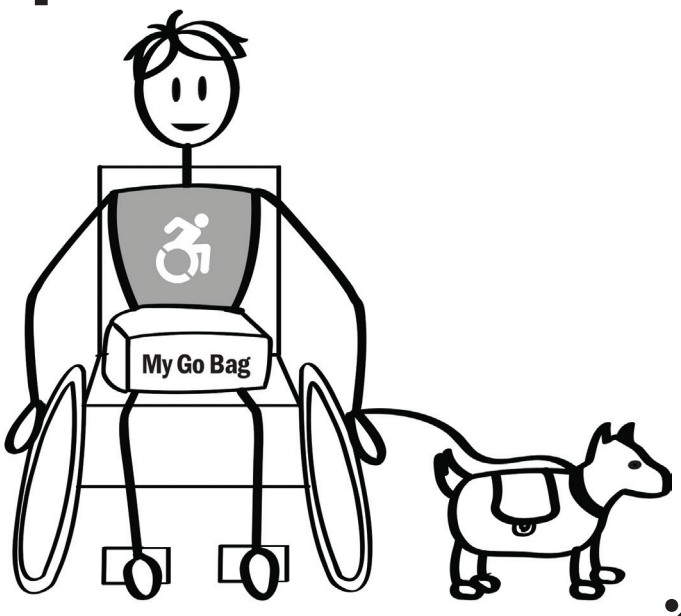
# BE PREPARED, HAVE A PLAN:

# Emergency Preparedness Toolkit




# For Persons with Disabilities

**Adapted and Endorsed by the Wisconsin Council on Physical Disabilities**

**Revised May 2019**

**About the Emergency Preparedness Toolkit**

This toolkit is a product of years of work by past and present members of the Wisconsin Council on Physical Disabilities. After witnessing what happened to people with physical disabilities in the wake of hurricanes Rita and Katrina, the Council knew more work needed to be done to ensure the safety and protect the lives of people, especially those with physical disabilities, before and during emergencies and natural disasters.

The Emergency Preparedness Toolkit was originally developed by the Wisconsin Association of the Deaf in partnership with the Wisconsin Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The Wisconsin Council on Physical Disabilities expresses gratitude to the Association for allowing them to utilize these materials and to modify them to address the needs of people with physical and other disabilities.

The Wisconsin Council on Physical Disabilities Emergency Preparedness Toolkit serves as a resource tool providing all people, particularly those individuals with physical or other disabilities, emergency preparedness information including tips, checklists, wallet card, visual communications tool, and other resources to be prepared and have a plan for emergencies and natural disasters.

The Wisconsin Council on Physical Disabilities and the Wisconsin Association of the Deaf disclaim any liability for any direct, indirect, special, incidental, or consequential damages, losses, or expenses arising in connection with your use of or inability to use the this toolkit, or in connection with any failure of acts related to disaster or emergency preparedness.

To download an electronic copy of this toolkit, or for more information, please visit the Wisconsin Council on Physical Disabilities website at: **cpd.wisconsin.gov/toolkit.htm**. If you need a copy of the toolkit in an accessible format, please contact us at **608-266-9354**.

**Acknowledgements**

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The Council would also like to express its sincere appreciation to Nicole Johnson for the logo and artwork she designed for the toolkit and Jill O'Leske for the graphic design work provided by Impact Design (**www.impactdesign.biz**) to create the toolkit.

The Emergency Preparedness Committee members want to send a special thank you to Lisa Sobczyk for her assistance in the final review and printing of the toolkit and assistance in planning toolkit distribution and outreach presentations.

This toolkit is dedicated to the memory of Dan Johnson, who was a tireless advocate to people with physical disabilities and provided staff support to the Wisconsin Council on Physical Disabilities for over thirty years. This project would not have been possible without him.

May 2019

BE PREPARED, HAVE A PLAN

# TABLE OF CONTENTS


**Introduction**

How to Use This Guide *(updated)*. . . . . 1

BE PREPARED, HAVE A PLAN:

**TOOLS TO BE PREPARED (green tab)**

What's Inside This Toolkit? . . . . . 3

**Emergency Checklists. . . . . 4**

**Medical Emergency Wallet Card . . . . . 6**

**Family Emergency Planning Form** *(updated)*. . . . . **7**

**Evacuation Planning Guide . . . . . 13**

Evacuating Yourself and Your Family . . . . . 13

Basic Fire Escape Planning . . . . . 15

Escape Planning in Tall Buildings . . . . . 16

Evacuation Procedures/Evacuation Devices . . . . . 17

**Responder Tips for Professionals and Volunteers** *(updated)* . . . . . **19**

Communicating with People in Emergency Situations . . . . . 19

Disability Etiquette *(new)* . . . . . 20

Tips for Effective Communication . . . . . 22

**Online Toolkit . . . . . 27**

**Visual Communications Tool . . . . . 27**

**Important Documents Checklist . . . . . 28**

**Document Storage . . . . . 28**

**SPRING (light green tab)**

Thunderstorm . . . . . 29

Tornado . . . . . 31

Flood . . . . . 33

**SUMMER (yellow tab)**

Extreme Heat . . . . . 35

Drought . . . . . 37

Wildfire . . . . . 38

BE PREPARED, HAVE A PLAN:


**FALL (orange tab)**

Winterizing . . . . . 41
House Fire . . . . . 42

**WINTER (light blue tab)**

Winter Weather. . . . . 47
Frostbite . . . . . 50
Hypothermia . . . . . 51

**OTHER EMERGENCIES AND DISASTERS (purple tab)**

Hazardous Materials . . . . . 53
Household Chemical Emergency . . . . . 55
Power Outages . . . . . 57
Explosions . . . . . 59
Nuclear Power Plants/Transportation of Nuclear Waste . . . . . 60
Epidemic or Pandemic . . . . . 62
Biological Threat. . . . . 63

**GLOBAL WEATHER (navy blue tab)**

Travel . . . . . 65
Earthquake . . . . . 66
Hurricane . . . . . 68
Tsunami . . . . . 70
Volcano . . . . . 71

**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) . . . . . 73**

**References. . . . . 89**

**Resources . . . . . 90**

**Basic Rights to Access for People with Disabilities in Emergencies and Disasters . . . . . 95**

# Introduction

## When something bad happens, do you know what to do? Do you worry that you won't know a natural disaster is coming? Are you afraid rescuers won't find you if you need help getting out?

Protect what matters to you. Know when a disaster or bad weather is coming. Know what to do when different kinds of emergencies occur. Your best chance of survival is to have a plan and be prepared.

After a large natural disaster, you may have to wait to be rescued. Help may not arrive for a few hours, five days, or even a week! You will have to take care of yourself, your family, and pets until help comes.

This manual is the first step you can take to be prepared and informed! Here are some things you can do to get started:

1. **Set up a meeting**. Talk with everyone in your household. Review this manual together. Plan how you will respond to emergencies. Remember, they can happen any time. Prepare for what you will do if you are at home, at school, at work, and while you're away on vacation.

2. **Take responsibility.** Give duties to each person in your home. Make a plan to work as a team.

3. **Plan ahead.** You may be separated from your family during an emergency (such as a house fire or evacuation). Plan where you will meet and how you will contact one another. Ask questions: How will you get there? Which way will you go? Is there an evacuation shelter nearby? (For example, you may choose to stay at a hotel or with friends or relatives in a safe location.)

4. **Discuss how you will communicate with each other.** Plan how you will contact your family or other people you live with to let them know you're safe. Talk about how you will find one another.

5. **Make plans for your pet(s)/service animal(s).** Decide how you will take care of your pet(s)/service animal(s) in a disaster. Remember to plan for their needs too. Decide who will be responsible for each pet during an evacuation. It is best to take your pets with you if you can. Service animals need to stay with the person they have been trained to serve.

6. **Have an evacuation plan and practice evacuating your home twice a year.** Practice driving your planned evacuation route. Find different ways to go in case roads or bridges are closed. Have a plan for what to do if public transportation is unavailable.

# Introduction

7. **Choose who you will make contact with during a natural disaster.** This is your **emergency contact person**. He or she should live in another town or state. It may be easier to contact someone outside of your local area during a disaster. Write his or her phone number, email, and address on the **FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING FORM**. Make sure everyone in your home has a copy.

8. **Pack emergency supplies that will last for 5 days.** Use the checklists included in this toolkit to guide you. Check all of your emergency kits when you change the clocks in the spring and fall. Replace any items that might expire, such as food, water, medicine, or batteries.

9. **Be resourceful.** Find items you already have around the house or buy used items from second-hand stores or garage sales for your emergency kits and **GO BAG**. You do not need to do this all at the same time. Put together things you already have first. Make a list of what you need to find; then add things as you go.

10. **Be informed.** Texts and emails can tell you that bad weather is on the way. They can also tell you when a natural disaster has occured and how to evacuate. You can find this service at your local county, TV station, or newspaper. If this is available, sign up! You can also use apps on your smartphone to keep you informed. If you don't have access to apps, texts, or emails, ask someone you trust to let you know when something is happening.

## Items you may need

**Flashlights:** Pack regular flashlights and lantern flashlights. The lantern flashlights are important for seeing faces, reading lips, and interpreting sign language.

**Whistles:** If you are trapped, a whistle can guide the rescuers to you. If you cannot see or hear people looking for you, a whistle can let them know where you are.

**Cell phone and tablet chargers:** Many of us use cell phones or tablets to keep in touch. Keep several chargers that are easy to grab in an emergency. A hand-crank charger can power a phone or tablet when you turn the crank by hand. You may want to have a hand-crank charger in case the electricity goes out for a long period of time.

You may have **glasses or contacts, hearing aids, cochlear implants, or personal amplifiers**. Don't forget to use waterproof storage containers when you pack your hearing aids, cochlear implants, and more. Pack chargers and car charger adapters for cell phones, laptops, tablets, mobility devices, and any other items that need to be charged.

# What's Inside This Toolkit?

This is the list of what is inside YOUR EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS TOOLKIT. If you have any questions, please contact the Wisconsin Council on Physical Disabilities at **cpd.wisconsin.gov/toolkit.htm**.

Be Prepared, Have a Plan: Emergency Preparedness Toolkit

Four Emergency Checklists:

- **General Checklist** *(updated)*
- **Car Kit Checklist** *(updated)*
- **Disability Checklist** *(updated)*
- **Important Documents Checklist** *(updated)*

A wallet-size card for important medical and contact information:

- **Medical Emergency Wallet Card**

A Family Emergency Planning Form for you and your family members to fill out:

- **Family Emergency Planning Form** *(updated)*

This Emergency Preparedness Toolkit includes information about evacuation/escape planning, including evacuation procedures and devices.

- **Evacuation Planning Guide**

Electronic copies of this toolkit are available online at **cpd.wisconsin.gov/toolkit.htm**:

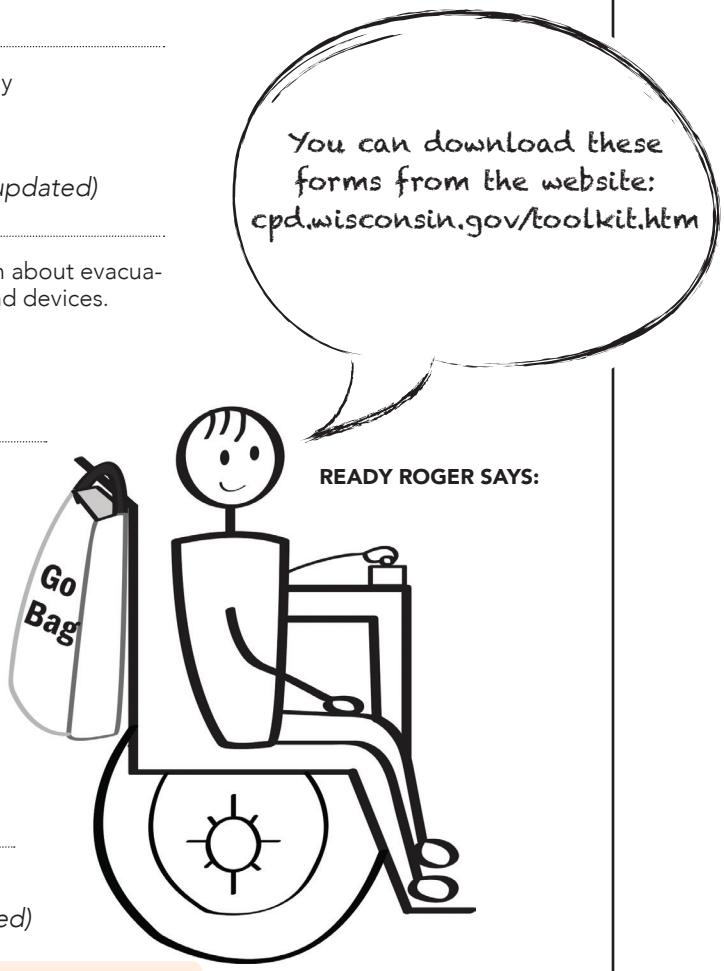
- **Online Toolkit**

A Visual Communications Tool to use for quick and easy communication with people during emergencies:

- **Visual Communications Tool**

Additional Forms:

- **How to Make a Home Fire Escape Plan** *(updated)*
- **Medical Information and Emergency Health Care Plan** *(updated)*



# Emergency Checklists

**Be prepared before, during, and after a disaster. This section explains how to use the tools and resources in the Wisconsin Council on Physical Disabilities *Be Prepared, Have a Plan: Emergency Preparedness Toolkit*. If you need extra copies of these tools and resources, they can be photocopied from this toolkit, or are available for downloaded at: cpd.wisconsin.gov/toolkit.htm.**

What is necessary for different emergencies depends on your personal needs and your specific circumstances: where you live; the number of people in your family and their ages; if you own a car or depend on public transportation; if you have pets and/or service animals; your personal, medical and assistive technology needs; and other factors.

**It is important that you plan for what you need to have available for different types of emergencies or natural disasters. If you need to evacuate, stay in your home, take shelter in your car, or stay at work, use these emergency checklists to help you identify what you may need.**

- **GENERAL CHECKLIST**
- **DISABILITY CHECKLIST**
- **CAR CHECKLIST**
- **IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS CHECKLIST**

These checklists have only suggested items. Use them to help you get your emergency kits together before an emergency or a natural disaster happens. Select the items that relate to your individual needs and the needs of other family members, children, pets, and/or service animals in your household.

If you have a physical disability, at the very least you should have a **GO BAG** that contains essential items you should always have with you. See the **GO BAG** items section of the **DISABILITY CHECKLIST**.

If you need to take shelter, it's important and necessary to have a supply of essential items in your home too. Identify what you need from the **GENERAL CHECKLIST** and **DISABILITY CHECKLIST** to create a **HOME KIT**.

If you have a car, you should also put together a **CAR KIT**. If you work, you might consider putting together a **WORK KIT**. The **GO BAG** could also be used as your **WORK KIT**.

Based on your circumstances, you may put together two or more emergency kits. If necessary, you may need to purchase multiples of some items. If you are on a fixed income with limited funds, select the items from the checklists that are the most important and have the highest priority for you to pack in your emergency kit(s).

## Don't forget!

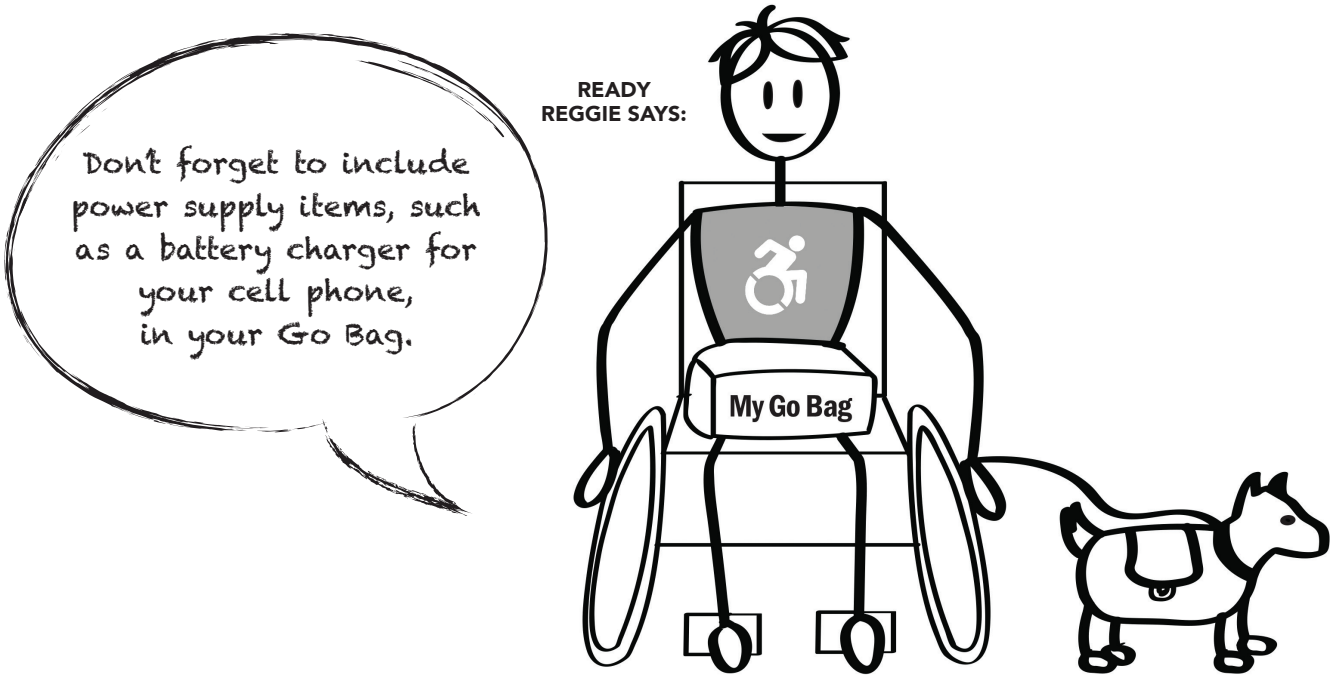
When it's time to change the clocks for Daylight Saving Time, go through the things you packed inside your emergency kits. Check to see if anything needs to be added or replaced. Make sure to record the date of when you last updated the items in your emergency kits.

# Emergency Checklists

There may be items you use on a regular basis at home, such as a cell phone charger, that you would also need to take with you when you travel, or if you need to evacuate. Consider using a **REMINDER TAG** to help you remember to take these items with you.

Here are some things to think about during your emergency planning process.

- If you need to evacuate, you should have a **GO BAG** or a small suitcase with items you need from the **GENERAL CHECKLIST** and **DISABILITY CHECKLIST.** All members of your household, including children, pets, and service animals, should each have their own **GO BAG**. The **GENERAL CHECKLIST** includes items for children and pets/service animals.
- If there is a natural disaster, you may have to stay in your home. Have water, food, and other supplies to last you for at least five days. Use the **GENERAL CHECKLIST** and the **DISABILITY CHECKLIST** to help you decide what you should include in your **HOME KIT**. Put the items in a large waterproof container with a cover. Using a container that is on wheels would make it easier to take with you if you needed to move to another part of the house during the disaster, or if you need to evacuate.
- A disaster can happen when you are away from home. Bad weather, road conditions, or a slow evacuation may strand you on the road forcing you to stay in your car. Consider putting the items in your **CAR KIT** in a waterproof container. If you need to take shelter in your car, you should have items from the **CAR CHECKLIST**.
- If you need to stay at work because of a natural disaster or severe weather, identify items you would need. If you want a separate **WORK KIT**, consider using a waterproof container for storage of these items. Your **GO BAG** could also be used as your **WORK KIT**.



# Medical Emergency Wallet Card

## Medical Emergency Wallet Card

The **MEDICAL EMERGENCY WALLET CARD** is included in this Emergency Preparedness Toolkit, and is also available for download at: **cpd.wisconsin.gov/toolkit.htm**. If you have the hard copy toolkit, the card is in a plastic sleeve in the back of the toolkit.

**HELPFUL TIP:**

If you have questions, your doctor or medical care provider can help you fill out the card.

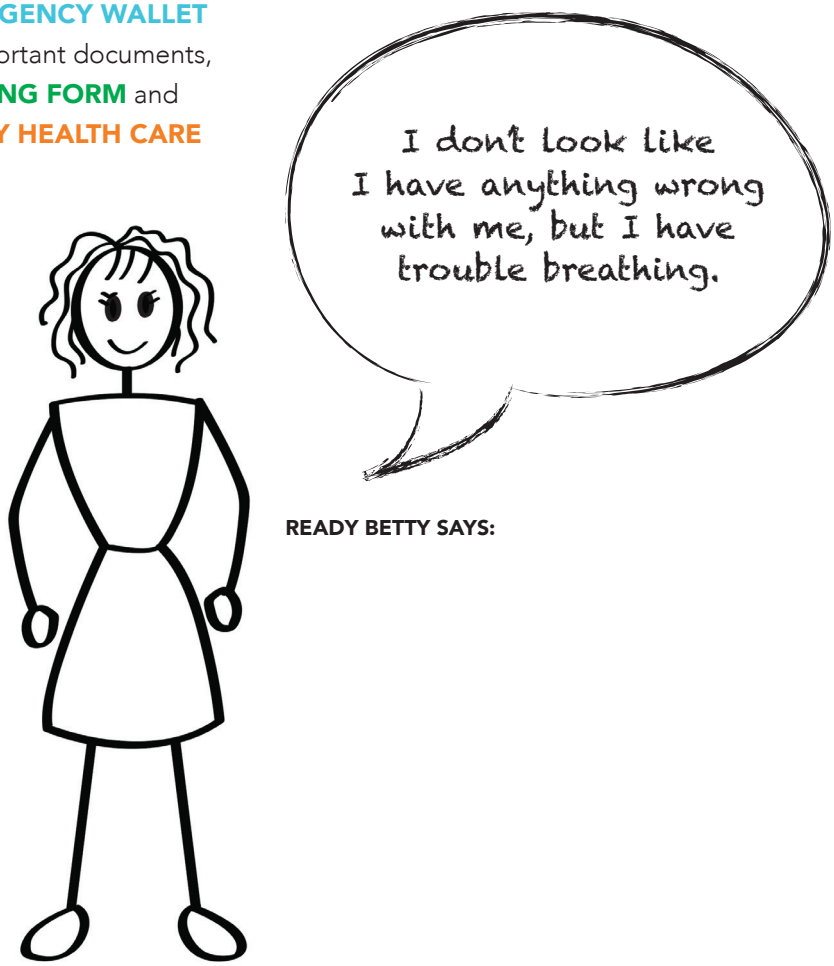
Fill out all the information on the wallet card that pertains to you, including your emergency contact, insurance information, and your medical history. This card may assist others in helping you if you get sick or injured and are not able to communicate with them.

Keep your **MEDICAL EMERGENCY WALLET CARD** with you at all times in your wallet or purse. If you have a car, also keep a copy of your **MEDICAL EMERGENCY WALLET CARD** in your **CAR KIT**.

All family members in your home should have their own **MEDICAL EMERGENCY WALLET CARD** with their information. Print additional copies of the **MEDICAL EMERGENCY WALLET CARD** if needed.

Make a copy of each person's **MEDICAL EMERGENCY WALLET CARD**. Keep the copies of these and other important documents, including your **FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING FORM** and **MEDICAL INFORMATION AND EMERGENCY HEALTH CARE PLAN** in your **GO BAG**.

**Review your card every six months and update the information as needed.** If possible, scan your **MEDICAL EMERGENCY WALLET CARD** and other important documents and copy them to a flash drive. Store the flash drive in a waterproof container.




**READY BETTY SAYS:**

# Family Emergency Plan

## Family Emergency Planning Form

Develop a **FAMILY EMERGENCY PLAN** including everything your family should do in order to be prepared for different emergencies or natural disasters:

- Fill out the **FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING FORM**. Make sure everyone in the family knows the plan. It is the best way to stay safe. The **FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING FORM** includes your out-of-town contact and other contact information, as well as information for each family member, including the family code word, designated meeting location after a disaster or emergency, and whether your **GO BAG** is up-to-date.
- Review the four **EMERGENCY CHECKLISTS** to determine the items which need to go into the emergency kit(s).
- Review the **EVACUATION PLANNING GUIDE** and practice the plan or plans that best fit your individual and family's needs, taking into consideration any special needs that family members might have.
- Communicate your family emergency plan. If you need assistance, let family, friends, and neighbors know how they may help, and let them know about your emergency plan. If you need to leave your home, know where there is a safe place for different types of emergencies (e.g. flood, tornado, wildfire) and practice getting there—to higher ground, to your safe place, or out of the area that you live in.

You may lose contact with your family and friends during an emergency or disaster, so filling out your **FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING FORM** can help you find each other again. How will you know where they are? Follow the **FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING FORM** to guide your discussion.

Think about what you may need during an emergency. If you have a physical disability, you might have special needs. Talk with professionals who could help you, including:

- Occupational and physical therapists.
- AT (assistive technology) specialists.
- Rehabilitation engineers.
- Independent living center staff that serve your county.
- Local emergency manager/planners.
- Local firefighters.

They may identify equipment and/or devices that could help you be better prepared during a natural disaster or emergency.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS TOOLKIT

# Family Emergency Plan

## 1. Evacuation Planning

Review the **EVACUATION PLANNING GUIDE** (within this manual) with your family. Based on your specific circumstances, think about the different possible situations (e.g. house fire, wildfire, tornado, flood, etc.) that could force you to evacuate. You may have one evacuation plan or you may have more than one, depending on different circumstances. It would be a good idea to put your evacuation plan(s) in writing and update them if your circumstances change.

**PLAN AHEAD:**

- Review the **EVACUATION PLANNING GUIDE** that identifies additional points you should consider for:
  - Evacuating Yourself and Your Family.
  - Basic Fire Escape Planning.
  - Escape Planning in Tall Buildings, including Safety Tips.
  - Evacuation Procedures and Evacuation Devices.
- If your plan includes using your vehicle(s) to evacuate, make sure there is enough gas in the vehicle(s) at all times.
- Identify where you will find information before and/or during an emergency or disaster (for example, broadcast on television, Internet, NOAA, or local radio stations). If emergency personnel are telling people to evacuate, you will need to follow their evacuation directions.

## 2. Out-of-Town Contact

Pick the same person to be the out-of-town contact for each family member. After a disaster, it might be easier to reach someone who is out-of-town, as the phone system in your local area may be damaged. Make sure everyone knows the plan.

**PLAN AHEAD:**

- **Ask a person to be your contact in case of an emergency.** He or she should be a friend or family member you trust.
- **Check that this person knows the plan.** Make sure he or she knows what you want them to do.
- **Give this person a list of names and contact information.** This list should have all the people you want to know about your situation during an emergency.
- **Be sure that everyone in your home knows how to contact this person.**

**DURING AND AFTER AN EMERGENCY:**

Contact your out-of-town contact person, who will let others know where you are, how you are doing, and how to get in touch with you.

# Family Emergency Plan

## 3. Designated Meeting Location

You may lose touch with each other during an emergency or disaster. Plan for how you all will find each other again.

**PLAN AHEAD: Pick three meeting places.**

1. **Outside the Home:** An emergency may happen in your home, such as a fire. Choose a place to meet. This could be at a neighbor's house or somewhere familiar in your neighborhood. Practice meeting at this location.

2. **Outside the Neighborhood:** It may not be safe to stay in your neighborhood. Choose a place such as a school playground or local park to meet. Practice meeting at this location.

3. **Outside the Region/State:** The magnitude of a natural disaster may be so widespread that you need to leave your region or state. Pick a meeting place that is further away. A friend or family member who lives in another state is a good choice. Talk with this person ahead of time so that he or she knows the plan. Make sure everyone has the address and contact information for this person.

## 4. Community Emergency Center

If a large natural disaster hits your area, look for help. There may be a community emergency center, an emergency shelter, or an aid station. One of these may be set up near you and could possibly provide food and water. The staff may be able to help you fill out forms for federal aid, get counseling, and more.

**PLAN AHEAD: Find out where you should go after a disaster.** All cities and counties have a plan. Learn how they plan to help you after a disaster. You can get this information from your City Hall, Fire or Police Department, or your county's Emergency Manager. Know where they plan to set up a center to help people who have been evacuated.

**DURING AND AFTER AN EMERGENCY: Reach out.** If you are not sure where to go for assistance, ask someone from the police or fire department, or a first responder.

## 5. Pet/Service Animal Emergency Plan

You need to take action before, during, and after a disaster occurs to make sure that your pet(s)/service animal(s) are taken care of. Include them in your emergency planning. See **www.ready.gov/animals** for more information.

**PLAN AHEAD: Make a Pet Emergency Plan**

- **ID your pet or service animal.** Make sure your pet's tags are up-to-date and securely fastened to your pet's collar. If possible, attach the address and/or phone number of your evacuation site. If your pet gets lost, their tag is their ticket home. Also consider microchipping your pets.

- **Make sure you have a current photo of your pet or service animal for identification purposes.**

# Family Emergency Plan

- **Make a pet or service animal emergency kit (Refer to the GENERAL CHECKLIST in this toolkit).**
- **Make sure you have a secure pet carrier, leash, or harness for your pet or service animal so that if the animal panics, it cannot escape.**

**PLAN AHEAD: Protect Your Pet During a Disaster**

- Bring your **pet or service animal** inside immediately.
- Have newspapers on hand for sanitary purposes. Feed animals moist or canned food so they will need less water to drink.
- Animals have instincts about severe weather changes and will often isolate themselves if they are afraid. Bringing them inside early can prevent them from running away. Never leave a pet or service animal outside or tied up during a storm.
- Separate dogs and cats. Even if your dogs and cats normally get along, the anxiety of an emergency situation can cause pets to act irrationally. Keep small pets away from cats and dogs.
- In an emergency, you may have to take your birds with you. Talk with your veterinarian or local pet store about special food dispensers that regulate the amount of food a bird is given. Make sure that the bird is caged and the cage is covered by a thin cloth or sheet to provide security and filtered light.
- If you evacuate your home, **DO NOT LEAVE YOUR PETS BEHIND**! Pets most likely cannot survive on their own and, if they do, you may not be able to find them when you return. 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; consider loved ones or friends outside of your immediate area who would be willing to host you and your pets in an emergency.
- Have a back-up 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 to improvise and use what you have on hand to make it on your own for at least five days.

Plan how you will shelter your pets during and after a disaster. **Service animals are allowed in shelters.** Pets may or may not be allowed in a shelter. If your pets are not allowed in a shelter, plan for where they will stay and how you will take care of them.

- **Keep a list of "pet friendly" hotels and motels.** Before making your list, check motel and hotel policies for accepting pets; they may have limits on the number, size, and kind of pets they allow. If they are pet-friendly, have a list of these motels and hotels with their phone numbers.
- **Ask someone you trust to care for your animals.** Talk with this person before a disaster so you both know the plan.

- **Some veterinarians and pet care facilities may take care of your animals overnight.** Find out which ones can help in an emergency. Make a list and know how to get a hold of them at any time.
- **Check with animal shelters in your area.** They may have a plan to help during a disaster. Find out about their plan and if they are an option for you and your animals.
- **If you have a hearing ear dog or other service animal, keep its proper identification and equipment with you.**

For additional information on "Caring for Your Pet After a Disaster," "Tips for Large Animals," "Cold Weather Guidelines for Large Animals," go to **www.ready.gov/animals** and review other sites listed in the **RESOURCES** section of this toolkit.

## 6. Family Code Word

A family code word is a secret word that only parents and their children know. This secret word should be easy for the children to remember. It should be a word a kidnapper could not guess. In an emergency, a parent may not be able to pick up a child from school or activity. Someone else may have to pick up the child. The family code word will let the child know it is safe to go with that person. If the person does not know the code word, the child should not go with that person. Practicing this with your child will help him or her remember what to do.

**HELPFUL TIP:**

Unless you are in immediate danger, use texts to communicate. Texts get through easier during emergencies. Phone calls may not get through. Phone lines are also needed by 911, the police, and fire departments.

**PLAN AHEAD: Talk with your child in a calm manner.**
Talk about safety openly and without fear. This will help your child feel more independent, not afraid.

- **Pick a word that is easy for everyone to remember.** It should not be the name of a pet or a word that can be easily guessed.
- **Teach your child what to do if someone approaches who does not know the code word.** He or she must not to go anywhere with that person. Talk about how your child can get away and find help.
- **Practice the plan with your child.** They should know what to do in either situation.

# Family Emergency Plan

## 7. Important Contacts

Emergencies can happen very fast. For example, you may need to reach your doctor or your child's school. You may not have time to find their phone number or address.

**PLAN AHEAD: Use the FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING FORM to put all this information in one place.** Make sure to take it with you if an emergency or natural disaster happens.

### Don't forget!

Make copies of the **Important Documents Checklist**, **Family Emergency Planning Form,** and **Medical Emergency Wallet Card**. Update them every six months (during Daylight Saving Time)!

# Evacuation Planning Guide

**Please heed warnings from public officials and agencies related to emergency situations and natural disasters, especially if you are a person with a physical disability or mobility impairment. People who are able to evacuate voluntarily in advance of emergency situations are more likely able to take all needed medications, assistive technology, mobility devices, durable medical equipment, and service animals with them. Planning in advance for these emergency situations will also help prepare you for an evacuation.**

Use this **EVACUATION PLANNING GUIDE** to help you create an Evacuation Plan for you and your family members. Consider your specific circumstances, where you live, and where you might need to go depending on different types of emergencies. Review the plan with your family, and practice what you need to do if you have to evacuate, including how to get a person with limited mobility or no mobility out of the house. If a person has a mobility device and/or a service animal, practice getting the person out both *with* AND *without* that mobility device and/or service animal.

Service animals provide a valuable service to the people with physical disabilities they serve. Service animals are not pets. Treat the service animal as you would a person. Service animals are equally important in evacuation and rescue efforts. In emergencies, the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) requires that the service animal be transported **WITH the person**.

If you have a mobility impairment, and live in a home with an elevator or in a high-rise building, make sure you have an evacuation chair, an evacuation sheet, or other transfer device that will allow you to exit the building using the stairs with the assistance of another person. You should also consider having a smoke/fire hood and/or respirator.

If a family member with a disability needs assistance, your **FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING FORM** should identify who is responsible for making sure that individual is safe in different emergency situations – staying in place, moving to a safe location within a structure, or evacuating. There should also be a plan for notifying emergency responders if an individual cannot leave but needs to be evacuated.

## 1. Evacuating Yourself and Your Family

**www.ready.gov/evacuating-yourself-and-your-family**

Evacuations are more common than many people realize. Fires and floods cause evacuations most frequently across the U.S. In addition, hundreds of times a year, transportation and industrial accidents release harmful substances, forcing many people to leave their homes.

The amount of time you have to leave will depend on the hazard. If the event is a weather condition, you might have a day or two to get ready. **However, many disasters allow no time for people to gather even the most basic necessities, which is why planning ahead is essential.**

# Evacuation Planning Guide

Plan how you will communicate with your family. Anticipate where you will go for different directions so you have options in an emergency and know the evacuation routes to get to those destinations Decide what supplies you'll need to take with you for each of these different situations.

There may be conditions under which you will decide to get away or there may be situations when you are ordered to leave. Follow these guidelines for evacuation:

- **Plan places where your family will meet, both within and outside of your immediate neighborhood.** Use the **FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING FORM** to decide these locations before a disaster.
- **If you have a car, keep a full tank of gas in it if an evacuation seems likely.** Keep a half tank of gas in it at all times in case of an unexpected need to evacuate. Gas stations may be closed during emergencies and unable to pump gas during power outages. Plan to take one car per family to reduce congestion and delay, if possible.
- **Become familiar with alternate routes and other means of transportation out of your area.** Choose several destinations in different directions so you have options in an emergency.
- **Leave early enough** to avoid being trapped by severe weather.
- **Follow recommended evacuation routes.** Do not take shortcuts; they may be blocked.
- **Be alert for road hazards** such as washed-out roads or bridges and downed power lines. Do not drive into flooded areas.
- **If you do not have a car, plan how you will leave if you have to.** Make arrangements with family, friends, or your local government.
- **Take your GO BAG,** unless you have reason to believe it has been contaminated. If contaminated, dispose of your **GO BAG** and its contents.
- **Listen to a battery-powered radio and follow local evacuation instructions.**
- **Take your pets/service animals with you**, but understand that only service animals may be permitted in public shelters. Plan how you will care for your pets/service animals in an emergency.

If time allows, consider doing the following before evacuating:

- **Call or email the out-of-state contact on your FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING FORM.** Tell them where you are going.
- **Secure your home** by closing and locking doors and windows.
- **Unplug electrical equipment such as radios, televisions, and small appliances.** Leave freezers and refrigerators plugged in unless there is a risk of flooding. 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.**
- **Wear sturdy shoes and clothing that provides some protection** such as long pants, long-sleeved shirts, and a cap.
- **Check with neighbors who may need a ride.**

## 2. Basic Fire Escape Planning

**www.nfpa.org/safety-information/for-consumers/escape-planning/basic-fire-escape-planning**

Your ability to get out depends on advance warning from smoke alarms and advance planning. Pull together everyone in your household and make a plan. Walk through your home and inspect all possible exits and escape routes. **See the HOW TO MAKE A HOME FIRE ESCAPE PLAN form.**

- **Draw a floor plan or a map of your home.** Show all doors and windows.
  - Mark two ways out of each room.
  - Mark the locations of all smoke alarms in your home.
- **Install smoke alarms** in every sleeping room, outside each sleeping area, and on every level of the home.
- **Everyone in the household must understand the escape plan.** When you walk through your plan, check to make sure the escape routes are clear and doors and windows can be opened easily.
- **If there are infants, older adults, or family members with mobility limitations, make sure that someone is assigned to assist them** in a fire drill or in the event of an emergency. Assign a back-up person too.
- **If windows or doors in your home have security bars, make sure that the bars have emergency release devices inside** so that they can be opened immediately in an emergency.
- **Always be fully prepared for a fire:** when a smoke alarm sounds, get out immediately.
- **Once you're out, stay out!** Under no circumstances should you ever go back into a burning building. If someone is missing, inform the fire department dispatcher when you call.
- **If your home has two floors, every family member (including children) must be able to escape from the second floor rooms.** Escape ladders can be placed in or near windows to provide an additional escape route. Review the manufacturer's instructions carefully so you'll be able to use a safety ladder in an emergency. Practice setting up the ladder from a first floor window to make sure you can do it correctly and quickly. Children should only practice with a grown-up, and only from a first-story window. Store the ladder near the window, in an easily accessible location. You don't want to have to search for it during a fire.
- **Closing doors on your way out slows the spread of fire,** giving you more time to safely escape.

# Evacuation Planning Guide

- In some cases, smoke or fire may prevent you from exiting your home or apartment building. To prepare for an emergency like this, **practice "sealing yourself in for safety" as part of your home fire escape plan**. Close all doors between you and the fire. Use duct tape or towels to seal the door cracks and cover air vents to keep smoke from coming in. Call the fire department to report your exact location. Wave a flashlight or light-colored cloth at the window to let the fire department know where you are located.

## 3. Escape Planning in Tall Buildings

**www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/By-topic/Safety-in-the-home/Escape-planning**

Fire drills are important for all homes, including apartment buildings and other high-rise structures. You need to know the basics of escape planning, from identifying two ways out of every room to getting low and going under smoke, and the importance of practicing how you would respond in an emergency. Be aware that sometimes the safest thing you can do in a tall building fire is to stay put and wait for firefighters.

**SAFETY TIPS:** To increase fire safety for apartment dwellers, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) offers the following guidelines:

- **Know the plan.** Make sure that you're familiar with your building's evacuation plan, which should illustrate what residents are supposed to do in the event of an emergency.
- **Practice is key.** Whether your building has one floor or fifty, it's essential that you and your family are prepared to respond to a fire alarm. Identify all of the exits in your building and if you are using the **HOW TO MAKE A HOME FIRE ESCAPE PLAN** form, mark them on your escape plan. Make sure to mark the various stairways too, in case one is blocked by fire.
- **Never use the elevator.** In case of fire, always use the stairs to get out, never the elevator. Make sure to practice using the stairs as part of your escape plan. If someone in your family has a mobility impairment make sure they have an evacuation chair or similar device available for evacuating down stairs, You should also consider having a fire hood mask, smoke mask, or escape respirator.
- **Stay low.** Smoke from a fire is toxic and deadly no matter what kind of structure you live in. When you hold your fire drill, everyone in the family should practice getting low and going under the smoke to the exit. In the event of a fire, and if hallways and stairwells are filled with smoke, stay in your apartment and wait for firefighters.
- **Seal yourself in for safety.** If you can't exit an apartment building due to smoke or fire in the hallway, call the fire department to report your exact location and gather in a room with a window to await their arrival. Close all doors between you and the fire. Use duct tape or towels to create a seal around the door and over air vents in order to keep smoke from coming in.
- **Stay by the window.** If possible, you should open your windows at the top and the bottom so fresh air can get in. Don't break the window—if smoke enters the room from outside the building, you won't be able to protect yourself.

- **Signal to firefighters.** Wave a flashlight or light colored cloth at the window to let the fire department know where you are located.

## 4. Evacuation Procedures/Evacuation Devices

If you live or work in a multi-story/high-rise building, you need to be aware of evacuation procedures. Ask if there is an evacuation plan. Ask what the procedure is to evacuate people with mobility issues. If that plan includes a designated area where you will be safe while waiting to be evacuated, make sure there are plans to notify rescue personnel of your location.

You should also consider having a fire hood mask, smoke mask, or escape respirator.

Evacuation chairs are not the only answer to evacuate people with mobility impairments. Individuals who use wheelchairs or other types of mobility devices for walking should have access to an evacuation chair, an evacuation sheet, or other transfer device if they live or work in a multi-story building. Remember that people have different needs during an evacuation, so people with disabilities should be consulted to see what kind of evacuation device works best for them.

People with physical disabilities or who have mobility impairments may need additional assistance evacuating if stairways are a part of their evacuation route. Thus, a comprehensive approach, including evacuations devices, wheelchairs, transfer devices, and a person to assist individuals with disabilities, may be required.

If elevators are not an option, evacuation chairs or other evacuation devices are needed to help people with mobility issues exit the building using the stairs with the assistance of another person, such as a personal care attendant or rescue personnel. Planning for and training on the use of evacuation chairs or other evacuation devices must be based on a person's location and availability of a person willing to assist that individual during an emergency.

Recognizing that there is no way to predict how evacuation routes will be affected in an emergency, consider the following to ensure an evacuation route is as clear as possible prior to an emergency:

- Accessible routes to stairwells via halls and other access points are clear.
- The stairwells are not blocked.
- There is adequate emergency lighting, if the power is out.
- The stairwell entrances and exits are unlocked.

Your building management may be able to provide a reasonable accommodation (such as an evacuation chair) if requested for emergency purposes. A reasonable accommodation request can be made orally or in writing. It is better if the request is made in writing to prevent any misunderstandings and to document the accommodation request. Check with a housing provider in advance to determine if there is a standard request form.

If you are receiving long-term care support services, another option for securing an evacuation chair would be to request the evacuation chair as part of your care plan. You will need to work with your case manager to secure approval for the purchase of an evacuation chair.

If you are employed and working in a high-rise building, ask if there are evacuation chairs available in the building. If there are none available, you will need to work with your employer to request that an evacuation chair be available as an accommodation. As with the request to your housing provider, the request to your employer for a reasonable accommodation should be in writing, although it does not need to be. An additional option, if you are employed, would be to request an evacuation chair as part of your plan for employment from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). Your DVR counselor may also help you request a reasonable accommodation from your employer.

For other possible funding sources for an evacuation chair or other evacuation device, check with:

- Your managed care organization (MCO): **www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/familycare/mcos.htm**
- A local aging and disability resource center (ADRC): **www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/adrc**
- The independent living center that services your county: **www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/disabilities/physical/ilcs-contact.htm**

You can also check with your private health insurance to determine if an evacuation chair is considered durable medical equipment.

# Responder Tips for Professionals and Volunteers

## COMMUNICATING WITH PEOPLE IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Special consideration should be given to the needs of special populations during a crisis. These tips have been developed to help professionals and volunteers in their search, rescue, and evacuation operations when assisting people with disabilities and the elderly during an emergency or natural disaster.

- Get the person's attention first.
- Speak to them at eye level.
- Identify yourself and explain why you are there, no matter how obvious it may seem.
- Look at the person when you speak. They may be able to read your lips.
- Speak slowly with a low-pitched and calm voice.
- Use short, familiar words, such as "What do you need?"
- Ask one question at a time. Try to ask questions that can be answered with a yes or no, if possible.
- Give directions one at a time. Check for understanding after each step.
- Give the person time to respond to your question or follow directions.
- Repeat, rephrase, or write your message if necessary.
- Ask permission first, before touching the person.
- Ask before moving a person or a person's wheelchair/mobility device.

*Mobile TIPS for First Responders* is a mobile application that provides general tips as well as tips for assisting people with various disabilities during emergency situations. This application was developed by Project REDD at the Center on Disability and Development at Texas A&M University. The Mobile TIPS are adapted from Dr. Tony Cahill's 3rd Edition of the *TIPS for First Responders*. To view this application, visit **disabilitytips.tamu.edu**.

# Responder Tips for Professionals and Volunteers

## DISABILITY ETIQUETTE

It is important to remember:

- Not all disabilities are visible, such as heart disease, depression, or asthma.
- Many people have temporary disabilities, which are equally as limiting as permanent disabilities.
- Not everyone with a disability wishes to discuss it or its limitations. Wait until you know an individual before asking personal questions.

The following pages provide tips for communicating with people with various disabilities. These tips are not all-inclusive, but may be helpful in emergency situations. These tips and resources are from University of Washington and are available at: **depts.washington.edu/uwdrs/faculty/faculty-resources/tips-for-working-with-different-disabilities**.

### Blindness or Visual Impairment

- Provide very explicit and specific directions if asked. Avoid using such terms as "over there" or "turn this way."
- Never pet, feed, or otherwise distract a service animal without first getting permission from the owner.
- Provide written information in accessible, electronic formats to support the individual in using assistive technology to speak content aloud.
- Feel free to use words like "see" and "look."
- Offer your arm/elbow when leading someone who is blind.
- Place the person's hand on the side or back of the chair when seating them.

### Cognitive

- Be very clear and specific in your language. Sarcasm and subtle humor is often missed.
- Present instructions in a clear, easy-to-understand way.
- Present oral information at a measured pace, using pauses as appropriate to encourage understanding.
- Offer cues to help with transitions like, "we have five minutes left until our meeting is done."
- Reinforce information in multiple formats.
- Employ modeling, rehearsing and role-playing to help people learn appropriate interactions.
- Keep in mind that an unconventional response may be influenced by a cognitive difficulty that affects social interaction.

### Chronic or Acute Health

*Examples: cancer, asthma, emphysema, diabetes, HIV/AIDS, sickle cell*

- Understand that each person has a unique set of symptoms and treatments.
- Accept that many health conditions are often invisible to others.
- Never define a person by their condition. For example, someone should be referred to as "the girl who has cancer," not "the cancer girl."
- Do not treat the person as if he or she is contagious.

# Responder Tips for Professionals and Volunteers

## Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing

- Tap someone who is Deaf on the shoulder or wave your hand to get his or her attention.
- Write notes if you don't sign (short sentences; common words).
- Look directly at the person while speaking and don't obscure your mouth.
- Try to limit gum chewing.
- Do not accept a head nod for understanding.
- Talk directly to the person, not the interpreter.
- Speak at a normal speed and tone unless asked to do otherwise.
- Avoid standing in front of a light source.
- Do not walk between two people using sign language as you will be cutting off their communication.
- Try to be expressive in your body language, gestures, and facial expressions.

## Learning Disability or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

- Understand that learning disabilities may impact a person's reading, writing, math, memory, and/or information processing.
- Realize that this is rarely visible evidence of learning disabilities.
- Use multiple methods to deliver information.
- Minimize environmental distractions (screen savers, background noises, etc.).
- Keep in mind that an unconventional response may be influenced by a processing difficulty that affects social interaction.

## Neurological

*Examples: cerebral palsy, seizures, multiple sclerosis, Tourette syndrome, muscular dystrophy, traumatic brain injury (TBI)*

- Know that some of these conditions will have symptoms that look like mobility issues or learning disabilities.
- Understand that someone may look as though they do not have a disability.

## Psychological

- Understand that social skills may be impaired.
- Be sensitive to emotional stress or triggers.
- Be patient.
- Set clear boundaries for people repeatedly interacting with you.

## Speech and Language

- Allow time for the person to speak, as they may need more time to respond to you.
- Avoid the urge to interrupt or complete a sentence for the person.
- Ask for repetition if you do not understand what the person said.
- Do not fake understanding.
- Be aware that you may need to use a variety of communication methods, such as writing notes, emailing, or technological options.
- Be patient and encourage the person toward expression.

# Responder Tips for Professionals and Volunteers

## Wheelchair Users and Other Mobility Device Users

- If engaged in a long conversation with someone who uses a chair, position yourself at the same eye level by sitting down.
- Treat the chair as part of a person's personal space; do not touch or lean on the chair.
- Ask before giving assistance to a wheelchair user and take "no" for an answer.
- Feel free to use words like "run" or "walk." Wheelchair users use these words too.
- Be aware of architectural features that may cause difficulty for wheelchair users, such as steps or doorways that are not wide enough.
- Remember that some parking spaces are reserved for people with mobility limitations. They are not a luxury, but a necessity.
- Direct your comments to the individual, not their companion or care attendant.
- Never pet, feed, or otherwise distract a service animal without first obtaining permission from the owner.

## TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

The following pages show a list of the possible situations or conditions that professionals and volunteers may encounter when working with people with disabilities or the elderly during emergency situations.

## Delayed Response Syndrome

People with disabilities, the elderly, and others in a trauma situation may respond more slowly to a crisis and often don't immediately comprehend the magnitude of their loss or injury. In some instances, reaction time is decreased. Due to age-related impairments, older people may also have difficulty hearing and understanding warnings and broadcasts.

## Mobility Impairments

People with disabilities and the elderly may have a wide range of mobility impairments. Loss of mobility may be the result of arthritis, osteoporosis, stroke, or numerous other conditions that could result from a fall or an accident. The mildest impairment may require a cane for support. Other impairments might require the need for crutches, four-pronged canes, and walkers. The most severe would be the need for a wheelchair for an individual who has limited use of arms and hands. These individuals may require special care and handling techniques. Adapt your rescue techniques to their disabilities. Whenever possible, allow the individuals to tell you how they should be assisted. People with disabilities living in the community are usually able to direct their own care. Make note of any special needs these individuals may have so special accommodations can be made. Be sure to alert emergency responders about the individual's special needs and any special sheltering arrangements that may be required.

## Sensory Changes

Many individuals with disabilities and the elderly suffer from some form of sensory deprivation. For

their own safety, it is important that responders understand the nature of sensory impairments. Sense of smell, pain and/or discomfort, touch, vision, or hearing may be less acute than the general population or may be heightened. For example, a limited sense of smell may render an older person unable to detect a natural gas leak and to take proper safety measures. Vision and hearing loss may affect people of any age. Responders should assess the person's ability to see or hear and adapt rescue techniques accordingly. Some individuals will not admit to either a vision or hearing loss. An emergency responder may have to detect the loss through observation. Hypersensitivity or Hyposensitivity sensations may also cause problems for people. For example, people who are hypersensitive to light may need to have their sunglasses when being transferred from indoors to outdoors. Some people don't want to be touched. To communicate, use the suggestions from "**Communicating with People in Emergency Situations**" section within this toolkit. Explain what procedures need to take place, and ask permission before touching people or moving their equipment. This will ensure that individuals are accommodated according to their specific disabilities and needs.

## Hearing Loss

It is estimated that hearing impairments affect about one-third of the population over age 65. People who have a hearing loss may appear disoriented and confused. Observe the person while you are speaking. Does the individual appear to be trying to read lips? Does he or she appear to understand? Determine if the individual normally uses a hearing aid and has one available. If this hearing aid is inoperable or damaged, make a note of this and report it to a disaster worker to get assistance in replacing it. Adapt your communications accordingly. This may require using gestures or pen and paper in the field and having a sign language interpreter in a shelter or medical facility.

## Vision Loss

People with visual impairments also need special consideration when evacuating. Treat a blind person as you would anyone else. You do not need to raise your voice to talk to them. Identify yourself and explain why you are there. When assisting a visually impaired person, avoid using words like "over there" or "here." Use specific directions such as "right" or "left." Ask what assistance they need, and be calm and reassuring. When assisting a visually impaired person to a seat, place the individual's hand on the back of the seat so he or she can become oriented to the position of the seat.

## Service Animals

More and more people with disabilities have specially trained service animals. **A service animal is any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.** Tasks performed can include, among other things, pulling a wheelchair, retrieving dropped items, alerting a person to a sound, reminding a person to take medication, or pressing an elevator button.

Emotional support animals, comfort animals, and therapy dogs are not service animals under Title II and Title III of the ADA. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not considered service animals either. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability. It does

not matter if a person has a note from a doctor that states that the person has a disability and needs to have the animal for emotional support. A doctor's letter does not turn an animal into a service animal.

The following are examples of animals that fit the ADA's definition of "service animal" because they have been specifically trained to perform a task for a person with a disability:

- **Guide Dog or Seeing Eye® Dog**[1] is a carefully trained dog that serves as a travel tool for persons who have severe visual impairments or are blind.
- **Hearing or Signal Dog** is a dog that has been trained to alert a person who has a significant hearing loss or is deaf when a sound occurs, such as a knock on the door.
- **Psychiatric Service Dog** is a dog that has been trained to perform tasks that assist individuals with disabilities to detect the onset of psychiatric episodes and lessen their effects. Tasks performed by psychiatric service animals may include reminding the handler to take medicine, providing safety checks or room searches, or turning on lights for persons with post traumatic stress disorder, interrupting self-mutilation by persons with dissociative identity disorders, and keeping disoriented individuals from danger.
- **SSigDOG** (sensory signal dogs or social signal dog) is a dog trained to assist a person with autism. The dog alerts the handler to distracting repetitive movements common among those with autism, allowing the person to stop the movement (e.g., hand flapping).
- **Seizure Response Dog** is a dog trained to assist a person with a seizure disorder. How the dog serves the person depends on the person's needs. The dog may stand guard over the person during a seizure or the dog may go for help. A few dogs have learned to predict a seizure and warn the person in advance to sit down or move to a safe place.

Under Title II and III of the ADA, service animals are limited to dogs. However, entities must make reasonable modifications in policies to allow individuals with disabilities to use miniature horses if they have been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for individuals with disabilities

These animals should be evacuated at the same time as the person with a disability. These dogs can be especially helpful to individuals with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability and can help relieve the stress of the situation.

## Chronic Illness/Medications

Many people with disabilities and the elderly suffer from a number of common ailments including heart and lung disease, cancer, stroke, diabetes, and high blood pressure. Because of these conditions, many use medications. When evacuating individuals, give special consideration to gathering all the medications for those individuals. Even if medicines appear to be contaminated, take the containers so that the information on them—name of the medication and instructions, prescribing physician, and pharmacy—is available to get the prescriptions refilled when the person is in a safer environment. Also, check for any **MEDICAL TAGS** (bracelet, necklace, or ankle bracelet) that identify different medical conditions.

[1] *Source: https://adata.org/publication/service-animals-booklet*

# Responder Tips for Professionals and Volunteers

## Heat and Cold

Many people with disabilities and the elderly are more vulnerable to heat and cold. This may be because of a chronic condition or the use of medications.

### Hypothermia

Means low body temperature, which is caused by exposure to the cold. If cold causes the body temperature to drop below 95° F, the heart begins to slow down, the body becomes weak, and the mind becomes confused. If not treated, hypothermia can be fatal. If you see a person with any of the following signs, it could mean that person may be suffering from hypothermia:

- Confusion
- Difficulty speaking
- Shivering
- Slow, shallow breathing
- Sleepy and hard to wake up
- Cold, stiff muscles
- Puffy face
- Stomach cold to the touch
- Forgetfulness
- Trembling on one side of the body or in one arm or leg

The treatment for possible hypothermia includes keeping the person warm with blankets, quilts, towels, or warm clothing. Make sure the individual's head and neck are covered, and handle the person gently.

### Hyperthermia

Means an increase in body temperature due to exposure to heat. Be sure the individual is cooled down and has plenty of liquids. Some signs of hyperthermia are dizziness, nausea, dry skin with no sweating, and mental confusion.

To assist someone with symptoms of hyperthermia, move the individual out of the hot environment and implement cooling measures as needed. Be sure the individual is cooled down and has plenty of liquids. Rest and rehydration are the treatment generally needed.

## Dementias

Dementia affects a person's mental functioning. Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia. Symptoms include: memory loss, impaired judgment, disheveled appearance, disorientation, absentmindedness, inability to communicate, and poor concentration. People with dementia may have impaired ability to respond to questions from rescuers. Try to maintain a calm environment, and, if possible, remove the individual from the stressful situation. It is important to use a non-threatening tone of voice. Excess stimuli may trigger a catastrophic reaction. If possible when working with individuals who have dementia, turn off lights and sirens and keep the radio volume down.

To communicate, use the suggestions from **"Communicating with People in Emergency Situations"** section of this toolkit. If the person is not injured and will be taken to a shelter, be sure to alert disaster workers of the individual's special needs so special accommodations can be made.

# Responder Tips for Professionals and Volunteers

## Autism Spectrum

The autism spectrum actually refers to a range of disorders. Each disorder has its own specific symptoms and they are sub-classified to make the diagnosis process easier. Some of these disorders have common traits, such as the struggle to communicate. Autistic adults on the higher end of the spectrum are able to speak with a very high level of vocabulary while those on the lower end of the spectrum may only use sounds to communicate. Some individuals may even be completely non-verbal. When working with adults on the autism spectrum it is important to allow ample time when communicating. Keep sentences short and concise. Sarcasm and subtle humor is often missed.

Autistic adults experience sensory overload from stimuli that most individuals would generally find comfortable. It is important to understand autistic individuals like to keep their personal space and may not like physical contact. In fact, this can lead to the equivalent of a panic attack for them. If possible when working with individuals on the autism spectrum, don't force communication, respect their desire for personal space, stay calm, and keep things consistent (they prefer to be prepared and know what to expect in new situations).

## Transfer Trauma

Transfer trauma occurs most often when individuals who are residing in an institution are transferred from one facility to another and are uprooted from friends, familiar surroundings and routines. Under normal situations, this process would take place after advance planning with facility staff who know the residents and can help reduce the effects of the move. While this is most often identified as a problem for residents of care facilities, it can also affect people with disabilities and the elderly who are homebound. A rapid change in environment can lead to distress that can be exhibited as aggravation, confusion, depression, serious illness, and even death. Rescue personnel need to be watchful when working with some people with disabilities and the elderly, especially those who are very frail. Rescue personnel should report any concerns to incident command.

## Fear of Institutionalization

For some older adults, and some people with disabilities, there is a fear of being placed in an institution. That emotion can override the individual's good judgment. They may be hesitant to admit any injuries or need for assistance for fear they will be placed in a nursing home. These individuals need to be reassured that they may receive medical attention and/or disaster assistance without fear of automatic placement into a nursing home or other institution.

Contact the emergency management office in your county for additional information and/or assistance. **http://emergencymanagement.wi.gov/counties/county_directors.asp.**

This material was originally prepared by the Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups through a grant from the Wisconsin State Bureau on Aging. It has been updated by Dane County Emergency Management, Special Populations Unit, in 2010. It was revised by the Wisconsin Council on Physical Disabilities Emergency Preparedness Committee for use in the Wisconsin Council on Physical Disabilities Emergency Preparedness Toolkit in December 2015.

# Online Toolkit and Visual Communications Tool

## Online Toolkit

The following forms are available for download from the **ONLINE TOOLKIT** at **cpd.wisconsin.gov/toolkit.htm**.

- Electronic copies of the following:
  - **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS TOOLKIT** Manual *(updated)*
  - **GENERAL CHECKLIST** *(updated)*
  - **DISABILITY CHECKLIST** *(updated)*
  - **CAR CHECKLIST** *(updated)*
  - **IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS CHECKLIST** *(updated)*
  - **MEDICAL EMERGENCY WALLET CARD**
  - **FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING FORM** *(updated)*
  - **VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS TOOL**
  - **HOW TO MAKE A HOME FIRE ESCAPE PLAN** *(updated)*
  - **MEDICAL INFORMATION AND EMERGENCY HEALTH CARE PLAN** *(updated)*

## Visual Communications Tool

The **VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS TOOL** can be used for quick and easy communication during an emergency. Stress may make it more difficult to understand others. You may have trouble expressing yourself when you are upset. Maybe your hearing aid was damaged, your cochlear implant was destroyed, or your communication board device was lost or damaged. This tool can be used to tell others what you need. They can also use the card to tell you what is going on.

The **VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS TOOL** **does not** substitute for accommodations required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Shelters and federal aid programs must provide interpreting services and other public accommodations as required by the ADA.

# Important Documents

## Important Documents Checklist

The **IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS CHECKLIST** helps to identify important documents and other items that you should take with you if there is an emergency.

You may need to apply for aid after a natural disaster. Your house or car may be damaged. You may have been injured, or you might need money or support services. The items on this emergency checklist will help you rebuild your life.

Use this checklist as a guide. You will not need every item. Our needs, properties, and lifestyles are different. For example, if you own a car, you must have auto insurance. Put a copy of your insurance card in your **GO BAG** or emergency kit. Remember to also include other insurance information (e.g. Medicare, health insurance, home or renters insurance).

**Take pictures and videos of everything you own.** Don't forget the insides of your closets and cabinets! Some cameras have pictures and videos stored on SD (Secure Digital) cards. Pictures can also be scanned and copied to a flash drive. Make sure SD cards or flash drives are stored in a waterproof container. If possible, scan all your important documents and copy them to a flash drive that you can take with you if you need to evacuate.

Consider keeping a backup copy of all documents in a safety deposit box at a bank, in a fireproof / waterproof lock box in your house, or have a backup storage location somewhere else (for example, with a family member in a secure location.)

## Documents Storage

Keep copies of all your important papers in a document storage mechanism of your choice. These documents will help you recover after an emergency. **Never include the original documents.** Store them in a safe place. A fireproof safe or safe deposit box at a bank is a good idea. If you need to use multiple envelopes for your copies, remember to keep everything together. Don't forget to also include a copy of your **MEDICAL EMERGENCY WALLET CARD**. The envelope(s) with your **IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS** should be kept together in a waterproof container.

Remember that it's a good idea, if possible, to scan all your important documents, including pictures of the contents of your home, and copy the files to a flash drive that you can take with you if you need to evacuate. The flash drive should also be stored in a waterproof container that can be put into a secure pocket or on a lanyard around your neck.

# Thunderstorm

## A Thunderstorm Watch or a Warning: What's the difference?

### WATCH

A thunderstorm **watch** means that severe thunderstorms are possible in or near the area. Stay alert. Look for storms. Be ready to act.

### WARNING

A thunderstorm **warning** means that severe weather has been reported by radar, or by people who watch the weather. People may be hurt by the storm. Homes and buildings may be damaged. Protect yourself. Take action now.

## What you can do *before* a storm

- **Complete the FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING FORM with your family.** Review your **EVACUATION PLAN(S)** with your family and practice what you need to do if you have to evacuate, including how to get a person with limited mobility or no mobility out of the house. If a person has a mobility device and/or a service animal, practice getting the person out both ***with* AND *without*** that mobility device and/or service animal.
- **If your plan includes using your vehicle(s) to evacuate, make sure there is enough gas in the vehicle(s) at all times.**
- **Follow any directions to evacuate from emergency personnel broadcast on television, internet, NOAA weather radio, or local radio.**
- **Protect yourself from flying broken glass.** Close any blinds or shades over all windows. If there are strong winds, this will help keep the broken glass from flying into the home.

## The dangers of lightning

Most lightning deaths and injuries happen in the summer months. People are often hit when outdoors during the afternoon and evening.

Lightning strikes often come with heavy rain. It can start as far as 10 miles away. When lightning strikes a home, it can travel through pipes, phone lines, outlets, and wiring.

"Heat lightning" is lightning so far away that thunder is not heard. But, be careful; the storm can still move in your direction!

- **Avoid electric shocks from lightning strikes:**
  - Unplug all electrical items: computers, television sets, toasters, etc. **Don't forget to unplug the air conditioner!**
  - Don't take a shower, do dishes or use any water, and avoid windows.

# Thunderstorm

## What you can do *during* a storm

- **Grab your GO BAG!** Go to a storm shelter, or the safe place that has already been prepared (see the **Tornado** section of this toolkit).
- **Caught outside?** Find low ground such as a ravine or ditch. Stay away from anything made of metal. Stay away from tall trees and open water.
- **If you are on water**, quickly get to land and seek shelter.

## What you can do *after* a storm

- **Wait 30 minutes after the storm has passed** before going outside. Lightning can still strike after a storm has moved on.

### Caught outside when lightning strikes?

If you feel your hair stand up this means lighting will strike soon. Do not lie flat on the ground.

- Squat low to the ground and make yourself as small as possible.
- Place your hands over your ears.
- Put your head between your knees.

## Don't forget!

Daylight Saving Time (Spring Forward) is a good time to review your plan.

- **Recheck your Emergency Checklists.**
- **Review the items in your GO BAG, and emergency kits. Replace water, food, and batteries that are old.**
- **Update your MEDICAL EMERGENCY WALLET CARD.**
- **Go over your FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING FORM.**
- **Review your IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS CHECKLIST.**
- **Practice your escape plans.**
- **Check your fire alarms.**

# Tornado

## A Tornado Watch or a Warning: What's the difference?

### WATCH

A **tornado watch** means that a tornado might happen. It means that there are thunderstorms that could form a tornado. Stay alert. Watch for more information.

### WARNING

A **tornado warning** means that a tornado has been seen or is forming. The tornado is here. Take cover now!

## What you can do *before* a tornado

- **Complete the FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING FORM with your family.** Review your **EVACUATION PLAN(S)** with your family, and practice what you need to do if you have to evacuate, including how to get a person with limited mobility or no mobility out of the house. If a person has a mobility device and/or a service animal, practice getting the person out both ***with* AND *without*** that mobility device and/or service animal.
- **If your plan includes using your vehicle(s) to evacuate, make sure there is enough gas in the vehicle(s) at all times.**
- **Follow any directions to evacuate from emergency personnel broadcast on television, internet, NOAA weather radio, or local radio.**
- **Find the safest area of your home.** The safe place should be in a basement, closet, or hallway. If you do not have a basement, go to the center of your home. Take shelter under a sturdy table or under a stairwell. Stay away from windows. See the green box at the right for a list of important items to keep in your safe place.

## Important items to pack in your safe place

- **Whistle**
- **Helmet** (bike helmet) to protect your head from flying debris
- **Food and water**
- **Small pillow**
- **Thick blanket**
- **Flashlight or lantern-style lamp**
- **Extra batteries**
- **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) radio** with new batteries. Some can show captions, or someone who can hear may be able to listen for you.
- **Visual Communications Tool**
- **Old cell phone and charger,** you do not need a phone plan to call 9-1-1.

# Tornado

- **Check with your county, news channel, or newspaper to see if they send free text alerts.** Many news channels offer text alerts for weather warnings and emergencies. If they offer this service, sign up!
- **If you have a smartphone or iPad, there are apps for emergency alerts and warnings.** Download them!
- **You may not have access to text alerts or apps. Ask a trusted friend, neighbor, or family member to let you know when a tornado or storm is coming.**
- **If you are in a mobile home, GET OUT!** Get to a permanent building or underground shelter.

## What you can do *during* a tornado

- **Grab your GO BAG and get to your safe place immediately!** Tornadoes move fast. You may have only seconds to protect yourself.
- **Bring pet(s)/service animal(s) inside** or move them to the safest area of your home.
- **If you are caught outside**, look for a sturdy building. Go to the safest part where there are four walls (such as a bathroom or interior stairwell). Stay away from windows.
- **If you can't get inside**, quickly run away from trees and cars. Lie flat on the lowest part of the ground, such as a ditch, face down, with your arms over your head.
- **If you are caught in your car, park the car quickly.** Stay in the car with your seat belt on. Put your head down below the windows. If you can safely get to a lower place, such as a ditch, leave your car and lie down in that low area. Cover your head with your hands, a blanket, or a coat.

## What you can do *after* a tornado

- **Try to stay calm and keep your family together.** Don't forget to check your meeting place!
- **When walking around, watch your step.** Stay away from power lines and standing water with wires in them. They may still be carrying electricity!
- **Stay out of any heavily damaged houses or buildings.** They could collapse at any time.
- **Do not use matches or lighters.** There may be leaking natural gas pipes or fuel tanks nearby. Lighting a match could cause an explosion.
- **Stay away from fallen power lines.**

### Signs of a tornado

- You can see a rotating, funnel-shaped cloud reaching toward the ground during a thunderstorm.
- A cloud of debris flying around near the ground can mean there is a tornado; even if you can't see a funnel-shaped cloud.
- A change in the color of the sky.
- A stillness occurring during or soon after a thunderstorm. The air may become very still.
- Debris dropping from the sky.
- A loud roar or a deep rumbling that feels and sounds similar to a freight train.

# Flood

## A Flood Watch or a Warning: What's the difference?

### WATCH

A **flood watch** means flooding is possible. A flash flood watch means water can get high quickly. Be ready to move to higher ground. Stay tuned to the internet, television or an NOAA Weather Radio for information.

### WARNING

A **flood warning** means water is rising over land. Stay alert. Stay tuned to the internet, television, or NOAA weather radio. Follow any evacuation instructions. A flash flood warning means water is moving very fast over land. Run to higher ground NOW.

## What you can do *before* a flood

- **Complete the FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING FORM with your family.** Review your **EVACUATION PLAN(S)** with your family and practice what you need to do if you have to evacuate, including how to get a person with limited mobility or no mobility out of the house. If a person has a mobility device and/or a service animal, practice getting the person out both ***with* AND *without*** that mobility device and/or service animal.
- **If your plan includes using your vehicle(s) to evacuate, make sure there is enough gas in the vehicle(s) at all times.**
- **Follow any directions to evacuate from emergency personnel broadcast on television, internet, NOAA weather radio, or local radio.**
- **Get flood insurance.** Most homeowner's insurance policies do not cover damage from floods. For more information about flood insurance, visit **fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program**
- **Secure your home** by closing all doors, windows, and vents.
- If you have time, **bring in anything from outside that can float away**.
- **Move pet(s)/service animal(s), things you need, and valuables to an upper floor.**
- **Turn off utilities at the main electrical switches.** Unplug all electrical appliances.

### The dangers of electricity

Don't touch anything electrical if you are wet or standing in water! Electricity can flow through water and can kill you. Stay away from power lines that have fallen down.

# Flood

## What you can do *during* a flood

- **Move away from low spots and get to higher ground.**
- **Do not walk in flooded areas.** You don't know how fast the water is flowing. The water may be deeper than it looks. There may be things in the water that you can't see, or bacteria that could make you sick.
- **Do not try to drive through flooded roadways.** It will not always be easy to see how deep the water is (the roads may be washed out under flood waters).
- **Six inches of water will reach the bottom of most passenger cars.** This can cause the car to stall or the driver to lose control.
- **Do not drive around a barricade.** They are there for your protection. Turn around and go a different way.

## What you can do *after* a flood

- **Do not walk or drive through moving water.** Stay away from flooded areas. Water may be contaminated by oil, gasoline, or raw sewage.
- **Be careful driving around areas where the water has gone down.** The roads may be weakened. They could collapse under the weight of a car.
- **Stay out of any building if it is surrounded by water.** It may be unstable. Building foundations can be damaged by water from the flood.
- **Go home only when authorities say it is safe.**
- **Before you go inside your home, look for any damage.** Check outside for loose power lines. Check the gas lines for any damage. Make sure the foundation has no cracks. If you think there might be damage to water, gas, electric, or sewer lines, contact the authorities.
- **Watch the news to learn when the water is safe to drink.**
- **Mold can develop in 24 to 48 hours. Remove wet things from your home as soon as you can.** This includes carpet, furniture, bedding, wood floors, and drywall.
- **Clean and bleach whatever you don't throw away.** Mud left after a flood can include raw sewage and chemicals.
- **Make a detailed list of all the items you find damaged or lost.**
- **Take pictures of damages and water in the house.**
- **If you have flood insurance, file a claim.** Be sure to provide the following information:
    - The name of your insurance company
    - Your policy number
    - Contact information

### The dangers of flooding

- Do not try to walk across flowing streams or through moving water. Six inches of moving water can make you fall!
- A foot of water can make your car float.
- Two feet of water is all it takes to sweep away cars, SUVs, and pick-up trucks.

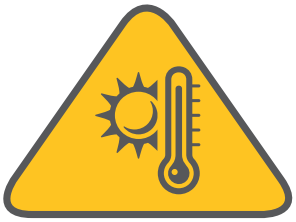
# Extreme Heat

## Excessive Heat Watch or Warning: What's the difference?

### WATCH

An **excessive heat watch** means conditions are favorable for an excessive heat event in the next 24 to 72 hours. It can be very hot for several days.

### WARNING



An **excessive heat warning** means air temperatures have gone up to dangerous levels for people and animals. Heat and humidity during this time can cause death. Stay out of the sun. Do what you can to stay cool.

## What you can do *before* excessive heat

- **Complete the FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING FORM with your family.** Review your **EVACUATION PLAN(S)** with your family and practice what you need to do if you have to evacuate, including how to get a person with limited mobility or no mobility out of the house. If a person has a mobility device and/or a service animal, practice getting the person out both ***with* AND *without*** that mobility device and/or service animal.
- **Cover any windows that get sun during the day.** Drapes or shades will help keep out the heat.
- **Make sure your air conditioner is working.** If you don't have an air conditioner, make a list of places you can go that have one. For example, you could go to a school, library, theater, or the mall.

## The dangers of heat exhaustion

Extremely hot air temperatures are dangerous. They can even be fatal. Everyone is at risk. People with physical disabilities, children, pets, and the elderly are the most vulnerable.

**Heat exhaustion (or heat cramps)** is one of the first signs the body is having trouble with the heat. This could lead to heat stroke or death. People experiencing the symptoms below need to cool down quickly. See the next page for what you can do.

Symptoms of heat exhaustion include:

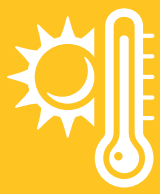
- Confusion and dizziness
- Fatigue and fainting
- Dark-colored urine (a sign of dehydration)
- Headache and nausea
- Muscle cramps and heavy sweating
- Pale skin and rapid heartbeat

# Extreme Heat

## What you can do *during* excessive heat

- **Drink plenty of water, even if you do not feel thirsty!** Don't drink beer, wine, alcohol, or beverages with caffeine.
- **For people with physical disabilities who do not perspire, it is important to use cold washcloths or towels** and/or have a spritzer bottle to cool themselves down.
- **NEVER leave children or pets alone in closed vehicles.**
- **Stay indoors as much as possible** and stay out of the sun.

### What is heat stroke?

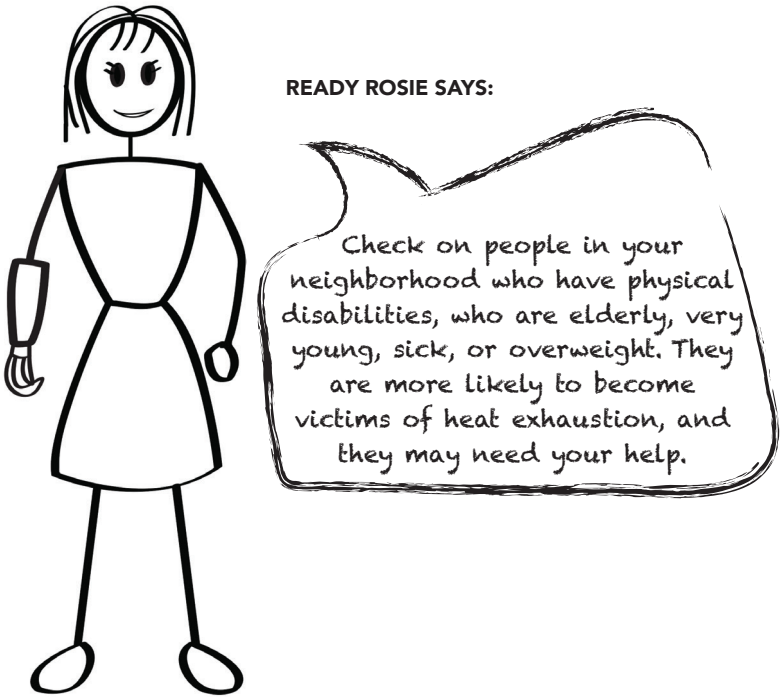


**Heat Stroke** or **Sun Stroke** happens when the body temperature keeps rising. Fluids are lost through heavy sweating. This can cause brain damage and death. The body must be cooled quickly. **The fluids lost through sweating must be replaced.**

Symptoms of heat stroke include:

- Body temperature is more than 105°F
- Lack of sweat
- Red, hot and dry skin
- Muscle weakness or cramps
- Nausea and vomiting
- Rapid heartbeat, which may be weak or strong
- Rapid, shallow breathing
- Behavioral changes such as confusion, disorientation, or loss of balance
- Throbbing headache
- Dizziness and light-headedness
- Seizures
- Unconsciousness

- **Avoid salt (unless your doctor tells you not to).**
- **Stay on the lowest floor of your home or go in the basement** because the temperature is cooler.
- **Go where there is air conditioning.** Review your list of places to go. For example, you could go to a school, a library, the theater, or the mall.
- **Postpone outdoor games** and activities.
- **Dress in lightweight and light-colored clothes.** Cover as much skin as possible. Wear hats with wide brims to keep the sun off your face. Avoid dark colors. Wear sunscreen on skin that is not covered.
- **Avoid any physical labor between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.** This is the warmest part of the day. If you have to work outdoors, take frequent breaks. **Drink plenty of water** to replace the water your body sweats out. Make sure someone is with you.
- **Remember your pets and animals!** Bring them inside to air conditioning if you can. Make sure they get **plenty of water and shade**.



# Drought

## What is drought?

**Drought** can happen when there is very little or no rain for a long time. A drought can last for 15 days or more. In some areas around the world, it can last many months or several years.

## What you can do *before* a drought

- **Save as much water as you can.** Choose appliances that are energy and water efficient.
- **Check all plumbing for leaks** and have any leaks repaired.
- **Limit the use of sprinklers or anything else that needs a constant stream of water.** Don't forget to turn off the hose!
- **Collect rain in a rain barrel.** This water can be used to water your lawn or garden.
- **Cover pools and spas** to reduce evaporation of water.

## What you can do *during* a drought

- **Follow the water restrictions** set by the local authorities.
- **Flush the toilet as little as possible.**
- **Avoid taking baths. Take short showers instead.** When you shower, turn on the water only to get wet. Then turn it on again to rinse off.
- **Do not keep the water on while brushing your teeth, washing your face, or shaving.**

## The dangers of drought

The heat and dry air of a drought can cause fires. Fires start easily because of dry grass, leaves, and bushes.

- Be extra careful when building campfires.
- Don't throw away cigarettes.
- Read the safety tips in the **Wildfire** section of this manual for more information.
- Drought can also cause dehydration or heat exhaustion.
- Make sure you keep plenty of water with you. **A person can only live three days without water.**
- Take steps to save water.
- Avoid activities outdoors.

- **Put a bucket in the shower to catch extra water.** It can be used for watering plants or cooling down your pets.
- **Avoid wasting water while waiting for it to get hot or cold.** Save extra water in buckets or containers. It can be used to water plants or for your pets. It can also be saved in the refrigerator for drinking or used for cooking.

# Wildfire

## What is a wildfire?

A **wildfire** or **fire storm** is fire that spreads very quickly over land. It is hard to control or stop. Wildfires can start from lightning or from other sources.

## What you can do *before* a wildfire

- **Complete the FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING FORM with your family.** Review your **EVACUATION PLAN(S)** with your family and practice what you need to do if you have to evacuate, including how to get a person with limited mobility or no mobility out of the house. If a person has a mobility device and/or a service animal, practice getting the person out both ***with* AND *without*** that mobility device and/or service animal.
- **If your plan includes using your vehicle(s) to evacuate, make sure there is enough gas in the vehicle(s) at all times.**
- **Follow any directions to evacuate from emergency personnel broadcast on elevision, internet, NOAA weather radio, or local radio.**
- **Have fire retardant products and fire extinguishers available and know how to use them.** Understand what products are available to treat your home, clothing, and body. Pretreat bedroom curtains and bedding.
- **Install dual-sensor smoke alarms on each level of your home.** Make sure to put them near bedrooms. If you need other types of alerts, such as a flashing light or vibrating alarms, install these where it makes the most sense. Do monthly tests. Change the batteries at least once a year.

## Recommendations for burning

Before you light any fire, learn about the burning rules in your area. Check with your local officials or fire department. You may need a special burn permit.

Safety tips to follow:

- Before you light the fire, make sure the fire can't spread. Clear away a ten foot wide area around the burn pit or burn barrel.
- Be ready in case the fire gets out of control. Keep a fire extinguisher or garden hose nearby at all times.
- Put stove, fireplace, or grill ashes in a metal bucket. Soak them for two days, then bury them in the soil.
- Liquid chemicals and oily rags can catch fire easily. Make sure to read the directions on how to store chemicals safely. Safety rules may differ due to the type of material. Store them outside or away from your home.
- Don't keep firewood close to your home. It should be stacked at least 100 feet away.

- **Keep fire extinguishers in a location where they are easy to grab and ready to use.** Teach each family member how to use them. Make sure family members know where to find them.
- **Teach children about fire safety, and keep matches out of their reach.**
- **Learn how to shut off your natural gas, propane tank, or fuel oil supply.**
- **Clean your roof and gutters regularly.** Cut down any dead branches hanging over your roof.
- **Keep your yard free of dead leaves, branches, and twigs.** Trim tree branches and shrubs. They should be more than 15 feet away from a stovepipe or chimney outlet.

## What you can do *during* a wildfire

- **Know how to use fire extinguishers and fire retardant products.** Treat clothing and use foam to cover exposed body areas to get through a fire.
- **Close all garage doors. Disconnect any automatic garage door openers.** If you have no power, you can still open the garage doors by hand.
- **In case you need to leave quickly, put your GO BAG, and if possible, your HOME KIT in the car.** Make sure you also get your pet(s)/service animal(s) into the car.
- **Wear protective clothing.** Your clothes should be cotton or wool. Cover as much skin as possible with long pants and a long-sleeved shirt. Wear sturdy shoes. Have a wet handkerchief to cover your face.
- **Keep paper maps in your car.** Regular evacuation routes may be closed by the fire. The signal for your GPS may be blocked by the smoke. Paper maps can be a backup in case you need to find a different way out.

### What you can do in your home

- **If you cannot leave, stay inside, and move away from outside walls.** Keep your family and pets together. Remain calm.
- **Close all openings such as windows, shutters, blinds, vents, doors, pet doors, etc.** Make sure you leave windows and doors unlocked.
- **Remove all drapes and curtains.** They could cause the fire to spread rapidly.
- **If you have a fireplace, open the damper.** Make sure to close the fireplace screen.
- **Shut off any natural gas, propane tank, or fuel oil supply.**
- **Use your garden hose to fill anything you can with water.** Pools and hot tubs can hold a lot. Garbage cans, tubs, or any other large containers can also hold a lot of water.
- **Put lawn sprinklers on the roof if you can.** Leave the sprinklers on as long as possible.
- **Put valuables in a pool or pond.**
- **Move furniture into the middle of your home.** They should be away from the windows and/or glass doors.
- **Turn on all the lights in your house.** This will make it easier for rescuers to see in heavy smoke.

# Wildfire

### What you can do in your car

Sitting in a car during a wildfire is dangerous. It should only be done if you have nowhere else to go. Here are some things you can do to try and stay safe:

- **Close all car windows and air vents.** Drive slowly with headlights on, and watch for other vehicles and pedestrians. **Do not drive through heavy smoke.**
- **If you have to stop, park away from bushes and trees.** Turn on the headlights and turn off the engine.
- **If you are stuck, stay in your car until the main fire passes.** Do not attempt to get out and run! Air currents may rock the car. Keep in mind metal gas tanks and containers rarely explode.

## What you can do *after* a wildfire

- **If you have burns, or if you are with someone with burns, call 911 right away!** Cool and cover the burns if you can. This will reduce the chance of infection or the burn getting worse.
- **If you needed to evacuate, do not go back home until fire officials say it is safe.** Check before going back.
- **Check the roof and the attic for any hidden burning sparks.** Keep checking for smoke and sparks throughout the house.
- **If you have a fireproof safe or strong box, do not try to open it.** It can hold heat for several hours. If the door is opened before the box has cooled, everything inside could burst into flames.
- **Keep an eye on your pet(s)/service animal(s).** Hidden embers and hot spots could burn your pet's or service animal's paws or hooves.

## Don't forget!

**Daylight Saving Time (Fall Back) is a good time to review your plan.**

- **Recheck your Emergency Checklists.**
- **Look over the items in your GO BAG and emergency kits. Replace water, food, medication(s), and batteries that are old.**
- **Update your MEDICAL EMERGENCY WALLET CARD.**
- **Go over your FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING FORM.**
- **Review your IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS CHECKLIST.**
- **Practice your escape plans.**
- **Check your fire alarms.**

# Winterizing

## What is winterizing?

**Winterizing** includes things you can do to get your home, and car ready for cold weather. The fall season is a good time to start getting ready for the winter. Check for things you will need in your home, and in your car to stay warm and safe.

## Winterize your home

- **Move pets and animals inside during cold weather.** If this is not possible, make sure they have shelter and are protected from cold winds and extreme temperatures. They should also have access to water that will not freeze.
- **Keep the cold air out.** Put up storm windows or cover windows with plastic. Wrap water pipes with insulation to keep them from freezing.
- **Don't get caught in the cold.** Every year get a tune-up for your furnace. Have your chimney cleaned and inspected.
- **Learn how to shut off water valves.** Pipes can burst if water doesn't run through them for a long time during winter. Turn off outside water sources before the first freeze!

## Winterize your car

- **Check your car to make sure all systems are working properly.** Take your car to a mechanic if necessary.
- **Always keep your gas tank full during cold weather.** This keeps the fuel lines from freezing.
- **Have good winter tires put on your car.** Make sure they have enough tread. All-weather tires are good for most winter conditions.

## Be prepared for winter on the road

Add these items to your **CAR KIT** to be ready for winter.

- Shovel
- Tow chain or rope
- Windshield scraper and small broom
- Road salt, sand, or kitty litter
- Disposable hand warmers
- Extra hats, socks, and mittens
- Blanket(s)
- Extra gallon of antifreeze
- Bright colored scarf or bandana to tie to the antenna of your vehicle, or hang out the window to draw attention if you're in trouble
- Flashlight that can strobe or flash red
- Portable power bank for charging devices

# House Fire

## What can cause a house fire?

**House fires** can be started by cigarettes, electrical appliances, heaters, old or faulty wiring, gas leaks, open flames from candles or fireplaces, children playing with matches, or fire spreading from house to house.

## What you can do *before* a house fire

- **Review the EVACUATION PLANNING GUIDE in this manual and the HOW TO MAKE A HOME FIRE ESCAPE PLAN form included in this toolkit.** If you have a physical disability or live in a multi-story building, see the **Escape Planning in Tall Buildings** and **Evacuation Procedures/ Evacuation Devices** sections of the **EVACUATION PLANNING GUIDE** in this manual.
- **Complete the FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING FORM with your family.** Review your **EVACUATION PLAN(S)** with your family, and practice what you need to do if you have to evacuate, including how to get a person with limited mobility or no mobility out of the house. If a person has a mobility device and/or a service animal, practice getting the person out both ***with* AND *without*** that mobility device and/or service animal.
- **Make sure you have an EVACUATION PLAN that you have practiced.**

## What you can do to *prevent* a house fire

- **Make sure your smoke alarm(s) and carbon monoxide detector are right for you**. Find out what type of alerts you need, such as a flashing light or vibrating alarm. Know where they should be installed.

### Calling 911 in an emergency

Plan ahead:

- Check with your **local city or county call centers** to find out if they have a **Text 911 service**.
- Check with your **video relay service (VP) provider** about how to place 911 calls.
- Ask a **trusted friend, neighbor or family member** to dial 911 for you. They can provide your location and explain what type of emergency you have.

- **Sleep with your door closed.** This will help keep the smoke and fire out a little longer, giving you more time to escape.
- **NEVER leave a room where candles are lit.** Blow them out before you leave.
- **NEVER use the range or oven to heat your home.**
- **Keep combustible and flammable liquids away from heat or fire.** For example, cooking oils, hairspray, nail polish, and turpentine should be kept away from stoves, lit candles, sparks from a fireplace, and curling irons.

# House Fire

- **NEVER use portable generators inside your home or garage.** Only use them outdoors. If it must be inside, make sure it is in an area that has fresh air moving around. For example, if you must put it in your garage, leave the garage door open all the way.
- **Do not cook if you are sleepy, have been drinking alcohol, or have taken medicine that makes you drowsy.**
- **Put barbecue grills at least 10 feet away from your home and deck railings.** Make sure the grill is not under a low roof or tree branches.

## The dangers of smoking

- **If you smoke, smoke outside.** Crush your cigarettes in a can filled with sand or in an ashtray. Never throw away hot cigarette butts or ashes in the trash.

- **Don't put ashtrays on furniture.**
- **Never smoke near an oxygen tank, even if it is turned off.** Oxygen can be explosive. It also makes fires burn hotter and faster.
- **Do not smoke in bed!** If you are sleepy, have been drinking, or have taken medicine that makes you drowsy, **put out your cigarette**.

## Electrical and Appliance Safety

- **Don't use old electrical products.** Replace old or damaged cords. Do not run cords under rugs or furniture, or through rafters.
- **Don't plug too many things into one outlet.** This will overload the circuit and may start a fire!
- **If your lights flicker or dim, or if you get a shock when you touch a switch, call a professional electrician immediately.**

## Portable Space Heaters

- **Heaters should be at least 3 feet from anything that could catch fire.**
- **Check to make sure the heater will switch off by itself if it falls over.**
- **Many fire departments suggest that you avoid kerosene heaters.** If you must, only use crystal clear K-1 kerosene. Be careful to never overfill it. Always crack open a window to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.

## Fireplaces and Wood Stoves

- **Check and clean wood stove pipes and chimneys every year.** Check monthly for damage or things that might get stuck inside.
- **Never burn trash, paper, or green wood.**
- **Always use a fireplace screen.** It should cover the entire fireplace, be heavy enough to stop fiery logs from falling out, and keep sparks from flying out.
- **Make sure the fire is completely out before you leave the home or go to bed.**

# House Fire

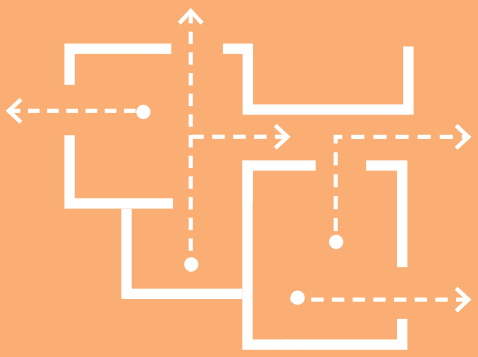
## Children

- **Store matches and lighters out of children's reach and sight.**
- **Teach children not to pick up or play with matches or lighters they might find.** Teach them to tell an adult immediately if they find matches or a lighter.
- **Never leave children alone near stoves or burning candles. Not even for a short time!**

READY SUZIE SAYS:

## Plan your escape

- **Find two ways to get out of each room.**
  If the first way out is blocked by fire or smoke, you will need a second way out. The second way out could be a window or a ladder escape.
- **Have a collapsible escape ladder for each bedroom above the first floor of your home.**
- **Check windows to make sure they open.** You should be able to take screens out quickly and security bars should open easily.
- **Practice feeling your way out of the house in the dark, or with your eyes closed.**
- **Meet each other at your designated meeting place.**



# House Fire

## What you can do *during* a house fire

- **When the smoke alarm goes off, get out fast.** *You may have only seconds to escape safely!*
- **Before opening a door, touch the doorknob and door.** If either one feels hot, leave the door closed, and use your second way out.
- **If you open a door, open it slowly.** Be ready to shut it quickly if you see heavy smoke or fire.
- **If there is smoke coming through the cracks around the door, leave the door closed.** Use the second way out.
- **Stay low. Crawl out under any smoke.** Heavy smoke and poisonous gases rise up toward the ceiling.
- **If you can't get out, close the door.** Cover vents and cracks around doors with cloth or tape. This helps to keep the smoke out. If you can, call 911 or your fire department.
- **Help show the firefighters where you are.** Signal for help at the window using a light-colored cloth or a flashlight. Use your whistle to help guide them to you.
- **If someone is trapped and you can't help them get out, leave the house.** Call 911 or the fire department. Make sure the operator knows that someone is inside. Tell them where that person is in the house.
- **If pet(s)/service animal(s) are trapped inside the house, tell firefighters immediately. Do not run back in the house to rescue them.**

### Stop, drop and roll

If your clothes catch fire, **STOP** immediately, and **DROP** to the ground. Cover your face with your hands, and **ROLL** over back and forth until the fire is out.

If you, or someone else with you, cannot stop, drop, and roll, cover the flames with a blanket or towel.

# Winter Weather

## Winter Storm Watch or Warning: What's the difference?

### WATCH

A **winter storm watch** means a severe storm with heavy snow or ice may occur within 48 hours. Watch the television or internet for updates on if, and when, a storm may occur. Be ready to change your plans if necessary.

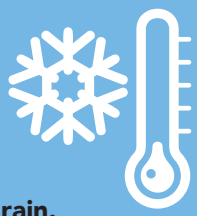
### WARNING

A **winter storm warning** means a combination of hazardous winter weather is occurring or imminent. The winter storm may cause freezing temperatures, high winds, and blowing snow. This is dangerous to life and property. Do not travel, if possible. Take shelter, and stay warm!

## What you can do *before* a winter storm

- Complete the **FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING FORM** with your family. Review your **EVACUATION PLAN(S)** with your family and practice what you need to do if you have to evacuate, including how to get a person with limited mobility or no mobility out of the house. If a person has a mobility device and/or a service animal, practice getting the person out both ***with* AND *without*** that mobility device and/or service animal.
- If your plan includes using your vehicle(s) to evacuate, make sure there is enough gas in the vehicle(s) at all times.
- Follow directions to evacuate from emergency personnel broadcast on Television, Internet, NOAA weather radior, or local radio.
- **Don't get caught in the cold.** Stay indoors as much as possible. Every year get a tune-up for your furnace, and have your chimney cleaned and inspected.
- **Move pets and animals inside during cold weather.** If this is not possible, make sure they have shelter, and are protected from cold winds and extreme temperatures. They should also have access to water that will not freeze.

### The dangers of winter weather



Some winter storms have very strong winds. The **wind chills** are dangerous for people and pets.

**Heavy ice (sleet), freezing rain,** and **heavy snow** can bring down trees and poles. This can hurt people, damage homes, and other buildings. Roads may become dangerous to drive on.

# Winter Weather

## What you can do *during* a winter storm

- **Stay indoors. Do not travel.**
- **Bring pet(s)/service animal(s) or companion animals inside.** Move other animals or livestock to a shelter. Protect them from cold wind, snow, and ice. Make sure they have drinking water that will not freeze.
- **Stop cold air leaking into your home.** Roll up towels, and put them at the bottom of any doors and windows. Close the curtains or cover windows with a blanket.
- **Dress in many layers to stay warm.** Cover as much of your body as you can. Just one layer of clothes will not keep you warm.
- **Cuddle up.** Huddle with other people under the same blanket. You'll warm up faster.

### If you are outside in a winter storm

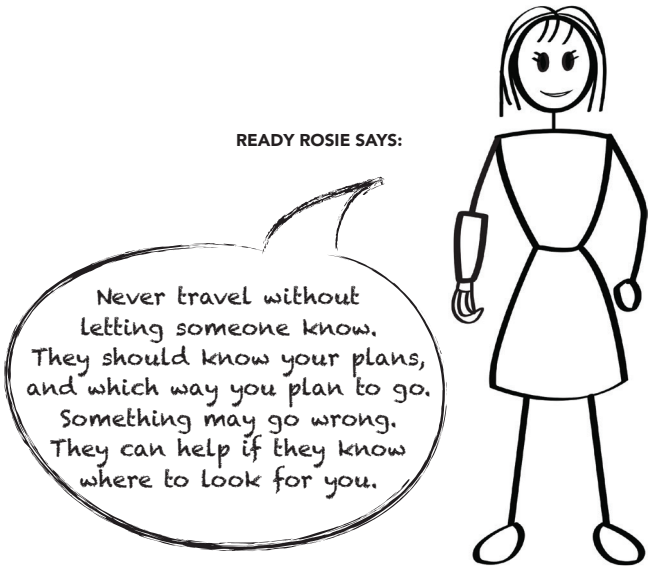
- **Wear several layers of clothing.** They should be loose-fitting, lightweight, and warm. Just one layer of heavy clothing will not protect you well.
- **Wear a hat and mittens to reduce loss of body heat.**
- **Cover your mouth with a scarf to protect your lungs.**
- **Stay dry.** Change damp clothing often to avoid losing body heat.
- **Take it slow and easy when shoveling snow.** You can have a heart attack by shoveling too hard, especially in colder or freezing temperatures.
- **Watch for signs of frostbite.** For more information, see the **Frostbite** section of this manual.
- **Watch for signs of hypothermia.** For more information, see the **Hypothermia** section of this manual.

### If you are driving in a winter storm

- **Always keep the gas tank in your vehicle more than half full.**
- **Drive only if you must.** If you must drive, travel during the day. Stay on main roads, and avoid shortcuts.

### If you are trapped in your car

- **Get off the highway if you can.** Turn on the blinking hazard lights. Hang a colored flag from the radio antenna or window until help arrives.
- **Stay in your car where rescuers can find you.** Do not go out unless a building is close. Be careful! The snow may be too deep to walk in, and buildings might be farther away than they appear.
- **Turn on the engine and the heater for 10 minutes each hour to keep warm.** Crack open a window to circulate the air. Make sure the exhaust pipe is not covered by snow. Keep it clear to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.



# Winter Weather

- **If you are with someone, take turns sleeping.** One person should be awake at all times to watch for rescue crews.
- **Save your battery power.** Do not turn on the lights—with the exception of hazard lights—unless you have to. Do not plug a phone, or tablet, into your charger unless necessary.
- **Turn on the inside light at night so work crews or rescuers can see you.**
- **Help rescuers find you by air if you are in the country or near an open area.** Spell out "HELP" or "SOS" with rocks or tree limbs near your car. Make the words big enough to be seen easily from the air.

## Know the winter conditions

**Blizzard:** A severe snowstorm that has very cold temperatures and strong winds. This creates blowing snow that makes it hard to see. This storm is dangerous.

**Thundersnow:** A thunderstorm with snow instead of rain. There will be lightning and thunder too.

**Sleet:** Rain drops freeze into small ice pellets. These ice pellets can bounce off the ground. Sleet can pile up like snow. This will make the roads dangerous to drive on.

**Freezing Rain:** This happens when the ground is frozen and the air is warm. Rain drops fall like normal rain, but then freeze when they hit the ground. This causes a layer of ice on everything: roads, trees, power lines, and buildings. Layers of ice can become very heavy and cause damage.

**Ice Storm:** A winter storm caused by freezing rain. The ground, and all other surfaces, are covered by ¼ inch of ice or more.

**Wind Chill:** How fast the wind is blowing and how cold the wind feels. Wind chill can make us feel colder than the air temperature. Our body makes a tiny layer of warm air around our skin that helps us feel warm. When this is blown away, we feel colder. The harder the wind blows, the colder we feel.

**Snow Flurries:** A light snow falling for a short time. There will be almost no snow accumulation on the ground.

**Snow Showers:** When snow is falling lightly, or heavily, for short periods of time. Sometimes there will be snow on the ground.

**Blowing Snow:** Strong wind can cause snow to fall horizontally. Strong winds can blow snow on the ground over roads, and block stairs or doors. This can make it hard to walk through, or to see the roads.

# Frostbite

## What is frostbite?

**Frostbite** happens when parts of the skin and other body tissues freeze. The more the tissues freeze, the more damage it causes. The most common places to get frostbite are on the face, nose, ears, fingers, and toes, because they are the farthest away from the heart. Frostbite can happen fast, even within a few minutes!

## What you can do to *prevent* frostbite

- **Pay attention to weather forecasts and the wind chill.** Stay indoors during cold, wet, or windy weather. If you must go outside, cover up!
- **Wear clothing that protects you against wind, snow, and rain.**
- **Wear a hat, mittens, and a scarf.** Mittens give better protection than gloves. If you do wear gloves, wear mittens over your gloves to protect your fingers.
- **Get out of the cold.** Once you're indoors, remove wet clothes.
- **Do not drink alcohol.** It causes your body to lose heat faster. Stay warm by drinking warm, sweet drinks, such as hot chocolate. Eating well-balanced meals also helps you to stay warm.

## Symptoms of frostbite

- Painful, prickly, or itchy feeling
- Red, white, pale, or gray/yellow-looking skin
- Hard, waxy-looking skin or blisters
- Numbness
- Clumsiness because of joint and muscle stiffness

## What you can do to *treat* frostbite

Warm the area slowly and carefully. Don't rub the skin! If hands or feet have frostbite, put them in warm (not hot!) water. Use a warm blanket. Do not use a stove, fireplace, or heating pad, because these can cause burns.

The skin will turn red when blood flow returns. There will be a feeling of burning and tingling as the area warms up. Find medical help if numbness, and pain, or blisters continue.

## Protect your ears and hearing aids or cochlear implant device

Our ears get cold easily. We may not notice any pain or chilling sensation until it is too late! Protect your ears from frostbite. If you have a hearing device, protect it from damage due to the cold.

- **Find ear gear or winter headbands that can cover your ears and hearing devices.** It should fit loosely to reduce feedback in your devices.
- **Protect your hearing devices from condensation (moisture).** Moisture builds up when very cold things warm up. Don't let your devices get cold, and then warm up too quickly. If the inside of your hearing instruments get damp, they may fail.
- **Carry extra batteries in a warm pocket.** Hearing aid batteries will lose power quickly in colder temperatures.

# Hypothermia

## What is hypothermia?

**Hypothermia** happens when a person's body temperature falls below normal. This can be caused by anything that exposes the body to cold. Signs and symptoms usually develop slowly. A person's breathing and heart rate will slow. The person may start to feel confused and tired, and may not be aware of being in danger and needing help.

## What you can do to *prevent* hypothermia

- **Dress in layers and keep your body covered.** Layer light warm clothes that fit loosely.
- **Don't forget to wear a warm hat, scarf, and mittens.**
- **Avoid outdoor activities that cause you to sweat.** Wet clothing in cold weather can cause you to lose body heat fast.
- **Stay as dry as possible.** Get out of damp clothing quickly. Be extra careful to keep your hands and feet dry. Mittens and boots get wet easily from snow.

## Symptoms of hypothermia

- Shivering
- Clumsiness or poor hand-eye coordination
- Sloppy communication or saying things that do not make sense
- Confusion or difficulty thinking
- Poor decision-making (such as trying to take off warm clothes)
- Drowsiness or low energy
- Low breathing or losing consciousness
- Weak pulse

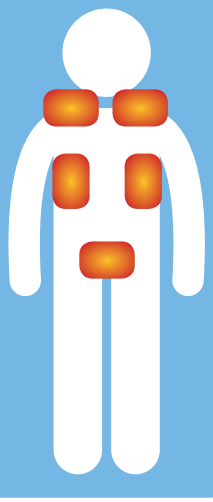
## What you can do to help a person suffering from hypothermia

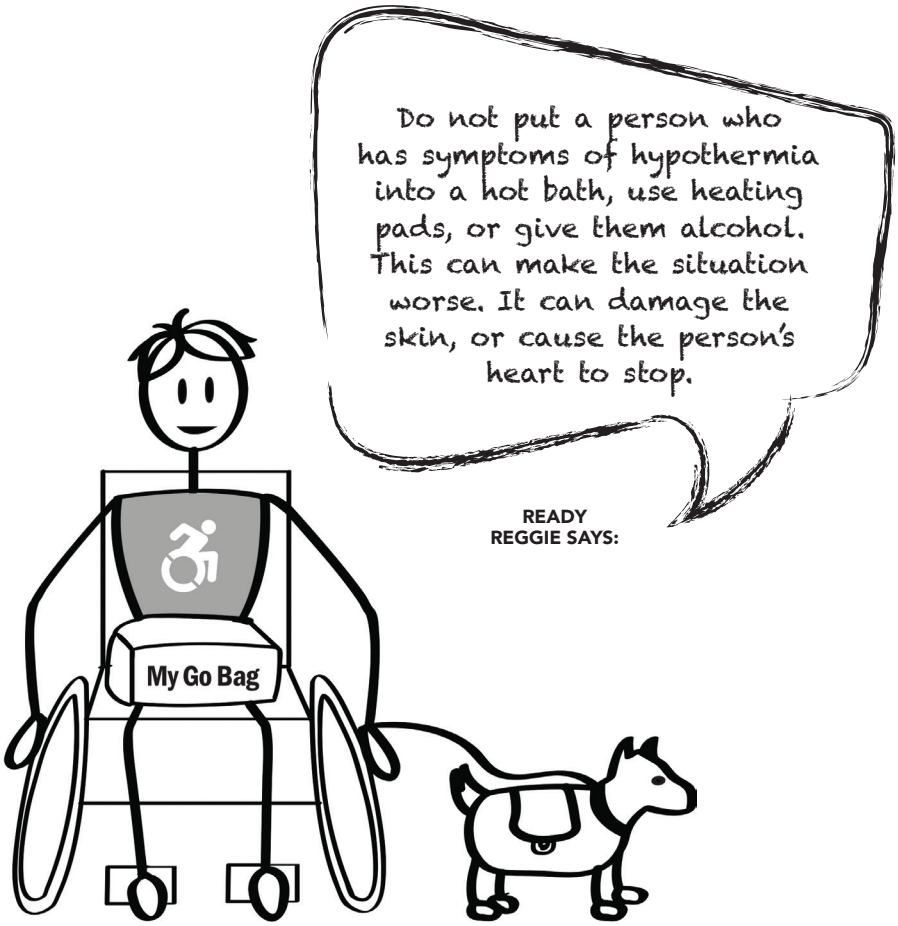
- **Call 911.** Get medical help as soon as possible.
- **Be gentle and keep the person from moving too much.** Don't massage or rub the person; this may cause a heart attack.
- **Move the person out of the cold.** Remove any wet clothing.
- **If you cannot move the person out of the cold, protect them from the cold and wind.** Lay the person on their back, on a blanket, or another warm surface.
- **Use layers of dry blankets or coats to cover and warm the person.** Cover the person's head, leaving the face exposed.
- **Your own body heat can help someone with hypothermia. Gentle hugging can help them warm up.**
- **If the person is alert and can swallow, give him or her warm drinks and food.** Avoid alcohol. Warm tea and chocolate are good choices.

# Hypothermia

## How to treat hypothermia

- **Use a warm compress** or a fluid-filled bag that warms up when squeezed.
- **If necessary, make your own compress** by filling a plastic bottle with warm water, or warm a towel in a microwave or dryer.
- **Apply the compresses only to the neck, chest, or groin.** See the red boxes at the right. They show where the compresses should go.
- **WARNING: Do not apply warmth to the arms or legs. Warm the core of the body first.** Warming the arms or legs could force cold blood toward the heart, lungs, and brain. The core body temperature drops. This could lead to death.





# Hazardous Materials

## What you can do *before* a hazardous materials incident

- Have a Family Emergency Plan in place that includes the **FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING FORM** and **EMERGENCY CHECKLISTS**. Use the **EVACUATION PLANNING GUIDE** in this manual.
- Your family may not be together when a disaster strikes, so it is important to know how you will contact one another, how you will get back together, and what you will do in case of an emergency.

## What you can do *during* a hazardous materials incident

Listen to local radio or television stations for detailed information and instructions. Follow the instructions carefully. You should stay away from the area to minimize the risk of contamination. Remember that some toxic chemicals are odorless.

### If You Are Asked to Evacuate

- **Do so immediately.**
- **Stay tuned to a radio or television** for information on evacuation routes, temporary shelters, and procedures.
- **Follow the routes recommended by the authorities.** Shortcuts may not be safe.
- **If you have time, minimize contamination in the house** by closing all windows, shutting all vents, and turning off attic fans.
- **Take your pre-assembled GO BAG** and make sure your **CAR KIT**, if you have one, is also in your vehicle.
- **Remember to help your neighbors** who may require special assistance including the elderly, people with physical disabilities, or people with access and functional needs. People who have infants or large families may also need additional assistance in emergency situations.

**Hazardous Materials**

**http://www.ready.gov/hazardous-materials-incidents**

### If You Are Caught Outside

- **Stay upstream, uphill, and upwind!** In general, try to go at least one-half mile (usually 8–10 city blocks) from the danger area. Move away from the accident scene and help keep others away.
- **Do not walk into or touch any spilled liquids, airborne mists, or condensed solid chemical deposits.** Try not to inhale gases, fumes, or smoke. If possible, cover mouth with a cloth while leaving the area.
- **Stay away from accident victims until the hazardous material has been identified.**

### If You Are In a Motor Vehicle

- **Stop and seek shelter in a permanent building.** If you must remain in your car, keep car windows and vents closed and shut off the air conditioner and heater.

### If You Are Requested to Stay Indoors

- **Bring pets and/or service animals inside.**
- **Close and lock all exterior doors and windows.** Close vents, fireplace dampers, and as many interior doors as possible.
- **Turn off air conditioners and ventilation systems.** In large buildings, set ventilation systems to 100 percent recirculation so that no outside air is drawn into the building. If this is not possible, ventilation systems should be turned off.

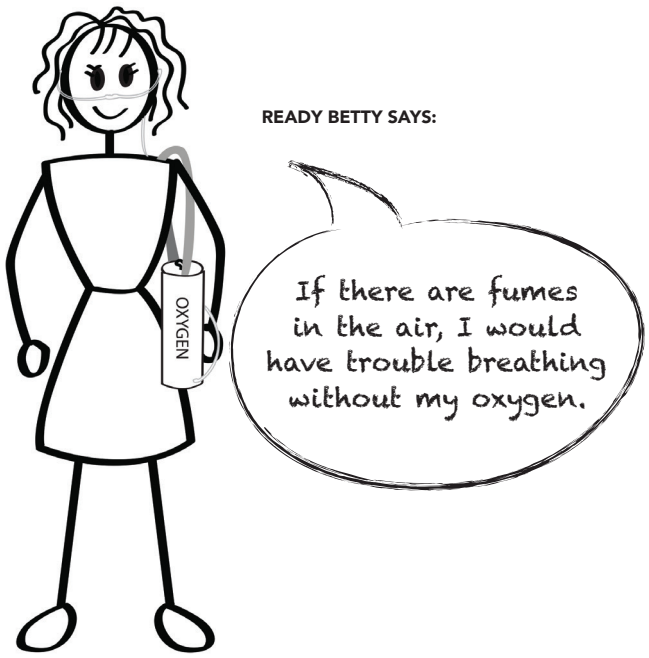
# Hazardous Materials

- **Go into your pre-selected shelter room.** This room should be above ground and have the fewest openings to the outside.
- **Seal gaps under doorways and windows** with wet towels or plastic sheeting and duct tape.
- **Seal gaps around window and air conditioning units, bathroom and kitchen exhaust fans, and stove and dryer vents** with duct tape and plastic sheeting, wax paper, or aluminum wrap.
- **Use material to fill cracks and holes in the room**, such as those around pipes.
- **If gas or vapors could have entered the building, take shallow breaths through a cloth or a towel.** Avoid eating or drinking any food or water that may be contaminated.

## What you can do *after* a hazardous materials incident

The following are guidelines for the period following a hazardous materials incident:

- **Go to a designated public shelter if you have been told to evacuate or you feel it is unsafe to remain in your home.** Text SHELTER + your ZIP code to 43362 (4FEMA) to find the nearest shelter in your area (example: shelter 12345).
- **Act quickly** if you have come in contact with or have been exposed to hazardous chemicals.
- **Follow decontamination instructions from local authorities.** You may be advised to take a thorough shower or you may be advised to stay away from water and follow another procedure.
- **Seek medical treatment for unusual symptoms as soon as possible.**
- **Place exposed clothing and shoes in tightly sealed containers.** Do not allow them to contact other materials. Call local authorities to find out about proper disposal.
- **Advise everyone who comes in contact with you** that you may have been exposed to a toxic substance.
- **Listen to local radio or television stations** for the latest emergency information.
- **Remember to help your neighbors** who may require special assistance including the elderly, people with physical disabilities, or people with access and functional needs. People who have infants or large families may also need additional assistance in emergency situations.
- **Return home only when authorities say it is safe.** Open windows and vents and turn on fans to provide ventilation.
- **Find out from local authorities how to clean up your land and property.**
- **Report any lingering vapors or other hazards** to your local emergency services office.



# Household Chemical Emergency

Nearly every household uses products containing hazardous materials or chemicals. Although the risk of a chemical accident is slight, knowing how to handle these products, and how to react during an emergency can reduce the risk of injury.

### Checking Your Home

There are probably many hazardous materials throughout your home. Take a tour of your home to see where these materials are located. Use the list of common hazardous household items (see the **Resources** section of this manual) to guide you in your hunt. Once you have located a product, check the label and take the necessary steps to ensure that you are using, storing, and disposing of the material according to the manufacturer's directions.

It is critical to store household chemicals in places where children cannot access them (preferably in a secured, locked cabinet). Remember that products such as aerosol cans of hair spray and deodorant, nail polish and nail polish remover, toilet bowl cleaners, and furniture polishes all fall into the category of hazardous materials.

## What you can do *before* a household chemical emergency

- Have a Family Emergency Plan in place that includes the **FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING FORM** and **EMERGENCY CHECKLISTS**. See the **EVACUATION PLANNING GUIDE** in this manual for more information about evacuation/escape planning, including evacuation procedures and evacuation devices.

The following are guidelines for buying and storing hazardous household chemicals safely:

### Common Hazardous Household Items

Leftover household products that contain corrosive, toxic, ignitable, or reactive ingredients are considered to be household hazardous waste (HHW). The following list of items contain potentially hazardous ingredients that require special care when you dispose of them.

- Paints
- Cleaners
- Oils
- Batteries
- Pesticides

- **Buy only as much of a chemical as you think you will use.**
- **Keep products containing hazardous materials in their original containers, and never remove the labels unless the container is corroding.** Corroding containers should be repackaged and clearly labeled.
- **Never store hazardous products in food containers.**
- **Never mix household hazardous chemicals or waste with other products.** Incompatibles, such as chlorine bleach and ammonia, may react, ignite, or explode.
- **Follow the manufacturer's instructions for the proper use of the household chemical.**
- **Never smoke while using household chemicals.**

# Household Chemical Emergency

- **Never use hair spray, cleaning solutions, paint products, or pesticides near an open flame** (e.g., pilot light, lighted candle, fireplace, wood burning stove). Although you may not be able to see or smell them, vapor particles in the air could catch fire or explode.
- **Clean up any chemical spill immediately.** Use rags to clean up the spill. Wear gloves and eye protection. Allow the fumes in the rags to evaporate outdoors, then dispose of the rags by wrapping them in a newspaper and placing them in a sealed plastic bag in your trash can.
- **Dispose of hazardous materials correctly.** Take household hazardous waste to a local collection program. Check with your county or state environmental or solid waste agency to learn if there is a household hazardous waste collection program in your area.
- **Post the number of the emergency medical services and the poison control center by all telephones.** In an emergency situation, you may not have time to look up critical phone numbers. The National Poison Control Center number is **1-800-222-1222**.

## What you can do *during* a household chemical emergency

Get out of the residence immediately if there is a danger of fire or explosion. Do not waste time collecting items or calling the fire department when you are in danger. Call the fire department from outside (a cellular phone or a neighbor's phone) once you are safely away from danger.

- Stay upwind and away from the residence to avoid breathing toxic fumes.

**Household Chemical Emergency**

**www.ready.gov/household-chemical-emergencies**

- Recognize and respond to symptoms of toxic poisoning including:
  - Difficulty breathing
  - Irritation of the eyes, skin, throat, or respiratory tract
  - Changes in skin color
  - Headache or blurred vision
  - Dizziness
  - Clumsiness or lack of coordination
  - Cramps or diarrhea
- If someone is experiencing toxic poisoning symptoms, or has been exposed to a household chemical, call the National Poison Control Center at **1-800-222-1222,** and find any containers of the substance that are readily available in order to provide requested information.
- Follow the emergency operator or dispatcher's first aid instructions carefully. The first aid advice found on containers may be out of date or inappropriate. Do not give anything by mouth unless advised to do so by a medical professional.

## What you can do *after* a household chemical emergency

Discard clothing that may have been contaminated. Some chemicals may not wash out completely.

# Power Outages

## What you can do *before* a power outage

- Have a Family Emergency Plan in place that includes the **FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING FORM**. See the **EVACUATION PLANNING GUIDE** in this manual in case the power is out for an extended time. If you rely on equipment that depends on power and/or if you have medications that need to be refrigerated, you might need to leave your home.

To prepare for a power outage people with disabilities and other access and functional needs should:

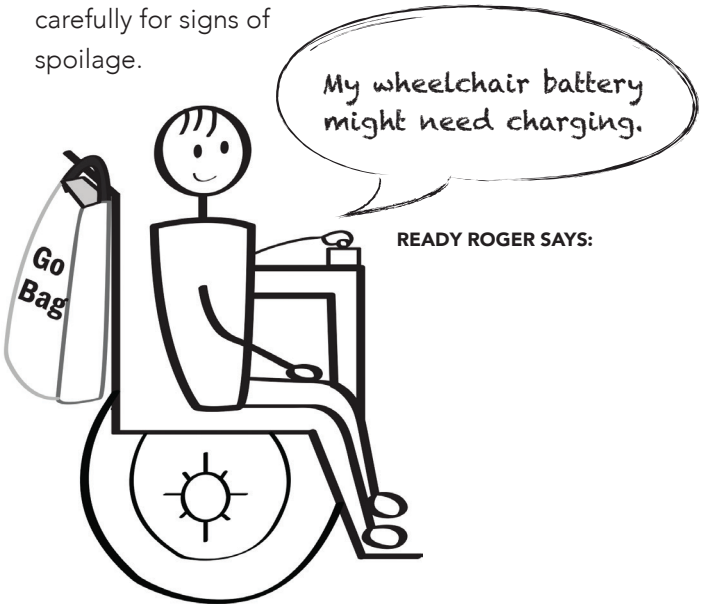
- **Call your power company.** Many utility companies keep a list and map of the locations of power-dependent customers in case of an emergency (such as customers who use battery-operated wheelchairs, life-support systems, or other power-dependent devices). Contact the customer service department of your local utility companies to learn if this service is available in your community.
- **Get advice from a licensed professional**, such as an electrician, **if you are considering obtaining a generator.** Make sure the generator is listed with Underwriter's Laboratories or a similar organization. Some municipalities, air quality districts, or states have "air quality permit" requirements. A licensed electrician will be able to give you more information on these matters.
- **Plan to always keep the generator outdoors.** Never operate it inside, including in the basement or garage. Do not hook up a generator directly to your home's wiring. The safest thing to do is to connect the equipment you want to run directly to the outlets on the generator.
- **Have an extra battery if you use a motorized wheelchair or scooter.** A car battery also can be used with a wheelchair, but will not last as long as a wheelchair's deep-cycle battery. If available, have a lightweight manual wheelchair for backup.
- **Have a talking or Braille clock or large-print timepiece with extra batteries** if you are blind or visually impaired.
- **Consider getting a portable, battery-operated television set if you are deaf or have a hearing loss.** Emergency broadcasts may give information in American Sign Language (ASL) or open captioning.

**Power Outages**

**www.ready.gov/power-outage**

## What you can do *during* a power outage

- **Use only flashlights for emergency lighting. NEVER** use candles during a power outage due to extreme risk of fire.
- **Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed** to keep your food as fresh as possible. If you must eat food that was refrigerated or frozen, check it carefully for signs of spoilage.




READY ROGER SAYS:

# Power Outages

- **Turn off or disconnect appliances, equipment** (like air conditioners) **or electronics in use when the power went out.** Power may return with momentary "surges" or "spikes" that can damage computers as well as motors in appliances like the air conditioner, refrigerator, washer, or furnace.
- **Do not run a generator inside a home or garage.**
- **Leave on one light** so that you'll know when your power returns.
- **Use a standard telephone handset, cellular phone, radio, or pager**. Use the phone for emergencies only. Listen to a portable radio for the latest information.
- **Do not call 911 for information.** Call only to report a life-threatening emergency.
- **Take steps to remain cool if it is hot outside.** In intense heat when the power may be off for a long time, consider going to a movie theater, shopping mall or "cooling shelter" that may be open in your community. If you remain at home, move to the lowest level of your home, since cool air falls. Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing. Drink plenty of water, even if you do not feel thirsty.
- **Put on layers of warm clothing if it is cold outside.** 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 (the home of a relative or friend, or a public facility) that has heat to keep warm.
- **Provide plenty of fresh, cool water for your pets and/or service animals.**
- **Eliminate unnecessary travel,** especially by car. Traffic signals will stop working during an outage, creating traffic congestion.

## Using a generator

- Get advice from a licensed professional, such as an electrician if you are considering obtaining a generator.
- Make sure the generator is listed with Underwriter's Laboratories or a similar organization.
- Plan to always keep the generator outdoors. Never operate it inside, including in the basement or garage.
- Do not hook up a generator directly to your home's wiring. The safest thing to do is to connect the equipment you want to run directly to the outlets on the generator.

- Remember that **equipment such as automated teller machines (ATMs) and elevators may not work during a power outage.**

## What you can do *after* a power outage

- If you are not sure food is cold enough, take its temperature with a food thermometer. Throw out any foods (meat, poultry, fish, eggs and leftovers) that have been exposed to temperatures higher than 40° F (4° C) for 2 hours or more, and any food that has an unusual odor, color, texture, or feels warm to touch.
- Never taste food or rely on appearance or odor to determine its safety. Some foods may look and smell fine, but if they have been at room temperature too long, bacteria that causes food-borne illnesses can start growing quickly. Some types of bacteria produce toxins that cannot be destroyed by cooking.
- If food in the freezer is colder than 40° F, and has ice crystals on it, you can refreeze it.

# Explosions

Learn what to do if you receive a bomb threat or get a suspicious package or letter. There are things you can do to prepare for the unexpected. Preparing for such events will reduce the stress that you may feel now, and later, should an emergency arise. Taking preparatory action can reassure you and your children that you can exert a measure of control even in the face of such events.

## What you can do *before* an explosion

- Have a Family Emergency Plan in place that includes the **FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING FORM** and **EMERGENCY CHECKLISTS**. See the **EVACUATION PLANNING GUIDE** section of this manual for more information about evacuation/escape planning, including evacuation procedures and evacuation devices.

## What you can do *after* an explosion

- **Get under a sturdy table or desk** if things are falling around you. When they stop falling, leave quickly, watching for obviously weakened floors and stairways. As you exit from the building, be especially watchful of falling debris.
- **Leave the building immediately.** Stay low if there is smoke. Do not stop to retrieve personal possessions or make phone calls.
- **Do not use elevators.**
- **Check for fire and other hazards.**

**Explosions**
**www.ready.gov/explosions**

- Once you are out, **do not stand in front of windows, glass doors, or other potentially hazardous areas.**
- **Move away from sidewalks or streets to be used by emergency officials** or others still exiting the building.
- If you are trapped in debris, **use a flashlight**, if possible, **to signal your location to rescuers.**
- **Tap on a pipe or wall so rescuers can hear where you are.**
- If possible, **use a whistle to signal rescuers.**
- **Shout only as a last resort.** Shouting can cause a person to inhale dangerous amounts of dust.
- **Avoid unnecessary movement so you don't kick up dust.**
- **Cover your nose and mouth with anything you have on hand.** Dense-weave cotton material can act as a good filter. Try to breathe through the material.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS TOOLKIT

# Nuclear Power Plants / Transportation of Nuclear Waste

The potential danger from an accident at a nuclear power plant (or during the transportation) is exposure to radiation. This exposure could come from the release of radioactive material into the environment, usually characterized by a plume (cloud-like formation) of radioactive gases and particles. The major hazards to people in the vicinity of the plume are radiation exposure to the body from the cloud and particles deposited on the ground, inhalation of radioactive materials and ingestion of radioactive materials. Radiation has a cumulative effect. The longer a person is exposed to radiation, the greater the effect.

## What you can do *before* a nuclear power plant or other nuclear emergency

- Have a Family Emergency Plan in place that includes the **FAMILY EMERGENCY PLANNING FORM** and **EMERGENCY CHECKLISTS**. See the **EVACUATION PLANNING GUIDE** section of this manual for more information about evacuation/escape planning, including evacuation procedures and evacuation devices.
- **Add plastic sheeting, duct tape, and scissors to your emergency kit** in order be better prepared for a nuclear power plant incident.
- **Inquire about emergency plans at places where your family spends time:** work, daycare, and school. If no plans exist, consider volunteering to help create one.

**Nuclear Power Plants or Transportation of Nuclear Waste**

**www.ready.gov/nuclear-power-plants**

- **Know your community's warning systems and disaster plans,** including evacuation routes.
- **Notify caregivers and babysitters about your plan.**
- **Make plans for your pets and/or service animal(s).**
- **Obtain public emergency information materials from the power company** that operates your local nuclear power plant or your local emergency services office. If you live within 10 miles of the power plant, you should receive the materials yearly from the power company or from your state or local government.

## What you can do *during* a nuclear power plant or other nuclear emergency

If an accident at a nuclear power plant were to release radiation in your area, local authorities would activate warning sirens or another approved alert method. They would also instruct you through the Emergency Alert System (EAS) on local television and radio stations on how to protect yourself.

# Nuclear Power Plants / Transportation of Nuclear Waste

- **Follow the EAS instructions carefully.**
- **Minimize your exposure by increasing the distance between you and the source of the radiation.** This could be evacuation or remaining indoors to minimize exposure.
- If you are told to evacuate, **keep car windows and vents closed;** use re-circulating air.
- If you are advised to remain indoors, **turn off the air conditioner, ventilation fans, furnace, and other air intakes.**
- **Shield yourself by placing heavy, dense material between you and the radiation source.** Go to a basement or other underground area, if possible.
- **Do not use the telephone** unless absolutely necessary.
- **Stay out of the incident zone.** Most radiation loses its strength fairly quickly.

## What you can do *after* a nuclear power plant or other nuclear emergency

- **Go to a designated public shelter if you have been told to evacuate** or you feel it is unsafe to remain in your home. Text SHELTER + your ZIP code to 43362 (4FEMA) to find the nearest shelter in your area (example: shelter 12345).
- **Act quickly if you have come in contact with or have been exposed to hazardous radiation.**
- **Follow decontamination instructions from local authorities.** You may be advised to take a thorough shower.
- **Change your clothes and shoes;** put exposed clothing in a plastic bag; seal it.
- **Seek medical treatment for unusual symptoms,** such as nausea, as soon as possible.
- **Listen to local radio or television stations for the latest emergency information.**
- **Remember to help your neighbors** who may require special assistance including the elderly, people with physical disabilities, or people with access and functional needs. People who have infants, or large families, may also need additional assistance in emergency situations.
- Return home only when authorities say it is safe.
- Keep food in covered containers or in the refrigerator.

# Epidemic or Pandemic

## Epidemic or Pandemic: What's the difference?

### Epidemic

An **epidemic** means many people get sick from the same virus at the same time. The virus spreads from person to person in an area. This could happen in a school, neighborhood, state, or country.

### Pandemic

A **pandemic** means that an epidemic has grown worse. People in different countries are now getting sick with the same illness. It has spread far and wide, even around the world.

## What you can do to avoid a pandemic

- **If you are sick, stay home.** Prevent others from catching your illness by staying home.
- **If you know someone who is sick, encourage them to stay home.** Keep your distance from the person if possible.
- **Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.**
- **Wash your hands often.** Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs spread easily. You could get sick by touching something that is contaminated with germs.
- **Over the counter medicines are important to keep in your home.** For example, have extra pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, fluids with electrolytes (such as Gatorade or Propel) and vitamins.
- **Medicine may be harder to get during a pandemic.** If possible, get extra refills of your prescriptions ahead of time.

## What is the flu?

The flu is a contagious respiratory illness. It is caused by viruses that infect the nose, throat, and lungs. Symptoms can be mild or severe. Sometimes it can lead to death. Get the flu vaccine every year to prevent getting the flu.

Signs and symptoms:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue

# Biological Threats

Biological agents are organisms or toxins that can kill or incapacitate people, livestock, and crops. Biological agents can be dispersed by spraying them into the air, by infecting animals that carry the disease to humans, and by contaminating food and water. Delivery methods include:

- **Aerosols**—biological agents are dispersed into the air, forming a fine mist that may drift for miles. Inhaling the agent may cause disease in people or animals.
- **Animals**—some diseases are spread by insects and animals, such as fleas, mice, flies, mosquitoes and livestock.
- **Food and water contamination**—some pathogenic organisms and toxins may persist in food and water supplies. Most microbes can be killed, and toxins deactivated, by cooking food and boiling water. Most microbes are killed by boiling water for one minute, but some require longer. Follow official instructions.
- **Person-to-person**—spread of a few infectious agents is also possible. Humans have been the source of infection for smallpox, plague, and the Lassa viruses.

## Biological Threats

**www.ready.gov/biological-threats**

## Cover your nose and mouth

Be prepared to improvise with what you have on hand to protect your nose, mouth, eyes, and cuts in your skin. Anything that fits snugly over your nose and mouth, including any dense-weave cotton material, can help filter contaminants in an emergency. It is very important that most of the air you breathe comes through the mask or cloth, not around it. Do whatever you can to make the best fit possible for children.

There are also a variety of face masks readily available in hardware stores that are rated based on how small a particle they can filter in an industrial setting. Simple cloth face masks can filter some of the airborne "junk" or germs you might breathe into your body, but will probably not protect you from chemical gases.

## What you can do *before* a biological threat

- **Check with your doctor to ensure all required or suggested immunizations are up-to-date.** Children and older adults are particularly vulnerable to biological agents.
- **Consider installing a High-Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filter in your furnace return duct.** These filters remove particles in the 0.3 to 10 micron range, and will filter out most biological agents that may enter your house. If you do not have a central heating or cooling system, a stand-alone portable HEPA filter can be used.

## What you can do *during* a biological threat

The first evidence of an attack may be when you notice symptoms of the disease caused by exposure to an agent.

In the event of a biological attack, public health officials may not immediately be able to provide information on what you should do. It will take

# Biological Threats

time to determine exactly what the illness is, how it should be treated, and who is in danger. However, you should watch television, listen to the radio, or check the internet for official news and information including signs and symptoms of the disease, areas in danger, if medications or vaccinations are being distributed, and where you should seek medical attention if you become ill.

- **If you become aware of an unusual and suspicious substance, quickly get away.**
- **Protect yourself.** Cover your mouth and nose with layers of fabric that can filter the air, but still allow breathing. Examples include two to three layers of cotton such as a t-shirt, handkerchief, or towel. Otherwise, several layers of tissue or paper towels may help.
- There may be times when you would want to consider **wearing a face mask to reduce spreading germs if you are sick,** or to avoid coming in contact with contagious germs if others around you are sick.
- **If you have been exposed to a biological agent, remove and bag your clothes and personal items.** Follow official instructions for disposal of contaminated items.
- **Wash yourself with soap and water and put on clean clothes.**
- **Contact authorities and seek medical assistance.** You may be advised to stay away from others or even quarantined.
- **If a family member becomes sick, it is important to be suspicious.**
- **Do not assume,** however, that you should go to a hospital emergency room or **that any illness is the result of the biological attack.** Symptoms of many common illnesses may overlap.
- **Use common sense, practice good hygiene and cleanliness to avoid spreading germs,** and seek medical advice.
- **Consider if you are in the group or area authorities believe to be in danger.**
- **If your symptoms match those described and you are in the group considered at risk, immediately seek emergency medical attention.**
- **Follow instructions of doctors** and other public health officials.
- If the disease is contagious **expect to receive medical evaluation and treatment.** You may be advised to stay away from others or even deliberately quarantined.
- For non-contagious diseases, **expect to receive medical evaluation and treatment.**
- In a declared biological emergency or developing epidemic, **there may be reason to stay away from crowds where others may be infected.**

# Global Weather–Travel

## Global Weather

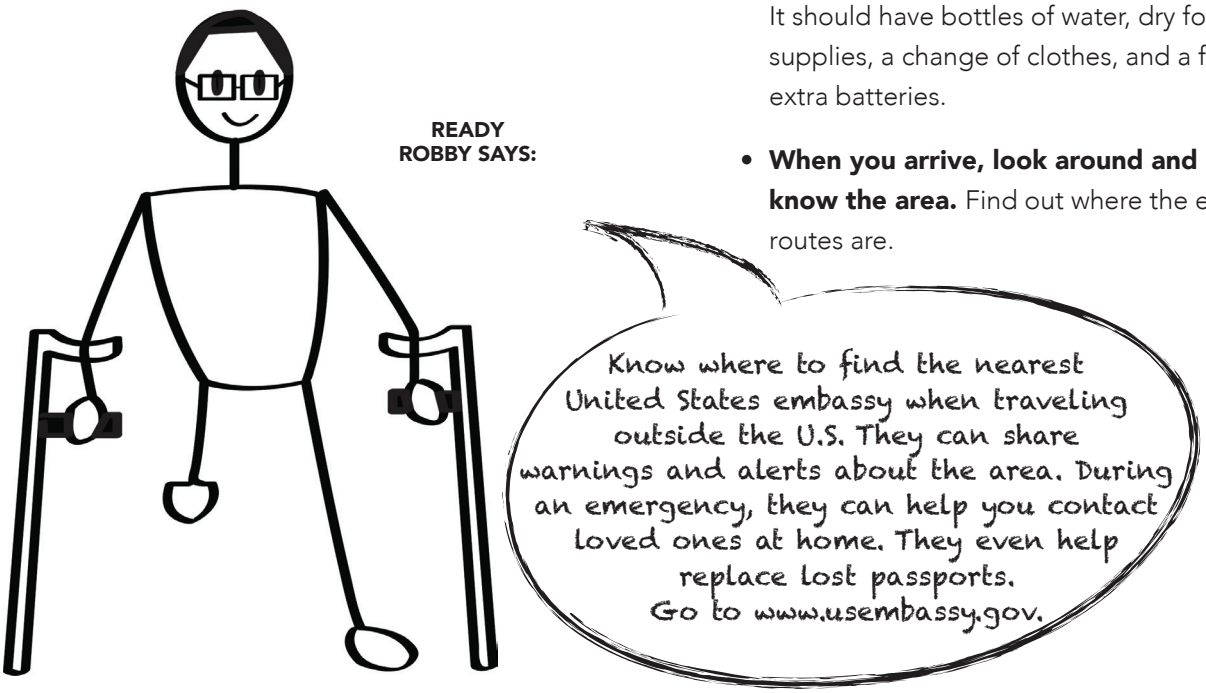
Disasters and bad weather can happen anywhere. You never know what might happen when you travel. Use this section to plan how to stay safe during your trip.

### What you can do *before* you travel

Always share your travel plans with someone you trust. Make sure they know:

- **Your travel dates and times.**
- **Any flight, bus, or train information.**
- **The route you plan to take if driving.**
- **Names, phone numbers, or emails for hotels or other places where you plan to stay and sleep.**
- **Names, phone numbers, or emails for anyone traveling with you.**
- **Name, phone number, or email for someone to contact if something happens.**

- **Make two copies of all your travel papers.** Leave one copy at home with a friend or family member you trust. Carry a second copy with you. The copies should be kept in a different place from the originals. Make the following copies:
  - Passport ID page
  - Foreign visa (if applicable)
  - Schedule for your trip
  - Hotel confirmation
  - Airline ticket
  - Driver's license
  - Credit cards brought on the trip
  - Traveler's check serial numbers
- **Pack a small emergency kit when you travel.** It should have bottles of water, dry food, first aid supplies, a change of clothes, and a flashlight with extra batteries.
- **When you arrive, look around and get to know the area.** Find out where the evacuation routes are.



# Earthquake

## What is an earthquake?

**Earthquakes** are the shaking, rolling, or sudden shock of the earth's surface. Two blocks of the earth suddenly push past each other deep underground. This makes waves in the ground like ripples on a pond. When the waves reach the earth's surface, they shake the ground and anything on it.

## What you can do *during* an earthquake

### If you are indoors

- **Drop to the ground and cover yourself.** Get under a very strong table or desk. Hold on until the shaking stops. If you do not have a table or desk, crouch in a corner and cover your head with your arms.
- **Stay away from glass, windows, outside doors, and walls.** Avoid anything that could fall, such as lights overhead or tall furniture.
- **If you are in bed when the earthquake strikes, hang on tight.** Protect your head with a pillow.
- **Stay inside until the shaking stops and it is safe to go outside.**
- **DO NOT use the elevators.** The electricity may go out. The sprinkler systems or fire alarms may turn on.

### If you are outdoors

- **Stay outside.** Move away from buildings, streetlights and electric wires.
- **Once outside, stay there until the shaking stops.** Watch out for falling walls, flying glass and falling objects.

### If you are in a moving vehicle

- **Stop as quickly as you safely can.** Stay in the vehicle. Stay away from buildings, trees, freeway ramps, and electric wires.
- **Move slowly and carefully after the earthquake has stopped.** Look for cracks or damage to the roads and bridges!

### Know the facts about earthquakes

- **Aftershock:** A smaller earthquake that happens after the large earthquake.
- **Fault:** A fault is an area underground where broken rocks slide past each other. They move because heavy pressure is pushing them. This causes a crack in the Earth's surface.
- **Epicenter:** The point on the earth's surface that is right above where the earthquake started.
- **Magnitude:** The measurement of how big the earthquake was. A lower number, such as 2 or 3, is very small and people won't feel it. A larger number, such as 7 or 8, will be felt and will cause a lot of damage.
- **Seismic Waves:** Waves that travel through earth. Seismic waves are caused by earthquakes, large explosions and landslides.

# Earthquake

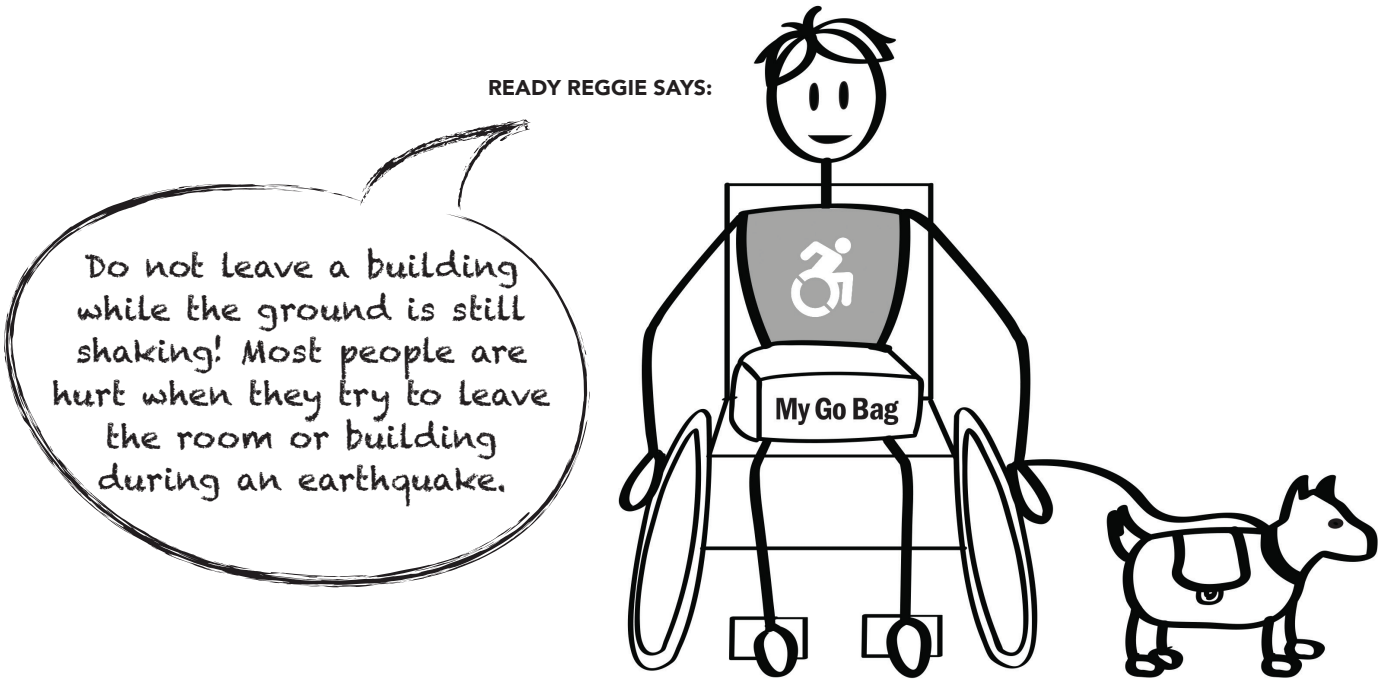
### If you are trapped under debris

- **Use your whistle or tap on a pipe or wall.** This will help rescuers find you.
- **Do not light a match.**
- **Do not move around or kick up dust.**
- **Cover your mouth with a handkerchief or clothing.** This keeps the dust out of your nose and mouth.

## What you can do *after* an earthquake

- **Expect aftershocks.** The earth may continue to shake on and off for a while. This may cause more damage and injuries.
- **Look for small fires and use an extinguisher to put them out.** Fire is the most common hazard after an earthquake.
- **Earthquakes could cause a tsunami.** When there is a tsunami warning, there might be dangerous waves on the way. Stay away from the beach or anywhere near the water.
- **Avoid damaged areas.** Do not try to help unless you are asked. Return to your home or hotel only when authorities say it is safe.
- **Clean up any spills right away.** Leave the area if you smell gas or any fumes.
- **If you smell gas or feel a slight air movement, open a window and leave the building RIGHT AWAY.** Turn off the gas if you can. Contact the gas company. Remember, if the gas is turned off it must be turned back on by the gas company.
- **Turn off the electricity if you see sparks.** Look for wires that have come apart. If you smell hot insulation, act fast. Turn off the electricity at the main fuse box. Be careful and look for leaks. Avoid any water near electricity.

**READY REGGIE SAYS:**



# Hurricane

## Hurricane Watch or Warning: What's the difference?

### WATCH

A **hurricane watch** means that a hurricane conditions are possible within a specified area. Officials are watching a storm. They do not know yet how severe it will be or where it will go. Once a hurricane starts, it is too late to prepare. This is why watches are issued 48 hours in advance of the anticipated onset of the storm.

### WARNING

A **hurricane warning** means that a hurricane is on its way soon. Warnings are given 36 hours before the storm hits. Get prepared now. Once a hurricane starts, it is too late to do anything.

## What you can do *before* a hurricane

- **EVACUATE, if possible!** Find the best way to get away from the area. Know where higher ground is and how to get there.
- **If you see a warning telling you to evacuate, do what the officials say. Leave NOW.** Take your pets with you.
- **If you are in a home or building with windows, cover all windows.** Use storm shutters or $^{5}/_{8}$-inch marine plywood.
- **Close the garage door.**
- **Bring in all outdoor furniture and anything that is not tied down.** Don't forget the garbage cans.
- **Turn off the gas and electricity. Turn off any propane tanks.**
- **Bring your pet and/or service animal inside.** Animals can sense severe weather is on the way. They may get upset, run away, or try to hide.
- **Check with trusted friends or family who are not in the path of the storm.** Ask if they can keep your pets.

## What you can do *during* a hurricane

- **Stay indoors. Stay away from windows and glass doors.**
- **Close all interior doors. Close, lock, and brace outside doors.**
- **Keep curtains and blinds closed.**
- **Turn the refrigerator to the coldest setting.** Keep it closed. Open the door only when you must.
- **Take shelter in the most central part of your building.** It could be in a small room on the lowest level. A closet or central hallway are also good choices.
- **Get as low as you can on the floor.** Take shelter under a table, desk, or structurally sound object.

- **Take the stairs. Do not use elevators.**
- **If you are in a tall building, be careful of strong winds. Stay below the 10th floor.** The winds are stronger on higher floors.
- **Keep your pet and/or service animal in a crate or on a leash in the safe room with you.** Stay calm and try to keep your pet and/or service animal calm too.

## What you can do *after* a hurricane

- **Stay away from dangling power lines.** Report them to the power company right away.
- **Walk around the outside of the house or building you live in.** Be careful before going inside. Check for loose power lines, gas leaks, and damage to the building.
- **Stay out of any building if you smell gas.**
- **Use battery-powered flashlights. Do NOT use candles.** There may be leaking gas, and the match may produce a spark that could cause an explosion.
- **Make sure your tap water is safe to drink.** Do not drink or cook food with tap water until you are sure it is safe to drink.
- **Inspect the home for damage.** Take pictures of any damage to the building, and of the things inside. The pictures will help you file insurance claims for damages. Do what you can to prevent further damage to your property (for example, putting a tarp on a damaged roof), as insurance may not cover additional damage that might occur after the storm.
- **Listen to local officials for updates and instructions.**
- **Check-in with family and friends by texting or using social media.**
- **Return home only when authorities indicate it is safe.**
- **Avoid walking or driving through flood waters.** Just 6 inches of moving water can knock you down, and fast-moving water can carry your vehicle away.
- **Avoid flood water.** It may be electrically charged from underground or fallen power lines, and may hide dangerous debris or cover areas where the ground has been washed away.

### Know the facts about hurricanes

The name of a storm depends on how fast the winds are. All three storms can be very damaging when they come onto land. Heavy rain, winds, and large waves can destroy buildings, trees, cars, and even kill people.

- **Hurricane:** A hurricane is a huge rotating storm that can be up to 600 miles wide. It will have strong winds blowing at speeds of 75 to 200 mph. The center of the storm or "eye" is the calmest part. It has only light winds and fair weather.
- **Tropical storm:** A rotating storm with winds that are 39 - 73 miles per hour.
- **Tropical depression:** A rotating storm with winds that are 38 miles an hour or less.
- **Storm surge:** A sudden rise in sea level due to a hurricane or strong storm. This part of the storm causes the most damage. Most injuries and deaths occur during a storm surge.
- **Storm tide:** The combined levels of the tide and sea water from the storm surge. This is usually bigger and much worse than a storm surge.

# Tsunami

## Tsunami Watch or Warning: What's the difference?

### WATCH

A **tsunami watch** means that destructive waves might be on the way. Officials do not know how big it is or if it will reach your area. Keep watching the news or the internet for the next 2–3 hours for more information. Prepare to move.

### WARNING

A **tsunami warning** means large waves will be coming to your area very soon. Get out and get to higher ground now. Follow any orders given by officials.

## What you can do *before* a tsunami

- **Evacuate or move quickly to higher ground.** Bring your pets and/or service animals with you and get as high as you can!
- **Do NOT try to escape the tsunami in your car.** Rushing water moves fast, and you might get trapped.

## What you can do *during* a tsunami

- If you are caught in a tsunami, **don't try to swim.** Grab something that floats, and keep yourself above the water. Try to climb onto a sturdy building or out of the water as soon as you can.

## What you can do *after* a tsunami

- **Wait for an official "All Clear" message before going back to the coast.** A tsunami is more than just one big wave. The dangerous waves can last for several hours.

## What is a tsunami?

**Tsunamis** (sounds like: soo-na-mee) are huge waves of water. They can travel as far as 10 miles inland. Most tsunami waves are caused by earthquakes or volcanic eruptions. They travel like ripples on a pond after you throw a rock. These ripples in the ocean become bigger and bigger. By the time they hit the shore, the water can be very high. It also moves very fast. Tsunamis can cause a lot of damage, injuries, and death.

- **Stay away from debris in the water.**
- **Stay safe.** If someone needs to be rescued, contact the authorities. They will have the right equipment to help.
- **Be very careful when going inside buildings or homes.** Water may have damaged buildings where you can't see it. Watch every step you take.

# Volcano

## What is a volcano?

A **volcano** is a mountain that opens down to a pool of molten rock below the surface of the earth. When it erupts, gases and rock shoot up through the ground. It can erupt upwards or sideways. Volcano eruptions have been known to knock down entire forests. Eruptions can cause lava flows, hot ash flows, mudslides, avalanches, falling ash, floods, tsunamis, flash floods, earthquakes, mudflows, and rockfalls.

## What you can do *before* a volcanic eruption

- **The situation may change quickly. Keep alert.** Stay tuned to the television, Internet, or text alerts. Follow all orders. If you are told to evacuate, leave.
- **Be aware of mudflows.** Mudflows can move faster than you can walk or run. Do not cross a bridge if a mudflow is coming.
- **If you are in a valley, you may hear rumbling from upstream or feel the ground tremble.** These are signs that danger is near. Get out immediately. Get as high as you can, as fast as you can.

## What you can do *during* a volcanic eruption

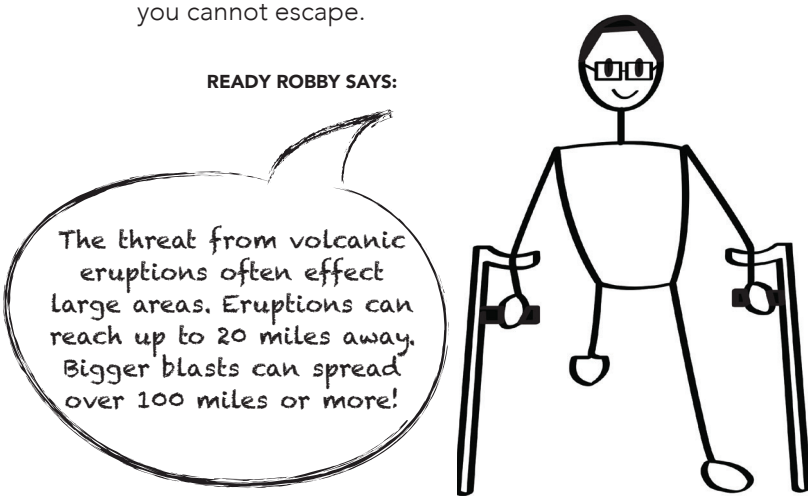
### Protect yourself from falling ash

- **If you cannot evacuate, stay indoors.** Keep doors, windows, and vents closed.
- **Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.**
- **Protect your eyes.** Use goggles and eyeglasses. Don't use contact lenses.
- **Use a dust mask or hold a damp cloth over your face** to help with breathing.
- **Avoid areas where the volcanic ash is falling.** The wind will blow the ash through the air. If the winds are blowing, stay downwind from the volcano.
- **Do not drive.** Driving can stir up volcanic ash. That can clog engines, damage moving parts and cause cars to stall.

### Protect yourself during a mudflow

- If you are near a stream or rushing water, **be alert for any changes.** It may change from clear to muddy. The water may slow to a trickle or start rising very quickly.
- **Getting out of the path of a mudflow is your best protection.** Move to high ground quickly! Mudflows can move faster than you.
- **Curl into a tight ball and protect your head** if you cannot escape.

**READY ROBBY SAYS:**



# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

## General

**What are Advanced Directives?**
An advance directive describes, in writing, your choices about how health care decisions should be made for you if you become incapacitated and cannot express your wishes. Anyone who is of sound mind, and age 18 or older, may complete these forms. Wisconsin law created two forms of advance directives for health care—the living will and the power of attorney for health care. A living will, also known as Declaration to Physicians, allows you to select the kind of life-sustaining care you would want if injury or illness leaves you in a terminal condition (dying) or a persistent vegetative state with no hope of recovery. With a health care power of attorney, you appoint someone to be your "agent" to make all health care decisions—not just those involving life support—for you if you lose the ability to make decisions for yourself. In addition, you can also appoint someone to handle your financial matters using a Power of Attorney for Finances and Property.

**What is an Aid Station?**
Aid stations are set up to help people after a disaster. They may be temporary or more permanent. How long they are open depends on the type of support and how much is needed. Aid stations may provide food, water, recovery supplies, and medical aid. Additionally, they are a central area to help find missing persons.

**What is an Alerting Device?**
If you have hearing loss, a variety of alerting devices are available to wake you, indicate a caller at the door, or make you aware of an emergency. Some alerting devices are for everyday use and others for emergency situations. Alerting devices have at least one of these three types of signals:1) Visual–a flashing light; 2) Vibrotactile–a vibrating component; 3) Auditory–increased amplification and lower frequency sounds. More than likely, an alerting device will have some combination of the above signals. Other types of alerting devices are bed shakers, moisture alerts, and alerts for wanderers. For more information, visit: **www.healthyhearing.com/help/assistive-listening-devices/alerting-devices**.

**What is the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)?**
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) became law in 1990. The ADA is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all public and private places that are open to the general public. For more information, visit: **www.ada.gov**.

**What are apps for Smart Phones?**
An app is a type of software that allows you to perform specific tasks. Applications for mobile devices are called mobile apps. These are user-friendly programs that provide additional functions, such as NOAA/current weather, compass, flashlight, or GPS, that you can download (copy) to your smart phone or other mobile device.

**What is an Assistive Technology Specialist?**
Assistive Technology (AT) Specialists help individuals with disabilities acquire and use appropriate AT to help them participate in activities of daily living, employment, and education.

AT Specialists provide services that are designed to assist people with disabilities to choose, acquire, or use AT devices. They also provide evaluation of AT needs; help in acquiring AT devices; provide guidance in selecting, customizing, adapting, maintaining, repairing, or replacing AT devices; and provide training to individuals with disabilities, family members, professionals, and employers in the effective use and integration of AT devices.

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**What is a Barricade?**
A barricade is anything that blocks passage to an area where there is damage from a disaster, such as a flood or tornado.

**What does "Be Resourceful" mean?**
Being resourceful means using what you have available to you and finding creative ways to solve problems. For example, instead of buying new items for your emergency kits, you might find some items at garage or rummage sales.

**What is a Bed Shaker?**
A bed shaker is a device that is connected to alerting equipment, such as an alarm clock or fire alarm. It has a disc that is placed under the mattress or pillow. This disc shakes when the alarm alerts.

**What is a Physical Disability?**
Wisconsin Statute 15.197 (4) defines a physical disability as a physical condition, including an anatomical loss or musculoskeletal, neurological, respiratory or cardiovascular impairment, which results from injury, disease or congenital disorder, and which significantly interferes with or significantly limits at least one of the following major life activities of a person: self-care, walking, mobility other than walking, breathing, employment, performance of manual tasks unrelated to employment, receptive and expressive language, education or capacity for independent living.

**What is Daylight Saving Time?**
Daylight Savings Time sets the clocks forward one hour during the longer days of summer, and back again in the fall. The clock moves ahead at 2:00 a.m. on the second Sunday in March. It falls back one hour at 2:00 a.m. (gaining one hour) on the first Sunday of November. To remember which way the clock goes, keep in mind: "spring forward, fall back."

**What is a Disaster?**
A disaster can be a natural event, such as bad weather, or man-made, such as a terrorist attack. It can cause a lot of damage. People may be injured or killed. The environment could also be destroyed. Examples of disasters are earthquakes, floods, large accidents, fires, or explosions. Depending on the damage, it could take a long time to recover. Sometimes the damage is so severe that people cannot rebuild.

**What does disconnect mean?**
Disconnect refers to shutting off the electric, gas or water supply between the supply lines and the building.

**What are Emergency Checklists?**
Emergency checklists help people plan for different emergencies. The checklists should help people identify items to include in their Emergency Kits. There are four checklists in this toolkit: **GENERAL**, **DISABILITY**, **CAR**, and **IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS**. See the **EMERGENCY CHECKLISTS** section of this manual.

**What are Emergency Kits (GO BAG, HOME KIT, CAR KIT, WORK KIT)?**
Emergency Kits are the actual physical kits people should consider putting together before an emergency happens using the **EMERGENCY CHECKLISTS** for ideas. See the **EMERGENCY CHECKLISTS** section of this manual.

**What are my Important Documents?**
Everyone has important documents (for example, prescriptions, medical records, drivers licenses, and insurance cards). Plan ahead to make sure you have copies of your important documents to take with you in case an emergency or disaster happens. See the **IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS CHECKLIST** to help determine what you need. Keep copies of

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

your important documents in a document storage envelope. You can also scan your documents and copy them to a USB or flash drive.

**What does "I am sensitive to Electromagnetic Frequencies (EMFs)" mean?**
People who are sensitive to EMF radiation have an intolerance to electromagnetic fields. EMF sensitivity is also called Electrical sensitivity (ES). Sources of EMF radiation include cell phones, cordless phones, laptops, other wireless devices, baby monitors, microwaves, appliances, fluorescent lighting, cell towers, Wi-Fi, wireless networks, power lines, and smart meters, to name a few.

**What is Environmental Illness (EI)?**
An environmental illness can occur when people are exposed to toxins or substances in the environment that make them sick. These health hazards may be found where you live, work, or play.

**What is a Vaccine?**
Vaccines help prevent the spread of many serious diseases. They are made from killed or weakened organisms. A vaccine is injected into a body through a needle or nasal spray. The vaccine stimulates the body's immune system to recognize the agent as foreign. They body destroys it and "remembers" it. This process makes the body immune against that organism. The immune system can more easily recognize and fight this disease if it enters the body again.

**What is an Evacuation?**
Evacuations are declared by officials when they believe it is dangerous for people to stay where they are, and need to be moved to a safe area quickly. Dangerous conditions could include floods, tornadoes, earthquakes, hurricanes, tsunamis, and volcanic eruptions. People may leave a building on fire; or they may leave a town or region because of a flood.

**What should I do if there is an Evacuation?**
When an evacuation is ordered, follow the instructions immediately. The American Red Cross, with local or state officials, may open shelters. These will most likely be in schools or other public buildings. You are not required to go to a shelter if you have another safe place to stay. You may choose to stay with friends or family in another region. No matter where you go, bring your **GO BAG** and, if possible, your **HOME KIT** with you.

**What is an Evacuation Route?**
Evacuation routes are the quickest and easiest way for people to flee a dangerous situation. If an evacuation is necessary, announcements will be made by public officials and the media. In the case of a fire, a staircase may be blocked. You will have to find a different way out. During a flood, a road may be covered with water. You will need to find an alternative route.

**What is an Evacuation Chair?**
An evacuation chair, escape chair, or stair chair is a device manufactured for the smooth descent of stairways in the event of an emergency.

**What are possible funding sources for evacuation chairs and other evacuation devices?**
Possible funding sources include Managed Care Organizations (MCOs), Aging and Disability Resources Centers (ADRCs), Independent Living Centers (ILCs), Health Care Provider Insurance Companies, and DVR.

**What should I do if I can't find an expiration date on my emergency supplies?**
For products that have no expiration date, look for any obvious signs of wear and tear. Products should not be used if you see any damage to the product or its packaging. Look for any degradation or discoloring. When in doubt, throw it out.

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**What is a Fire Blanket?**
A fire blanket is a highly flame-resistant blanket that can be used to either extinguish a small fire or to wrap around a person.

**What is Federal Aid and how would I get it?**
If a disaster is large enough, a Governor will ask the President to issue a Major Disaster Declaration. This is the only way to start the federal assistance programs for help after a disaster. These may include temporary housing, low-interest loans and grants, counseling, and other support services. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) doesn't offer all of its programs for every disaster. It depends on the kind of damages reported by the state. To qualify for federal disaster assistance, the damage must have happened in an area covered by the Major Disaster Declaration.

**Who are First Responders?**
First responders are the first to arrive on the scene of an emergency or disaster. They work for fire departments, police departments, or they are emergency medical personnel, such as paramedics. They are trained to react quickly. First responders' most important job is to make sure people are safe. This includes evacuation, rescue, crowd control, and medical attention. They also make sure that the area has been secured. They redirect traffic and keep onlookers away.

**What are Flashing Lights or Vibrating Alarms?**
Smoke alarms and other alerting devices, such as alarm clocks or doorbells, are available for people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind. Instead of making sounds to catch their attention, these devices use flashing lights or vibrating devices. For example, flashing strobe lights can alert people to the presence of smoke in a building. When people are asleep, a strobe light and a pillow or bed shaker can wake them up and alert them so that they can escape.

**What does a hand crank do?**
Some flashlights, phone chargers, and NOAA weather radios have a hand crank with a special handle so they do not need batteries or electric power to work. Every time you crank the handle, you generate power for the device. Some devices will provide a charge for several items. For example, an NOAA weather radio may include a plug for a phone charger.

**What does heavy duty or sturdy mean?**
A heavy duty product, or one that is sturdy, is made to be strong enough to withstand external forces.

**What does a lantern-style flashlight look like?**

**What is an Independent Living Center (ILC)?**
ILCs are community-based, consumer-directed, not-for-profit organizations. Independent Living Centers are non-residential organizations serving persons of any age with any disability in all 72 counties of Wisconsin. ILCs are governed and operated by board and staff composed of a majority of people with disabilities. All ILCs provide the following core services, which include: information and referral, peer support, independent living, individual and systems advocacy, and transition. **www.il-wisconsin.net/centers/**

**Where do I find the Independent Living Center that serves my county?**
There are eight Independent Living Centers in Wisconsin. Locate the ILC nearest to you by using the map at **www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/disabilities/physical/ilcs-contact.htm**. A text-only list of counties is also available.

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**What is an Insurance Claim?**
An insurance claim is a written request to an insurance company for money to replace items that are damaged and covered by the insurance policy. Claims are reviewed by the company to make sure they are real and accurate. Once it has been approved, the claim is paid out to the insured person.

**What is a Main Fuse Box and how does it work?**
The main fuse box controls and distributes the electricity in your home. The fuse box includes three things: the main switch, fuses and/or circuit breakers, and residual current devices. The main switch allows you to turn off the supply of electricity to your home. You may have more than one main switch, for example if your home has electric storage heaters. In this case you may have a separate fuse box.

Fuses have a piece of special wire connected to two screws. When something goes wrong with the flow of electricity, the wire will become hot and melt. The melted fuse turns off the electricity and keeps you safe. Circuit breakers switch off a circuit if they detect a fault. When they "trip," you can simply reset the switch. But make sure you correct the problem first. residual current devices (RCD) are switches that trip a circuit under dangerous conditions, and instantly disconnect the electricity. If your fuse box has a wooden back, cast iron switches, or a mixture of fuses, it is likely that it dates back to before the 1960s and will need to be replaced.

**What are Main Switches?**
Main switches turn on and shut off the flow of electricity, gas, and water that comes into a home or building.

**What is Multiple Chemical Sensitivity?**
Multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS) is a chronic medical condition that results from low-level chemical exposure to different substances, such as scented products, pesticides, plastics, synthetic fabrics, smoke, petroleum products, and paint fumes. MCS is also called "environmental illness" or "sick building syndrome."

**What is a Medical Identification Tag?**
A medical identification tag is a small emblem or tag worn on a bracelet, neck chain, or clothing that bears a message that the wearer has a medical condition that might require immediate attention.

**What is an NOAA Weather Radio?**
This is a service of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The National Weather Service provides local weather broadcasts through the NOAA weather radio. The signal is sent from more than 700 different transmitters across the United States. It provides continuous broadcasts of the latest weather information from local National Weather Service offices. The messages are repeated every 4 to 7 minutes and are updated every 1 to 3 hours. This could be done more frequently if the weather is rapidly changing, or if a nearby hazardous environmental condition exists. This service operates 24 hours a day. Special NOAA weather radios that receive only NOAA weather radio broadcasts are available from several manufacturers. The radios can usually be found at department and electronics stores.

**Why should I use an NOAA Weather Radio, even if I can't hear it?**
Some NOAA weather radios can caption the kind of warning. They can tell you if it is a tornado, thunderstorm, or some other kind of severe weather. Some NOAA weather radios have different colored lights to tell you if it is a watch or a warning. Some flashing and vibrating alert systems work with NOAA weather radios to let you know when an alert is happening. Most of us live with or near people who can hear the radio alerts.

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**What are Propane Tanks?**
Propane tanks are the storage containers for liquid propane. Tanks have many different sizes and are used for many different reasons. Propane tanks can stay in one area or be portable. Portable tanks are used as a fuel source for gas grills and forklifts. Stationary propane tanks are often found behind homes or businesses. These tanks supply power to all propane powered appliances in the buildings.

**What is Property?**
Property is something that is owned or possessed. There are two basic kinds of property: buildings and land; and personal property—any object that a person owns or uses.

**What is a Rehabilitation Engineer?**
Rehabilitation engineers design and build devices and systems to meet a wide range of needs that can assist individuals with mobility, communication, hearing, vision, and cognition. These tools help people with day-to-day activities and tasks related to employment, independent living, and education. Rehabilitation engineering may involve relatively simple observations of how workers perform tasks, and then making accommodations to eliminate further injuries and discomfort.
**www.nibib.nih.gov/science-education/science-topics/rehabilitation-engineering**

**What is a Service Animal?**
A service animal is a dog trained to perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability.

**What is an Emergency Shelter?**
An emergency shelter is a temporary place for people to stay when a disaster or emergency forces them to evacuate from their homes. Shelters are set up by groups, such as the American Red Cross and/or government agencies. How long shelters stay open depends on multiple factors, including the extent and severity of the disaster and the needs of the people.

**Why should animals have shelter?**
Even though many animals have a coat of fur and spend time outdoors, they still need protection from severe weather. They can get cold and wet during the winter or rainy months. They can also overheat during the hot summer months. A proper shelter for animals should have a roof to protect them from rain, hail, and snow. The shelter should also have walls to help block cold winds.

**What does "Shelter-in-Place" mean?**
"Shelter-in-Place" means to seek safety indoors, wherever you are. Find the safest places inside that will protect you the most. If you are in your home, you should know how to turn off heating and ventilation systems quickly. DO NOT go outside until officials declare that is it safe to do so.

**What is a Thermal Blanket?**
A thermal blanket is made of heat-reflective thin plastic sheeting. It is another name for a space blanket, which is also known as a mylar blanket, first aid blanket, emergency blanket, or weather blanket. They are designed to reduce the heat loss in a person's body.

**What is a Transfer Board?**
A transfer board is an assistive device that is designed to help people move or transfer from wheelchairs to beds, cars, or other locations.

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**What is a Video Relay Service?**
Video Relay Service (VRS) allows people who use American Sign Language (ASL) to use video equipment to communicate with voice telephone users. VRS allows people whose primary language is ASL to communicate in their preferred language. People who use ASL express themselves through facial expressions and body language. This cannot be expressed in text. The person using ASL uses a television or a computer with a video camera. The television or computer is connected to broadband (high-speed) internet. The internet call connects to a qualified sign language interpreter. They communicate with each other in sign language through the video link. The interpreter then calls the person the ASL user wishes to call. The interpreter relays the conversation back and forth: in sign language with the ASL user and by voice with the person on the telephone. No typing or text is involved. A voice telephone user can also make a VRS call. VRS call by dialing the phone number of the videophone (VP) user. He or she will automatically connect with the interpreter to facilitate the call.

**What is Wisconsin's Council on Physical Disabilities?**
The Wisconsin Council on Physical Disabilities (CPD) was created by the state legislature in 1989. Its mission, established by state statute 15.197 (4), is to: develop and implement a state plan for services to people with physical disabilities; advise and make recommendations to state agencies on relevant legislation; promote public awareness about the abilities of and barriers to people with physical disabilities; encourage the development of programs and policies that prevent physical disabilities; and submit recommendations in an annual report to the state legislature.
**cpd.wisconsin.gov**

## TOOLS TO BE PREPARED

### GO BAG

**What does non-perishable mean?**
Non-perishable foods can last for months without spoiling. Examples are canned foods and foods sold in other types of packaging, such as dried fruit sold in sealed plastic bags.

**What can I do if I can't get a backup supply of my prescription medications?**
If you can't get an emergency supply for your **GO BAG**, ask your doctor or insurance company to help you. Refill your prescriptions on the first day it is allowed. Don't wait until you run out of your medications. Make sure you have a plan to rotate your medications and medical supplies. They should always be up-to-date.

**Why do I need a whistle, even if I can't hear it?**
You can use the whistle to let people know where you are. You may not be able to hear rescuers calling out to you, but by using your whistle, you can get their attention and guide them to you. Rescuers can use the sound of the whistle to tell them where you are and how far away you are.

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**What is a Road Flare?**
Road flares are safety equipment used to alert people to hazards on the road, such as closed lanes, accidents, fallen trees, and other issues. Law enforcement officers, ambulances, and fire trucks usually carry road flares. Motorists can carry flares too. The road flare is an insulated stick which carries explosive material. The flare is activated by pulling a tab on one end. The fuse on the end of the flare sparks and then lights. It will remain lit for 15-20 minutes. The flare may include safety measures such as a spark deflector or roll prevention stand to avoid causing a fire. The light emitted by road flares is extremely bright which makes it visible from a distance. You can lay several flares in a row to attract the attention of cars coming your way. When they are burned out and cool, pick them up and throw them away. **Store road flares in a cool, dry place, away from light.**

## MEDICAL EMERGENCY WALLET CARD

**What is a Blood Type and how do I know mine?**
There are eight different blood types: A+, A-, B+, B-, AB+, AB-, O+, or O-. These types are determined by the presence or absence of certain antigens—substances that can trigger an immune response if they are foreign to the body. Safe blood transfusions depend on careful blood typing and cross-matching. If you do not know your blood type, ask your doctor.

**What is the Emergency Information Form (EIF) for Children with Special Needs?**
The Emergency Information Form (EIF) is available online at: **www.acep.org/clinical---practice-management/emergency-information-form-for-children-with-special-health-care-needs**. This document will assure appropriate care for children with special health care needs. When these children are presented to emergency departments or health care professionals with an acute illness or injury, physicians, EMS professionals, and nurses will be able to use the EIF as a tool to transfer critical information to ensure that a child's complicated medical history is summarized and available when it is needed most—when neither parent nor pediatrician is immediately available.

## FAMILY EMERGENCY PLAN

**What is a Designated Location?**
This is a location that has been selected by family members so they can find each other if they are separated during a disaster. Families should have three designated locations: outside the home, outside the neighborhood, and outside the region or state.

**Who is an emergency contact? Why do I need a local contact and one out-of-town?**
An emergency contact should be someone you trust. The local contact should be someone who can help you during an emergency, (e.g. take you home from the emergency room). The out-of-town contact is someone you and your family members can communicate with in case you have trouble connecting with one another.

**What does pet-friendly mean?**
Pet-friendly may mean that a hotel or facility will accept pets. Some facilities will charge extra fees. Most will have some rules and restrictions. You will want to contact each place directly to ask some of the following questions:

- Are there any size or weight restrictions you have for pets?
- Are there any restrictions on the type of pets you allow to stay?
- What fees will you charge for my pet—per day or per stay?

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

- Is there a "cleaning fee," and is that fee refundable or non-refundable?
- What secure outside space is available?
- What areas of your facility are off-limits to pets?
- Where is our pet permitted to sleep?

**What is Lightning?**
Lightning is a discharge of the static electricity built up in storm clouds. Most lightning is formed as a part of thunderstorms. This is because the rising and sinking of air causes a bumping of air and water molecules. That bumping causes the buildup of a charge. As a thunder cloud becomes more and more charged it induces a positive charge in the ground to balance things out. This is the lightning that we see.

**What is a Thunderstorm?**
It is a storm with thunder and lightning. It also usually has heavy rain, gusty wind, or hail.

**What is Radar?**
Radar stands for Radio Detection and Ranging. Radar can detect the motion of rain droplets and how fast and hard they are falling. This data can be analyzed to determine the structure of storms, their potential to cause severe weather, and the expected movement of significant storms over the next hour. It also provides storm details such as the presence of hail and direction of rotation.

**What is a Microburst?**
A microburst is a downdraft (sinking air) in a thunderstorm. Some microbursts can be a threat to life and property, but all microbursts can pose a major threat to air travel. Sometimes they can be more destructive than a tornado. In fact, wind speeds as high as 150 mph are possible in extreme microburst cases.

**What is a Supercell?**
A supercell usually looks like a very tall storm cloud shaped like an anvil. They are the least common type of thunderstorm. Supercells produce severe weather including damaging winds, very large hail, and sometimes tornadoes. The storms can last for several hours. Supercells are most common in the central part of the United States.

**What is a Tornado?**
A tornado begins as a rotating, funnel-shaped cloud extending from a thunderstorm cloud. The tornado's high-speed winds rotate around a small center. It can suck up dust and debris. This makes the tornado darker and more easily seen.

**What is the Enhanced-Fujita (EF) Scale?**
The Enhanced Fujita Scale rates tornadoes by the damage they cause. Tornado categories are from EF0 to EF5. The EF Scale takes into account variables such as building types, structures, and the sizes of trees.

| EF Rating | Wind Speed | Kind of Damage |
|---|---|---|
| EF0 | 65–85 mph | Light damage. Peels surface off some roofs; some damage to gutters or siding; branches broken off trees; shallow-rooted trees pushed over. |
| EF1 | 86–110 mph | Moderate damage. Roofs severely stripped; mobile homes overturned or badly damaged; loss of exterior doors; windows and other glass broken. |
| EF2 | 111–135 mph | Considerable damage. Roofs torn off well-constructed houses; foundations of frame homes shifted; mobile homes completely destroyed; large trees snapped or uprooted; light-object missiles generated; cars lifted off ground. |
| EF3 | 136-165 mph | Severe damage. Entire stories of well-constructed houses destroyed; severe damage to large buildings such as shopping malls; trains overturned; trees debarked; heavy cars lifted off the ground and thrown; structures with weak foundations blown away some distance. |
| EF4 | 166–200 mph | Devastating damage. Whole frame of well-constructed houses completely leveled; cars thrown and small missiles generated. |
| EF5 | Any winds over 200 mph | Incredible damage. Strong frame houses leveled off foundations and swept away; automobile-sized missiles fly through the air in excess of 100 m (109 yd.); high-rise buildings have significant structural deformation; incredible phenomena will occur. |

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**Where do tornadoes occur?**
Tornadoes can occur whenever and wherever conditions are right! Tornadoes can occur in every state in the United States, on any day of the year, and at any hour. They also occur in many other parts of the world, including Australia, Europe, Africa, Asia, and South America.

**Where is Tornado Alley?**
Tornado Alley is a nickname for an area that has more tornadoes than other parts of the U.S. The area with the strongest and most violent tornadoes include eastern South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, northern Texas, and eastern Colorado.

**How much advance warning can forecasters give us before a tornado strikes?**
The current average lead-time for tornado warnings is 13 minutes.

**What is a Waterspout?**
A waterspout looks like a tornado over water. Waterspouts do not suck up water. The water seen in the main funnel cloud is water droplets formed by condensation. Waterspouts are usually much weaker than a tornado over land.

**What is Wind Shear?**
Wind shear is a change in wind speed and/or direction that can occur either horizontally or vertically. It is most often associated with strong changes in air temperature and levels of moisture. Wind shear can also refer to a rapid change in winds. These conditions can cause a rapid change in the altitude of a plane.

**What is Higher Ground?**
Higher ground is any place that is above the highest level of a flood or mudflow. It can be at the top of a hill or in a tall building.

**What is Flood Insurance?**
Flood insurance covers direct physical loss caused by a flood. A flood is an excess of water on land that is normally dry. As with any other type of insurance, it's important to know what the policy does and doesn't cover. For example, damage caused by a sewer backup may not be covered. It is only covered by flood insurance if it's a direct result of flooding. The damage is not covered if the backup is caused by some other problem.

**What is Dehydration?**
Dehydration occurs when you use or lose more fluid than you take in. Your body doesn't have enough water and other fluids to carry out its normal functions. If you don't replace lost fluids, you will get dehydrated. You can usually treat mild to moderate dehydration by drinking more fluids, such as water or a sports drink. Get immediate medical care if you develop severe signs and symptoms such as extreme thirst, a lack of urination, shriveled skin, dizziness and confusion.

**What is Extreme Heat?**
Extreme heat occurs when temperatures hover 10 degrees or more above the average high temperature for the region. This condition can last for several weeks.

**What is Humidity?**
Humidity is the amount of water vapor in the air. The hotter the air is, the more water vapor it can hold. Too much or too little humidity can be dangerous to humans who are sensitive to changes in humidity. Our skin uses the air around us to get rid of moisture in the form of sweat. If the relative humidity is very high, the air is already saturated with water vapor. This prevents our sweat from evaporating, and we feel hotter than the actual temperature. Very low humidity can make us feel cooler than the actual temperature. This happens because the dry air helps sweat evaporate more quickly.

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**What is Lightweight Clothing?**
In warm weather, the best fabrics are those made from natural materials such as cotton, linen and rayon. These materials tend to "breathe" more than synthetics such as polyester. Wool and silk are not good choices either. They tend to retain heat. Generally, light colored fabrics are better for warm weather because they reflect light and heat. White, beige, and pastels are good choices. Lightweight clothing should also be loose and comfortable.

**What is Water Conservation?**
It is important to use our water wisely and not waste it. A typical household uses approximately 260 gallons of water every day. We can reduce this amount and save money by using water more efficiently. There are many ways to save water. Turning off the water while brushing our teeth can save as much as 3,000 gallons of water each year! There are also products, such as high efficiency washing machines and toilets, that can help save water.

**What are Water Restrictions?**
It is in the public interest to conserve water supplies to protect the health, welfare, and safety of communities. When there are water shortages, local governments can declare water restrictions that are voluntary, or mandatory, if the shortages are severe. Residents may be asked to water their lawns every other day or not wash their cars. During drought conditions, water use would be much more limited.

**What are Air Currents?**
Air currents are masses of moving air. They are usually caused by differences in pressure and temperature. Air currents shape, and are influenced by, the Earth's climate and weather. They are felt by people as wind, both on the ground and when flying in a plane.

**What is a Burn Barrel?**
A burn barrel is used to burn trash or solid waste. It could be a 55-gallon drum or some other type of large metal container. Many states have bans or restrictions on burn barrels because they can be a fire hazard. They are also a source of pollution from the smoke and chemicals in the items being burned. Always check with local authorities before using a burn barrel.

**What is a Burn Permit?**
Burn permits are granted by the state Department of National Resources (DNR) or the local officials. They are an important tool in wildfire prevention. Having a permit allows a person to burn legal materials outdoors. This process is proven to be effective in protecting lives, property, and natural resources from the damages of unwanted wildfires.

**What is a Dual-sensor Smoke Alarm?**
Dual-sensor smoke alarms use two kinds of detection methods for finding fires. Fires that smolder and don't create big flames create a different kind of smoke than one that has big flames. Many fire safety organizations support using this kind of smoke alarm because they cover a broad range of fires. This makes them much safer than single sensor alarms.

**What is a Fire Extinguisher?**
Portable fire extinguishers can help put out small fires. They have a small amount of extinguishing material. They need to be properly used so that this material is not wasted. **Only trained firefighters can safely extinguish large fires.** The use of a fire extinguisher in the hands of a trained adult can be a life and property saving tool. Different types of fires require different types of extinguishers. For example, a grease fire and an electrical fire require the use of different fire extinguishers to safely put out the fire.

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**What is a Fire Hazard?**
Threats to fire safety are called fire hazards. They can be defined as areas where fires will start, where smoke or gasses can be generated, or where explosions can endanger the lives of people. Fire hazards may also include situations that increase the chances that a fire may start, or buildings where escape exits would be blocked, trapping people inside.

**What is Fire Safety Training?**
Fire safety training helps prevent fires and reduces the possibility that a fire may happen. It also reduces the possibility of deaths, injuries, and/or property damage from fires. Having systems in place that alert people when fire and/or smoke is present gives people time to evacuate.

**What does flammable mean?**
An item that is flammable can easily catch on fire. It can also burn easily. Examples of flammable things are paper, wood, and gasoline.

**What is Fuel Oil?**
Fuel oil is a general term for a number of burnable liquids made from crude oil. Most common are kerosene, range oil, and jet fuel. All fuel oil mixtures have similar chemical and physical properties. Fuel oils are used to run many types of engines, lamps and heaters. Sometimes small amounts of fuel oil are stored in portable containers for use in space heaters, to clean metal parts, or used in camp stoves or lanterns.

**Why do oily rags cause fires?**
Do-it-yourself projects often involve using products that are flammable, such as oil-based paints and stains, varnishes and polyurethane, paint thinners, etc. Oily rags from these projects have a long history of being a source of fire. For a fire to exist, it needs heat, oxygen and fuel. Oily rags that get folded, or balled up, are in danger of suddenly catching on fire. As the oil is drying on the rag, it produces heat, and air gets trapped in the folds. Heat and oxygen are combined in the rag, which is usually made of a cloth that can easily catch on fire. This is why oily rags that are not disposed of properly can create a fire.

**What is Protective Clothing?**
Protective clothing includes sturdy shoes, cotton or woolen clothing, long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, gloves, and a handkerchief to protect your face. Hot embers or cinders can burn your skin if you come into contact with them. Smoke can make it difficult to breathe.

**What is Spontaneous Combustion?**
Spontaneous combustion happens when something catches on fire without having a clear cause, such as a spark, outside source of heat, or a flame. These fires are often the result of chemical reactions that were developing over a long time. The chemical reaction starts the fire by itself. Oily rags, coal, and wet hay are known to suddenly catch on fire.

**What are Valuables?**
A valuable is anything that is important (has value) to you or someone else. It could be expensive, such as a piece of personal jewelry or collectible item, or have sentimental value for its memories, such as pictures of family members.

**What is a Wildfire?**
A wildfire is a large, destructive fire that spreads quickly over woodland or brush. They can happen anywhere, but are common in the forests of the United States and Canada. Wildfires often begin without anyone noticing the first flames. They then spread quickly—igniting brush, trees and homes. More than four out of every five wildfires are caused by people. Fires are more common in the summer and fall. They happen during droughts when fallen branches, leaves, and other material can dry out and become highly flammable. A wildfire is also known as a wildland fire, forest fire, vegetation fire, grass fire, peat fire, bushfire (in Australia), or hill fire.

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**What are Storm Windows?**
Storm windows are windows that are mounted outside or inside of the main glass windows of a house. They can be made of glass, rigid plastic panels, or flexible plastic sheets. Storm windows can also be permanent or temporary. Storm windows help protect glass windows during bad weather.

**What is a Collapsible Escape Ladder?**
Collapsible escape ladders help people escape from fires. These ladders can attach to the window sill and allow a person to go down the ladder safely to escape the fire. These ladders fold or roll up and should be stored in rooms above the first floor where they would be needed.

**What are Flammable or Combustible Liquids?**
Flammable and combustible liquids are liquids that can catch on fire and will burn easily. Liquids are grouped as flammable or combustible. Which group the liquid belongs to depends on the temperature at which it will start burning. Fuels and products like solvents, thinners, cleaners, adhesives, paints, waxes and polishes may be flammable or combustible. The vapors from these liquids are usually invisible. These fires burn very fast. They also give off a lot of heat. You will often see clouds of thick, black, toxic smoke. A small spill can cover a large area. Burning liquids can flow under doors, down stairs and even into neighboring buildings. This makes a dangerous fire spread widely. Materials like wood, cardboard and cloth can easily absorb flammable and combustible liquids. Even after a spill has been cleaned up, a dangerous amount of liquid could still remain in surrounding materials or clothing. The vapors left behind are still very dangerous. They could still catch fire. Everyone who works with these liquids must be aware of their hazards and how to work safely with them.

**What is a Flashpoint?**
The flashpoint is a measure of how easily a chemical may burn. It is the lowest temperature that vapors of a liquid will catch fire. Chemicals with lower flash points are more dangerous. Materials with higher flash points are less flammable or dangerous. Flashpoints are only intended to be used as guides.

**What is a Portable Generator?**
A portable generator provides temporary electrical power. Generators can be helpful when the power goes out. They can keep a freezer, refrigerator, television and some lights working. Generators usually use gas or diesel fuel to work.

**What is a Portable Space Heater?**
Small space heaters are used when people need to warm up a small space. Electric space heaters are the kind usually found in homes. They can cause burns and fires so they should be used with caution. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that more than 25,000 fires in homes every year are caused by space heaters. Those fires cause more than 300 deaths every year. Almost 6,000 people receive hospital emergency room care for burn injuries because they touched the hot surfaces of space heaters. If you use one, buy a unit with a tip-over safety switch. This automatically shuts off the heater if the unit is tipped over.

**What is a Smoke Alarm?**
A smoke alarm is usually found in homes or small buildings. It can be put anywhere and does not have to be connected to a larger system with multiple alarms. It has its own alarm sound, its own power (such as a battery), and heat and smoke sensors. A smoke alarm includes a test button to check if it is still working.

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**What is a Smoke Detector?**
A smoke detector is part of a system. The device on the ceiling is just a sensor. It will sense heat or smoke. It has no built in power supply or sounder. This means that the alarm sound and power source are usually in the fire alarm panel. Sometimes the panel will send an alert directly to the fire department. This kind of system is usually in large buildings, hotels, dorms, or large apartment buildings.

**What is Carbon Monoxide Poisoning?**
Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas that comes from burning things like kerosene, coal, or wood. It is a poison. Breathing carbon monoxide fumes decreases the blood's ability to carry oxygen. Carbon monoxide replaces oxygen in the blood. Low levels of oxygen cause cells in the body to die, including those in vital organs such as the brain and heart. Carbon monoxide can come from broken gas water heaters and furnaces, space heaters that don't have vents, gas clothes dryers, tobacco smoke, and fuels burned in wood and gas stoves. Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are: symptoms like the flu or a cold, headache, dizziness, weakness or clumsiness, nausea and vomiting, rapid or irregular heartbeat, shortness of breath, chest pain, loss of hearing, blurry vision, disorientation or confusion, seizures, loss of consciousness or coma, cardiac arrest, respiratory failure, and even death. Carbon monoxide detectors help prevent carbon monoxide poisoning in the home. If you suspect you have carbon monoxide poisoning, leave the area and get fresh air immediately. Turn off the carbon monoxide source only if you can do so safely. Call 911 or your local emergency medical service (EMS).

**What Does it Mean to Circulate Air?**
To circulate air means to make sure there is fresh air coming into or through a room or closed building. "Old" air may be full of odors, toxic gases, or dust. Carbon dioxide accumulation comes from poor air circulation. Air can be ventilated (or circulated) by opening or closing windows. It can also come from a system with vents that blow fresh air into the room.

**What is an Exhaust Pipe?**

An exhaust pipe carries toxic gases away from an engine. Cars, indoor generators and furnaces all use exhaust pipes. Without exhaust pipes, they can quickly fill an enclosed space with poisonous exhaust gases. So they must be properly vented outdoors. Because these gases are also hot, the pipes must be heat-resistant. They must not pass through or near anything that can burn or that can be damaged by heat.

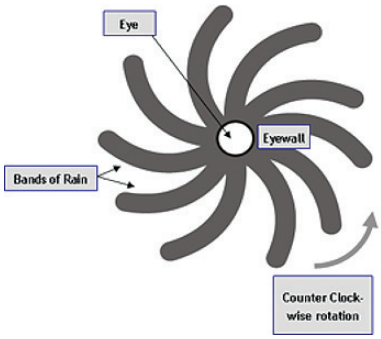
**What are Hazard Lights?**

Hazard lights can be used to alert drivers to problems. Hazard lights are turned on with a small switch located near the steering column. In many cars, the switch has a small triangular icon on it that is often red or orange to make it more visible in emergencies. When the switch is turned on, all of the turn signals on the vehicle start flashing at the same time. This pattern is highly visible and unique, so drivers will not confuse it with turn signals or approaching headlights. Drivers who see a vehicle with flashing hazard lights should slow down until they know what the problem is. Often the hazard lights are turned on for a car that has been pulled to the side of the road. At night, they increase the visibility of the car so that it will not be hit, and also warn drivers that there is a problem of some kind. Some drivers use the lights and also put up their car hoods when they need help. Responders to an accident scene may also use their hazard lights to warn drivers about unusual conditions up ahead, and to help clear a lane for access to the accident.

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**What is condensation?**
You see the process of condensation on your glasses every time you walk from the cold outdoors into a warm house. Your glasses fog up. This is water that collects as droplets on the cold surface of the glasses when the warm and humid air of the house comes in contact with it. This moisture can damage things such as hearing aids or cochlear implants.

**What is the Eye of a Hurricane?**
The eye of a hurricane is the center of the storm. It is the point around which the rest of the storm rotates and where the lowest surface pressures are found in the storm. Skies are often clear above the eye and winds are light. It is the calmest section of the hurricane. The eye is calm because the strong surface winds that stretch towards the center never reach it. The winds rotate around the center of the hurricane (the eye wall), leaving the exact center (the eye) calm.




**What is an "All Clear"?**
An "All Clear" is the signal that the danger is over.

**What is Volcanic Ash?**
Volcanic ash consists of tiny jagged pieces of rock and glass. Ash is hard, abrasive, and mildly corrosive. It conducts electricity when wet and does not dissolve in water. Ash is spread over large areas by blowing wind. Falling ash can turn daylight into complete darkness. When it comes with rain and lightning, the ash can lead to power outages, prevent communications, and cause people to be disoriented.

**What is an Avalanche?**
An avalanche is a rapid flow of snow, rocks or debris down a sloping surface. It is typically triggered when the forces on the snow exceed its strength. The heat from a volcanic eruption can also cause the snow to quickly melt. The melted snow becomes water rushing down the slope, taking trees and boulders with it. After it starts, an avalanche usually increases in speed and in size as it picks up more snow, mud, or debris.

**What is an Eruption?**
When pressure builds up under a volcano, eruptions occur. Gases and rock shoot up through the opening. They spill over or fill the air with lava, ash or volcanic rocks. Eruptions can cause blasts that blow out the side of the volcano. They can also cause lava flows, hot ash flows, mudslides, avalanches, falling ash and floods. Volcano eruptions have been known to knock down entire forests and trigger tsunamis, flash floods, earthquakes, mudflows and rock falls.

**What is a Lahar?**
A lahar is a kind of mudflow or debris flow. It is made up of rocky debris and water. It flows down from a volcano, typically along a river valley. It is very dangerous because it acts very much like cement. It is liquid when it's moving, but when it stops, it becomes solid very quickly. Lahar can cause just as much destruction as lava.

**What is Lava?**
Lava is liquid rock (magma) that flows out of a volcano. Fresh lava glows red hot to white hot as it flows.

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**What is Magma?**
Magma is liquid rock that is inside a volcano.

**What is Molten Rock?**
Molten rock is heated rock. It is so hot that it turns into a thick liquid.

**What is a Mudflow?**
A mudflow or mudslide occurs when a significant amount of water, from rain or melting snow, mixes with soil and rock, creating a slippery mass of mud. Mudflows occur mostly in mountainous places where long dry seasons are followed by heavy rains. Mudflows of volcanic eruptions are the most dangerous. A mudflow caused by a volcano is also called a lahar.

**What is Pumice?**
Pumice is a light, porous volcanic rock. It forms during explosive eruptions. It resembles a sponge because it is made up of a network of gas bubbles frozen amidst fragile volcanic glass and minerals. All types of magma will form pumice.

**What is a Pyroclastic Flow?**
A pyroclastic flow is a mixture of solid to semi-solid fragments and hot, expanding gases that flows down the sides of a volcano. It moves much like a snow avalanche, except that it is extremely hot and contains deadly toxic gases. It also moves at unbelievable, hurricane-force speeds. They are the most deadly of all volcanic events.

# References

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American Academy of Pediatrics, Committee on Pediatric Emergency Medicine. *Emergency Preparedness for Children with Special Health Care Needs.* 104(53), 1-6.

Department of Health Services, Alzheimer's Association of Southern Wisconsin, AARP Wisconsin. (2015). *Building Dementia-Friendly Communities.* Madison, WI.

Federal Emergency Management Agency and The Rockefeller Foundation. (2012). *Be Prepared: Protect What Matters.* Madison, WI.

National Fire Protection Association. (n.d.). *How to Make a Home Fire Escape Plan*. Quincy, MA.

# Resources

## WISCONSIN RESOURCES

*Center for Deaf-Blind Persons*
***www.deaf-blind.org***

*Hearing Loss Association of America – Wisconsin (HLAA-WI)*
***www.hlaawi.org***

*Ready Wisconsin*
***ready.gov/wisconsin***

*Wisconsin Association of the Deaf*
***wesp-dhh.wi.gov/wdbtap***

*Wisconsin County Emergency Directors*
***dma.wi.gov/DMA/wem/response/county-directors***

*Wisconsin Deaf-Blind Technical Assistance Project*
***www.wdbtap.wi.gov***

*Wisconsin Department of Health Services*
***dhs.wisconsin.gov***

*Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources*
***dnr.wi.gov***

*Wisconsin Independent Living Centers*
***www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/disabilities/physical/ilcs.htm***
***http://wis-il.net/centers/***

*Wisconsin Emergency Assistance Volunteer Registry (WEAVR)*
***www.weavrwi.org***

*Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM)*
***dma.wi.gov/DMA/wem/***

*Wisconsin Functional Assessment Service Teams (FAST)*
***dhs.wisconsin.gov/preparedness/human-services/fast.htm***

*Wisconsin Homeland Security*
***hsc.wi.gov***

*Wisconsin Office for the Blind and Visually Impaired*
***dhs.wisconsin.gov/blind***

*Wisconsin Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing*
***www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/odhh***

*Wisconsin Council for People with Physical Disabilities*
***https://cpd.wisconsin.gov/***

*Wisconsin Community Resource Database*
***https://211wisconsin.communityos.org/***

## NATIONAL RESOURCES FOR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

*American Red Cross*
***www.redcross.org***

*Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)*
***www.cdc.gov***

*Department of Homeland Security (DHS)*
***www.dhs.gov***

*Disaster Assistance*
***www.disasterassistance.gov***

*Federal Alliance for Safe Homes*
***www.flash.org***

*Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)*
***www.fema.gov***

*Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety*
***www.disastersafety.org***

*NASA Earth Observatory*
***www.earthobservatory.nasa.gov***

*Natural Hazard Mitigation Association*
***www.nhma.info***

*National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)*
***www.noaa.gov***

*National Organization on Disability (NOD)*
***www.nod.org***

*The National Terror Alert Response Center*
***www.nationalterroralert.com***

*National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster*
***www.nvoad.org***

*ReadyAmerica*
***www.ready.gov***

# Resources

*United States Department of Health & Human Services (HHS)*
***www.hhs.gov/programs/emergency-preparedness/index.html***

*United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)*
***www.epa.gov***

*United States Geological Survey (USGS)*
***www.usgs.gov***

*United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC)*
***www.nrc.gov***

## RESOURCES FOR THUNDERSTORMS AND TORNADOES

*National Storm Shelter Association (NSSA)*
***www.nssa.cc***

*National Weather Service (NWS)*
***www.weather.gov***

*NOAA National Severe Storms Laboratory*
***www.nssl.noaa.gov/education/svrwx101/thunderstorms/***

*Ready America*
***www.ready.gov/thunderstorms-lightning***

*Ready Wisconsin*
***www.readywisconsin.wi.gov/media/pdf/Thunderstorms.pdf***

## RESOURCES FOR FLOODS AND FLASH FLOODS

*The National Flood Insurance Program*
***www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program***

## RESOURCES FOR FIRES AND WILDFIRES

*National Fire Protection Association*
***www.nfpa.org***

*National Interagency Fire Center*
***www.nifc.gov***

*National Wildfire Coordinating Group*
***www.nwcg.gov***

*United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)*
***www.epa.gov***

*Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) Wildfire Toolkit*
***www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/P0/p00666.pdf***

*Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR)*
***www.dnr.wi.gov/topic/ForestFire/restrictions.html***

## RESOURCES FOR EXTREME HEAT

*Air Now – Air Quality Index (AQI) Basics*
***www.airnow.gov/index.cfm?action=aqibasics.aqi***

*Ready America*
***www.ready.gov/heat***

*United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)*
***www.epa.gov/natural-disasters/extreme-heat***

# Resources

## RESOURCES FOR DROUGHT

*Natural Resources Conservation Service*
***www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detailfull/national/home/?cid=stelprdb1245689***

*Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)*
***https://www.nrdc.org/issues/prepare-drought***

*Ready Wisconsin*
***www.readywisconsin.wi.gov/drought/***

*United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Disaster Assistance Program*
***https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/disaster-assistance-program/***

*Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) Drought Toolkit*
***www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p0/p00884.pdf***

*Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS)*
***https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/climate/drought.htm***

## RESOURCES FOR WINTERIZING

*Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC)*
***www.cdc.gov/features/winterweather/***

*Ready Nutrition*
***www.readynutrition.com/resources/checklist-for-winterizing-your-home_04012014/***

## RESOURCES FOR PANDEMICS OR EPIDEMICS

*Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC)*
***www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/***

*WebMD*
***www.webmd.com/cold-and-flu/what-are-epidemics-pandemics-outbreaks***

*Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS)*
***www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/influenza/index.htm***

*Wisconsin Flu*
***www.flu.wisconsin.gov/***

## RESOURCES FOR WINTER WEATHER, FROSTBITE AND HYPOTHERMIA

*Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC)*
***www.cdc.gov/disasters/winter/***

*The Humane Society of the United States*
***www.humanesociety.org/animals/resources/tips/protect_pets_winter.html***

*Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety*
***www.disastersafety.org/ibhs-news-releases/winter-arrived-ibhs-provides-consumer-resources-reduce-freezing-weather-property-risks/***

*Ready America*
***www.ready.gov/winter-weather***

*Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) Winter Weather Toolkit*
***https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p0/p00652.pdf***

*Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS)*
***www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/climate/winterweather.htm***

## RESOURCES FOR EARTHQUAKES

*Earthquake Country Alliance*
***www.earthquakecountry.org/dropcoverholdon/***

*Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)*
***www.fema.gov/earthquake***

*Ready America*
***www.ready.gov/earthquakes***

# Resources

## RESOURCES FOR HURRICANES

*Boat Owners Association of the United States*
***www.boatus.com/hurricanes/***

*Hurricanes: Science and Society*
***www.hurricanescience.org***

*Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety*
***www.disastersafety.org/hurricane/***

*National Hurricane Center*
***www.nhc.noaa.gov***

*Ready America*
***www.ready.gov/hurricanes***

## RESOURCES FOR TSUNAMIS

*National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA)*
***www.tsunami.noaa.gov/***
***www.youtube.com/watch?v=UzR0Rt3i4kc***

*The Pacific Tsunami Museum*
***www.tsunami.org***

*The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center*
***www.ptwc.weather.gov***

*Ready America*
***www.ready.gov/tsunamis***

## RESOURCES FOR VOLCANOES

*Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC)*
***www.cdc.gov/disasters/volcanoes/***

*Ready America*
***www.ready.gov/volcanoes***

## RESOURCES FOR GLOBAL WEATHER

*Global Disaster Preparedness Center*
***www.preparecenter.org***

*World Health Organization (WHO)*
***www.who.int/hac/techguidance/preparedness/factsheets/en/***

## RESOURCES FOR ANIMALS AND PETS

*The American Humane Society Emergency Training*
***www.americanhumane.org/initiative/emergency-training/***

*The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA)*
***www.aspca.org/pet-care/general-pet-care/disaster-preparedness***

*The American Veterinary Medical Association*
***www.avma.org/KB/Resources/Reference/disaster/Pages/default.aspx***

*The Humane Society of the United States*
***www.humanesociety.org/about/departments/disaster_preparedness.html***

*PetFinders*
***www.petfinder.com/info/pets-in-disasters***

*Red Rover*
***www.redrover.org/pet-disaster-preparedness***

# Resources

## RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN

*American College of Emergency Physicians and the American Academy of Pediatrics*
**www.acep.org/by-medical-focus/pediatrics/medical-forms/emergency-information-form-for-children-with-special-health-care-needs/**

*American Academy of Pediatrics*
**www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/Children-and-Disasters/Pages/Promoting-Adjustment-and-Helping-Children-Cope.aspx**

*Ready America: For Kids*
**http://www.ready.gov/kids**

*Sesame Street: Let's Get Ready!*
**www.sesamestreet.org/toolkits/ready**

*Weather WizKids*
**www.weatherwizkids.com**

## RESOURCES FOR PERSONS WHO ARE DEAF, HARD OF HEARING, OR DEAF-BLIND

*American Association of the Deaf-Blind*
**www.aadb.org/information/emergency_preparation/emerg_plan.html**

*Community Emergency Preparedness Information Network (CEPIN)*
**www.sites.google.com/a/cepintdi.org/cepin-website/**

*Disaster Preparedness and the Deaf Community For the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Latened Deaf*
**www.cidrap.umn.edu/sites/default/files/public/php/332/332_brochure.pdf**

*Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)*
**https://www.fema.gov/office-disability-integration-and-coordination**

*Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA)*
**www.hearingloss.org/content/emergency-preparedness**

*National Association of the Deaf (NAD)*
**http://nad.org/issues/emergency-preparedness**

*National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA)*
**www.nssl.noaa.gov/users/wood/public_html/NWR/spc-nds-nwr.html**

*Northeast Texas Public Health District*
**www.accessibleemergencyinfo.com**

*Readiness Guide for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Individuals*
**www.kcdhh.ky.gov/docs/ois/emergency/DeafReadinessGuideForEmergency.pdf**

*United States Department of Justice (DOJ)*
**www.ada.gov/emerprepguideprt.pdf**

# Basic Rights to Access for People with Disabilities in Emergencies and Disasters

**According to the *ADA Best Practices Tool Kit for State and Local Governments* by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)**

## Emergency sheltering programs must:

- Make sure the programs are accessible to people with disabilities.
- Respect the rights of people with disabilities to make choices about where to shelter.
- Provide emergency sheltering devices, such as generators, batteries, and battery chargers for motorized wheelchairs and scooters, van lifts, and other devices.
- Ensure audible information is accessible to people who are Deaf, hard of hearing, or Deaf-Blind.
- Provide a Telecommunications Device for the Deaf to be used by people who are deaf, hard of hearing or deaf-blind;
- Consider low-stimulation "stress-relief zones," such as quiet rooms.
- Provide emergency supplies that support people with disabilities to care for their service animals.

## Emergency management agencies must:

- Use warning methods that ensure all residents and visitors will have the information necessary. For example:
  - Combining visual and audible alerts.
  - Incorporating text messaging, emails and auto-dialed TTY messages to pre-registered individuals.
  - Providing qualified sign language interpreters and open captioning to make sure that all people have access to the information provided during announcements on local television.
- Create procedures to make sure people with disabilities are able to evacuate under different circumstances and conditions, with assistance when needed.
- Ensure programs and social services that are put in place to assist people affected or harmed by disasters and/or emergencies are available and accessible to all. For example:
  - If people are notified by telephone about these programs and services, there must also be alternative delivery systems in place to reach out to people who are Deaf, hard of hearing, or Deaf-Blind and to those who do not speak English.
  - If there are announcements about the availability of these programs and services made by radio, or made as public announcements at emergency shelters, then there must also be alternative delivery systems in place to reach out to people who are Deaf, hard of hearing, or Deaf-Blind, and to those who do not speak English.
  - Crisis counseling services should also be accessible. People who are Deaf, hard of hearing, or Deaf-Blind should have access to appropriate auxiliary aids and services.

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