

Disaster and Emergency Readiness Training for Elderly Populations

Supplementary Materials and Ideas for Trainers

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DRAFT-NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION

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[Note: The contents herein are beta (draft) versions and have been developed exclusively for educational purposes.]

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Opener: Think-Pair Share Expand

[Think-pair-share-expand is a collaborative learning strategy where learners work together to solve a problem or add to solutions. This strategy requires learners to (1) think individually about a topic the instructor wants to raise; and (2) share ideas with a single colleague, and then the group.]

Every time a major disaster or emergency occur, we read about how hard hit the elderly communities in the affected areas more. Elderly folks are unusually vulnerable to these kinds of events not just because of their physical limitations, but also because of the extent to which the elderly face the access and functional challenges that inevitably accompany old age.

Unsurprisingly then emergency readiness for the elderly requires some special preparations that younger people may not have had to think about. For example:

- (1) Elderly people living in group facilities may need to have someone make sure that the paraprofessional aides and assistants who help them are trained to support them when a need to evacuate occurs,**
- (2) Elderly people who rely on a variety of prescriptive medications may need some way to be reminded of the various medications, dosages *etc* when/if they need to be moved to an emergency shelter or to another location**

These are just a couple of things we need to be especially aware of when training elderly people and their supporters for emergency readiness.

On the back of this page, please write down a couple of other special areas that emergency readiness training for elderly clients might have to focus on.

Disaster Preparedness for the Elderly: Videos

- **[Disaster Preparation for Elderly People:](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dym-kCH4k4I)** (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dym-kCH4k4I>) This video follows an elderly couple as they prepare in advance for possible emergencies. The 5-minute video offers tips on putting together an emergency kit customized to your needs, making a plan for what to do in case of a disaster, and finding out more about resources specific to your state or community.
- **[Emergency Preparedness for Seniors:](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sVTrBuHJsTI)** (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sVTrBuHJsTI>) This brief video gives an overview of steps that senior citizens can take to better prepare for an emergency. It covers learning about the disasters most likely to strike your area, making an emergency supply kit, and protecting financial well-being. This video is also translated into American Sign Language.
- **[Evacuation Procedures – Aged Care:](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L-d_wrJ8ALY)** (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L-d_wrJ8ALY) This short video looks at how to evacuate a healthcare facility for the elderly. The video covers the RACE technique – Remove, Alert, Contain, Evacuate.
- **[How to Help Older Adults Prepare for Disasters:](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V4uf1iyQxgs)** (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V4uf1iyQxgs>) Statistics show that in any given disaster, older adults constitute a large percentage of the fatalities. Given that, it is important for communities to pay special attention to this population in all disaster planning. This hour-long webinar explains why older adults may be especially vulnerable during a disaster, and how families and communities can better prepare the elderly for emergency situations. The webinar includes a few scenarios to help put the ideas in practice.
- **[Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Facilities:](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vD7u4n0OdJI)** (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vD7u4n0OdJI>) This 21-minute video shows how an assisted living facility managed during a severe weather emergency. Although the video is fiction, the situation could happen at any healthcare facility and offers examples for handling situations such as power outages and evacuations.
- **[Proper Nutrition in an Emergency:](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JxZMF6azhUs)** (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JxZMF6azhUs>) It is always important for senior citizens to eat nutritious food, but in an emergency situation, nutritious foods can help you maintain health and energy. This short (4-minute) video goes over foods that provide essential proteins and vitamins, as well as other things important to consider when you are storing foods for you and your family.

Disaster Preparedness for the Elderly: Handouts and Other Downloadable Materials

- **[Bug Out & Bug in Checklist:](#)** “Bug out” kits, meant for short-term evacuations, and “bug in” kits, meant for sheltering in place, contain many items that can help you survive during and after a disaster. This handout provides checklists for both situations and considers some of the needs of elderly populations, such as medical needs.
- **[Disaster Preparedness for Seniors by Seniors:](#)** Senior citizens have specific needs that perhaps only other senior citizens can appreciate. This American Red Cross publication was developed by senior citizens and offers a checklist of important questions that people in this community should ask themselves as they prepare for a disaster. The manual also anticipates things

overlooked in other resources, such as mental health and the presence of caregivers or even grandchildren. Also included are places to jot down notes and important contact information.

- **[Disaster Preparedness Guide for Elders](#)**: This 24-page booklet was published by the State of Florida; thus, many of the resources it mentions are specific to Florida. However, it does provide detailed information about various kinds of disasters – including wildfires, hazardous leaks, and floods – and how elderly populations can better prepare for them. There is guidance on how to apply for assistance from FEMA and the SBA after a disaster. Sample emergency checklists and contact sheets are included as well.
- **[Helping Older Adults Weather the Storm Before, During, and After Disasters](#)**: This 4-page booklet gives advice to older adults on what to do before, during, and after a disaster. The first part discusses preparing a disaster plan, and the second part provides tips for staying safe during a disaster. The last part treats the aftermath of a disaster – including how to get connected to critical resources and how to avoid being the target of post-disaster scams.
- **[Disaster Planning Toolkit for People with Dementia](#)**: This manual was created for people with dementia. Not only does it provide general planning information, it includes a checklist and a place to store contact and medical information. Family members and caregivers may also find this manual useful, as it recognizes needs specific to people with dementia.
- **[Disaster Preparedness for Seniors by Seniors](#)**: Senior citizens have specific needs that perhaps only other senior citizens can appreciate. This American Red Cross publication was developed by senior citizens and offers a checklist of important questions that people in this community should ask themselves as they prepare for a disaster. The manual also anticipates things overlooked in other resources, such as mental health and the presence of caregivers or even grandchildren. Also included are places to jot down notes and important contact information.
- **[Elderly Populations in Disasters: Hospital Guidelines for Geriatric Preparedness](#)**: This comprehensive manual is targeted towards hospitals to help them better serve elderly patients in times of disaster. The manual includes links to different resources, best practices, and articles on elderly preparedness in general.
- **[Emergency Power Planning for People who Use Electricity and Battery-Dependent Assistive Technology and Medical Devices](#)**: Disasters and other emergency situations often leave us without electricity. A lack of electricity is more than an inconvenience; if you depend on medical devices or assistive technologies that are powered by electricity, losing power can be a perilous event. This checklist serves as a guide for people who use technologies such as respirators, powered wheelchairs, oxygen tanks, and more. It outlines how to ensure that your technology will remain functional in an emergency situation. A large print version is available [here](#).
- **[Identifying Vulnerable Older Adults and Legal Options for Increasing Their Protection during All-Hazards Emergencies](#)**: This 56-page document from the Center for Disease Control advocates for a greater inclusion of the needs of older adults when it comes to disaster planning. Among the topics discussed are why older adults tend to be more vulnerable to disasters, federal and legal resources, ways to identify the elderly population in a given community, and suggested actions.
- **[Just in Case: Emergency Readiness for Older Adults and Caregivers](#)**: The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services created this 12-page booklet, which covers basic information to help elderly citizens and their caregivers prepare for an emergency. It includes links to other resources and a comprehensive checklist to track your readiness in advance of a disaster.

- [Recommendations for Best Practices in the Management of Elderly Disaster Victims](#): This resource offers best practices for local, state, and federal organizations to better assist elderly populations during a disaster. In particular, it evaluates the Seniors Without Families Triage (SWiFT) tool for assessing needs before and after a disaster.
- [We Can Do Better: Lessons Learned for Protecting Older Persons in Disasters](#): AARP produced this document as a way to evaluate the lessons from Hurricanes Rita and Katrina, in which elderly citizens accounted for a substantial number of fatalities. It explores how communities can better protect older citizens during a disaster, and discusses resources to help in disaster planning.

Downloadable Resources Not in PDF

- [Emergency Preparedness: What Do Seniors Say? What Do They \(and We\) Need to Know?](#): This PowerPoint presentation challenges some of the prevailing myths about senior citizens and offers recommendations for how to make seniors a part of emergency planning.
- [The Importance of Emergency Planning for Vulnerable Older Adults](#): This PowerPoint presentation, prepared by the Center for Disease Control, looks at ways to incorporate the needs of older adults in emergency planning. It discusses how older adults are an increasing demographic, how they could be affected by a disaster, and how people and communities can better include older adults in their disaster planning efforts.

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Disaster Preparedness for the Elderly: Android Apps

- [FEMA app](#): The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) created this app to serve as a comprehensive tool for emergency alerts and preparedness. It sends alert notifications in case of emergency, offers safety tips for various kinds of disasters, and directs users to nearby shelters. Many users find it helpful for preparing for and managing after a disaster. Spanish translation is available, although alerts are currently available only in English.
- [Life360](#): This app uses GPS to share your location with people of your choosing, such as family members or caretakers. It notifies them when you have arrived at and departed from a particular location. In an emergency situation, this app could help loved ones know your status. There is a basic version of the app that is free; a Driver Protect version costs \$7.99 per month provides roadside assistance and alerts your contacts if you are in a car accident.
- [Medical ID](#): It isn't always practical to carry around medical paperwork. Furthermore, in the stress of an emergency or a disaster, it can often be hard to communicate important medical details. Some people may not be able to verbally communicate in the first place. Medical ID is an app that stores medical information – including emergency contacts, medication information, allergies, and medical conditions. It is accessible from the lock screen, meaning that the user can view the information without needing to enter a password, thus saving valuable minutes. Some users have reported the app crashing on their phone and requiring a factory reset, but overall user response is positive. There is a basic version of the app that is free, and a premium version that costs \$6.99 and allows for more customization and data backup.

- **[ICE – In Case of Emergency](#)**: This free app stores the information you might typically keep on a wallet card – such as blood type, medications, treatment information, etc. – on the lock screen of your phone. In the event of an emergency, first responders only need to look at your phone to learn of any important health issues. You can also include emergency contact information on the screen as well. One downside noted by some users is that the screen will display if you are an organ donor – which some may not feel comfortable disclosing.
- **[Life360](#)**: This app uses GPS to share your location with people of your choosing, such as family members or caretakers. It notifies them when you have arrived at and departed from a particular location. In an emergency situation, this app could help loved ones know your status. There is a basic version of the app that is free; a Driver Protect version costs \$7.99 per month provides roadside assistance and alerts your contacts if you are in a car accident.
- **[Waze](#)**: What if you need to evacuate, but you are unable to drive and have no nearby friends or relatives? Waze is an app intended for navigating traffic, but it has a carpool feature that allows you to find others to ride with. The app also provides real time information on road conditions, alerting users to accidents and hazardous conditions. Some users have noted connectivity issues.
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Disaster Preparedness for the Elderly: Pamphlets

- **[6 Tips on How Older Adults Can Prepare for a Disaster](#)**: This 2-page infographic gives basic tips on how to prepare for an emergency, from making an escape plan to keeping loved ones informed. The same document is available on the National Institute on Aging's [website](#). The website also includes versions that are shareable on social media.
- **[Prepare for Emergencies Now: Information for Older Americans](#)**: FEMA has created a pamphlet to assist the elderly with emergency preparedness. This document highlights important steps towards disaster preparedness, such as preparing an emergency kit. It includes considerations such as pets, medication, communication, and even the choice of evacuating versus staying in place. This pamphlet is available online, but hard copies can be ordered on [FEMA's website](#). There is a printer-friendly version [in Spanish](#), and translations are also available [in multiple languages](#) (including Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian, and Urdu).
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Fillable Forms

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- **[Important Medical Information](#)**: This is a simple card that collects important medical information that would be helpful to an emergency responder. It is not as comprehensive as the Complete Care Plan, but still lists essential information.
- **[Emergency Preparedness for Seniors](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sVTrBuHJsTI)**: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sVTrBuHJsTI>) This brief video gives an overview of steps that senior citizens can take to better prepare for an emergency. It covers learning about the disasters most likely to strike your area, making an emergency supply kit, and protecting financial well-being. This video is also translated into American Sign Language.

- [Evacuation Procedures – Aged Care](#): This short video looks at how to evacuate a healthcare facility for the elderly. The video covers the RACE technique – Remove, Alert, Contain, Evacuate.
- [Complete Care Plan](#): This form stores information about a person’s current medical condition and treatment. It includes space for health insurance information, providers, and preferred healthcare facilities. It also has a checklist of other important considerations to discuss with loved ones and healthcare providers, such as living wills and power of attorney.
- [Emergency Information: Communication Disability](#): This one-page form alerts first responders and other emergency responders to any disability that the person they are treating may have.
- [Finding Relief if You Have Been Affected by a Disaster](#): This link generates customizable disaster preparedness plans based on users’ responses to a short questionnaire. Although the disasters covered are currently limited to hurricanes and floods, it does factor in the user’s level of preparedness ahead of a disaster and whether that user has a disability. The plans can be filled out and printed for personal use.
- [Important Medical Information](#): This is a simple card that collects important medical information that would be helpful to an emergency responder. It is not as comprehensive as the Complete Care Plan, but still lists essential information.
- [My Medical Conditions and Care Needs](#): This form tracks not only basic medical information, but also information on assistive devices, Alzheimer’s/dementia symptoms, service animals, and vaccinations. The text is in large print for ease of visibility.
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Possible sub-topics

- **Caregiver preparedness and support during emergencies**
- **Assistive technologies and how to maintain them during a disaster**
- **Communication with family and caregivers during and after a disaster**
- **Additional considerations for people with Disabilities and Other Access and Functional Needs**
- **Additional considerations for pets or farm animals**
- **Food water safety**
- **Power outage safety**
- **Community resources for senior citizens**
- **Disaster preparation for senior citizens with Alzheimer’s or dementia**
- **Disaster preparation for senior citizens with disabilities**
- **Managing chronic conditions during a disaster**
- **Navigating Medicare and FEMA assistance in the wake of a disaster**
- **Sheltering in place vs. evacuating**
- **Emergency preparedness for assisted living and healthcare facilities**

Resources with Group Activities

- [Capacity-Building Toolkit for Including Aging & Disability Networks in Emergency Planning:](#)
This toolkit is a guide for new and experienced emergency planners who are looking to better include the needs of the elderly in their emergency planning. This toolkit is divided into nine modules that break down parts of emergency planning, including needs assessment, messaging, and recovery. There are links to outside resources, tabletop exercises, and sample assessments.

Plausible Behavioral Changes From Training

- Participants create an emergency kit that incorporate their specific needs, including any medical needs.
- Participants become more aware of community, state, and federal resources that can provide assistance in times of emergency.
- Participants develop a communication plan for emergencies, including friends, relatives, caregivers, and healthcare providers that would need to be contacted.

Attachment A: Nursing Home Disaster Plans Often Faulted As ‘Paper Tigers’ SEPTEMBER 19, 2017

Around the country, facilities have been caught unprepared for far more mundane emergencies than the hurricanes that recently struck Florida and Houston, according to an examination of federal inspection records. Those homes rarely face severe reprimands, records show, even when inspectors identify repeated lapses.

In some cases, nursing homes failed to prepare for basic contingencies.

In one visit last May, inspectors found that an El Paso, Texas, nursing home had no plan for how to bring wheelchair-dependent people down the stairs in case of an evacuation. Inspectors in Colorado found a nursing home’s courtyard gate was locked and employees did not know the combination, inspection records show. During a fire at a Chicago facility, residents were evacuated in the wrong order, starting with the people farthest from the blaze.

Nursing home inspectors issued 2,300 violations of emergency-planning rules during the past four years. But they labeled only 20 so serious as to place residents in danger, the records show.

In addition, a third of U.S. nursing homes have been cited for another type of violation: failing to inspect their generators each week or to test them monthly. None of those violations was categorized as a major deficiency, even at 1,373 nursing facilities that were cited more than once for neglecting generator upkeep, the records show.

“That’s the essential problem with the regulatory system: It misses many issues, and even when it identifies them, it doesn’t treat them seriously enough,” said Toby Edelman, a senior policy attorney at the Center for Medicare Advocacy. “It’s always the same story: We have some pretty good standards and we don’t enforce them.”

In the wake of [eight deaths](#) at Rehabilitation Center at Hollywood Hills, Fla., following Hurricane Irma, heightened attention has focused on [new federal disaster-planning rules](#), with which nursing homes must comply by mid-November. Those were prompted by nursing home and hospital deaths during Hurricane Katrina in Louisiana in 2005.

Dr. David Gifford, senior vice president for quality and regulatory affairs at the American Health Care Association, a nursing home industry group, said facilities have gotten better at handling disasters after each one. Most evacuations go smoothly, he said. “After each one of these emergencies we’ve learned and gotten better,” Gifford said.

But advocates for the elderly say enforcement of rules is as great a concern, if not greater. Dr. David Marcozzi, a former director of the federal emergency preparedness program for health care, said that inspectors — also known as surveyors — should observe nursing home staff demonstrating their emergency plans, rather than just checking that they have been written down.

“If you have not implemented and exercised plans, they are paper tigers,” said Marcozzi, now an associate professor at the University of Maryland School of

Medicine. “The emphasis from the surveyor has to be ‘Show me how you do this.’ ”

Gifford said pre-planning and drills, which are important, only go so far in chaotic events such as hurricanes.

“No matter what planning you might have, what we have learned from these emergencies is these plans don’t always work,” he said. Nursing homes take surveys seriously and face closure if they do not fix flaws inspectors identify, he added.

Inspection results vary widely by state, influenced sometimes by lax nursing homes or more assertive surveyors, or a combination, according to an analysis of two types of emergency-planning deficiencies. In California, 53 percent of nursing facilities have been cited for at least one of two types of emergency-planning deficiencies, and a quarter have been cited in Texas. No nursing home in Indiana, Mississippi or Oregon was issued violations for those two emergency-planning violations during the past four years.

Asked to explain the rarity of severe citations in emergency preparation, the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, which oversees inspections, referred a reporter to its [emergency-preparedness mission statement](#) on its website.

The danger of high temperatures for elderly residents, which the Hollywood Hills case shows can be disastrous, has been well known. In a heat wave in 2000, [two nursing home residents](#) in a Burlingame, Calif., facility died and six others suffered severe dehydration, heat stroke or exhaustion.

During the past four years, inspectors have cited 536 nursing homes for failing to maintain comfortable and safe temperature levels for residents. Inspectors deemed 15 as serious, including two where patients were harmed, records show.

“There is undoubtedly little, if any, enforcement of the laws since we see the same tragedies repeated time and again,” said Patricia McGinnis, executive director of California Advocates for Nursing Home Reform.

Attachment B: AARP Suggestions from Disaster Veterans

Recent natural catastrophes are a fresh reminder that disaster can strike at any time. And no area of the country is immune, when you factor in the threat of tornadoes, earthquakes and human disasters like toxic spills. While the circumstances may differ, there's one tip that every person needs to take from all these situations: how to pack a "go bag."

A go bag is a packed case that you grab on your way out the door, and that will help keep you safe and comfortable in the coming hours and days. Stopping to hunt for your medications or other important needs can cost you critical seconds in an evacuation. Pack a separate go bag for yourself and every member of your household, and keep them stored in the same location. Hundreds of disaster victims, compiled their recommendations below.

1. Basic electronics

Pack an extra phone charger in case you're fortunate enough to have electricity, and a portable battery pack in case you're not. Also stash a long-lasting LED flashlight. Pack a small hand-cranked or battery-operated AM/FM radio (with extra batteries).

2. Personal needs: While getting ready for a typical day, list every toiletry you use, then buy a [travel-size version](#) of each. Pack backup eyeglasses, as well as a first-aid kit, baby wipes and a multipurpose tool with a knife and can opener.

3. Clothing: Pack a few days' worth. Include layers you can add or remove, plus lightweight rain gear and waterproof boots.

4. Your meds: Pack about three days' worth of each of your [prescriptions](#), which should last until you can get to a pharmacy that's open. If you need larger items, such as an oxygen tank, make sure you have a portable version.

5. The perfect bag: Think small and portable. A backpack is ideal, but a lightweight suitcase with wheels will also do. Just remember, you may literally be running with it.

6. Paperwork

Fill a zip-top waterproof bag with photocopies of your birth certificate; driver's license; Social Security and Medicare cards; power of attorney and will; any marriage, adoption or naturalization certificates; proof of address; insurance, medical and immunization records; and info about your credit and ATM cards.

7. Food and drink

Bottled water is essential. Granola or energy bars are great because they are small and filling, and they come in a variety of flavors.

8. Cash: In addition to enough money for a few days, include small bills and a roll of quarters. If you need to buy something out of a vending machine, you don't want to start asking equally desperate strangers for change.

Attachment C: Best Practices for Disaster Planning for Elderly Care Facilities

Tips for Elderly Citizens in Care Facilities/choosing care facilities

Key concepts from the below article describe good procedures for elderly persons, for families of elderly persons, and for elderly care facilities to follow to ensure disaster preparedness:

- Critical that nursing homes have well-trained staff and updated and detailed emergency procedures in place
- Disaster planning at most nursing homes is sorely lacking as communities confront unusual, unpredictable weather
- Staff at elderly care facilities should do the following:
 - Specify how patients' medical records and medications would be dealt with in an emergency
 - Have a plan for handling the illness or death of a resident in a disaster
 - Include measures to ensure an adequate supply of drinking water for workers and patients
 - Have a strategy to ensure an adequate fuel supply for backup generators
 - Address the need for adequate staffing during emergencies
 - Detail how patients' needs for items such as feeding tubes, ventilators or oxygen would be handled
- Participate in drills or exercises run by community emergency preparedness managers
- Regularly update disaster plans
- Conduct mock drills regularly
- Arrange regular meetings with the state Department of Health, energy providers and local emergency response managers
- People considering living in elderly care facilities or their families should consider when choosing a facility that facility's level of disaster preparedness to ensure their own safety/ the safety of their loved ones and should be prepared to ask specific questions pertaining to disaster preparedness at that facility

Adapted from FEMA senior resources

http://www.ready.gov/sites/default/files/documents/files/olderamericans_quadfold.pdf

HAVE

- Water, one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
- Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food and a can opener if kit contains canned food
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both
- Flashlight and extra batteries

- First aid kit
- Whistle to signal for help
- Dust mask to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Local maps
- Pet food, extra water and supplies for your pet or service animal

Include Medications and Medical Supplies Additional Items:

In addition, there may be other things specific to your personal needs that you should also have on hand. If you use eyeglasses, hearing aids and hearing aid batteries, wheelchair batteries, and oxygen, be sure you always have extras in your home. Also have copies of your medical insurance, Medicare and Medicaid cards readily available.

Include Emergency Documents:

Include copies of important documents in your emergency supply kits such as family records, wills, power of attorney documents, deeds, social security numbers, credit card and bank information, and tax records. It is best to keep these documents in a waterproof container. Include the names and numbers of everyone in your personal support network, as well as your medical providers. Also be sure you have cash or travelers checks in your kits in case you need to purchase supplies.

DO

If there are **people who assist you on a daily basis**, list who they are, and how you will contact them in an emergency. Create your own personal support network by identifying others who will help you in an emergency. Think about what modes of transportation you use and what alternative modes could serve as back-ups. If you require handicap accessible transportation be sure your alternatives are also accessible. For every aspect of your daily routine, plan an alternative procedure. Make a plan and write it down. Keep a copy of your plan in your emergency supply kits and a list of important information and contacts in your wallet. Share your plan with your family, friends, care providers and others in your personal support network.

Create a Personal Support Network: If you anticipate needing assistance during a disaster, make a list of family, friends and others who will be part of your plan. Talk to these people and ask them to be part of your support network. Share each aspect of your emergency plan with everyone in your group, including a friend or relative in another area who would not be impacted by the same emergency who can help if necessary. Make sure everyone knows how you plan to evacuate your home or workplace and where you will go in case of a disaster. Make sure that someone in your personal support network has an extra key to your home and knows where you keep your emergency supplies. Practice your plan with those who have agreed to be part of your personal support network.

Develop a Family Communications Plan: Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so plan how you will contact one another and review what you will do in different situations. Consider a plan where each family member calls, or e-mails, the same friend or relative in the event of an emergency. It may be easier to make a long-distance phone call than to call across town, so an out-of-town contact, not in the impacted area, may be in a better position to communicate among separated family members. You may have trouble getting through, or the phone system may be down altogether, but be patient.

You will need to make plans in advance for your **pets and service animals**. Keep in mind that what's best for you is typically what's best for your animals. If you must evacuate, take your pets with you, if possible. However, if you are going to a public shelter, it is important to understand that only service animals may 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, pet-friendly shelters and veterinarians who would be willing to take in you and your pets in an emergency.

First: stay or go? In any emergency, local authorities may or may not immediately be able to provide information on what is happening and what you should do. However, you should monitor television or radio news reports for information or official instructions as they become available. If you're specifically told to evacuate or seek medical treatment, do so immediately. If you require additional travel time or need transportation assistance, make these arrangements in advance.

There could be times when you will need to stay put and **create a barrier between yourself and potentially contaminated air outside**. This process is known as "sealing the room." Use available information to assess the situation. If you see large amounts of debris in the air, or if local authorities say the air is badly contaminated, you may want to take this kind of action.

Evacuation: Choose several destinations in different directions so you have options in an emergency. Ask about evacuation plans at the places where you spend time including work, community organizations and other places you frequent. If you typically rely on elevators, have a back-up plan in case they are not working.

Fire Safety: Plan two ways out of every room in case of fire. Check for items such as bookcases, hanging pictures, or overhead lights that could fall and block an escape path. Check hallways, stairwells, doorways, windows and other areas for hazards that may keep you from safely leaving a building during an emergency. Secure or remove furniture and objects that may block your path. If there are aspects of preparing your home or workplace that you are not able to do yourself, enlist the help of your personal support network.

Contact Your Local Emergency Information Management Office: Some local emergency management offices maintain registers of older people so they can be located and assisted quickly in a disaster. Contact your local emergency management agency to see if these services exist where you live.

Attachment D: Disaster Planning Tips for Caregivers of the Elderly and People with Disabilities

Have a Plan

Create a Disaster Team

- **Make plans for help with family, friends, neighbors or social service agencies.**

Include someone on your team who is able to lift and carry heavy objects such as wheelchairs or other medical equipment.

Give at least one other person a key to the person's home.

Each team member should have the contact information for the others

Name a substitute caregiver in case you are unavailable or unable to provide care.

- **Make Evacuation Plans**

Where are the closest special needs emergency shelters? Remember you may not be able to reach the closest shelter, so know where the next closest one is located. Practice driving to both using different routes prior to storm warnings.

What supplies must you take with you? In addition to the supplies you would normally need for an evacuation, think of those things you use as a caregiver every day. Make a check list of special caregiving items such as incontinence items, cleaning and sanitizing supplies, pill splitter or crusher, and thermometer. Secure a box or case to carry them in.

How many people are needed to help make the move? These people should be part of your disaster network. Know how to reach them.

Whom should you inform that you are evacuating? Let your neighbors and family members know, and if you live in any kind of "complex" let the administrators know that you have left.

Keep your vehicle's gas tank over ¾ full at all times.

- **Put It In Writing**

Give copies of the list to the members of your caregiving team and place a copy where it can be easily found. Many people put this kind of information on a boldly written note securely taped to the front of the refrigerator.

In addition, create an hour by hour description of a typical 24 hour day, include:

How the care recipient spends his or her time.

What is needed at each point in time.

How to provide for those needs.

Where the supplies are used to meet those needs.

If there are caregiving tasks that occur every other day, or on a weekly basis, create a weekly calendar to describe those care needs.

Describe in detail how to help the care recipient handle stress and trauma:

Does talking or singing help? Is there a special story or song?

What possessions bring comfort (blanket, stuffed animal, etc.)? Where can they be found?

When is medication needed to help calm the care recipient?

Who is the care recipient most comfortable with if you are unavailable? How can they be contacted?

- **Waiting for the Storm**
 - **Tornados**

When a tornado is approaching there is little time to prepare, and little time to worry. Put your plan into action immediately.

- **Hurricanes**

When a hurricane is approaching there is time to get ready, and plenty of time to worry. When caring for someone with a disability who depends on a strict routine to help remain calm, it is important to maintain as much of your daily routine as possible:

Keep normal sleeping and meal schedules.

Minimize talk about the status of the hurricane.

If you are unable to go out as normal, create activities at home to pass the time.

Limit watching the news and weather forecasts to a specific time of day rather than keeping the television or radio turned on all day long.

Attachment E: Specific Checklists for Various Conditions

People with special needs

- **Persons with diabetes**

- o Keep travel packs of insulin in the refrigerator.
- o Testing supplies (enough for at least 2 weeks)
- o Extra batteries for your meter
- o Insulin-delivery supplies
- o Insulin
- o Lancets and Lancing device
- o Oral medications
- o Quick-acting source of glucose
- o Extra glucagon emergency kit
- o Medical waste container for used needles
- o Keep insulin as cool as possible; if on ice, be careful not to freeze.
- o If necessary, insulin may be stored at room temperature (59°F–86°F) for 28 days.
- o Do not use insulin that clumps or sticks to the side of the bottle

- **Persons with Alzheimer's**

- o Register with local police and fire departments.
- o ID bracelet or necklace indicating special or peculiar behaviors (e.g., memory loss)
- o Written instructions for reaching family members, friends, and physicians.

- **Bed-Bound Persons**

- o Emergency transportation plan
- o Supplies of daily care items - bed pads, adult diapers, linens (enough for at least 2 weeks)
- o Dietary needs

- **Oxygen-Dependent**

- o Oxygen supplies (including alternate power source such as a battery)
- o Extra water for oxygen condensers

- **Persons with Incontinence**

- o Incontinence under garments
- o Disposable wipes
- o Cleansing products

Water

- 1 gallon/person/day.
- Store at least 3–5 days worth. A two week supply is ideal.
- Use for drinking and sanitation.
- Store extra water if you have pets.
- Water in swimming pools and spas can be used only for flushing toilets.
- Dehydration is a serious health problem for older adults. If possible, store more than the recommended amount.
- Gallon jugs of water are heavy. Use containers that are small enough to easily handle, such as clean and sanitized two-liter plastic soda bottles, if you choose not to purchase commercial water storage containers.

- Be certain that the caps are easy to remove by persons with arthritis.

Food

- Store at least a 3–5 day supply of nonperishable food.

- Include foods from all food groups.

- o Examples include: Grains - breads, dry

- cereals, crackers, biscuits; Vegetables -

- canned (your favorites); Fruits -canned

- (in juice) and dried; Milk - canned and

- boxed shelf-stable; consider small

- sizes; Meat and Beans - jerky, canned

- beans, canned tuna and chicken, shelfstable chicken, nuts and seeds, peanut

- and nut butters.

(from <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/files/fy/fy62000.pdf>)