



# A FIRST STEPS GUIDE AFTER A DISASTER

## REPORTING DAMAGES TO YOUR HOME IS IMPORTANT **DAMAGE.TDEM.TEXAS.GOV**

Register your home damages by using a self-reporting survey called "Individual State of Texas Assessment Tool" or iSTAT. The information you share allows local officials to understand what assistance and resources are needed in our community to help everyone move forward with recovery efforts. This data also contributes to determining if our county receives federal funding to assist households with recovery. To report your damages go to [damage.tdem.texas.gov](http://damage.tdem.texas.gov) or use the QR code provided to the right. This tool contains detailed instructions to guide you through the process of reporting. Make sure you are following us on Facebook and can easily access our website (see the bottom of the other side of this sheet). When a disaster happens, we will share information about the iSTAT tool through these outlets, which may be helpful to you. *Ex. What to do if you need help using the tool*



### **Start a paper trail: DOCUMENTATION IS EVERYTHING.**

If your home is impacted by a disaster, you will be contacting a lot of people to gather information necessary for your recovery process. Before you begin, you need a **Recovery Kit**. We recommend:

1. A spiral notebook or legal pad
2. A large 3-ring binder with pockets -or- a sturdy folder or accordion file

Record every communication you have regarding your recovery. Collect the phone number, the name of the person you spoke with, what organization they represent, and any instructions or directions they give you. Keep this log in the large binder, folder or accordion file.

Store all things recovery related: every insurance claim, every disaster-related receipt, all contractor bids, and essentially any paperwork that is related to your home damage and the disaster.

**NEVER THROW AWAY A RECEIPT** that verifies a disaster expense.

*CAUTION: Receipt paper fades. Make copies of each receipt. If you don't have access to a copy machine, take a photo of them. Saving all documentation related to disaster expense(s) is critical.*

### **If you have insurance coverage on your damaged property: FILE A CLAIM**

Promptly report home damages to your insurance agent or company. Follow their instructions on how to document your damages. Always check with them before discarding anything. The State of Texas has a regulatory agency that oversees the state's insurance industry. They provide any and all information you may need regarding insurance. Should you have any problems with your insurance company or adjuster, you can reach out or file a complaint. To help you with insurance questions or for good direction, visit them at [www.tdi.texas.gov](http://www.tdi.texas.gov) or contact them at 800-252-3439.