



## **Everybody Needs a Plan**

### **Be Prepared for Disasters**

According to the National Organization on Disability (NOD), "To be better prepared as a nation, we all must do our part to plan for disasters. Individuals with or without disabilities can decrease the impact of a disaster by taking steps to prepare BEFORE an event occurs."

**"You are in the best position to know your abilities and needs before, during, and after a disaster."**

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Emergency Evacuation Planning Guide for People with Disabilities, "All people, regardless of circumstances, have some obligation to be prepared to take action during an emergency and to assume responsibility for their own safety."  
for example,

Practice and planning **do make a difference**. During the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center, a man with a mobility disability was working on the 69th floor. With no plan or device in place, it took over six hours for him to evacuate.

In the 2001 attack on the World Trade, the same man had prepared himself to leave the building using assistance from others and an evacuation chair he had acquired and had under his desk. It took less than 90 minutes for him to get out of the building the second time.

### **Create a Home Plan**

- You may be on your own for a few minutes, a few hours or in the worst case scenario, a few days... you need to plan for this possibility.
- Meet with household members, neighbors or personal care assistant to discuss what would happen in an emergency.
- Remember, when creating a plan for an emergency, networking with those that are in close proximity is important.
- Discuss different types of emergencies:
  - Tornado
  - Pandemic

- Flood
  - Chemical spill
- Determine what you will need to do to respond to each type of emergency:
  - Will you shelter in place or will you evacuate?
  - Shelter in place – do you have enough water, food, medical supplies, pca support?
  - Evacuation – do you have a transportation source; is the evacuation site accessible, do you have enough medical supplies, pca support?

### **CHECKLIST**

- Post emergency telephone numbers where you can find them, near the telephone or programmed into your cell phone.
- Teach children and others in the household what to do, who to call and when.
- Listen to a battery or crank-operated radio for emergency information.
- Know where the flashlights are located.
- Know where the First-Aid kit is located.
- Arrange for a relative, friend or neighbor to check on you in an emergency.
- Teach those who may need to assist you in an emergency on what to do:
  - the best way to notify you of an emergency if you are deaf or hard of hearing
  - the best way to communicate
  - how to assist with a transfer
  - how to do a blood pressure check
  - how to assist with an insulin injection
  - how to operate necessary lift or medical equipment, etc.
- Keep family records, medical records or other important documents in watertight, fireproof containers.
- Consider getting a medical alert system that will allow you to call for help if you are immobilized in an emergency.
- Consider getting a medical ID bracelet or medical dog tags that state your medical condition.
- Try to identify a second exit, in case the primary exit is blocked. At a minimum, have some ideas on how you would evacuate in this situation.
- Consider your transportation options; do you have access to a vehicle?**
- Do you have a network of friends, family or neighbors that would be able to provide transportation in an emergency?
- Does your transportation provider have resources available during an emergency?

- Pick one out-of-state and one local friend or relative for family members to call if separated by disaster.
- Pick two meeting places:
  - A place near your home in case of a fire.
  - A place outside your neighborhood in case you cannot return home after a disaster.
- Learn how to turn off the water, gas and electricity at main valves or switches.
- Know how to connect or start a back-up power supply if needed.
- PLAN AND PRACTICE HOW TO ESCAPE FROM YOUR HOME IN AN EMERGENCY.
- If you live in an apartment, ask the management to identify and mark accessible exits.
- Plan & Practice**

### **Prepare a Disaster Supplies Kit**

Assemble supplies you might need in an evacuation. Store them in an easy-to-carry container such as a backpack or duffel bag.

Include:

- A battery or crank-operated radio, flashlight and plenty of extra batteries for them.
- A first aid kit, extra pair of glasses.
- If you take medication or use supplies, make sure you have a week's worth, if not more, available and travel ready.**
- A supply of water - store water in a sealed, unbreakable container. Identify the storage date and replace every six months.
- A supply of non-perishable food and a non-electric can opener, plus any special food you require.
- A sturdy whistle.
- Cash or travelers checks.
- Soap and sanitation products.
- A change of clothing, rain gear, and sturdy shoes.
- Blanket or sleeping bag.
- Important family & medical documents that include:
  - A list of family physicians and the relative or friend who should be notified if you are injured.
  - A list of the style and serial numbers of medical devices such as pacemaker.
  - Keep family records, medical records or other important documents in your disaster supply kit in watertight containers.
- An extra set of car keys.
- If you have a baby, include extra diapers and other infant care items.
- Extra wheelchair batteries, oxygen, medication, catheters, food for guide or service animal, or other special equipment you might need.

- Plastic garbage bags.

Also...

- Store back-up equipment, such as a manual wheelchair, at a neighbor's home, school or workplace.

**Learn your community's evacuation plan:**

- Will your community have transportation options available?
- Are the shelters accessible?
- How will you secure a sign language interpreter?
- Will guides or assistants be available?
- **To learn more or if you have questions, contact the emergency planner for your area. Attached please find contact information for Minnesota emergency management directors for the county or tribal government.**

Resources

- [www.codeready.org](http://www.codeready.org)
- [www.disability.state.mn.us](http://www.disability.state.mn.us)
- [www.DisasterHelp.gov](http://www.DisasterHelp.gov)
- [www.fema.org](http://www.fema.org)
- [www.hsem.state.mn.us](http://www.hsem.state.mn.us)
- [www.noaa.gov](http://www.noaa.gov)
- [www.nod.org](http://www.nod.org)
- [www.PrepareNow.Org](http://www.PrepareNow.Org)
- [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)
- [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

For additional information contact:

The Minnesota State Council on  
Disability (MSCOD)  
121 East 7<sup>th</sup> Place, Suite 107  
St. Paul, MN 55101  
651.361.7800 (v/tty)  
800.945.8913 (v/tty)  
**www.disability.state.mn.us**