

Emergency Preparedness for People with Functional Limitations

Taking Responsibility For Your Safety

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Today's Purpose

Understanding the importance of personal preparedness in an emergency

Today's Tasks

- What would be your biggest fear/concern in an emergency or disaster?
- Determine what special accommodations you may need in an emergency situation
- Who would you include in your personal support network?

Why Prepare?

- You are less likely to have problems in both large and small emergencies if you are prepared.
- Systems that you rely on may not work or be available in an emergency.
 - Communication
 - Accessible Exits
 - Medication
 - Transportation



Quiz

1. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), you should have a disaster supply kit at home that includes enough food and water for at least how long? :

b

- a. 24 hours
- b. 3 days
- c. 1 week
- d. 10 days

2. When the National Weather Service issues a severe thunderstorm warning for your area, it means:

b

- a. The barometer is falling much faster than normal.
- b. Conditions are right for a thunderstorm to develop.
- c. A severe thunderstorm is expected in your state within the next 24 hours.
- d. A severe thunderstorm has been spotted in your area.

3. If a disaster occurs and you don't have a supply of drinking water set aside, all but which of the following would be fit to drink?

d

- a. Water from your hot-water tank
- b. Water from your toilet tank
- c. Rain water
- d. Water from your waterbed.

4. Everyone in your family should know where the gas shutoff valve is and should practice turning it off and on.

f

- True
- False

Quiz

5. Which of the following weather-related disasters were the most deadly in 2008?

b

- a. Heat
- b. Tornadoes
- c. Lightning
- d. Hurricanes

6. According to FEMA, how often should you change the food and water in your emergency supply kit?

b

- a. Every 3 months
- b. Every 6 months
- c. Every year
- d. Every 2 years

7. When putting together an emergency supply kit, how much water should you include for each person to drink each day?

c

- a. 1 quart
- b. 1 pint
- c. 1 gallon
- d. 5 gallons

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General Issues

Ability Self-Assessment

- Do you know where and how to operate fire alarms & extinguishers?
- Do you know where gas and water shut-offs are and how to use them?
- Do you have a standard telephone and know where it is?
- Can you make an inaccessible exit accessible by using a portable ramp?

General Issues

Ability Self-Assessment

- How will you evacuate if an accessible vehicle is not available?
- Does your city have a registration system for people with disabilities?
- Have you planned for what you will do if your service animal becomes confused, disoriented, or frightened?

Sight Issues

Ability Self-Assessment

- If you rely on sound clues to get around, will you be able to get yourself to safety if they are missing? (no electricity)
- Are there signs with raised and Braille characters that designate exits, direction, including floor levels and signs?
- Have you marked your utility shut-off valves with fluorescent tape or large print or Braille labels.

Hearing Issues

Ability Self-Assessment

- Have you practiced having people communicate emergency information with you?
- Does your building have two-way communication devices installed in the elevators/areas of refuge/rescue assistance?
- Do you know the location of your amplified or text telephones?

Hearing Issues

Ability Self-Assessment

- Do emergency alarm systems have audible and visible features? (strobes)
- How will you communicate if there is no interpreter or if your hearing aids are not available?
- Do you have a portable communication device (PDA, pager, laptop, portable TTY?)
- Do you carry paper and pens with you?

Speech Issues

Ability Self-Assessment

- Do you keep a copy of a word or letter board, paper and pens, and pre-printed phrases with you?
- How will you communicate if you do not have use of your usual communication device?

Cognitive Issues

Ability Self-Assessment

- Have you practiced how to communicate your needs?
- Have you thought about how you may react in an emergency and how you will cope with any unhelpful reactions?
- Have you prepared information in a way that is easy for you to understand?
- Does your emergency Health Info explain how best people can help you?

Physical/Mobility

Ability Self-Assessment

- Will you be able to independently evacuate from the site?
- Do you know where all evacuation devices are stored? And, have you practiced?
- If you absolutely had to bump down stairs on your buttocks, or crawl, will you need something to protect your buttocks or gloves for your hands?

Physical/Mobility

Ability Self-Assessment

- Can you give quick instructions on how to safely carry you if needed?
- Is there a lightweight devices you can use is you cannot evacuate with your wheelchair, respirator, or other power device?

Mental Illness

Ability Self-Assessment

- Think through what a rescuer might need to know about you and be prepared to say it briefly, or keep a written copy with you- for example:
 - I have a psychiatric disability. In an emergency I may become confused. Help me find quiet corner and I should be fine in approximately 10 minutes.
 - I have a panic disorder. If I panic, give me one green pill (name of medication) located in my (purse, wallet, pocket, etc.)
 - I take Lithium and my blood level needs to be checked every_____.

Assistive Device Users Ability Self-Assessment

- What will it take to get your wheelchair or other equipment out of the building?
- Have you told your support team how to operate and safely move your equipment if necessary?
- Have you labeled equipment with simple instruction cards on how to operate it?
- Do you have cards explaining what assistive devices you use and where they are stored in your home?

Allergies/Respiratory Ability Self-Assessment

- Do you carry supplies with you based on your worst days including masks, gloves, inhaler, industrial respirator with gas-mist filters?
- Do you have battery back-ups for oxygen?

Establish A Support Team

- Build a support team of people who will help you in an emergency if necessary.
- They should be people who are regularly in the same area as you.
- These people, not professional first-responders, make 70% of rescues in major disasters.

Buddy System & Attendants

- Do not rely on one person
- They may not be available
- You may not be able to contact them
- Plan multiple ways to give and get information
- Know how to give quick information on how best to help you

Create Emergency Plans

- Keep a list of out-of-state friends or relatives that household members can call if you are separate during a disaster
- Contact local electric company about your power needs for life-support devices
- Talk to equipment suppliers about your power options
- Plan how to re-charge batteries

Create Emergency Plans

- Identify all ways you can exit your home
- Tag devices with name, address, phone, etc. in case you must leave them behind
- Practice dealing with different conditions and unexpected situation, such as blocked paths or exits
- Don't assume you know how to use an evacuation device when you need it

Emergency Supplies/Go-Kits

- Prepare different kits for different place.
- Tailor the contents of these kits to your needs and abilities.
 - Example: Wheelchair users would want a pair of heavy gloves in their supply kit to use while wheeling or making your way over glass and debris.
- Plan for supplies for up to two weeks.
- Do what is realistic for you.

Emergency Supplies/Go-Kits

- Will you be able to carry it? How will you transport your go-kit?
- Should be stored in an easy-to-get-to location
 - Medications
 - Emergency Food & Water
 - Emergency Documents
 - Service Animal Supplies

Emergency Supplies/Go-Kits

- **Carry-On You**
 - Essential items you need to keep with you at all times
- **Grab-and-Go Kits**
 - Large kit with water, food, first aid supplies, clothing, bedding, tools, emergency supplies, disability-specific items.
 - Things you would need to be self-sufficient for days
- **Bedside Kit**
 - What you need if you were trapped in or near your bed and couldn't get to other parts of home.

Conclusion

In planning for your life safety in emergency situations, hope doesn't count for much! Make sure you are included in the decisions on which equipment and procedures work for you. Given today's current expanding disaster possibilities, quick evacuation and stabilization of the situation can be critical.



