

## 1. Disaster Preparedness and Evacuation

With the recent surge in natural disasters such as typhoons, heavy rain, and major earthquakes, this can be a dangerous time of year. When a disaster occurs, engaging in "self-help" activities is essential for safety.

First and foremost, it is crucial to gather information so that you can promptly make decisions and take action when facing threats like heavy rain or approaching typhoons. Be prepared by regularly checking and downloading helpful applications on your smartphone, such as Tochigi City's official website for local information, Kyu-chan Navi on cable TV, the NHK News Disaster Prevention App, Kikikuru by the Japan Meteorological Agency, and more.

When the alerts for heavy rainfall, flood warnings, or river flooding reach "alert level 3," evacuate the elderly from dangerous areas. If the alert level is "Level 4," evacuate everyone from those areas. Although no evacuation information is issued at the "Level 1" or "Level 2" stage, it is crucial to confirm the necessity and timing of evacuation, as well as the evacuation destination and essential items to bring.

Now, let's discuss where to evacuate when the situation reaches "Level 4." Kyokuto Tochigi Kura no Machi Gakushukan, where the Tochigi City International Center is located, is one of the evacuation centers that the city will prioritize. Other open evacuation centers can be used by anyone. It is always advisable to check which evacuation centers are close to your location.

If your home is in a safe area, staying at home is considered to be a form of "evacuation," and you can also consider "vertical evacuation" to the second floor. Another option is to evacuate to the home of a relative or friend in a safe area. Additionally, "open-area

evacuation" involves moving as soon as possible to an area with less risk of disaster.

It is crucial to have a plan for when, where, and how to evacuate so that you won't panic in an emergency. If you have family members, discuss in advance how each person will evacuate and establish alternative means of communication since cell phone service may not be available.

## 2. Disaster Preparedness and Supplies

At evacuation centers and shelters, supplies may be limited. It is important to prepare an "emergency kit" with necessary items.

Items to bring to the evacuation site include a radio, flashlight, batteries, non-perishable food, drinking water, canned food, snacks, regular medication, masks for infection prevention, hand sanitizer, thermometer, extra cash, health insurance card, change of clothes, wet wipes, toothbrush, cell phone charger, towel, and more. Additionally, consider including plastic bags, tissues, toilet paper, and supplies specific to the needs of the elderly, women, babies, pets, and others based on your household situation.

In the event of a major disaster, logistics and lifelines may be disrupted, leading to food and supply shortages. Even if Tochigi City is not directly affected, it may experience such impacts. It is recommended to have at least a "3-day supply" of food and essential items. A "7-day supply" would be better in preparation for prolonged evacuation and other situations. Aim for 3 liters of drinking water per person per day, and store water for daily use in bathtubs or other containers.

In reality, "emergency rations" are not the only food to be stockpiled for emergencies. You can also utilize the food you regularly consume. This is known as "rolling stock." By purchasing a little extra of canned foods, retort pouch meals, cup noodles, and other long-lasting items during your routine shopping, consuming them regularly, and replenishing as needed, you can build up a stockpile without significant effort or expense.

Disasters can strike unexpectedly and being prepared provides peace of mind. Just start with what you can do right now.

### 3. Call for Lead Role Applicants in "Utamaro Dochu"

This year, on Saturday, November 11, we will host "Utamaro Dochu," a performance inspired by the world depicted by Utamaro Kitagawa, a renowned ukiyo-e artist of the Edo period. "Utamaro Dochu" is an event where participants dress in kimonos and parade through the warehouse district, portraying characters from the Edo period. Foreign residents are also welcome to join.

The main role is that of "Oiran." The costume weighs 15 to 20 kg, so applicants must be physically fit and have long black hair as it will be tied into a traditional Japanese hairstyle. Other roles include "Kamuro", "Geisha," "Shinzo," "Okami," "Umbrella-bearer," and "Kanabo-bearer," each with specific age and height requirements for applicants.

"Utamaro Dochu" attracts a large audience, and you will be the center of attention. If you are interested in participating, please obtain an application form from the Tochigi City Hall website, submit it by mail, or apply in person at the Kura-no-Machi Section of the city hall. For assistance with the application process, please contact the Tochigi City International Center. Applications must be received no later than August 31.