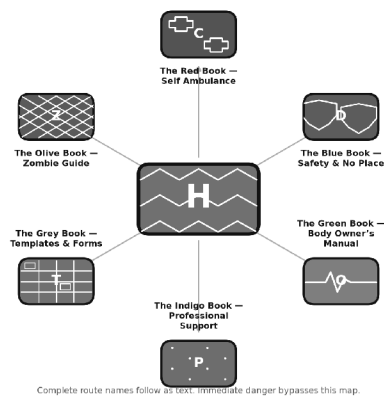
H

You do not need to complete the shelf in order. Stay here while this is the primary problem; move when another title becomes more accurate.

- **C — The Red Book — Self Ambulance** — use it when that problem becomes primary.
- **D — The Blue Book — Safety & No Place** — use it when that problem becomes primary.
- **O — The Green Book — Body Owner's Manual** — use it when that problem becomes primary.
- **P — The Indigo Book — Professional Support** — use it when that problem becomes primary.
- **T — The Grey Book — Templates & Forms** — use it when that problem becomes primary.
- **Z — The Olive Book — Zombie Guide** — use it when that problem becomes primary.

LOOK CLOSER / MAP · EVIDENCE · DIAGRAM

You are here: H — The Orange Book — Hazards & Disasters



Complete route names follow as text. Imminent danger bypasses this map.

Connections from H — The Orange Book — Hazards & Disasters

1. BBK, official warnings in NINA: https://www.bbk.bund.de/DE/Warnung-Vorsorge/Warn-App-NINA/Funktion-Inhalt/Warnmeldungen/warnmeldungen_node.html↵
2. Bundesamt für Bevölkerungsschutz und Katastrophenhilfe (BBK), “Was tun, wenn es brennt?”: https://www.bbk.bund.de/DE/Warnung-Vorsorge/Vorsorge/Brandschutz/_documents/feuer-verhalten_dossier2.html↵
3. BBK, “Vorsorge und Handeln bei Stromausfall,” including combustion and CO precautions: https://www.bbk.bund.de/DE/Warnung-Vorsorge/Vorsorge/Stromausfall/stromausfall_node.html↵
4. Deutscher Verein des Gas- und Wasserfaches (DVGW), “Was tun bei Gasgeruch?”: <https://www.dvgw.de/themen/gas/verbraucherinformationen/was-tun-bei-gasgeruch>↵
5. BBK, European emergency number 112; fire, smoke, explosion, and suspected gas smell are explicit emergency examples: <https://www.bbk.bund.de/SharedDocs/Kurzmeldungen/DE/2026/02/om-11-tag-notruf.html>↵
6. gesund.bund.de, “Erste Hilfe bei Vergiftungen”: <https://gesund.bund.de/erste-hilfe-bei-vergiftungen>↵
7. Bundesinstitut für Risikobewertung, current directory of Germany's seven poison information centres, reviewed 29 April 2026: <https://www.bfr.bund.de/de/deutsches-produktregister-depro/giftinformationszentren-in-deutschland>↵
8. German Red Cross, “Stromschlag — Erste Hilfe,” including self-protection, interruption of the circuit, 112, and professional rescue for high voltage: <https://www.drk.de/hilfe-in-deutschland/erste-hilfe/stromschlag>↵
9. Bundesamt für Bevölkerungsschutz und Katastrophenhilfe, official warnings and NINA information: https://www.bbk.bund.de/DE/Warnung-Vorsorge/Warn-App-NINA/warn-app-nina_node.html↵
10. GFZ Helmholtz Centre for Geosciences with the BBK, “Verhalten bei Erdbeben” (August 2025): stay in the building during strong shaking, take sturdy cover or protect head and face beside a load-bearing interior wall, avoid stairwells and lifts, follow local instructions. https://www.gfz.de/fileadmin/gfz/medien_kommunikation/Infothek/Merkbl%C3%A4tter/Verhalten-Erdbeben-August2025.pdf↵
11. BBK, “Erdbeben”: <https://www.bbk.bund.de/DE/Themen/Risikomanagement/Baulicher->

FIELD NOTE 23

Quick reference

[dis.23]

Orange — quick hazard router

First, always: where is the source?

Source local — in the room or building	leave or isolate it → call from safety
Warning for the area outside	do what the current official instruction says
Source unclear	increase distance → verify from safety → do not walk into it

HAZARD	IMMEDIATE SHAPE
Fire / smoke	smoke-free exit → close doors behind you → stairs → 112 from safety. Trapped: close the door, call, signal from a window
Carbon monoxide	everyone outside now → 112 → no re-entry until it is cleared
Gas	no flame, switch, plug, bell, fan or phone inside → knock → leave → call from outside
Chemical, local	stop the exposure → cleaner air when the route is safe → rinse → keep the label → poison centre or 112
Electricity	do not touch a connected person → isolate only at a known safe control → keep clear → 112
Earthquake	stay in the building while it shakes → sturdy cover or interior wall → protect head → expect aftershocks
Severe wind	interior room, lowest suitable floor → away from glass → protect head and neck
Flood	leave basements and low levels early → move up rather than into water → never enter moving water
Power	light first → find who depends on power → transfer before the reserve runs out
Water	stored drinking water → obey local notices → no cistern, no generic bleach recipe

An unclear active hazard is not a harmless one. Increase the margin and verify from somewhere safe. Current official instructions outrank this page.

Cleaning chemistry: the minimal doctrine

- Use one product at a time.
- Follow the label dilution and ventilation instructions.
- Never combine chlorine bleach with acids, toilet cleaner, vinegar, or ammonia-containing products.
- Store products in original labelled containers.
- If exposure occurred, move to fresh air if safe, rinse skin/eyes as directed, keep the product label, and contact **112** or a poison centre based on symptoms.

Persistent drain smell

A dry trap in a rarely used sink, shower, or floor drain can allow sewer gas into the room. Running water may refill the trap. Persistent odour, leaks, or repeated empty traps need building management or plumbing repair. A candle is not plumbing, even when scented “Alpine Responsibility.”

FIELD NOTE 04

Fire or smoke

[dis.4]

Action

- Warn other people.
- Leave by a route that is not smoky.
- Close doors behind you when doing so does not slow or endanger escape.
- Use stairs, not a lift.
- Call **112** from safety and state who may still be inside.²

Backup when the escape route is smoky

Do not enter a smoke-filled corridor or stairwell. Close the door between you and the smoke, call **112**, give your exact location and number of people, and make yourself visible or audible at a window. Do not jump unless the fire service directly instructs you.

Escalation

Any uncontrolled fire, smoke in the route, trapped person, smoke inhalation, burn, confusion, collapse, or uncertainty is a **112** route. Possessions remain possessions. They are famously replaceable compared with lungs.

FIELD NOTE 05

Carbon monoxide

[dis.5]

Carbon monoxide is colourless and odourless. A smell test cannot clear it. Risk can arise from fire, faulty combustion equipment, generators, charcoal, camping stoves, or improvised heating in enclosed or partly enclosed places.³

Action

- Treat a CO alarm as real.
- Move everyone into fresh air immediately.
- Do not delay to locate, switch off, photograph, or debate the source.
- Call **112** from outside.

Useful clues, not clearance tests

Headache, dizziness, nausea, weakness, confusion, unusual sleepiness, collapse, or similar symptoms affecting several people in one place increase concern. Absence of symptoms does not make a sounding alarm decorative.

Do not re-enter until the fire service or another competent authority has cleared the scene.

FIELD NOTE 06

Gas smell or hissing

[dis.6]

Odorized gas can be noticeable before a dangerous concentration is reached, but a lay reader cannot measure the margin. The safe route prevents sparks.⁴

Action

- No smoking, flame, lighter, or match.
- Do not operate lights, switches, plugs, bells, fans, extractors, or phones inside.
- Warn other occupants by **knocking**, not ringing.
- If a gas shut-off valve is **already known to you, clearly reachable, and can be closed without delay or moving into stronger gas**, close it. Do not go looking for one.⁴
- Leave the building.
- Call the local gas-network emergency service from outside. Call **112** for a strong release, damaged line, symptoms, fire/explosion risk, or when the local number is unavailable.⁵

Open an immediately reachable door or window only when this requires no electrical action and does not delay leaving. Do not return to close things when an official warning instead tells the surrounding area to shelter indoors; follow the current official instruction for the event.

FIELD NOTE 07

Chemical fumes, splash, or swallowed product

[dis.7]

A chemical incident needs substance-specific advice. Household labels and poison centres are more useful than improvised chemistry performed while coughing.⁶

Action

1. Stop the exposure without exposing another person.
2. Move to fresh air when inhalation is possible and the route is safe.
3. Remove contaminated clothing while avoiding spread to clean skin.
4. Rinse exposed skin or eyes with running, lukewarm water.
5. Keep the container, label, ingredient list, or a photograph taken only after leaving the exposure area.

Do not

- induce vomiting;
- mix another substance in to “neutralize” the first;
- give food, drink, milk, charcoal, or medication unless the product instruction, poison centre, clinician, or dispatcher tells you to;
- re-enter for a better sample.

Call

Use **112** for breathing difficulty, altered consciousness, seizure, collapse, severe or rapidly worsening symptoms, extensive exposure, or any life-danger concern. For a stable person or uncertain exposure, call a regional poison information centre and answer: who, what, how much, when, route of exposure, symptoms, and measures already taken.⁷

FIELD NOTE 08

Electrical danger

[dis.8]

Electricity can keep the rescuer attached to the same source. Water, damaged wiring, high voltage, batteries, solar equipment, and generators can leave parts energized after the obvious switch is off.

5. Identify medication refrigeration, powered medical devices, lifts, heating, cooling, water pumps, and people who cannot safely wait.

A life-supporting function losing power is a medical problem, not an energy-saving challenge. Use the personal backup plan and call early enough to transfer before the safe reserve ends.¹⁷

FIELD NOTE 20

Emergency water

[dis.20]

The safest emergency water is commercially sealed stock or water stored in clean food-safe containers before the event. Follow local notices exactly.¹⁸

- Do not assume bathtub water remains drinkable; use it primarily for sanitation unless authorities provide a safe treatment route.
- Do not drink toilet-cistern water: cleaners, biofilm, plumbing materials, and local contamination are unknown.
- Do not apply a universal bleach-drop recipe. Products and concentrations vary, and chemical contamination is not removed by boiling or disinfection.
- Boiling can address many biological hazards when authorities recommend it; it does not remove fuel, solvents, salt, heavy metals, or radioactive material.
- Keep drinking-water containers separate from washing and waste containers.

The Olive Book contains the household storage calculation and continuity plan. The Orange Book owns the event-specific warning.

FIELD NOTE 21

Communication and rescue

[dis.21]

- Calls may fail under congestion; brief text messages can sometimes queue, but availability varies.
- Attempt the local emergency number and state **location first**.
- Do not rely on a phone without a SIM, a foreign network, or a text service unless the device and local system actually support it.
- If trapped, use a whistle or regular knocking rather than exhausting yourself with continuous shouting. Pause and listen for responders.
- Leave written location and time information when moving from a searched area.

FIELD NOTE 22

After the event

[dis.22]

Before moving quickly, check injuries, fire, gas, electricity, unstable structures, contaminated water, and official instructions. Then:

- photograph damage only when safe;
- record times, warnings, symptoms, and actions;
- contact building management, insurers, care teams, and utilities as relevant;
- replace used supplies and update the household plan;
- expect delayed shaking, exhaustion, anger, nausea, sleep disturbance, or tears.

You survived a disaster in a bathroom. Nobody’s trauma requires a minimum square footage.

- Follow official evacuation or shelter instructions. If rising water has already made the lower level unsafe and no safe exit through the water exists, move upward inside a structurally sound building rather than entering moving water — do not wait for permission to stop standing in a flooding room.
- Do not walk, cycle, or drive through moving floodwater. Depth, current, missing covers, contamination, and electricity are difficult to judge.¹⁴
- Keep away from electrical equipment and water together; they remain a poor collaboration.
- After flooding, treat water, food, medicines, and surfaces as potentially contaminated until local instructions say otherwise.

FIELD NOTE 17

Fire and smoke

[dis.17]

The bathroom is not a preferred fire shelter. Leave immediately by a smoke-free route when possible, close doors behind you, use stairs, and call the fire service from safety.¹⁵

If smoke or fire blocks every exit:

- close the door between you and the smoke;
- call emergency services and give the exact room, floor, side of building, people present, and any mobility or communication need;
- seal obvious gaps only if this can be done quickly without approaching heat or smoke;
- stay low, signal from a window if one is safely usable, and follow dispatcher instructions;
- do not turn on a shower as a smoke-control system, improvise chemistry, or enter a smoke-filled route because a towel has become emotionally persuasive.

A closed door can substantially slow heat and smoke, but it does not create a fixed number of safe minutes. Construction and fire conditions vary.¹⁶

FIELD NOTE 18

Gas, carbon monoxide, chemicals, and electricity

[dis.18]

Use the Orange Book together with the existing environmental-hazard route:

- gas smell or hissing:** no flame, switch, plug, bell, fan, or phone inside; warn by knocking, leave, call from outside;
- CO alarm or suspected combustion exposure:** fresh air immediately, then emergency help; smell cannot clear carbon monoxide;
- chemical fumes or splash:** stop exposure, fresh air when safe, rinse skin or eyes with running water, keep the label, contact poison advice or emergency help according to symptoms;
- live electricity or sparking:** do not touch the source or a connected person; isolate power only at a safely reachable control.

Uncertainty about an active environmental hazard is a reason to increase distance, not to investigate from inside the plume.

FIELD NOTE 19

Power outage

[dis.19]

Darkness in a tiled room creates a small slapstick injury factory.

- Stop moving until you have light.
- Use a phone or battery torch; avoid candles near aerosols, paper, oxygen, or uncertain gas.
- Check whether the outage affects only the room, the building, or the area.
- Preserve phone battery and follow official outage information.

Action

- Do not touch a person or object still connected to a possible live source.
- Disconnect power only at a clearly identified, safely reachable control.
- Keep others away.
- Call **112** for an electrical injury, fire, smoke, high-voltage source, wet-area exposure, loss of consciousness, abnormal breathing, chest symptoms, burns, or inability to isolate the source.⁸

A person who appears well after an electrical shock may still need medical assessment. Do not use a home pulse, smartwatch, or heroic confidence as a clearance certificate.

FIELD NOTE 09

Dependency modifiers during a hazard

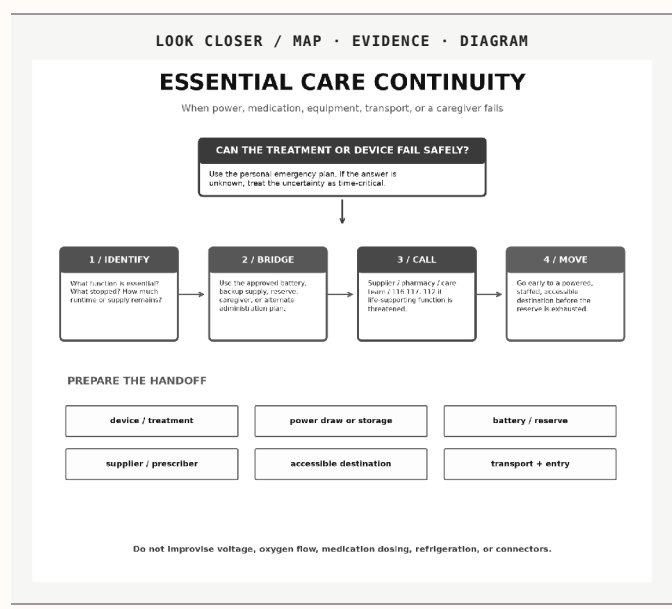
[dis.9]

A safe route may need adaptation for a child, mobility limitation, sensory or communication access need, essential medication, powered medical device, animal, or missing transport.

Essential treatment and powered-device continuity map

[dis.fig.1]

What treatment or powered-device dependencies require an early backup route?



Apply the modifier **after** recognizing urgency:

- name who needs hands-on help;
- take only immediately reachable essential medication, device, mobility, communication, infant, or animal equipment;
- do not delay evacuation to assemble the perfect bag;
- tell dispatchers what cannot be interrupted and how long any battery or supply is expected to last;
- move early to an accessible, staffed, powered destination when continuity is uncertain.

FIELD NOTE 10

The hazard handoff

[dis.10]

Five-field hazard handoff card: location, hazard, people, symptoms, and access

[dis.fig.2]

Which five fields make an environmental-hazard handoff usable from a safe place?

LOOK CLOSER / MAP · EVIDENCE · DIAGRAM

Hazard handoff — five fields from a safe place



Useful fields beat polished prose. Never return to the hazard for a better report.

The card compresses the same five fields written below. It is a memory aid, not a reason to remain near the source or delay the call.

From a safe place, say:

“I am at [address/location]. The suspected hazard is [fire/smoke/CO alarm/gas/chemical/electricity]. [number] people are out; [number or unknown] may remain inside. Symptoms are [none / list]. A child, mobility need, powered device, animal, or other dependency is [state]. We are waiting at [safe location].”

Then answer questions. Do not return to improve the report. The call does not need polished prose; location, hazard, people, symptoms, and access are enough to begin.

FIELD NOTE 11

After the immediate hazard

[dis.11]

Once the scene is officially safe:

- record time, alarms, symptoms, products, device failures, and instructions;
- obtain medical assessment when advised;
- replace used emergency supplies;
- repair the source through a qualified service;
- update the local gas number, poison-centre route, accessible exit, and powered destination in the household plan;
- check the person who was calmest. Competence can postpone shaking; it does not abolish it.

FIELD NOTE 12

The world changed while you were on the toilet

[dis.12]

Preparedness guides generally picture you dressed, alert, and standing beside a perfectly labelled emergency bag. Reality may deliver the earthquake, siren, smoke alarm, or flood warning while you are barefoot and holding a phone at 11%. The event is not required to respect the brochure.

The bathroom may be useful because it is small, interior, supplied with water, or away from windows. It may also be a trap because it has one exit, glass, chemicals, electricity, or rising water. **The room does not have a universal safety rating. The hazard and the building decide.**

FIELD NOTE 13

First principle: identify the event

[dis.13]

1. Check the immediate environment: smoke, fire, gas smell, water, broken glass, structural movement, injured people.
2. Check an official warning source when available: NINA, Cell Broadcast, warnung.bund.de, local radio, police, fire service, weather service, or municipality.⁹
3. Follow the current instruction to evacuate, shelter, move higher, avoid an area, or wait. A static guide cannot see the event outside the door.
4. Tell one person where you are and conserve battery.

FIELD NOTE 14

Earthquake

[dis.14]

During shaking, use **Drop, Cover, Hold On**: get low, protect the head and neck under sturdy cover when available, and hold on.¹⁰¹¹

In a bathroom:

- move away from mirrors, windows, glass shower screens, shelves, and hanging objects if this can be done in one or two safe movements;
- do not run through the building while it is shaking;
- if no sturdy cover exists, crouch beside an interior wall and protect the head and neck;
- a bathtub is not automatically engineered shelter, and a toilet is not a structural column wearing porcelain.

After shaking:

- expect aftershocks and repeat the action;
- check injuries, shoes, broken glass, fire, gas, electricity, and visible structural damage;
- leave when the building or official instructions require it, using stairs;
- do not use damaged plumbing until local guidance confirms it is safe;
- use stored drinking water and follow boil-water or do-not-use notices.

FIELD NOTE 15

Severe wind and tornado

[dis.15]

Where **tornado-specific** guidance applies — this branch follows US FEMA/NOAA practice — go to a basement or a small interior room on the lowest floor, away from windows, and protect the head and neck. Bathrooms and closets are examples only when they meet those conditions.¹²

For German windstorms and severe thunderstorms, follow DWD, NINA, Cell Broadcast, and local instructions instead: stay away from windows and avoid trees, unsecured objects, damaged roofs, and flooded routes.¹³

Do not open windows or doors to equalize pressure. Do not cross an exposed area to collect a mattress after the warning has become immediate. Use what is within reach: a helmet, cushions, blankets, or your arms.

For European windstorms and severe thunderstorms, use official DWD/local warnings and avoid windows, trees, unsecured objects, damaged roofs, and flooded routes. The correct room depends on the building and the event.

FIELD NOTE 16

Flood

[dis.16]

Water reverses many “stay in the bathroom” instincts.

- Leave basements and low rooms early when flooding is possible.