

Safety is taking  
small precautions  
every day.

Information and instructions for accident prevention and emergencies



## HOME AND LEISURE

Your own home can be a dangerous place. After all, two thirds of all injuries occur at home or during leisure time. Every year, about 400 Finns die in road accidents and drowning statistics also make grim reading. The biggest cause of drowning accidents is alcohol; swimming and alcohol do not mix.

## RISK OF MAJOR ACCIDENTS

There are plants processing hazardous chemicals in the areas of all rescue departments, and hazardous materials are also transported by road and rail. If an accident occurs, the Rescue Department will warn those in the area, provide instructions for protection and carry out evacuations, if necessary.

## TAKING PRECAUTIONS


Have you ever paused to think how you would manage during a power failure lasting for more than a day or if the district heating system broke down or if drinking water supplies were cut off? How would you get food if you were trapped by floods, or snow? This booklet gives instructions on how to prepare for disruptions and emergencies affecting your daily life.

## CIVIL DEFENCE

The booklet also provides information and instructions for more serious emergencies during civil defence measures to protect lives and property. Contact the Rescue Department to find out the location of the nearest emergency shelter or for instructions on how to erect a temporary shelter.

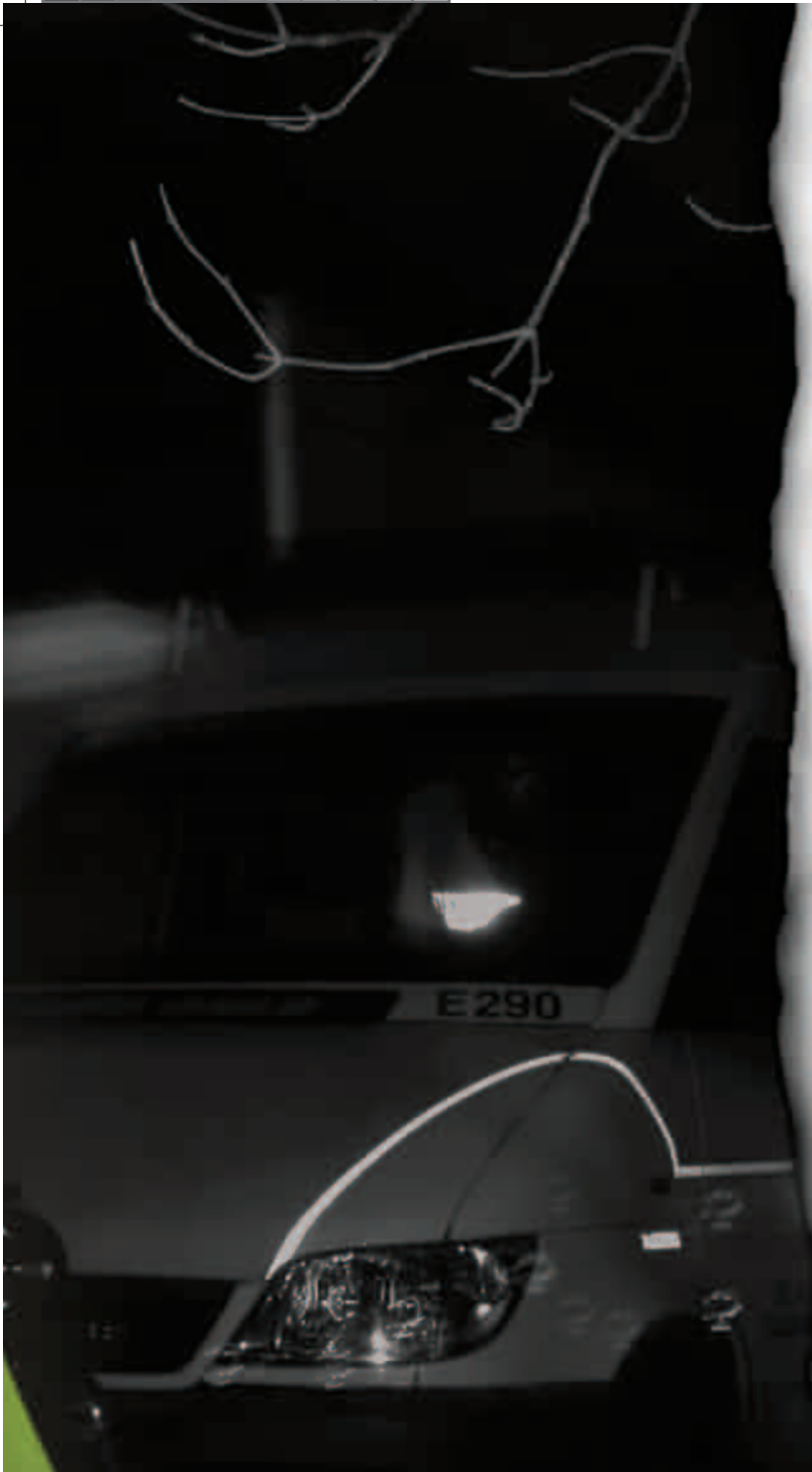


Medical emergencies	5
Accidents	11
Fire safety at home	17
Providing a safe home for children	23
Safety tips for the elderly	25
Disruptions affecting your daily life	26
Major emergencies	29
Regional rescue services	33
Partners	38
Making an emergency call to 112	39



If you are in  
an emergency situation  
stay calm and call  
112 for help.

Make sure that you master the basic resuscitation skills. They only take a few hours to learn but using them could mean the difference between life and death. Update your skills every two to three years.



## Medical emergencies

Injuries and sudden illnesses can occur anywhere at any time. In such situations it may be difficult to stay calm and to provide a victim with the correct help. Nevertheless it is essential that you call 112 to activate emergency medical services.

## GIVE EMERGENCY FIRST AID

The purpose of emergency first aid is to keep the victim's airways open and to maintain breathing and blood circulation.

1. Make a quick assessment of the situation, ensure your own safety and call 112.
2. Open the victim's airways by lifting their chin and by tilting their head back.
3. Check whether an unconscious and responseless victim is breathing. Feel for the flow of air on your hand, ear or cheek.
4. If the victim is not breathing, start cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
5. If the victim is unconscious but breathing, place them on their side in the recovery position and keep them warm.
6. Stop any bleeding by pressing down on the wound with your hands. Raise the injured limb and make sure the victim is lying down.
7. If the victim has suspected spinal injuries keep their head still.

### In an emergency

- Stop and think.
- Call 112.
- Make sure you are safe and prevent any further injuries.
- Give emergency first aid.
- Direct the emergency services to the scene.

### RAPID RESPONSE IS CRITICAL



Call 112



Start cardiopulmonary resuscitation immediately



Defibrillation (stopping arrhythmia using electric shocks) must be started without delay



Advanced emergency medical care

## SUDDEN ILLNESSES

### HEART ATTACK (CARDIAC CHEST PAIN)

If you suspect that someone is having a heart attack, call 112 immediately.

A heart attack often begins with vague symptoms when the heart is deprived of oxygen. This occurs when blood flow to the heart stops or decreases substantially. A coronary disease is the most common cause of sudden death resulting from a heart attack.

The victim's chances of survival depend on how quickly the emergency medical services arrive on the scene. The ambulance crew will check the victim and start medical care on the spot even before the victim is taken to hospital for further treatment.

### Symptoms

- Chest pain over a wide area lasting for more than five minutes
- Pressure, tightness or squeezing pain around the chest
- Pain radiating to the arm, neck or shoulders
- Pale, cool, sweaty skin
- Shortness of breath, anxiousness
- Inexplicable pain in upper abdominal region, nausea and weakness (particularly among women and those suffering from diabetes)

### Required action

- Keep the victim calm.
- Place the victim in a half-seated position or (if the victim is short of breath) in a seated position leaning forwards.

### For more information, go to:

[www.sydanliitto.fi](http://www.sydanliitto.fi), [www.terveysportti.fi](http://www.terveysportti.fi),  
[www.emergencyfirstresponce.com](http://www.emergencyfirstresponce.com),  
[www.medicfirstaid.com](http://www.medicfirstaid.com), [www.ecr.edu](http://www.ecr.edu),



## CARDIAC ARREST

**When the heart stops beating, survival is a matter of seconds.**

During cardiac arrest, the heart stops. By giving cardiopulmonary resuscitation, a non-professional can provide blood circulation until the arrival of the emergency services. The victim's chances of survival depend on how quickly resuscitation is started.

### Symptoms

- The victim does not react when touched or spoken to.
- The victim is lethargic and does not move.
- The victim is not breathing or has gasping breaths (agonal respiration\*).

### Required action

- Call 112 immediately.
- Open the victim's airway and check breathing and air movement.
- Start resuscitation by giving chest compressions.
- Start cardiopulmonary resuscitation, if you know how to do it (30 chest compressions, followed by two rescue breaths).
- If the victim vomits, place them in the recovery position for a moment. Remove any large obstructions from the victim's throat with your fingers. You may only interrupt resuscitation for a maximum of 30 seconds.
- If you are unable to clear the victim's airway of vomit, continue with chest compressions until the arrival of the emergency services.
- Stop resuscitation only when the emergency services staff allow you to do so.

## STROKE

A stroke is caused by a blockage or rupture of blood vessels in the brain. A sudden stroke requires urgent emergency hospital treatment. Only emergency services staff can make an assessment of the seriousness of the situation and the treatment required.

Call 112 immediately, even if the symptoms, such as paralysis of the hand or leg, were only temporary.

### Symptoms

- Difficulty with speech, slurred speech
- Difficulty in swallowing
- Drooping lower lip
- Sudden weakness or numbness in the arm or leg
- Vision problems, double vision

### Required action

- **Call 112 immediately.**
- Open the victim's airway and place them in the recovery position.

**For more information, go to:**  
[www.stroke.fi](http://www.stroke.fi)

### How to give cardiopulmonary resuscitation

Give 30 chest compressions followed by 2 rescue breaths. If the rescue breaths do not make the victim's chest rise, DO NOT continue rescue breathing. The most important thing is to maintain the victim's blood circulation by giving chest compressions. Long pauses in chest compressions may result in brain damage.

\*Agonal or gasping respiration resembles breathing but there is no flow of air. Agonal respiration occurs in as many as 40% of all cardiac arrest patients.



## INJURIES

Most of the injuries occurring at home and during leisure time could be easily prevented by taking small precautions, by eliminating the risk factors and by changing daily routines.

The home should be a safe place for people of all ages. By going from room to room on all fours, you will notice the dangers attracting the attention of your children. For safety tips for families with small children, go to page 23.

Falls, tripping and slipping are the most common injuries in the elderly. For safety tips, go to page 25.

## EMERGENCIES INVOLVING MENTAL PROBLEMS

Professional help and special care is needed for a person suffering from mental problems. They may have lost their sense of reality and behave in a self-destructive manner or are unable to care for themselves becoming a danger to themselves and people around them. In such cases, call 112.

## BURN INJURIES

Burn injuries are classified by their cause: chemical, heat, electrical and airway burn injuries.

Burns damage the skin and the tissue beneath it. Inhaling hot gases can cause life-threatening swelling in the throat and, consequently, airway obstruction. You should seek treatment immediately if the area affected is larger than your hand.

### Call 112 to get help

- If the burns cover a large area, or if the victim has inhaled hot gases or has electrical burns.
- If the victim has large and deep burns on their face, hands, legs, groin, back or around major joints.

### First aid for severe burns

- Call 112.
- Keep the victim's airway open.
- Cool the burn area with cool water for 10 minutes.
- If the emergency services have not arrived within 10 minutes, cover the victim to prevent temperature loss.
- Place a victim with facial/airway burns in a half-seated position.

### First aid for chemical burns

- Ensure your own safety and call 112.
- Remove the victim from the place where they were exposed to the hazardous chemicals.
- Ask the victim to take off contaminated clothing. Otherwise the chemical vapours may also put others at risk. If the victim is conscious and able to walk, take them to a shower so that they can wash themselves.
- Flush liquid chemicals from the surface of the skin with running water for at least 20 minutes.
- Remove powdery chemicals from the skin by brushing them off before rinsing with water.

## POISONINGS

The most common causes of poisonings at home are alcohol, medicine, and toxic plants, chemicals and mushrooms.

If the victim does not show any visible symptoms of poisoning and you need further instructions, call the 24-hour service provided of the Poison Information Centre, on (09) 471 977 or (09) 4711, and follow the instructions.

### Medicine overdoses

Call 112 immediately if you suspect that somebody's life is at risk because of a medicine overdose.

### Required action

- If the victim is conscious, give them charcoal tablets, if any are available.
- If the victim is unconscious but breathing normally, place them in the recovery position.
- Gather all medicine and medicine packages you find for the emergency medical services.
- Do not let the victim drink any alcohol.

### Swallowing toxic plants or mushrooms

Before giving first aid, try to find out which plant or mushroom has caused the poisoning.

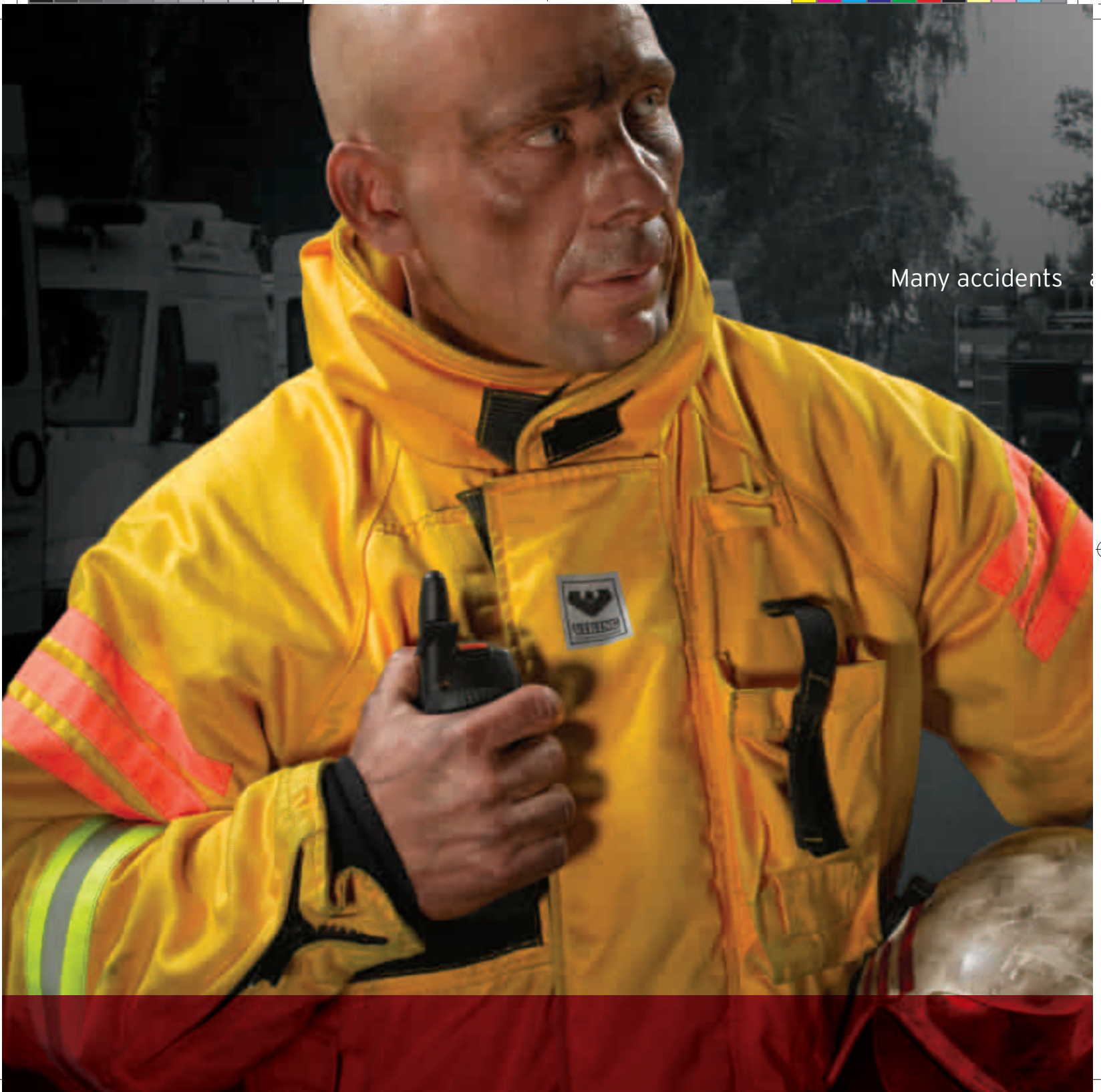
### Required action

- Check whether the victim has any pieces of plant or mushroom in their mouth.
- Give the victim vegetable carbon according to the instructions on the package.
- Call 112, or the Poison Information Centre on (09) 471 977 or (09) 4711.

## YOUR FIRST AID KIT SHOULD CONTAIN THE FOLLOWING


- Strong, waterproof bag or box
- Emergency first aid instructions
- Non-latex protective gloves
- Ventilation barrier
- Survival blanket (so-called space blanket)
- Two first aid bandages
- Two elastic bandages
- Two triangular bandages
- Plaster
- Adhesive tape
- Cold pack
- Tick tweezers
- Wound wipes or disinfectant
- Painkillers
- Snakebite kit
- Vegetable carbon (for poisonings)
- Drugs for lowering fever (suppositories or liquid for fever seizures)
- Pair of scissors

Remember that in areas outside population centres it may take more than an hour for the help to arrive.



Many accidents





are preventable.

## Accidents

Accidents are almost always caused by human factors. Tiredness, being under pressure, stress, anger and personal problems affect our concentration at work, at home and in traffic.

If you come across an accident, stop and help the casualties. Call 112 and guide the emergency services to the scene. Make sure you master the emergency first aid skills so that you know how to help a badly injured victim.



## TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS

### **Traffic accidents are not caused by bad weather**

Most traffic accidents are caused by careless driving and excessive speeds. A large number of road accidents could be prevented if motorists showed more consideration and remembered to keep a safe distance from the vehicle in front.

Wearing seat belts substantially decreases the risk of injury. Did you know that the kinetic force released in a crash can make an adult weigh as much as an elephant? Occupants not wearing seat belts who are thrown against obstacles inside the vehicle are not only at risk themselves but can also endanger the lives of other passengers.

#### **You should**

- Observe traffic regulations and teach them to your children.
- Be an example to others.
- Wear a safety helmet when cycling and roller skating.
- Keep a reflective vest in your car.
- Not drive when you are angry or have stayed awake all night.
- EVERYONE CAN HELP!

#### **Required action**

- Pull over.
- Check the situation before calling 112.
- Ensure your own safety and prevent any further accidents. Switch on your hazard lights and put on a reflective vest before stepping out of your car. Ask other motorists arriving at the scene to direct traffic. Place a warning triangle sufficiently far away from the accident site.
- If a vehicle carrying hazardous materials is on fire, involved in a collision or has driven off the road, do not approach the vehicle before authorized by the emergency response centre to do so. If necessary, ask for further instructions from the emergency response centre before approaching the accident site.\*
- Check the number of injured and their condition.
- Move any victims from the road or out of the damaged vehicle if they are in danger of being hit by passing vehicles or in danger of being killed by smoke and flames inside a burning car.
- Open the airway of an unconscious victim by tilting their head back and lifting their chin.
- If the vehicle was travelling at a high speed, or if any of the occupants have been thrown out of a moving vehicle, they have probably received spinal injuries. Support the victim's head by hand and ask them to keep still.
- Keep the victim warm and dry.



## ACCIDENTS IN WATER

### Use your common sense when you are in or near water

Drowning and other fatal accidents occur in water in Finnish waters every summer. Many of the deaths could be easily prevented by avoiding alcohol, and with the appropriate swimming, life-saving and basic navigational skills.

### Take the right precautions

Before setting off, check the condition of your boat and its equipment. Also check the latest weather forecasts so that you are not caught by strong winds or a thunderstorm.

Under Finnish law, all sailing boats longer than five metres and all motorboats must have life jackets for all those on board, oars or a paddle, an anchor, an anchor line and a device for emptying the boat of water. Boats with a gas cooker, an inboard engine, an outboard engine of more than 34 hp, flammable liquids, liquid gas or a battery must have an officially approved portable fire extinguisher. Up-to-date charts are also an important safety factor.

### Remember

- To wear life jackets when on board.
- To stay under the legal alcohol limits.
- To keep emergency telephone numbers on hand.

### What to do in a drowning accident

Use a life buoy, a rope, an oar or a boathook to rescue somebody in water. If in water, approach the victim from behind. Otherwise they may panic and drag you under the surface.

A person rescued from under water will usually vomit because they have taken in water. Water and vomit can block the victim's airway, and you must therefore clean their throat quickly and place them on their side before resuscitation. If the victim has only been under water for a few minutes, you may be able to revitalize their vital functions by giving cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

If help is unavailable or there is no telephone nearby, continue cardiopulmonary resuscitation for NO MORE THAN a minute before making the emergency call.

If you are unable to rescue a victim in water and the victim sinks under the surface, make sure you remember the spot. It is important that you can show the exact location to the emergency services.

For emergencies in sea areas and inland waterways, call 112. For emergencies in sea areas you can also contact the Maritime Rescue Centre at 0204 1000. The Maritime Rescue Centre is in charge of rescue operations in sea areas, while the responsibility for rescue operations in inland waterways lies with rescue authorities.

### For more information, go to:

[www.viisastivesilla.fi](http://www.viisastivesilla.fi), [www.raja.fi](http://www.raja.fi), [www.coastguard.fi](http://www.coastguard.fi)



## FALLING THROUGH ICE

### Never move on frozen waterways alone

Before heading out to a frozen waterway ask yourself whether it is really necessary and whether you can be certain that the ice will support you. If you do decide to set off, make sure you have the following equipment with you: a pair of awls, a long stick (for checking the thickness of the ice), a change of clothing, a mobile phone (kept in a water-tight package), a rescue rope and a survival blanket. Remember that the awls are useless if you keep them in your pocket!

Falling into icy water can be fatal. Water cools down your body temperature 25 times faster than air of the same temperature, which means that you will start feeling the effects of hypothermia within minutes.

### If you fall through ice

- Stay calm.
- Shout for help or blow a whistle.
- Drag yourself out of the water using the awls. If you see somebody else fall through ice, approach him or her from the direction where the ice is strong and crawl the last few metres.
- Put on dry clothes as soon as you are out of the water and try to get warm.
- Call 112.
- Give the person who has been rescued from the water some of your own clothes and try to prevent their body temperature from dropping any further.
- Stay still and keep your legs in an elevated position.

A person suffering from hypothermia may only be moved carefully and they must not be rubbed, resuscitated, given alcohol or taken to a warm shower or a sauna. A person who is conscious can be given something warm and sugary to drink.

## NATURAL DISASTERS

### Stay calm and use your head!

Storms, heavy rain and floods often result in several simultaneous rescue responses, which means that help will not reach all those in need at the same time. Rescue services will provide help when there are unsafe roof structures, or trees have fallen or are about to fall on buildings and roads, for example. Pipe and water damage caused by heavy rain also keep rescue services busy during extreme weather. Removing trees fallen on power lines is usually the responsibility of the power companies.

During natural disasters, you will get information and instructions through the main media.

### How to prepare for natural disasters

Stay calm and keep candles and battery-operated lamps on hand for prolonged power failures.

### Make sure that your boat is properly secured

Check that your boat is properly secured during strong winds and heavy rain. A loose boat may cause serious damage to other craft in the mooring area.

### Required action

- Try to prevent flood water from entering places where it can cause damage.
- Make sure that nobody is injured and that there are no people left in the danger zone.
- Call 112.
- Prevent other people from entering the danger zone (such as areas with falling trees or unsafe sheet metal roofs).



## POST-EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Those involved in accidents often require professional help so that they can continue their daily routines after the emergency. An emergency affects victims, helpers, witnesses and the victims' family members.

Post-emergency management helps to deal with the reactions and suffering caused by accidents, sudden deaths and near misses. It also helps to relieve anxiety and prevent stress symptoms.

### **In Finland, post-emergency management is provided by**

- Health centres and hospitals
- Crisis groups and crisis centres
- Occupational health service
- Social welfare offices
- Mental health clinics
- Family counselling clinics
- Parishes
- Family counselling centres
- Victim Support Finland

Municipal, social and crisis helplines can also be contacted through emergency response centres by calling 112.

### **The municipal helplines**

The municipal helplines provide assistance in problems concerning child protection, mental health, intoxicant abuse, income, matters concerning the elderly and the disabled, and in urgent crisis situations, even after normal office hours. You may remain anonymous and the helpline is there for anyone with a crisis. Close family members, neighbours, friends or officials may also call the helpline on behalf of someone else. The services are free of charge.

### **HEHU team**

The HEHU emergency team of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland assists the authorities by providing psychological help at accident sites.

### **Nationwide helplines**

Nationwide helpline of the Finnish Association for Mental Health 0203 44 55 66  
MON 9-22, TUE-FRI 9-06 and SUN 15-22

Crisis prevention for foreigners  
(09) 4135 0501 weekdays 9-15

Nationwide helpline of the  
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland  
01019-0071  
SUN-THURS 18-01 and FRI-SAT 18-03

Victim Support Finland  
0203 16116

[www.tukinet.fi](http://www.tukinet.fi) is an online crisis centre. It employs volunteers to provide you with personal support and you can also participate in discussion groups.

### **The Finnish Red Cross**

The FRC's emergency unit, part of Finland's voluntary rescue service and emergency response system, provides accident victims with psychological and material help during the first few days following the event. The FRC also maintains, organises and trains a group of psychologists for major accidents and emergencies.



About one hundred people are killed in fires in Finland every year. In relative terms, this figure is much higher than in other western European countries. Most of the fire deaths are caused by a combination of intoxication and carelessness.



Always be careful with fire.

## Fire safety at home

A fire in a residential building will become life-threatening within 2-3 minutes. Inhalation of the hot gases generated by burning items such as furniture, textiles and household appliances will lead to unconsciousness and death within minutes.

You must get out of a burning building quickly because hot gases obstruct visibility and can make you disorientated even if you are in familiar surroundings. The safest alternative is to crawl out because visibility is best near floor level.

## IS YOUR HOME SAFE ENOUGH?

Make sure that your home is safe. A fire safety check does not cost anything and will only take a few minutes.

If you live in a housing company with at least five apartments, you should study the emergency rescue plan drawn up by the housing company. Also check the website of your rescue department for the latest instructions on how to prevent fires and what to do if a fire breaks out.

- Make sure that your address sign is illuminated and visible from the road leading to your house.
- Locate the switch for turning off the mechanical ventilation in your house. If a fire breaks out in your house, you must turn off the ventilation to prevent the flames from spreading from room to room or, if there is a fire nearby, to prevent the hot gases from entering the house and causing damage.
- Make sure that the smoke alarms function properly, and are correctly located and correctly installed.
- Keep matches out of children's reach.
- Keep exits clear.
- Check the condition of the fire escape ladder providing emergency exit from the upper floors.
- Keep fire doors closed.
- Check the condition of the roof ladder, the catwalk and the wall ladder.
- Make sure that your heating oil tank is regularly inspected and maintained.
- Make sure that there are no cracks in the fireplaces or ducts and that they are regularly swept.
- Make sure that the sauna stove is on a steady platform and in accordance with all fire-safety requirements. Do not hang laundry above the stove.
- Do not keep any flammable objects on building walls, in the attic, in the basement or in the garage.
- Keep all electrical equipment and installations in good condition and in accordance with all requirements.
- Make sure that all flammable liquids, liquid gas and other hazardous materials are stored correctly.
- Do not keep containers containing liquid gas in the basement. The pressure adjustment valves and the gas hoses must be inspected each year, and the hoses replaced at least every five years.
- Ensure proper ventilation when using liquid gas indoors.
- Keep solvents, paints, detergents, disinfectants, insecticides, medicine and toxic plants out of children's reach.
- Make sure that your fire-extinguishing equipment is properly inspected and maintained.
- Make sure that everyone in your home knows how to use the fire-extinguishing equipment and can find their way out of the building in an emergency.

**For more information, go to:**  
[www.spek.fi](http://www.spek.fi)

## PRACTICAL INSTRUCTIONS

### **Smoke detectors provide protection at low cost**

All apartments and holiday homes in Finland must have smoke detectors. A properly functioning smoke detector is highly sensitive to smoke, and the loud sound it emits will alert residents and give them time to escape.

Like any other home appliance, a smoke detector must be properly maintained and, if defective or unreliable, should be replaced immediately.

- Check your smoke detector each month. The device is functioning properly if it beeps when you push the test button.
- Keep the smoke detector clear of dust, for example by gently vacuum-cleaning it.
- Unless batteries lasting for five or ten years are used, the smoke detector should have its batteries replaced each year.
- Choose a battery-replacement date that is easy to remember (for example, the national 112 day, on February 11).
- Make sure that you also have smoke detectors at your holiday home, in your caravan and in your boat, and check them on a regular basis.

### **Installing a smoke detector**

Make sure that you have at least one smoke detector on each floor. One device can cover a maximum of 60 m<sup>2</sup> and they should be installed in bedrooms and areas normally used for leaving the building. The parents' and children's bedrooms should both have a smoke detector. Installing a smoke alarm in a kitchen or too close to a shower or sauna may result in false alarms. Connecting the device to the mains can significantly improve safety.

### **Residential buildings with fireplaces should also have carbon monoxide detectors**

As ordinary smoke alarms are not sensitive to carbon monoxide, houses with fireplaces should be equipped with carbon monoxide detectors. A carbon monoxide detector should, like a smoke detector, be installed at the highest point of the ceiling.



### **Make sure that you have the proper fire-extinguishing equipment on hand**

Make sure that you have a fire blanket, an extinguisher and a water hose for dealing with different types of fire in your home.

Make sure that everyone in the house knows how to use a portable fire extinguisher. After all, it is a basic civic skill.

### **Do not attempt to extinguish burning fat with water!**

Even small amounts of water will cause a fire involving burning fat to spread like an explosion, and hot fat can cause serious burns. Extinguish burning fat by suppressing it with a saucepan lid or a fire blanket. You can also use other types of thick blanket or a carpet as long as they do not contain synthetic fibres. Remember to switch off the extractor fan above the stove.

### **Do not try to extinguish an electrical fire with water!**

Water conducts electricity. Therefore, the safest way to extinguish an electrical fire is to use a portable fire extinguisher. Before tackling the flames, unplug the burning equipment or turn it off using the main switch.

**For more information, go to:**  
[www.tukes.fi](http://www.tukes.fi)

### **Have an emergency rescue plan ready**

Make sure that everyone in the house knows the safest and quickest way out of the building if a fire breaks out.

Each person must be able to get out of their bedroom safely and quickly. Emergency exits must be large enough (windows that open or a balcony from which the firefighters can rescue the residents) and must not have any locking mechanisms blocking the escape. Make sure that you check the condition of the fire escape ladder on a regular basis.

A housing company with at least five apartments must have an emergency rescue plan.

### **Never escape into a smoke-filled space!**

In a block of flats, the structures separating apartments can withstand a fire for about an hour, and the doors for about 30 minutes. If you are about to leave a burning building, remember to close the door leading to the staircase after you so that your neighbours can also exit the building safely. Never try to escape using a smoke-filled staircase.

If the fire has not yet reached your flat you should stay there because it is the safest place in the building. Keep the door to your flat closed and, if necessary, seal it by using wet towels. Call 112 and explain that you are trapped inside your own flat.

### **Act quickly!**

1. First rescue those in immediate danger.
2. Warn other people in the building and ask them to leave.
3. Close all doors and windows before leaving the building.
4. Call 112 when you are in a safe place.
5. Put out the fire with first aid firefighting equipment without putting yourself at risk.
6. Confine the fire from spreading by closing doors, windows, air vents and by switching off the air-conditioning.
7. Direct the emergency services to the scene and let them know if there are any people left inside the burning building.

### **Fireplaces and sweeping**

The building owner or occupant is responsible for keeping the fireplaces in good condition and using them correctly. Make sure to have your fireplaces swept on a regular basis and burn only dry and clean wood in them. Burning litter can damage the fireplace and the ducts and increase the likelihood of a duct fire.

Under a decree issued by the Finnish Ministry of the Interior, the building owner or occupant must ensure that the necessary sweeping required by law is carried out.

Fireplaces and their ducts must be swept each year. Fireplaces and ducts in private holiday homes and their saunas must be swept every three years. If necessary, the furnaces and heating surfaces of central-heating boilers and warm-air generators must be swept more frequently.

**For more information, go to:**  
[www.nuohoojat.fi](http://www.nuohoojat.fi), [www.tukes.fi/en](http://www.tukes.fi/en)



### **Hazardous materials**

Solvent paints, fuels or gas cylinders must not be kept in housing company storage rooms.

### **Liquid petroleum gas (LPG)**

Liquid petroleum gas is highly flammable. Moreover, incomplete combustion of liquid gas will produce carbon monoxide, which is highly dangerous. Liquid gas must never be stored in a building basement, and if it is used indoors, proper ventilation must be ensured.

### **Fireworks and open light**

Check the websites of your municipality and rescue department for the latest permit requirements concerning fireworks and open light. Remember to observe the restrictions when a forest-fire warning is in force!

Burning litter is forbidden. Garden waste may, under certain conditions, be burned provided that it does not cause any smoke nuisance or a risk of fire. For further information on how to deal with garden waste, contact your municipality.

### **Candles**

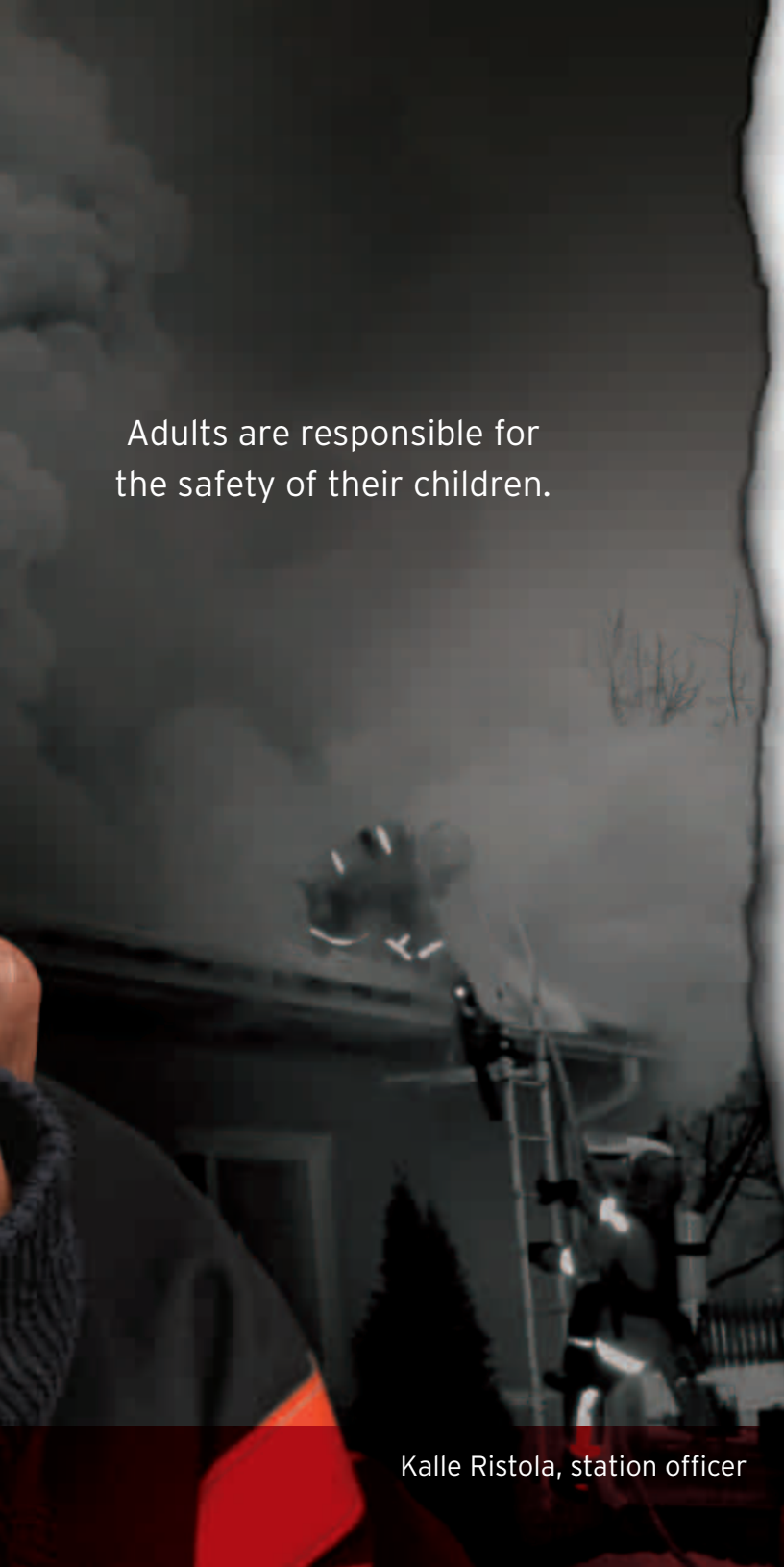
Candles must always be placed on a fireproof base sufficiently far away from curtains and other textile items. Never put candles too close to each other and never leave them unsupervised. Outdoor candles must never be burnt on balconies or placed on flammable surfaces such as wooden stairs.





Keep your home safe for your children. Going from room to room on all fours gives you an idea of the risks your children face and how they perceive their environment.





Adults are responsible for  
the safety of their children.

## Providing a safe home for children

Most of the deaths of children and young people in Finland are caused by accidents occurring at home. It is the parents' duty to ensure the safety of their children.

Kalle Ristola, station officer

23

## KEEP YOUR HOME SAFE

Equipping sockets with protective covers, keeping medicine, toxic substances and plants and sharp objects out of children's reach, purchasing safety gates, equipping windows and doors with safety locks and installing protective covers on the stove is enough to ensure the safety of a child under the age of three.

- Teach your children what to do in a fire. Make sure that they know a safe and quick way out. Teach them how to call 112 to get help.
- Make sure that your children know their home address by heart.
- Teach your children traffic safety rules.
- Be an example to your children. If you ignore the rules, so will your children.
- Teach your children to wear protective gear in their hobbies. A helmet, wrist guards, and elbow and knee pads can protect them against serious injuries when roller skating, skateboarding, freestyle biking and other activities.
- Keep your children safe when they are playing on a tram-poline.
- Teach your children to wear cycle helmets. It protects them against death and serious brain injuries.
- Make sure that your children can be seen in the dark. Reflectors provide effective protection for people of all ages.
- Keep home appliances, hot saucepans, toxic detergents and sharp objects out of children's reach.
- Keep matches away from your children and tell them why it is dangerous to play with fire.
- Teach your children to call 112 to get help if they or their friends are injured, in danger of drowning, suffocation or trapped because of fire.
- Warn your children about the dangers of traffic, building sites, forests, shores, streets and other unsupervised places in the area. Have clear rules on what your children may or may not do when playing outdoors.

## Never leave children unsupervised when they are near water

Children with inadequate swimming skills must NEVER be allowed to go into water of any depth without their parents' supervision. Drowning accidents at Finnish beaches have shown that it is not possible to rescue a child who is more than a few metres away. Parents are always responsible for the safety of their children playing at the beach.

## Always wear a life jacket

Teach your children to wear life jackets when on board a boat and make sure that they are familiar with all safety instructions. You can already teach a child of school age how to rescue someone using a rope, a life buoy, an oar or a boat-hook. For more information, go to: [www.viisaastivesilla.fi](http://www.viisaastivesilla.fi)

## TEACH YOUR CHILDREN HOW TO CALL FOR HELP

### When calling for help you must:

1. Give your name and exact address
2. Explain what has happened: fire, sudden illness or other accident
3. Answer any questions
4. Hang up only when you are given permission to do so

**The most important thing is to remember the emergency number 112!**

Knowing how to give  
emergency first aid may  
save the life of your child.

# Safety tips for the elderly

Up to 80% of all accidents occurring to the elderly are caused by falling. A fall can be fatal for an elderly person. Many of the accidents occurring to the elderly could be avoided by improving home safety, and by making daily routines and moving easier, particularly in the kitchen and the bathroom.

## YOU CAN PREVENT FALLS BY

- Turning on the lights if you need to go to the toilet at night.
- Getting out of bed slowly to avoid dizziness.
- Wearing anti-slip socks.
- Paying attention to loose carpets and carpet edges.
- Placing anti-slip sheets on bathroom and shower floors and by using anti-slip underlays.
- Equipping the toilet seat with arm rests and the bathtub with a seat, and by attaching handrails to bathroom walls.
- Making daily items more easily accessible by moving them to lower cupboard shelves and by purchasing a sturdy kitchen ladder.
- Wearing appropriate footwear (such as shoes equipped with anti-skid pads) when walking on slippery and icy surfaces.
- Not rushing on the stairs, to the phone or to the door.
- Changing the smoke alarm battery each year unless you have batteries lasting for five or ten years.
- Purchasing a smoke alarm with a wall-mounted battery casing: this makes replacing the battery easier.
- Connecting the smoke alarm to the mains.

**For more information, go to:**  
[www.kotitaturma.fi](http://www.kotitaturma.fi)

## CALL HELP AS SOON AS POSSIBLE - CALLING 112 IS ALWAYS THE RIGHT CHOICE

If you suffer from cardiac chest pain and feel weak and unwell, call 112 immediately and do not wait for the symptoms to disappear. If necessary, ask your neighbours for help or shout for help.

KEEP THE LINE FREE after calling 112. The emergency services may call you back and ask for further information about your condition.

### Remember!

- Make sure that your address sign is clearly visible and illuminated.
- Keep the emergency number 112 and your home address to hand.
- Do not use any safety locks that cannot be opened by property maintenance workers. These will only delay the arrival of the emergency services.
- Keep the drug lists, your latest medical records and electrocardiogram to hand for the emergency medical services.

Ageing makes you wiser  
- and more vulnerable to injuries

# Disruptions affecting your daily life

## Be careful with fire

Never leave an open fire or even a small candle unsupervised for a second. Make sure that the smoke alarms in your house function properly. After all, they are cheap and effective and could save your life in a fire. For more information on home fire safety and the correct use of smoke detectors, go to page 17.

## How to prevent fires in your home

- Keep cooktops clear. Food leftovers, paper towels and plastic bowls can easily start a fire.
- Do not leave dishwashers or washing machines unsupervised.
- Replace old and defective household appliances.
- Do not keep plants, tablecloths or any other fire-risk items on top of television sets. Watering the flowers may lead to a short circuit, which in turn may lead to the TV set catching on fire. A tablecloth can block the ventilation openings of the TV set causing it to overheat.
- Equip your household appliances with timers so that they switch off automatically.
- Do not dry clothes on electric radiators or on a sauna stove.
- Make sure that all the electrical appliances and wiring in your home are in proper condition.
- Do not use bedside lamps equipped with snap fittings. A hot lamp may easily start a fire if it falls on the bed.

### For more information, go to:

[www.spek.fi](http://www.spek.fi), [www.redcross.fi](http://www.redcross.fi), [www.redcross.fi/en\\_GB/](http://www.redcross.fi/en_GB/)

The following practical information will help you to cope with sudden disruptions in water and power supplies.

## What to do when the water supply is cut off

Always have a few bottles of drinking water and refillable water containers on hand. When the water supply is cut off, turn off the taps, fetch water from a water distribution point, fill the containers and ration the water. Check the washing machine, turn off its tap, if necessary, and stop the wash program.

## What to do during a power failure

Always have a flash light, a battery-operated radio, back-up batteries, candles and matches on hand.

Make sure that no one is trapped in the lift and that the electric sauna stove is turned off. Switch off all household appliances, turn the kitchen stove knob to the 0-position and cover the freezer with blankets. Open it only when necessary.

## What do to if the heating is cut off

The best way to prepare for a disruption in heating supplies is to provide everyone in the house with warm woolly socks and jumpers. Switch off all ventilation machines and close all doors, windows and airvents. Protect all places susceptible to damage, such as pipes and restrict the use of warm water.



### How to prevent water damage

- Check the connecting hoses and taps of your washing machines on a regular basis.
- Determine the location of the main shut-off valve so that you know where to cut the water supply.
- Keep floor drains clean and clear.
- Do not leave washing machines or dishwashers unsupervised and ALWAYS turn off the taps after use.

### If water damage occurs

- Try to limit the extent of the damage and block the leakage.
- Close the doors leading to other parts of the building.
- If necessary, turn off the main power switch.

### ALWAYS HAVE EMERGENCY FOOD SUPPLIES READY!

Make sure to have a sufficient supply of food and other basic items on hand for emergencies. These should include medicine, sanitary products, diapers, a battery-operated radio, a flashlight, batteries, candles and matches. The supply should cover the needs of the entire family for up to a week.

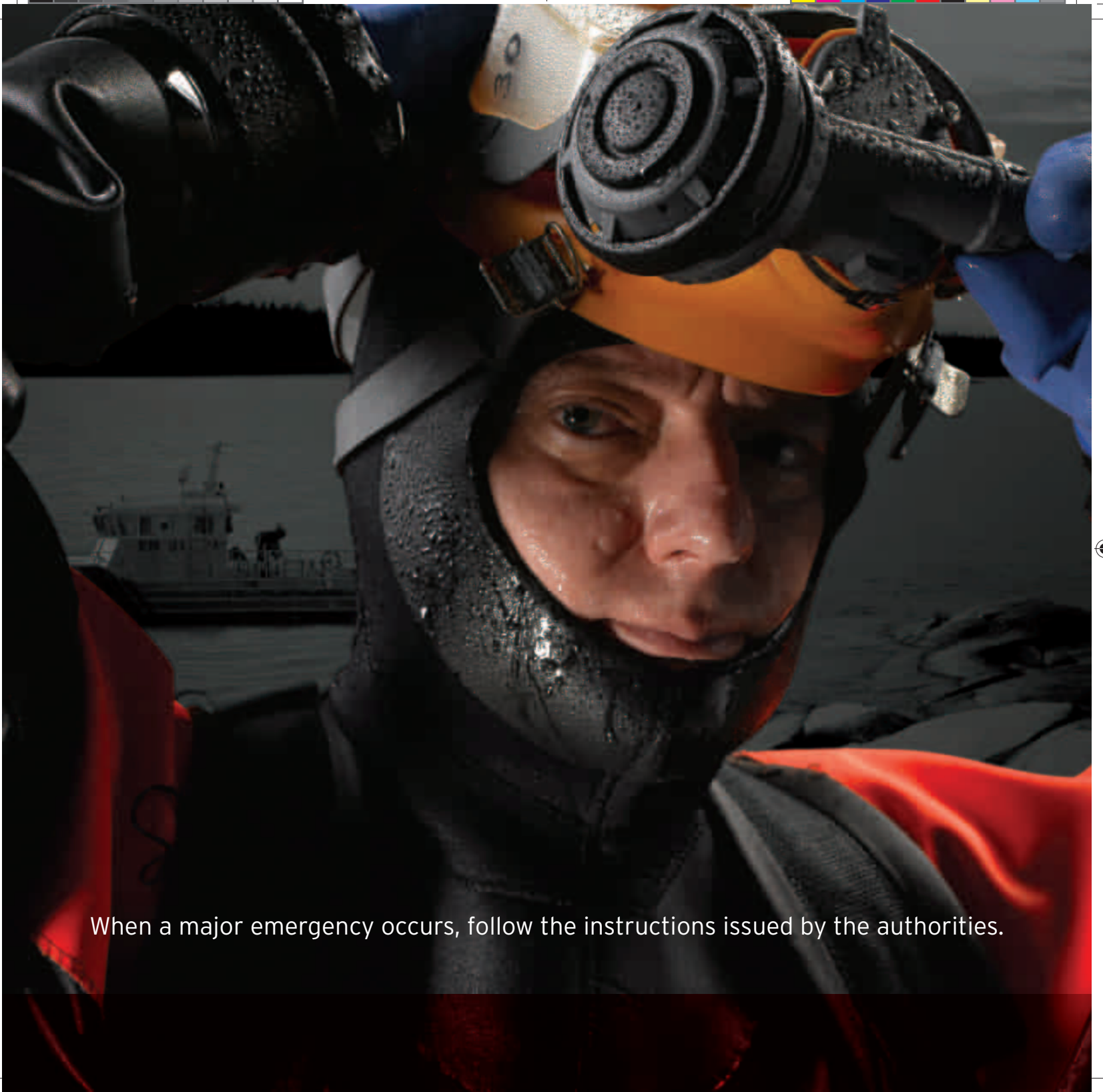
### One week's emergency supply for one person

- 0.5 kg of potatoes
- 0.5 kg of rice and pasta
- 0.5 kg of sugar
- 16 l beverages & water and 1 kg of treats
- 1.5 kg of bread and other grain products
- 1.3 kg of milk and milk products
- 1 kg of fruits and berries
- 1.5 kg of vegetables
- 1 kg of meat, fish, chicken and eggs
- drinking water

Remember to use and replenish the supply continuously and remember the special needs of the children, the elderly and those with ailments!

You cannot always  
avoid disruptions  
- however, you can  
always prepare for them.

**For more information, go to:**  
[www.spek.fi](http://www.spek.fi), [www.pelastustoimi.fi](http://www.pelastustoimi.fi)



When a major emergency occurs, follow the instructions issued by the authorities.



Firefighter Esko Haapa-Aho wearing diving equipment

## Major emergencies

When a large scale accident or a radiation leak occurs, stay calm and follow the instructions issued by the authorities on TV and the radio. Listen to the radio and be prepared.



### General alarm signal

The general alarm signal warns the public of immediate danger. It is a regularly rising and falling sound lasting for one minute, or a warning issued by the authorities through loudspeakers. The rising and falling sounds last for seven seconds each.



'All clear' is given with a single continuous sound lasting for one minute. It signals that the threat or danger has passed.



An acoustic signal lasting about seven seconds means that the alarm is being tested and no protective measures are required.

### Action required when a general alarm is sounded

- Go indoors and stay there.
- Close all doors, windows, airvents, and turn off all ventilation equipment.
- Seal all through holes with materials such as plastic film and adhesive tape to prevent radioactive gases and particles from penetrating into the building.
- Stay calm, listen to the radio and wait for further instructions.
- Do not use the telephone. The lines may become congested.
- Do not leave the area unless ordered by the authorities to do so.

The instructions are also available on page 868 of the Finnish Broadcasting Company's teletext service and on the first pages of your telephone directory.

## MAJOR EMERGENCIES

### Major accident

A major accident is an incident where there are numerous dead or injured persons. The resulting damage to the environment and property, or the nature of the event, is considered extremely serious.

Major accidents are caused by traffic accidents, fires, explosions, accidents at nuclear power plants, armed conflicts, radiation and chemical accidents caused by hazardous materials, natural disasters, infectious diseases or outbreaks of waterborne diseases.

A major accident may put human lives at risk and it can also cause immediate environmental damage. Sometimes the extent of the environmental damage may only emerge later.

If an emergency occurs, a decree may be issued under the Emergency Powers Act, authorising the Finnish government to use special powers.

### Radiation accidents

A serious accident in a nuclear power plant in Finland or in a neighbouring country may cause the radiation to reach dangerous levels. Staying indoors, taking the necessary precautions and taking iodine tablets are sufficient measures for those living more than 20 km from the accident site.

A general alarm signal will warn the public after which instructions on how the general public can protect themselves will be issued on television, the radio and via other media (page 31).

Always have iodine tablets in your medicine cabinet. They prevent the radioactive iodine released into the air in a radiation accident from accumulating in your thyroid gland. Take iodine tablets only when ordered by the authorities to do so.

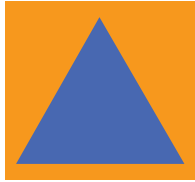
**For more information, go to:** [www.stuk.fi](http://www.stuk.fi)

### Protection in dangerous situations

The first thing to do is to stay indoors, take the necessary precautions and listen to the radio for further instructions. In most cases, protective measures are only required for a few hours or maximum of one day.

Staying indoors, taking the necessary precautions and following the instructions issued by the authorities is usually enough.

## CIVIL DEFENCE



### General civil defence

It is the duty of the authorities to ensure the vital functions of society. The purpose of civil defence is to protect human lives and property, to prepare for emergencies and to ensure that emergency services can carry out their tasks.

### Precautions

Building owners and occupants, government agencies, companies and corporations must have their own emergency rescue plans. The plans must detail how to prevent an emergency and what to do in an emergency.

### Emergency shelters

A ready-to-use emergency shelter is a building or space that is intended for providing the public with protection against the threat of a gas or a toxic leak, armed attack, nuclear fallout or some other similar type of danger. The owner of the shelter is responsible for maintaining it and making it ready for use within 24 hours.

A housing company may have an emergency shelter of its own or it can share a shelter with other housing companies. A public shelter is intended for local residents and other people in the area at the time of the emergency. There are usually no emergency shelters in rural areas or in areas with mainly detached housing. In such areas, residents must take the necessary precautions themselves.

### Items you should have with you in an emergency shelter

- Personal hygiene products
- Comfortable clothing, a sleeping pad, a blanket or a sleeping bag and a pillow
- Two days' supply of food and drinking water
- Cutlery and a can opener
- Books, magazines, games and toys
- A flashlight, batteries, paper towels and plastic bags
- Your medicine!

### Evacuation

Evacuation means the moving of the population, in total or in part, from an area under threat, the reception and settlement of the population in a safe area and the securing of the living conditions of the population and the vital functions of society during the evacuation. An evacuation is carried out under the direction of authorities.

Stay indoors and take the necessary precautions. Go to the emergency shelter only when ordered to do so by the authorities!

Listen to the radio!



## OIL DAMAGE AND CHEMICAL ACCIDENTS

### Old oil tanks can be dangerous

All oil tanks, both those above and below ground, must be repaired every 5-10 years. After all, the tanks and the environmental damage they cause are always the responsibility of the property owner.

Even small leaks can be serious. After all, oil can spread through soil and particularly in cuttings made for subsurface drains, cables, water pipes and sewers. By permeating through plastic water pipes it can also pollute drinking water.

Leaked oil should be absorbed using peat, sawdust or oil absorption pads. If an oil leak occurs, notify the emergency services immediately by calling 112.

### Factors increasing the oil leak risk

- Level indicator is defective or lacking altogether
- The tank is of square shape (common in the 1960s and 1970s)
- Small air pipes  
(in tanks with a capacity of less than 5,000 litres)
- The air pipe has a whistle as fill alarm
- The air pipe is defective or blocked
- Acidic soil
- Last inspection date not known

### If you detect oil in the environment act as follows

- Warn people in the area.
- Prevent the oil from spreading to the sewers and waterways.
- Call 112.
- Prevent sparks and make sure there is no open fire in the area.
- Direct the emergency services to the scene.

### For more information, go to:

[www.oil.fi](http://www.oil.fi), [www.oil-gas.fi](http://www.oil-gas.fi), [www.oljylammitys.fi](http://www.oljylammitys.fi), [www.oil-gas.fi/eng](http://www.oil-gas.fi/eng)

### Chemicals and other hazardous materials

A general alarm signal warns the public if there has been an accident involving chemicals and other hazardous materials such as chlorine, ammonia and sulphur dioxide. When you hear the signal, stay indoors, take the necessary precautions and follow the instructions issued on the radio.

### Required action

- If you are indoors, stay on the highest floors.  
If necessary, protect your breathing with a damp cloth.  
Listen to the radio for further instructions.
- If you are outdoors, move crosswind under the chemical cloud to a location above the accident site (such as on top of a hill). If necessary, protect your breathing.

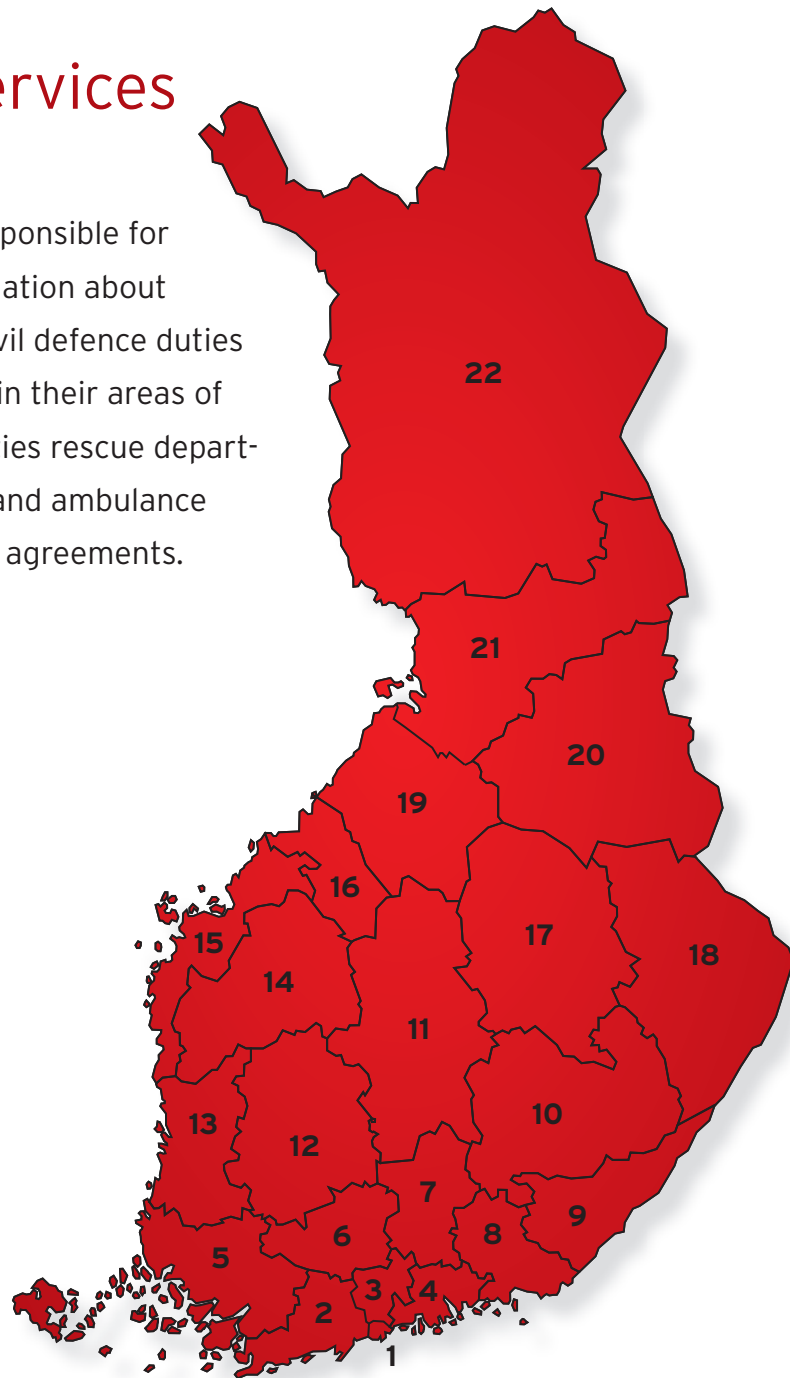
# Regional rescue services


PREVENTIVE, RESPONSIVE, ATTENTIVE

Regional rescue departments are responsible for supplying rescue services and information about preventing fires and accidents, for civil defence duties and for carrying out fire inspections in their areas of operation. In a number of municipalities rescue departments also provide emergency care and ambulance services in accordance with separate agreements.

## Finland's rescue service regions:

1. Helsinki
2. Länsi-Uusimaa
3. Keski-Uusimaa
4. Itä-Uusimaa
5. Varsinais-Suomi
6. Kanta-Häme
7. Päijät-Häme
8. Kymenlaakso
9. South Karelia
10. Etelä-Savo
11. Central Finland
12. Pirkanmaa
13. Satakunta
14. South Ostrobothnia
15. Ostrobothnia
16. Central Ostrobothnia
17. Pohjois-Savo
18. North Karelia
19. Jokilaaksot
20. Kainuu
21. Oulu-Koillismaa
22. Lapland





**Vision for Finland's rescue services**

In 2015 Finland will have an excellent safety culture and the most efficient rescue services in Europe.

The aim is that in 2015 all Finns will be sharing responsibility for everyday safety and that everybody will be able to prevent accidents at home, at work and during leisure time. Both individuals and corporations will be in a position to prevent accidents and know how to act in dangerous situations.

The vision will only become reality if rescue services can rely on competent and motivated staff and a strong network of partnerships that can successfully deal with threats to safety and to provide citizens with the economic and high-quality services they need.



Nina Sandell, fire inspector

### Regional rescue departments

Finland is divided into 22 rescue service regions in each of which the municipalities jointly maintain a rescue department. Until 2004, the year the system was introduced, each municipality was responsible for its own rescue services. However, it is still the duty of individual municipalities to guarantee an adequate supply of water for fighting fires and emergency shelters in their areas and build and operate their own emergency control centres.

The autonomous province of Åland has its own rescue services legislation.

### In their own areas, regional rescue departments are responsible for

- maintaining a system for providing the required rescue services
- providing information, advice and expertise in matters pertaining to rescue services
- accident prevention and damage limitation falling under the purview of rescue authorities
- rescue departments are also responsible for regional fire inspections **for more information about the intervals for fire inspections, contact your rescue department.**
- carrying out the required civil-defence duties and maintaining the required preparedness levels
- coordinating the activities of different authorities and other parties involved in rescue operations
- providing rescue-service personnel with training

Providing the local population with information and training in matters pertaining to accident prevention are the responsibility of all rescue service staff.

In addition to ordinary fire engines and ambulances, rescue departments also have boats and other special equipment, such as mobile control units, tankers, aerial platforms, rescue vehicles and equipment for dealing with accidents caused by hazardous substances.



## EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE

### **Emergency medical care is part of health care**

The prime aim of emergency medical care is to reach a casualty suffering from acute illness or injuries as quickly as possible, provide them with urgent care by restoring, stabilizing and securing their vital functions on the scene of the accident and to transport them to a care institution as soon as their condition permits. The casualty's condition is monitored and the required treatment administered throughout the transportation.

Patient guidance and referral to treatment is always in accordance with the instructions issued by the doctor with overall responsibility for emergency medical services. The examination and treatment on the scene of the accident and the instructions concerning home care and monitoring given to the patient are often the only measures required. Not all patients need to be transported to a hospital or a clinic, as in less urgent cases they are often able to seek further treatment themselves, at, for example, health care centres.

All staff treating the patients have the required emergency-care qualifications and their skills are kept up-to-date with supplementary training. Different methods are regularly used for ensuring that the staff know how to use their skills.

The emergency care staff can rely on a broad range of equipment when examining and treating casualties. If necessary, the doctor with overall responsibility for emergency medical services can give instructions for treating the patient over the phone. The patient's electrocardiogram can also be sent to a doctor for assessment.

## EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE SYSTEM

### **First response vehicle**

A first response vehicle is a fire engine manned by a crew with first response skills and the equipment for examining and treating the casualties. Its main purpose is to act as the

quickest source of help in emergencies but a first response vehicle may also be called to assist ambulances. A first response vehicle is not used for carrying patients.

### **Basic life support ambulance (BLS)**

A basic life support ambulance is a vehicle that can transport casualties for further treatment. It has the equipment for examining and treating casualties and a crew that are able to provide them with the necessary treatment. If necessary, the staff can administer life-saving treatment to the casualty in accordance with the instructions given by the doctor with overall responsibility for emergency medical services.

Advanced life support ambulance (ALS) The crew of an ALS are able to provide the emergency patient with intensive care and carry out the transport so that the patient's vital functions can be secured. The patient is treated. The treatment is in accordance with the instructions given by the doctor with overall responsibility for emergency medical care.

### **Medical command vehicle**

A medical command vehicle carries the supervisor and is not used for transporting casualties. The equipment on board enables the supervisor to provide the casualty with intensive care. The supervisor is responsible for coordinating emergency medical care and for ensuring that it is carried out in a proper manner. If necessary, the supervisor can also assume overall responsibility for medical rescue operations.

### **Physician-staffed intensive care unit**

Physicians in an intensive care unit are responsible for coordinating and supervising regional emergency medical care and for providing the casualties requiring urgent treatment with the necessary emergency medical care. The casualty is transported to a care institution in an ambulance or a helicopter and the physician will look after them during the transport.

# To the rescue!

## A FULLY-EQUIPPED FIREFIGHTER

A helmet with an ear-phone microphone for radio communications.

Firefighter jacket and overalls protect the firefighter against heat and flames.

A firefighter uses a thermal imaging camera to search for people and burning objects in dark and smoke-filled spaces.

Breathing apparatus for fresh air

A firefighter uses a fire hose equipped with a nozzle to cool and extinguish the fire.

© Tuomas PÄLVÄ

## FIREFIGHTER OR PARAMEDIC

In addition to extinguishing fires, firefighters also carry out ambulance work.

A defibrillator is used for monitoring heart rhythm and for re-establishing normal heart rhythm. It can also be used to take an electrocardiogram, and the results can be sent to a doctor for examination.

A respiratory aid kit contains emergency medical care equipment used for treating casualties with respiratory ailments.

An emergency care kit contains equipment such as a stethoscope, a blood-pressure monitor, devices for measuring blood oxygen and sugar levels, emergency medicine, infusion liquids and bandages.

© Tuomas PÄLVÄ

**Are you interested in becoming a rescue services professional?**

For more information, go to: [www.pelastusopisto.fi](http://www.pelastusopisto.fi)

# Your safety is paramount to us!

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE CENTRE ADMINISTRATION - 112

The regional emergency response centres coming under the Emergency Response Centre Administration receive emergency calls requiring action by the rescue services, the police and the providers of social and health care and other calls involving human and environmental safety and the safety of property and forward them to their partners and the authorities responsible for providing help. All emergency calls in the area of an emergency response centre are directed to the emergency number 112, regardless of whether the caller needs the help of the rescue services, the police, or providers of social and health care.

**For more information, go to:** [www.112.fi](http://www.112.fi)

## POLICE

There is close cooperation between rescue departments and the police in situations involving accidents and other daily emergencies. The police are responsible for directing traffic at the accident site and for on-site investigation of accidents and fires. The police also assist the emergency services in cordoning off the accident site and in the evacuation of people from the area and, if necessary, help to secure the work of the emergency services.

**For more information, go to:** [www.poliisi.fi](http://www.poliisi.fi)

## DEPARTMENT FOR RESCUE SERVICES AT THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR

The Department for Rescue Services at the Ministry of the Interior directs, develops and supervises Finland's rescue services, and sees to it that they meet all requirements and are available in all parts of Finland. It is also responsible for nationwide preparations and organisation of rescue services and coordinating the efforts of different ministries in the sector.

**For more information, go to:** [www.pelastustoimi.fi](http://www.pelastustoimi.fi)

## THE FINNISH BORDER GUARD

The main task of the Finnish Border Guard is to guard Finland's land and maritime borders and carry out passport control at border crossing points, ports and airports. The Border Guard is also responsible for coordinating maritime rescue services and carrying out searches and patient transportation in its area of operations. Maritime rescue operations normally involve the rescue units of the Border Guard and, if necessary, other authorities and bodies.

**For more information, go to:**  
[www.rajavartiolaitos.fi](http://www.rajavartiolaitos.fi), [www.raja.fi](http://www.raja.fi)

## THE FINNISH NATIONAL RESCUE ASSOCIATION (SPEK) AND REGIONAL RESCUE ASSOCIATIONS

SPEK acts as the umbrella organisation for Finland's regional rescue associations. It is also responsible for the provision of nationwide safety information, for the production and sales of educational material and for information services. Regional rescue associations are members of SPEK and their tasks include the provision of training in the rescue sector and advice and training at local level.

**For more information, go to:** [www.spek.fi](http://www.spek.fi)

## VOLUNTARY RESCUE SERVICE - VAPEPA

VAPEPA is a network of voluntary helpers with about 50 organisations as its members. Its task is to assist authorities in emergencies. General rescue work carried out as part of VAPEPA is coordinated by the Finnish Red Cross. Coordination of voluntary rescue operations in inland waterways and sea areas is the responsibility of the Finnish Lifeboat Institution, while the coordination of voluntary fire surveillance flights and airborne rescue services is the task of the Finnish Air Rescue Association.

**For more information, go to:**  
[www.vapepa.fi](http://www.vapepa.fi), [www.redcross.fi](http://www.redcross.fi), [www.meripelastus.fi](http://www.meripelastus.fi),  
[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org), [www.ilmailuliitto.fi](http://www.ilmailuliitto.fi), [www.pelastustoimi.fi](http://www.pelastustoimi.fi),  
[www.redcross.fi/en\\_GB/](http://www.redcross.fi/en_GB/)

### Remember!

Call 112 only if there is an emergency (sudden illness, accident, fire, or a need for urgent police help). Unnecessary calls may prevent help from reaching those in need.

# Making an emergency call to 112

## 1. IF POSSIBLE, MAKE THE EMERGENCY CALL YOURSELF

You are able to give the most accurate description of the situation and of your own condition. Using intermediaries may simply delay the arrival of the emergency services.

## 2. EXPLAIN WHAT HAS HAPPENED

The emergency response centre dispatcher will ask you questions about what has happened so that they can send the right kind of help.

## 3. GIVE THE EXACT ADDRESS AND THE NAME OF THE MUNICIPALITY

There may be several addresses with the same name in the area served by an emergency response centre. It is therefore important to give both the street address and the name of the municipality. Always have your address available so that you can provide the emergency response centre with the correct information.

## 4. ANSWER THE QUESTIONS PUT TO YOU

The arrival of the emergency services will not be delayed even if you are asked about the event in more detail. In urgent cases, the emergency response centre dispatcher will dispatch the emergency services before hanging up and provide the additional information while they are on their way.

## 5. FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS

The emergency response centre dispatchers have been trained to deal with different situations and you should follow their instructions. The measures carried out during the first few minutes may be crucial.

## 6. STAY ON THE LINE


Hanging up too early may delay the arrival of the emergency services. After you have been given permission to end the call you should keep the line clear. The emergency response centre dispatcher or the emergency services may call you again for additional information.

Direct the emergency services to the scene. Contact the emergency response centre again if the situation changes.

### REMEMBER!

- Stay on the line. Emergency calls are answered as quickly as possible and always in the order of arrival.
- No area code is required when calling 112.
- Calls to 112 are free.





Finland is a safe place. However, accident statistics show that there is still plenty of room for safety improvements. After all, injuries and deaths at home and during leisure time are more common in Finland than in other European countries. Our aim is to advance from the middle league to the group of the five safest countries in Europe by the year 2012.

The task of the regional rescue departments is to ensure your safety and provide you with professional help in accidents and other emergencies. This booklet gives you information on how to prevent dangerous situations in your daily life, what to do in emergencies and where to get additional information.

Take a look at this guide so that you know what to do. After all, in an emergency there is no time to consider the required action because the first minutes are critical: when a fire breaks out, a room will be filled with deadly smoke within minutes, and when someone's heart stops, their brain will start to suffer permanent damage after a few minutes. If you are the first one on the accident scene, your duty is to call professional help and start helping the casualties immediately. If you have first aid skills, you may save lives.

Do you want to make your life and the lives of the people around you safer? Do you want to know what to do in an emergency? If the answer is yes, read this guide.