



# PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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Whether the situation dictates staying in place or evacuating to shelters when a disaster strikes, it is imperative to be prepared and know how you can help individuals with special needs and disabilities in your household or community. The following tips can be of assistance during an emergency:

### DISABILITIES

- ❖ Have a plan. Meet with family members or your personal care attendant to discuss the dangers and procedures to take in the event of a disaster;
- ❖ Know how to connect or start a backup power supply for essential medical equipment;
- ❖ If you use a wheelchair, make sure more than one exit is accessible;
- ❖ Teach others how to operate necessary medical equipment;
- ❖ Identify two or three people who will assist you. Arrange for a friend to check on you during an emergency;
- ❖ Consider getting a medical alert system, allowing you to call for help if immobilized;
- ❖ If you live in an apartment, ask the management to identify and mark accessible exits; and
- ❖ Store backup equipment, such as a manual wheelchair or backup battery, at a neighbor's home, school or workplace.

### SENIORS

- ❖ Some elderly persons may respond more slowly to a crisis and may not fully understand the extent of the emergency. Be patient. Taking time to listen carefully or to explain again may take less time than dealing with a confused person who may be less willing to cooperate;
- ❖ Before moving an elderly person, assess their ability to see and hear;
- ❖ Persons with hearing loss may appear disoriented and confused. Determine if the person has a hearing aid. If they do, make sure it's available and bring new batteries that work;
- ❖ If possible, gather all medications before evacuating. Ask the person what medications they are taking and where their medications are stored. Make sure that you have at least seven-day supply; and
- ❖ For families who have a family member with dementia, please let the emergency responders know to properly handle them in case of evacuation.

### SERVICE ANIMALS

*(Reminder: A service animal is not a pet)*

- ❖ Do not touch/pet, or give the animal food or treats without the permission of the owner;
- ❖ The dog is on duty when it is wearing its harness. In the event you are asked to take the dog while assisting the individual, hold the leash and not the harness;
- ❖ Plan to evacuate the animal with the owner. Do not separate them; and
- ❖ People with psychiatric and emotional disabilities may have a companion animal. These are just as important to them as a service animal is to a person with a physical disability. Please be understanding and treat the animal as a service animal.

### MOBILITY IMPAIRMENTS

*(Reminder: Always ask the person how you can help before attempting any assistance. Respect their independence to the extent possible)*

- ❖ When carrying the person, avoid putting pressure on his or her arms, legs, or chest. This may result in spasms, pain, and may even interfere with their ability to breathe;
- ❖ Ask if they have limitations or problems that may affect their safety;
- ❖ Ask if you can help by offering to carry the extra crutch;



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### *(Mobility Impairments continued)*

- ❖ Wheelchair users are trained in special techniques to transfer from one chair to another. Depending on their upper body strength, they may be able to do much of the work themselves;
- ❖ Before lifting a motorized wheelchair, turn off the power. Motorized wheelchairs may weigh up to 100 pounds unoccupied, and may be longer than manual wheelchairs. It requires two to four people to lift the motorized wheelchair and user; and
- ❖ Most people who use motorized wheelchairs have limited arm and hand motion. Ask if they have any special requirements for being transported down the stairs.

### DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

- ❖ Hearing aids do not guarantee that the person can hear and understand speech. They increase volume, not necessarily clarity; and
- ❖ Written communication may be especially important if you are unable to understand the person's speech.

### VISUALLY IMPAIRED

- ❖ State the nature of the emergency and offer them your arm. As you walk, advise them of any obstacles. Be sure to mention stairs, doorways, narrow passages, ramps, etc.;
- ❖ Offer assistance but let the person explain what help is needed; and
- ❖ When you have reached safety, orient the person to the location and ask if any further assistance is needed.

### MULTIPLE CHEMICAL SENSITIVITIES

- ❖ Inform the emergency responder/evacuating individual that your family member is chemically sensitive; and
- ❖ Whenever possible, take the person's own medical supplies and equipment with them, including oxygen mask and tubing, medications, food and water; bedding, clothing, and soap. He or she may be sensitive to these items if issued at a shelter or hospital.

### EQUIPMENT REQUIRING POWER

- ❖ If you use a battery-operated wheelchair, life-support system, or other power-dependent equipment, call your power company. Many utility companies keep a list and map of the locations of power-dependent customers in case of an emergency. Ask them what alternatives are available in your area. Contact the Customer Service Department of your local utility company(ies) to learn if this service is available in your community;
- ❖ If you are blind or have a visual disability, store a talking or Braille clock or large-print timepiece with extra batteries; and
- ❖ If you are deaf or have a hearing loss, consider getting a small portable battery-operated television set. Emergency broadcasts may give information in American Sign Language (ASL) or open captioning.



# FAMILY EMERGENCY PLAN

## FAMILY EMERGENCY PLAN

Make sure your family has a plan in case of an emergency. Before an emergency happens, sit down together and decide how you will get in contact with each other, where you will go and what you will do in an emergency. Keep a copy of this plan in your Emergency Supply Kit or another safe place where you can access it in the event of a disaster.

Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so it is important to plan in advance. How will you contact one another? How will you get back together? What will you do in different situations? It may be easier to make a long-distance phone call than to call across town, so an out-of-town contact may be in a better position to communicate among separated family members. Cell phone service may be unavailable or limited. Be sure every member of your family knows the phone number and has coins or a prepaid phone card to call the emergency contact.

## CREATE AN EVACUATION PLAN

- ❖ Plan places where your family will meet, both within and outside of your immediate neighborhood;
- ❖ If you have a car, keep a half tank of gas in it at all times in case you need to evacuate;
- ❖ Become familiar with alternate routes and other means of transportation out of your area;
- ❖ If you do not have a car, plan how you will leave if you have to;
- ❖ Take your Emergency Supply Kit unless you have reason to believe it has been contaminated;
- ❖ Lock the door behind you; and
- ❖ Take your pets with you, but understand that only service animals may be permitted in public shelters. Plan how you will care for your pets in an emergency.

## IF TIME ALLOWS

- ❖ Call or e-mail the "out-of-state" contact in your family communications plan and tell them where you are going;
- ❖ If there is damage to your home and you are instructed to do so, shut-off water, gas and electricity before leaving;
- ❖ Leave a note telling others when you left and where you are going; and
- ❖ Check with neighbors who may need a ride.

## NEIGHBORHOODS AND APARTMENTS

A community working together during an emergency makes sense.

- ❖ Talk to your neighbors about how you can work together during an emergency;
- ❖ Find out if anyone has specialized equipment like a power generator, or expertise such as medical knowledge, that might help in a crisis;
- ❖ Decide who will check on elderly or disabled neighbors;
- ❖ Make backup plans for children in case you can't get home in an emergency; and
- ❖ Sharing plans and communicating in advance is a good strategy.

*(make additional copies of the form on the back to accommodate your needs)*

**DIAL 911 FOR EMERGENCIES**



# FAMILY EMERGENCY PLAN

Out-of-Town Contact Name: _____	Telephone No.: _____
E-mail: _____	
Neighborhood Meeting Place: _____	Telephone No.: _____
Regional Meeting Place: _____	Telephone No.: _____
Evacuation Location: _____	Telephone No.: _____

Fill out the following information for each family member and keep it up to date

Name: _____	SSN: _____
Date of Birth: _____	Important Medical Info: _____
Name: _____	SSN: _____
Date of Birth: _____	Important Medical Info: _____
Name: _____	SSN: _____
Date of Birth: _____	Important Medical Info: _____
Name: _____	SSN: _____
Date of Birth: _____	Important Medical Info: _____

Write down where your family spends the most time

<b>WORK LOCATION ONE</b>	<b>SCHOOL LOCATION ONE</b>
Address: _____	Address: _____
Phone No.: _____	Phone No.: _____
Evacuation Location: _____	Evacuation Location: _____
<b>WORK LOCATION TWO</b>	<b>SCHOOL LOCATION TWO</b>
Address: _____	Address: _____
Phone No.: _____	Phone No.: _____
Evacuation Location: _____	Evacuation Location: _____
<b>OTHER PLACE YOU FREQUENT</b>	<b>OTHER PLACE YOU FREQUENT</b>
Address: _____	Address: _____
Phone No.: _____	Phone No.: _____
Evacuation Location: _____	Evacuation Location: _____

<b>IMPORTANT INFORMATION</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>TELEPHONE NO.</b>	<b>POLICY NO.</b>
Doctor(s):	_____	_____	_____
Other:	_____	_____	_____
Pharmacist:	_____	_____	_____
Medical Insurance:	_____	_____	_____
Homeowners/Rental Insurance:	_____	_____	_____
Veterinarian/Kennel (for pets):	_____	_____	_____



## PET INFORMATION

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If you are like millions of animal owners nationwide, your pet is an important member of your household. The likelihood that you and your animals will survive an emergency such as a fire, flood, earthquake, or terrorist attack depends largely on emergency planning done today. Some of the things you can do to prepare for the unexpected, such as assembling an animal Emergency Supply Kit and developing a pet care buddy system, are the same for any emergency. Whether you decide to stay put in an emergency or evacuate to a safer location, you will need to make plans in advance for your pets. Keep in mind that what's best for you is typically what's best for your animals.

If you must evacuate, take your pets with you if possible. However, if you are going to a public shelter, it is important to understand that animals may not be allowed inside. Plan in advance for shelter alternatives that will work for both you and your pets.

Make a backup emergency plan in case you can't care for your animals yourself. Develop a buddy system with neighbors, friends and relatives to make sure that someone is available to care for or evacuate your pets if you are unable to do so. Be prepared with your Emergency Supply Kit to last for at least three days, maybe longer.

### PREPARE A PET EMERGENCY SUPPLY KIT

Just as you do with your family's Emergency Supply Kit, think first about the basics for survival, particularly food and water. Consider two kits. In one, put everything you and your pets will need to stay where you are. The other should be a lightweight, smaller version you can take with you if you and your pets have to get away. Plus, be sure to review your kits regularly to ensure that their contents, especially foods and medicines, are fresh.

- FOOD.** Keep at least three days of food in an airtight, waterproof container;
- WATER.** Store at least three days of water specifically for your pets in addition to water you need for yourself and your family;
- MEDICINES AND MEDICAL RECORDS.** Keep an extra supply of medicines your pet takes on a regular basis in a waterproof container;
- FIRST AID KIT.** Talk to your veterinarian about what is most appropriate for your pet's emergency medical needs. Most kits should include cotton bandage rolls, bandage tape and scissors; antibiotic ointment; flea and tick prevention; latex gloves, isopropyl alcohol and saline solution. Include a pet first aid reference book;
- COLLAR WITH ID TAG, HARNESS OR LEASH.** Your pet should wear a collar with its rabies tag and identification at all times. Include a backup leash, collar and ID tag in your pet's Emergency Supply Kit. In addition, place copies of your pet's registration information, adoption papers, vaccination documents and medical records in a clean plastic bag or waterproof container and also add them to your kit. You should also consider talking with your veterinarian about permanent identification such as microchipping, and enrolling your pet in a recovery database;



## PET INFORMATION

- ❑ **CRATE OR OTHER PET CARRIER.** If you need to evacuate in an emergency situation take your pets and animals with you provided that it is practical to do so. In many cases, your ability to do so will be aided by having a sturdy, safe, comfortable crate or carrier ready for transporting your pet. The carrier should be large enough for your pet to stand, turn around and lie down;
- ❑ **SANITATION.** Include pet litter and litter box if appropriate, newspapers, paper towels, plastic trash bags and household chlorine bleach to provide for your pet's sanitation needs. You can use bleach as a disinfectant (dilute nine parts water to one part bleach), or in an emergency you can also use it to purify water. Use 16 drops of regular household liquid bleach per gallon of water. Do not use scented or color safe bleaches, or those with added cleaners;
- ❑ **A PICTURE OF YOU AND YOUR PET TOGETHER.** If you become separated from your pet during an emergency, a picture of you and your pet together will help you document ownership and allow others to assist you in identifying your pet. Include detailed information about species, breed, age, sex, color and distinguishing characteristics; and
- ❑ **FAMILIAR ITEMS.** Put favorite toys, treats or bedding in your kit. Familiar items can help reduce stress for your pet.



# UTILITY OUTAGES

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Prolonged utility outages are not only a nuisance — they are also potentially life-threatening and can cause major economic losses. The following tips will help you, your family, and your community prepare for this kind of emergency.

## SAFETY TIPS FOR A BLACKOUT

- ❖ Only use a flashlight for emergency lighting. Never use candles;
- ❖ Turn off electrical or disconnect equipment you were using when the power went out;
- ❖ Avoid opening the refrigerator and freezer;
- ❖ Use the phone for emergencies only. Listening to a portable radio can provide the latest information;
- ❖ Eliminate unnecessary travel, especially by car. Traffic signals will stop working during an outage, creating traffic congestion;
- ❖ Keep your car fuel tank at least half full because gas stations rely on electricity to power their pumps;
- ❖ Remember that equipment such as Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) and elevators may not work during a power outage;
- ❖ If it is hot outside, take steps to remain cool. Move to the lowest level of your home, as cool air falls. Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing. Drink plenty of water, even if you do not feel thirsty. If the heat is intense and the power may be off for a long time, consider going to a movie theater, shopping mall, or “cooling shelter” that may be opened in your community;
- ❖ If it is cold outside, put on layers of warm clothing. Never burn charcoal for heating or cooking indoors. Never use your oven as a source of heat. If the power may be out for a prolonged period, plan to go to another location (relative, friend, or public facility) that has heat to keep warm;
- ❖ Do not run a generator inside a home or garage; and
- ❖ If you use a generator, connect the equipment you want to power directly to the outlets on the generator. Do not connect a generator to a home’s electrical system.

## PREPARE BEFORE A BLACKOUT HAPPENS

If you have space in your refrigerator or freezer, consider filling plastic containers with water, leaving about an inch of space inside each one. (Remember, water expands as it freezes, so it is important to leave room in the container for the expanded water). Place the containers in the refrigerator and freezer. This chilled or frozen water will help keep food cold if the power goes out, by displacing air that can warm up quickly with water or ice that keeps cold for several hours without additional refrigeration.



# UTILITY OUTAGES

*(Prepare Before A Blackout Happens continued)*

If you use medication that requires refrigeration, most can be kept in a closed refrigerator for several hours without a problem. If unsure, check with your physician or pharmacist.

## **LEARN HOW AND WHEN TO TURN OFF UTILITIES**

If there is damage to your home or you are instructed to turn off your utilities:

- ❖ Locate the electric, gas and water shut-off valves;
- ❖ Keep necessary tools near gas and water shut-off valves;
- ❖ Teach family members how to turn off utilities; and
- ❖ If you turn the gas off, a professional must turn it back on. Do not attempt to do this yourself.



# EMERGENCY SUPPLY KIT

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Everyone should have some basic supplies on hand in order to survive for at least three days if an emergency occurs. The following is a listing of some basic items that every Emergency Supply Kit should include. However, it is important that individuals review this list and consider where they live and the unique needs of their family in order to create an Emergency Supply Kit that will meet their needs. Individuals should also consider having at least two Emergency Supply Kits, one full kit at home and smaller portable kits in their workplace, vehicle or other places they spend time.

## RECOMMENDED ITEMS TO INCLUDE IN A BASIC EMERGENCY SUPPLY KIT

- Water, one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation;
- Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food;
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert;
- Flashlight;
- Extra batteries;
- First aid kit;
- Whistle, to signal for help;
- Dust mask, to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in place;
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation;
- Wrench or pliers, to turn off utilities;
- Can opener, for food (if kit contains canned food); and
- Local maps.



## EMERGENCY SUPPLY KIT

### ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO CONSIDER ADDING TO AN EMERGENCY SUPPLY KIT

- Prescription medications and glasses;
- Infant formula and diapers;
- Pet food and extra water for your pet;
- Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records in a waterproof, portable container;
- Cash or traveler's checks and change;
- Emergency reference material such as a first aid book;
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person. Consider additional bedding if you live in a cold-weather climate;
- Complete change of clothing including a long sleeved shirt, long pants and sturdy shoes. Consider additional clothing if you live in a cold-weather climate;
- Household chlorine bleach and medicine dropper - when diluted nine parts water to one part bleach, bleach can be used as a disinfectant. Or in an emergency, you can use it to treat water by using 16 drops of regular household liquid bleach per gallon of water. Do not use scented, color safe or bleaches with added cleaners;
- Fire extinguisher;
- Matches in a waterproof container;
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items;
- Portable metal cooking set, paper cups, plates and plastic utensils, paper towels;
- Paper and pencil; and
- Books, games, puzzles or other activities for children.