I am Citizen Prepared

By Maribeth F. Mooney

Disaster Planning & Emergency Preparedness for People with Disabilities!
The author wishes to thank her colleagues at the Center on Aging and Community for their assistance in editing and formatting this publication.

This publication was partially funded by grant #90DD0548-05, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Developmental Disabilities. The information presented herein does not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Administration on Developmental Disabilities and no official endorsement should be inferred.

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Dear Readers,

It is my hope that you will find this booklet helpful. My reason for gathering this information is so that anyone who is living in his or her own home, with or without assistance, will have the information that many officials have. So many publications are written for people who provide services and supports to people with disabilities. I think it is time for people themselves to have that information.

“I am Citizen Prepared” is another way to say you are Informed, Connected and Prepared!

~ Maribeth F. Mooney

Main Topic Areas:

• Disaster Planning & Emergency Preparedness
• Connections
• Networks
• Disaster Kits
• Preparedness Plans
I am Informed

- Definition of a Disaster
- Community Plans
- Kinds of Disasters
- Warnings & Rescuers
“Disaster” and “emergency” are just other words for events that have happened to us in the past and could happen to us in the future.

Because of them, we might have had to change our routine for a day or more because there has been a change in our surroundings.

Winter storms sometimes cause us to cancel activities because the roads are too icy to drive on.

If our home is damaged by a tornado, we might have to go to a shelter until it is repaired.

In this booklet you will learn how you can be a leader in your community.

You will discover the fun of being Informed, Connected & Prepared
Disaster Preparedness and Me – I am Informed
I know what a disaster is!

5 things to know about disasters:

1. They can happen with little or no warning.

2. They can happen at any time of day or night.

3. I could be at home or away from home.

4. I could be with other people or alone.

5. My home or work place might be damaged.

Natural Disasters in MY Town could be: (X)
- Tornadoes
- Ice Storms
- Floods
- Snow Storms
- High Winds
- Hurricanes
- Earthquakes
- Landslides
- Volcanoes
- Wildfires

I remember when _____________________________________________

I wanted to _________________________________________________

Next time I will be prepared because I will:
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
My Community Disaster Plan

Counties have outdoor warning sirens.

Duke Energy offers a “Life Support Program” for people who use life support equipment that requires electricity. Does my utility company?

Counties have fire departments.

Counties have shelters in schools, churches and public buildings. Locations are decided once the path and nature of the disaster is confirmed. Listen to your radio for up-to-date information.

What does my county have? ____________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
The sirens blast a steady tone to alert everyone that a tornado has been sighted. Sirens are tested on a regular basis during tornado season. Learn how to decide if the siren is a test or a real warning.
Local officials will be in charge of what everyone needs to do after an emergency.

Police and firefighters are the ones in charge during an emergency.

It’s important to listen to them!

They may look scary because of their protective clothing.

There is a helpful person inside all that gear.

Names of my local rescuers:

________________________
________________________
________________________
________________________
________________________
________________________
Volunteers include:

Amateur Radio Operators – The Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) and The Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (Races)

The Red Cross – Provides service not only during national and regional tragedies but also to single family incidents such as fire, flood or tornadoes

Citizens Corps – Established through the Department of Homeland Security to enhance public preparedness and safety

County Emergency Management Agency – Prepares for and coordinates all emergency functions other than functions that are the responsibility of military and federal agencies
Emergencies create opportunities for ordinary citizens to help.

Being in an emergency situation can be upsetting to the point that people who are not trained can become over excited and give out wrong information. Write down some questions you might ask a person who is wanting to give you advice on what to do next.

____________________________________
____________________________________
____________________________________
____________________________________
Weather extremes can be harmful to your health. Simple plans and precautions will protect you.

In a heat advisory, try to stay in an air conditioned building.
- Wear light-colored clothing.
- Do not leave anyone or any pet unattended in a vehicle.
- Drink plenty of water, regularly and often.
- Eat small meals and eat more often.
- Avoid caffeine and foods that are high in protein.

In a winter storm advisory, try to stay in a warm building.
- If you cannot be indoors, stay dry.
- Wear several layers of lightweight clothing.
- Cover all exposed skin to protect from wind chill.
- Walk carefully on snowy, icy walkways.
- Stay off ponds, lakes and streams - the water might not be totally frozen.
- Avoid driving.
- Build a lean-to, windbreak, or snow cave to protect yourself from the wind, and a fire for heat.
- Exercise from time to time to keep blood flowing.
- Eat regularly.
- Melt snow for drinking water.
A tornado is a violently rotating column of air that goes from a thunderstorm cloud to the ground. Tornadoes can occur at any time of the year.

- Be alert to changing weather conditions.

- Blowing debris or the roaring sound of an approaching tornado may alert you.

- Know where your disaster kit is.

- When you are at home and hear the siren, go to the basement or lowest floor, such as a closet or bathroom.

- Wrap yourself in blankets or other heavy materials to protect yourself from flying debris.

- Listen to NOAA hazards radio or local radio and TV stations for updated information.

- Avoid gymnasiums, auditoriums and other rooms with tall, large roofs.

- Interior hallways on the lowest floor away from glass or exterior doors are safer locations.
All thunderstorms produce lightning. Lightning kills more people each year than tornadoes. Lightning often strikes as far as 10 miles away from any rainfall. There may not be any clouds in the sky. You are in danger from lightning if you can hear thunder.

- Be the lowest point. Lightning hits the tallest object.
- Stay away from trees. Keep twice as far away from a tree as it is tall.
- Don’t lean on vehicles. Get off bikes and motorcycles.
- Avoid metal! Don’t hold on to golf clubs, fishing rods, tennis rackets or tools.
- Get out of water. It conducts electricity.
- Don’t huddle in groups of people.
- You are safe in your car if you don’t touch its metal frame.
Blackouts

To Prepare:

• Keep a couple containers of ice in your freezer.
• When filling the containers with water, leave an inch of space inside each because water expands when it freezes.
• Use in coolers to keep food frozen/cold when there is no electricity.
• Have plenty of flashlights & batteries.
• Have a battery operated or hand crank radio.
• Know how to manually open your garage door if it is electric.

Do not use candles

Do not run a generator inside a home or garage.

If you need to use a generator, connect the equipment you want to power directly to the outlets on the generator.
FOR A FIRE IN A BUILDING:

- Find a way out and away from any smoke or fire.
- Touch closed doors before opening them.
- Drop to the floor and crawl to avoid smoke fumes.
- Call 911 from a safe place.

Remember:

**Do Not:**
- Open doors if they are hot or smoke-filled
- Go back in the building until the authorities say it is safe.

**Stop, Drop and Roll**
Pay attention to your surroundings!

Look for things you may need in an emergency like:

Emergency Exits
Fire Alarms
Fire Extinguishers

Stay Calm! Do what the authorities ask you to do to stay safe.
**DO THIS:**
Drop, cover your head, and hang on!

**ALSO:**
- Lie on the floor against an inside wall.
- Stay away from anything that could fall on you like windows, hanging objects, mirrors, large appliances, and tall furniture.
- Do not run out of the building during strong shaking.
- Do not use elevators.
Contagious Disease Emergencies

✓ Listen for information on how to protect yourself from catching the illness.

✓ Stay home if you can.

✓ Wear latex gloves and mask if you have to go out.

✓ Wash your hands often.

✓ Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when sneezing or coughing.

✓ Stay away from people who are not feeling well.
High Winds

- Secure outdoor items that might be blown away or might hit you.
- Avoid gymnasiums, auditoriums and other rooms with tall, large roofs.
- Avoid rooms with windows.

The Extremes of Wind & Water

Flash Floods

- If advised to evacuate, do so immediately.
- Do not drive on roads that are covered with water.
- If you come upon a flowing stream where water is above your ankles, stop, turn around, and go another way.
I can check with my agency to see what their disaster plans are.

Does their plan fit in with community and regional plans?

They need to make sure they are not all depending on the same limited resources in the event of an emergency.

I can explain to them they can be helpful.

They know where we all live and work.

They have needed supplies and equipment.

They have trained staff, and connections with medical personnel.

They have experience in managing the needs of people with behaviors, and significant disabilities.

They have accessible vans and drivers.

I can find out how to connect them with local authorities to start making a plan.
I am Connected

My Neighborhood

Community Services

My Privacy vs. Safety

My Network
Your neighborhood is #1 on your list of important connections

My Neighborhood

Do I know any of my neighbors?

Do I know my mailman?

How do I meet people in my neighborhood?

Do I use any of my community services?

How to make Connections

• Take a walk around your block
• Work in your yard
• Sit outside and enjoy the sunshine
• Visit the neighboring park, pool, movie theater
• Attend community centers
Connections

What am I willing to share about me?

The issue of **Personal Privacy** vs. **Safety Net**

My disability? ________________________________

My address? ___________________________________

My staff? _____________________________________

My daily schedule? _____________________________

Anything else? __________________________________

Who Will I Tell?

My neighbors: _________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

My mail carrier: ______________________________

Neighborhood fire station: _____________________
Support is important for everyone, especially during an emergency.

It is recommended that a person have a support network of at least 3 people in each location where he or she usually spends time.

At any one time some of the support people might not be available to help.

Questions I need to answer:

• Who will I ask to be in my network?
• Have I asked my agency what their plans are?
• Do I know someone who lives at least 100 miles away who I can ask to be in my network?
• Give your network copies of all your emergency documents and personal disaster plan.

• Decide with your network how you will contact each other. Phones may not be working. Choose visual or auditory signals – a sheet in the window, a whistle.

• Ask your network to notify you if there is an emergency you might not have heard of.

• Give your network keys to your home.

• Make sure your network knows how to work your equipment.

• Make sure your service animal knows and is comfortable with your network people.

• Inform your network of any areas of your body that have reduced feeling so they can check for injuries if you can’t check yourself.

Who could be in my network?

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________
• Label your equipment with laminated cards explaining how to use and move each item.
• Choose an emergency meeting place for each place
• Choose a signal you can use to let your network know you have left the place and are OK.
• Give your out of town contact copies of all your important papers such as Medicaid, Medicare, and Social Security papers.
• Keep your network informed about any vacation plans - your hotel and travel information.
• Review and revise your personal emergency plan regularly or if your situation changes.
• Practice your plan.
• Remember your network may also have needs – assist each other during an emergency.

My people:
_________________________________________________
_________________________________________________
_________________________________________________
I am Prepared

- My Home
- My Disaster Kits
- My Documents
- My Shelter-in-Place Plan
- My Evacuation Plan
- My Plan for my Pet
- After the Disaster Tips
When a disaster happens, the first priority of disaster relief organizations and government agencies is to provide basic needs – food, water, and shelter – to everyone who needs them.

Your personal needs such as restoring your regular support for daily activities may not happen right away.

It is important for everyone to be prepared to meet his or her own basic needs by storing food and water for a minimum of 3 days.

A smart plan includes steps to meet your specific disability related needs by having a pro-active emergency plan and storing enough supplies, meds, and batteries for at least 7 days.

Sometimes weather can change so quickly that there is no time for a warning. You can protect yourself by paying attention to the weather around you.
Your Home is #1 on your list of how to be Prepared.

- Make sure your home is easy to find. Is your street address number large and well lighted?
- Learn how and WHEN to turn off all utilities.
- Have a fire extinguisher and know how to use it.
- Install smoke alarms on each level of the home, test regularly and replace the battery yearly.
- Keep the shut off switch for oxygen equipment near your chair or bed so you can get to it quickly if there is a fire.
- Have a professional repair broken electrical and gas equipment and clean your fireplace.
- Learn what to do to protect your pipes from freezing in the winter.
- Place heavy objects on lower shelves and hang pictures and mirrors away from beds.
- Keep battery operated emergency lights plugged into wall outlets. They turn on when there is a power outage.
**Things to consider:**

- Lists can go on for pages. Your list should be specific to your wants and needs.
- Take time to make up your list and figure out how you will be able to carry it in an emergency.
- You will need to replace food and water every 6 months.

**Your Basic Emergency Supply Kit should have:**

- Water – 1 gallon per person per day for at least 3 days
- Food – non-perishable for at least 3 days
- Battery powered radio and a NOAA weather radio and extra batteries
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Whistle
- Dust mask to help filter air
- Plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Can opener if kit contains canned food
- Local maps – to find the shelters
## Emergency Supplies Checklist

### Which will you choose?

**Food and Water checklist:**
- [ ] Water – 1 gallon per person, per day for at least 3 days
- [ ] Ready to eat canned meals, meats, fruits and veggies
- [ ] Canned juices
- [ ] High energy foods – granola bars, energy bars
- [ ] Peanut butter and jelly
- [ ] Crackers
- [ ] Vitamins
- [ ] Cookies
- [ ] Tea bags
- [ ] Instant coffee
- [ ] Fluids with electrolytes, like Gatorade
- [ ] What else I want to pack: _______________________

**Clothes:**
- [ ] At least 1 complete change of clothing and footwear
- [ ] Long sleeved shirt
- [ ] Long pants
- [ ] Closed toe shoes or boots
- [ ] Blankets and pillow
- [ ] Cold weather items such as hats, scarves, gloves
- [ ] Rain gear
- [ ] What else I will take: ___________________________

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Does your first aid kit have these things in it?

- Non-prescription meds such as pain relievers, stomach remedies, anti-diarrhea, antacid, syrup of Ipecac (to induce vomiting), laxative, activated charcoal (advised by the poison control center)
- Absorbent compress 5x9 dressing
- Adhesive bandages – assorted sizes
- Adhesive cloth tape – 5 yards x 1”
- Adhesive tape
- Antibiotic ointment packets
- Antiseptic wipe packets
- Aspirin
- Non-latex and latex gloves
- Scissors
- Roller bandage 3”
- Sterile gauze pads 3 x 3
- First aid manual
- Assorted sizes of safety pins
- Sunscreen
- Triangular bandages
- Tweezers
- Needle
- Rubbing alcohol
- Thermometer
- Tongue blades
- Petroleum jelly or other lubricant

Is it possible we have forgotten something? ______________

__________________________________________________________
Tools:

- Cash
- Paper and pen
- Heavy cotton or hemp rope
- Heavy work gloves
- Flashlight
- Battery powered radio
- Battery powered TV
- Batteries
- Plastic sheeting and duct tape
- Paper plates
- Plastic utensils
- Non-electric can opener
- Plastic garbage bags and ties (for personal sanitation)
- Matches in watertight container
- Whistle
- Cooking utensils
- Camping cook stove or equivalent and sterno
- Map of the local area – for locating shelters
- Safety goggles
- Pliers, screwdriver, hammer, crowbar, assorted nails
- Shutoff wrench to turn off household gas and water
- Compass
- Aluminum foil
- Plastic storage containers
- Signal flare
- Needles and thread
- Disposable dust masks
- Cooler/ice chest
- Battery operated devices for operating controls, opening and closing windows and doors
- A way to call for help, such as “Medic alert” help buttons

Challenge! How to fit this in a container you can carry!
Whoops! Can't forget

**Personal items:**

- [ ] Toothbrush and Toothpaste
- [ ] Comb and brush
- [ ] Soap
- [ ] Feminine supplies
- [ ] Toilet paper
- [ ] Hand sanitizer
- [ ] Moisten towelettes
- [ ] Copies of ID and credit cards
- [ ] Household chlorine bleach
- [ ] Insect repellent
- [ ] My important stuff: __________________________
  ____________________________________________

**Special needs items:**

- [ ] Contact lens solution
- [ ] Hearing aid batteries
- [ ] Glasses
- [ ] Catheters
- [ ] Disinfectant solutions
- [ ] Inhalers
- [ ] Oxygen
- [ ] My special needs: __________________________
  ____________________________________________
**Important documents & personal information:**

- Copy of will
- Insurance policies
- Contracts
- Deeds, stocks and bonds
- Passports
- Social security cards
- Credit card account information
- Bank account numbers, names and phone numbers
- Important telephone numbers
- Valuable household goods – pictures of them
- Family records – birth, marriage, death certificates
- SSI award letter
- Medicaid/Medicare award letters
- Tanf documentation
- Family and close friends’ address and phone numbers
- Person out of town contact information

**Medical history**
- Current medical information, including immunizations
- Emergency contact information
- Specific disaster preparedness information

**Evacuation plan:**
- How will you evacuate home or work
- Who will you need to call for transportation
- Where will you go
- Who should be contacted once you have been relocated
- When the shelter closes, where will you go and how will you get there.

**Question!** Which documents do you really need to take with you? Which can be safely put in a bank deposit box?
**Pet supplies:**
- Water and food and bowls and way to open food
- Leash or harness or crate
- Identification tags
- Meds and medical records
- Litter/pan
- Current photo
- Vet contact info
- Feeding and care information
- Sanitation supplies
- Other: ___________________________________

**Supplies for your vehicle:**
- Flashlight and batteries
- First aid kit and manual
- White distress flag
- Tire repair kit
- Jumper cables
- Pump and flares
- Bottled water and non-perishable food
- Other: ___________________________________

**Seasonal:**
**Winter** – thermal underwear, blanket, hat, mittens, shovel, sand, tire chains, windshield scraper, florescent distress flag, sleeping bag for each person.
**Summer** – sunscreen lotion, shade item such as an umbrella or wide brimmed hat.
Gather all personal information and put in place for rescuers and your network.

Make a Plan and Review it Regularly.

Practice your Plan
It's All about ME!

We like to think it is nicer to think of others instead of ourselves; but in an emergency, it is important that you think about yourself first so others can find out about your needs if you are unable to tell them.

**Important information about a person:**

- Basic personal information
- Medical History
- Current Medical Information
- Medications
- Contact Information
- Disability Related Inventory
- Personal Assessment of support needs
- “Important to the Person” Information
Federal and state officials have designed the “Vial of Life” information form that you can find on the internet. First responders are trained to look for this form and other important information clearly labeled in the refrigerator or on its door. It is important to use their form so it will not be reproduced in this manual.

The Vial of Life form covers information on:

1. Basic personal information
2. Medical history and current medical concerns
3. Preferred hospital and doctors
4. Medications and allergies
5. Living will and organ donor information
6. Insurance policies and numbers
7. Emergency contact information
Disability-Related Supplies Inventory

Equipment & Supplies

___ Glasses
___ Eating utensils
___ Grooming aids
___ Dressing devices
___ Hearing aids
___ Oxygen
___ Suction equipment
___ Dialysis equipment
___ Sanitary supplies
___ Urinary supplies
___ Ostomy supplies
___ Wheelchair
___ Chair repair kit
___ Walker
___ Crutches
___ Dentures
___ Monitors

Vendors & Stores

Vendor name, address & phone number:

Pharmacies:

Stores:
# Emergency Contacts Plan

## My Network in Charge

<table>
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<th>Members of My Network:</th>
<th>Best Way to Contact:</th>
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**Our Plan**
**Designated friend or family from out-of-town –**
Address: __________________________________________
Home phone: _______________________________________
Mobile phone: ______________________________________
Email: ____________________________________________

**Designated friend or family –**
Address: __________________________________________
Home Phone: ______________________________________
Mobile phone: ______________________________________
Email: ____________________________________________

**Service Provider –**
Name: ____________________________________________
Address: _________________________________________
Phone number: ____________________________________
My Routine is Important to Me

My daily activities and time of day preferences -

My daily schedule is: __________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
I need assistance with: ________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

Most Important to me is: _______________________
___________________________________________
Recent disasters such as Katrina may have changed the rules but Beware!

Shelters usually do not allow pets. They will allow service animals.

Your plan for your pet:

• Take your pet with you
• Keep a list of “pet friendly” places, including hotels
• Assemble your pet’s disaster supplies kit
• Make sure dogs and cats are wearing collars with up-to-date identification
• Attach information to their collar about your location or information about a friend or family member who lives out-of-town.

Plan for your pet’s evacuation. Talk to your vet for ideas. Choose your method of transporting them carefully. Use carriers when possible.
Your Guide to Sheltering in Place

During some kinds of emergencies, officials will instruct you to shelter in place. That means you need to stay where you are. You could be in your home or at your workplace.

Sheltering in Place means selecting a small, interior room with no or few windows; not your whole house or office.

What to do to secure your home

• Close and lock all windows and doors.
• Turn off all fans, heating and air conditioning systems.
• Keep your pets with you.
• Get your disaster supplies kit and radio.
• Choose a room that is above ground and has a hard wired phone in it.
• Call your emergency contact and keep in touch.
• If there is a danger of explosion, close window shades, blinds and curtains.
• In case of a chemical threat, use duct tape & plastic sheeting to seal all cracks around the door and vents into the room.
• For workplace or school, follow the same general guidelines.
When Evacuating is the Thing to do!

It’s not only the destination, but also the Process

You have your important papers and your disaster kits.

You have planned with your network how to contact each other.

Now you need to decide the following:

1. Will I understand what the warning messages on the TV or radio are saying? _________________________________

2. Do I know where the nearest accessible shelter is? _________________________________

3. How will I get to the shelter — go on my own? Wait for my network to pick me up? _________________________________

4. Once there, will I know what to tell them about me? Have I practiced how to fill out the intake paperwork? _________________________________
• Keep your flashlight and radio with you.
• Watch out for wildlife and animals that might attack you.
• Watch for fallen objects, and downed electrical wires.
• Use the phone only to report life-threatening emergencies.

Returning to your home:
• Do not enter if you smell gas or flood waters are around it.
• Be aware of loose floor boards and slippery floors.
• If you suspect any problems with the electrical system, have an electrician check it out before turning on any lights or appliances.
• If your water pipes are damaged, turn off the main valve. Do not flush toilets until you know that sewage lines are intact.
• Throw out all food and other supplies that you think may have become contaminated or come in contact with flood water.
• Clean up household chemical spills.
Post emergency numbers by the phone.

Conduct a home hazard hunt.

Decide where you will meet outside of your house in case of a fire.

Decide where you will go and stay outside of your neighborhood if you cannot return home.

Practice exiting from your residence.

Find the safe spots in your home for certain disasters like tornadoes.

Write on your calendar or another kind of chart the dates that you complete all the tasks necessary to being prepared.

Throw out canned goods if the can is swollen, dented or corroded.

When the power first goes off, use the food in the refrigerator, then the freezer, then your emergency food. You will have a longer supply of food!

Mark food containers with date purchased.
Let's Check One More Time!

Did we forget Anything?

• Some of the things a person can do to prepare for a pandemic flu outbreak are the same as other disasters that require you to shelter-in-place. Just remember the basics for limiting the spread of germs. Wash hands and cover coughs and sneezes with tissues.

• Ways to communicate may be more difficult than usual. The phone lines may be down. Choose alternative ways to get in touch.

• Make sure to include water in your disaster kit. Leave the pop at home. The carbonation in the pop makes you thirsty.

• A NOAA weather radio is an important item to have in an emergency disaster kit.

• Check into a hand crank radio! You won’t need batteries for it.

• Last but not least. All the emergency guides will tell you what items you will have to have in your emergency kit. What about those personal items that are not critical to your safety but they are crucial to your emotional wellness? Get them and put them in your kit.
You have learned what could happen to you.

You have surrounded yourself with friends and helpers.

You have gathered all your supplies and have your disaster kits ready.

You have created your plan and continue to practice it with your network.

You are Ready!
Guide References


NOTES