Emergency Management and People with Disabilities

CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN DISABILITIES

"Commitment To Excellence"

WV West Virginia University

including a list of prescription name, dosage, frequency, doctor and pharmacist. Also consider if medications need to be refrigerated and if so, bring a cooler with an ice pack or other coolant system

__ List of emergency contact information including your support network members in and out of the region, service providers, etc

__ Copies of important documents (birth certificate, passport licenses, insurance information, proof of address)

__ Extra set of keys

__ Flashlight and radio with extra batteries

__ Cash, credit cards, checkbook, ATM card

__ Sanitation and hygiene items including soap, denture care, absorbent pads, etc

__ Items for infants, such as formula, diapers, bottles and pacifiers

__ Supplies for a service animal including food, identification tags, proof of up-to-date vaccinations and veterinarian name and number

__ Clothes, blanket, pillow

__ White distress flag or cloth, whistle, flashlights and/or glow sticks

__ Basic first aid kit

__ Medical alert tags or bracelets that identify your disability-related or health condition

Emergency Management and People with Disabilities

Be Ready: Create a "ready kit" and a "go bag".

You should create a comprehensive "ready kit" with the many supplies necessary to self-sustain for a period of time. Also create a "go bag" containing your most essential items to take with you if you must leave immediately.

Items on this list can be included in both the "ready kit" and "go bag". It is up to you to decide the most essential items to include for you and your family.

___ Three-day supply of non-perishable food and a manual can opener. Make sure the food meets your dietary requirements

___ Three-day supply of water. Plan for one gallon per person per day, but you may need more; consult with your doctor

___ Medical equipment and assistive devices (glasses, hearing aids, catheters, augmentative communication devices, canes, walkers). Label each with your name and contact information. Be sure to have extra batteries and chargers

Checklist, continued

___ Medications,

WV EMS Units and Fire Departments

West Virginia State Fire Marshal
Sterling Lewis Jr.
1207 Quarrier St., (2nd Flr.),
Charleston, WV 25301
Phone: 304-558-2191
www.wvfiremarshal.org/

WV Fire Departments
www.wvfiremarshal.org/pdf/fd%20list1-03.PDF
List of all fire departments and contact information by city. (PDF file)

WV EMS/First Response Units
www.wvochs.org/shared/content/ems/pdfs/
rptagencymailing5162.pdf

For a verbal list of statewide EMS units or fire departments, call the Fire Marshal's office at 304-558-2191.

Checklist and Other Resources

Community Emergency Planning

Emergencies and people with disabilities

One of the most important roles of local government is to protect citizens from harm, including helping people prepare for and respond to emergencies. Making local government emergency preparedness and response programs accessible to people with disabilities is a critical part of this responsibility. Making these programs accessible is required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).

The ADA requires accommodations in public services. A public accommodation is made by a private entity that owns, operates or leases a place used by the public. Places that require public accommodation include restaurants, hotels, theaters, doctors' offices, pharmacies, retail stores, museums, libraries, parks, private schools and day care centers.
The ADA requires that these establishments do not discriminate against persons with disabilities.

If you are responsible for your community's emergency planning or response activities, you should involve people with disabilities in identifying needs and evaluating effective emergency management practices.

Issues that have the greatest impact on people with disabilities include:
- Notification
- Evacuation
- Emergency transportation
- Sheltering
- Access to medical care and medications
- Access to assistive technology or service animals while in transit or at shelters
- Access to information

In planning for emergency services, you should consider the needs of people who use mobility aids such as wheelchairs, scooters, walkers, canes or crutches or people who have limited stamina. Plans also need to include people who use oxygen or respirators, people who are blind or who have low vision, people who are hard of hearing, people who have a cognitive disability, people with mental illness and those with other types of disabilities.

Developing Communications

Include people with disabilities in all levels of emergency planning

Emergency planning should include a focused educational and awareness effort to ensure that:
- Emergency officials include people with disabilities in the planning, training exercises and the response activities undertaken at the community level.
- People with disabilities take an active role in participating alongside emergency officials before, during and after an emergency.
- People with disabilities take measures to prepare themselves for emergencies.

Statewide Red Cross Contacts

Berkeley County Chapter
205 East King Street
Martinsburg, WV 25401
Phone: 304-263-5241
Fax: 304-264-3873
E-mail: arcberkeleyco@aol.com

Fayette-Nicholas Chapter
PO Box 355 (208 Main St. E)
Oak Hill, WV 25901-0355
Phone: 304-469-4636
Fax: 304-469-4638

Jefferson-Morgan Counties Chapter
1948 Wiltshire Road, Suite 2
Kearneysville, WV 25430
Phone: 304-725-5015

Weirton Office
3146 Main Street
Weirton, WV 26062
Phone: 304-797-1600

Wheeling Office
193 - 29th Street
Wheeling, WV 26003
Phone: 304-232-0711

Morgantown Office
1299 Pineview Drive, Suite 3
Morgantown, WV 26505
Phone: 304-598-9500

Central WV Chapter
Phone: 888-574-2459
E-mail: info@cwv-redcross.org

Employ-ABILITY Handbook
Accessible Attitudes: Disability Etiquette for One-Stop Staff
www.employ-ability.org/one-stop/begnoblequest2.asp

Disability Basics - etiquette guidelines, attitudinal barriers and positive language
Suggestions by the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability (NCWD)/Youth
www.ncwd-youth.info/resources_&_Publications/disability_Basics/index.html

The Disability Etiquette Page
General disability, blind, deaf and wheelchair user etiquette tips.
www.onsighttraining.com/etiquette.html

Ten Commandments Of Communicating With People With Disabilities
26-minute training video or DVD that can be purchased for disability awareness training
www.trainerstoolchest.com/show_product.php?idnum=369

National Business and Disability Council (NBDC)
Contains links to a number of fact sheets and tip sheets related to disability etiquette and workplace issues
www.business-disability.com/members/fact.asp

Know your community members

- Identify concentrations of people with disabilities who live in the community. These would include senior housing developments, residential care facilities and schools.
- Work with primary and specialty health care providers to identify their roles in disaster planning for their patients with special needs.
- Partner with community organizations.
- Help families of children with special needs develop disaster shelter plans.
- Identify resources and funding from public and private health care funding agencies.

Develop a special needs registry

Consider developing a special needs registry if one does not exist. Include people meeting specified criteria who voluntarily list themselves to make local emergency authorities aware of their presence. Recognize that no matter how comprehensive a registry may be, not all people with disabilities will register. Therefore, any registry should be considered only as a guide in an emergency and not as a definitive or exhaustive list. Also, it should be updated periodically (e.g., once a year).

Develop a disability phone tree

Another communication tool is a phone tree. This can be a particularly effective way to reach people with disabilities. Community emergency managers should be responsible for initiating communication to the top-level contact persons on each branch of a phone tree who in turn call the next level or branch of the tree.

Evacuation Plans

There are several types of facilities and structures where special consideration is required in connection with the evacuation of people with disabilities.

Buildings, residential facilities and other tall or large structures with relatively permanent residents

As part of emergency planning efforts, it is important to work with the administrators of these facilities to ensure that each structure has a workable evacuation plan in place. Administrators should conduct regular drills so residents and employees within their structures are familiar with these plans.

Large facilities, such as stadiums, arenas and museums with no permanent residents

In these facilities, full-scale evacuation drills are usually not feasible with certain exceptions such as schools. It is critical to ensure that the managers of these facilities have effective evacuation procedures in place for people with disabilities.

Entire communities

Community evacuation plans should be designed to allow the necessary time, consideration and assistance for people with disabilities to be adequately notified of evacuation plans. They must be able to bring service animals and special equipment with them, e.g., wheelchairs, dialysis machines, ventilators.

Disability Etiquette

Disability Etiquette Tips for Speaking Engagements
Job Accommodation Network (JAN)
www.jan.wvu.edu/media/etipresent.html

Disability Etiquette - Section 504 Handbook
Contains many etiquette tips related to (a) blindness and visual impairments and (b) speech disabilities
Federal Communications Commission (FCC).
www.fcc.gov/cgb/dro/504/disability_primer_4.html

Disability Etiquette: Using Words with Dignity
Guidelines by the Community Resources for Independence (CRI)
www.crinet.org/dignity.php

Disability Training
Contains lists of many videos, CDs, DVDs and training courses that can be ordered to assist with disability awareness
www.disabilitytraining.com/disaw.html

DisabilityInfo.gov
Links to many resources related to emergency preparedness
www.disabilityinfo.gov/digov-public/public/
DisplayPage.do?parentFolderId=5150

The NBDC Yellow Pages: Specific Disability Resources
National Business & Disability Council (NBDC)
www.business-disability.com/Services/links.asp

Disaster Resources for People with Disabilities and Emergency Managers
Assisting People with Disabilities in a Disaster
www.jik.com/disaster.html

FCC Consumer Facts - Closed Captioning (Federal Communications Commission)
Requirement that all video programming distributors who provide emergency information do so in a format that is accessible to people who are deaf or hard of hearing or blind or have low vision
www.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/closedcaption.html

Emergency Backup, and Safety, and Prevention Strategies Brochure
This brochure provides safety and prevention strategies, planning for backup care, preparing for attendant support during a community-wide disaster, how to minimize risk of theft, and health care emergency instructions and forms.
www.hcbs.org/files/95/4743/Emergency_Backup.doc

Disability Needs in the Recovery Phase

The recovery phase of an emergency typically is the longest and most difficult aspect of a disaster for a community's residents. This phase can be especially traumatic for people with disabilities. In addition to coping with any personal losses or injuries they may have suffered, people with disabilities who experience a disaster may be deprived of vital connections to attendants, service animals, neighbors and even family members.

Include major considerations in the recovery phase

- Make allowances at blockades, shelters and other impacted areas for access by attendants, home health aides, visiting nurses, service animals and other individuals crucial to the immediate health care needs of people with disabilities.
- Plan for an accessible shelter and appropriate temporary housing needs.
- Involve persons with disabilities in "after action reviews" to capture the true impact of the disaster and to improve plans for the future.

Consider other factors

- Train volunteers ahead of time in the basics of helping their fellow residents with disabilities.

- Understand the federal, state and local regulatory codes that address special needs issues in the context of emergency planning.
- Ensure shelters meet ADA accessibility standards so that all members of a community can find safety. The level of medical oversight provided in a shelter must be determined well in advance of an emergency.
- Make accessible transportation available during and after a disaster.
- Make sure groups that provide services to persons with disabilities are involved in planning to ensure ongoing services to people with disabilities after a disaster.
- Ensure emergency equipment includes specialized evacuation chairs, transfer-height cots, communication boards and reverse 911 notification systems.

Emergency professionals can rely on the Red Cross *"Disaster Preparedness for People with Disabilities"* handbook (found at: www.redcross.org/services/disaster/beprepared/disability.pdf) for information on emergency equipment.
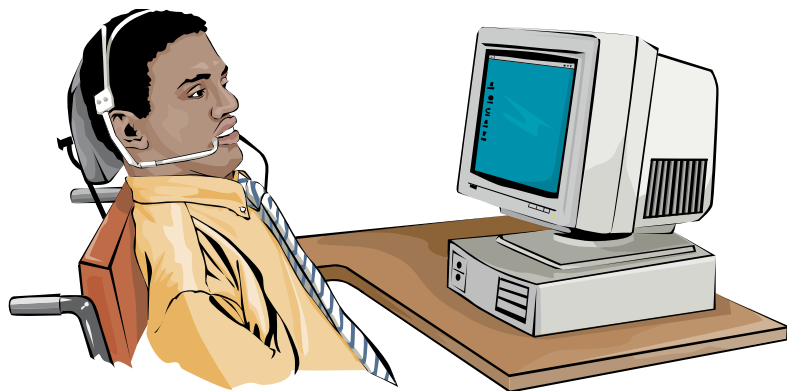
Emergency Preparedness Initiative, (EPI) for Emergency Managers, Planners & Responders
Many detailed online guides are available and can be downloaded in PDF or HTML format
www.nod.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=11

Emergency Preparedness Initiative: Guide on the Special Needs of People with Disabilities For Emergency Managers, Planners and Responders (PDF format)
National Organization on Disability (NOD)
www.nod.org/resources/PDFs/epiguide2005.pdf

Disability and Emergency Preparedness Resources: West Virginia
Offers links to various statewide emergency preparedness resources.
www.nod.org/epiresources/westvirginia.html

Emergency Evacuation Preparedness: Taking Responsibility for Your Safety: A Guide for People with Disabilities and Other Activity Limitations (PDF format)
Center for Disability Issues and the Health Professions (CDIHP)
www.cdihp.org/evacuation/emergency_evacuation.pdf

Evacuation Preparedness Guide
Focuses on people with disabilities and activity limitations
Center for Disability Issues in the Health Professions (CDIHP)
www.cdihp.org/evacuation/toc.html

Resources and Links

Special Needs and Emergencies

Disaster Preparedness for People with Disabilities
American Red Cross Disaster Services
This detailed 48-page booklet can be downloaded in PDF format
www.redcross.org/services/disaster/beprepared/disability.pdf

An ADA Guide for Local Governments - Making Community Emergency Preparedness and Response Programs Accessible to People with Disabilities
U.S. Department of Justice
www.ada.gov/emergencyprep.htm

Effective Emergency Preparedness Planning: Addressing the Needs of Employees with Disabilities
U.S. Department of Labor
www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/fact/effective.htm

Employers Guide to Including Employees with Disabilities in Emergency Evacuation Plans
Job Accommodation Network
www.jan.wvu.edu/media/emergency.html

Emergency Preparedness and Individuals with Disabilities
U.S. Department of Transportation
hwww.dotcr.ost.dot.gov/asp/emergencyprep.asp

Preparing Emergencies for the Special Needs Population: A Checklist for People with Mobility Problems
Downloadable PDF Emergency checklist
www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/HH/main/ss/Disaster_Services_Program/SpecialNeeds.pdf

Personal Emergency Planning

If you are a person with a disability, know how to reduce the impact of a disaster on yourself.

   What can you do to reduce the effects of the disaster and to develop a personal disaster plan? Start by considering the following actions:

- Create a personal support network.
- Complete a personal assessment of your needs.
- Collect information and take actions that will help you meet your needs during evacuations and after the disaster happens.
- Gather essential supplies you will need during and after a disaster, and especially those specific to your disability.
- Make your home or office as safe as possible.
- See pages 21-22 for a checklist.

Evacuation options

Understand your emergency evacuation options. Use your judgment, given your specific situation and the information you have available during an emergency. If you will need evacuation assistance, your options could include:

- Being carried
- Using evacuation chairs
- Identifying an area of refuge/rescue assistance
- Using an elevator
- Establishing an emergency plan for your home

Personal support network

Organize a network for your home, school or workplace - any place where you spend a lot of time. A personal support network is made up of individuals who will check with you and assist when needed. These people are usually located in the same area as you.

Include at least three people for each location where you spend time and give each of them a copy of the disaster preparedness lists you have created, such as:
- Your personal needs assessment, medical information, disability-related supplies, assistive technology and special equipment, evacuation plans and documents you might need
- A plan of how and when you and your network will contact each other during an emergency

Also, consider doing the following activities with your network team:
- Show them how to operate and safely move the assistive technology you use.
- Make sure your service animal knows the people in your network.
- Have network members practice your evacuation plan during a simulated emergency.

Disability-related items you use

Make a list of all special items you use, including a description of each. Options could include:
- Disability-related supplies and assistive technology such as wheelchair, walker, crutches, cane, glasses, hearing device, writing device, eating utensils, dentures, medical equipment, prescriptions or supplies
- Service animals and pet supplies such as food, extra water, leash/harness/collar, ID tags, medications.

Other Etiquette Tips...
- Accept persons with disabilities as individuals, entitled to the same respect and treatment you would want for yourself.
- Treat adults with disabilities as adults. Do not patronize them by telling them how courageous they are, patting them on the back or talking to them like children.
- Extending to shake hands is appropriate for greeting all individuals regardless of disability.
- Speak directly to the person with a disability rather than through a companion.
- While it is rude to stare or ask personal questions, do not pretend the disability does not exist.
- Offer assistance, but wait until your offer is accepted before you help. If your offer to help is declined, do not insist. Listen to any instructions the person may want to give you.
- Be considerate of the extra time a person with a disability may need. Let the person set the pace in talking or walking.

Say…	Instead of…
child with a disability	disabled or handicapped child
person with cerebral palsy	palsied, C.P., or spastic
person who has	afflicted, suffers from, victim
without speech, nonverbal	mute, dumb
developmental delay	slow
emotional disorder	crazy or insane
person who is deaf or hard of hearing	deaf and dumb
uses a wheelchair	confined to a wheelchair
person with retardation	retarded
has a learning disability	is learning disabled
has a physical disability	crippled
seizures	fits
cleft lip	hare lip
mobility impaired	lame
medically involved, or has a chronic illness	sickly
paralyzed	invalid or paralytic
has quadriplegia	quadriplegic
has paraplegia	paraplegic
born with	birth defect

Disability Acronyms

General disability acronyms:
- ADA – The Americans with Disabilities Act
- ASL – American Sign Language, which is an American language other than English
- TDD – Telecommunication Device for the Deaf, also referred to as TTY – teletypewriter

Above excerpts are from sources listed on pages 17-18.

Personal needs assessment

A checklist of recommended items in the personal needs assessment is found at the end of this pamphlet under **"Checklist and Other Resources"** on page 21-22.

Make a list of your personal needs and how you meet them. Then, make an additional list to include resources or additional assistance you would need in each area during a disaster. Include these items on your lists:

1. Getting around

- Transportation, such as a specially-equipped vehicle or accessible transportation
- Errands, such as getting groceries or medications

2. Daily living

- Personal care such as adaptive equipment for getting dressed or shower chair or tub transfer bench
- Water service
- Adaptive feeding devices or special utensils
- Electricity-dependent equipment, such as dialysis or electrical lifts
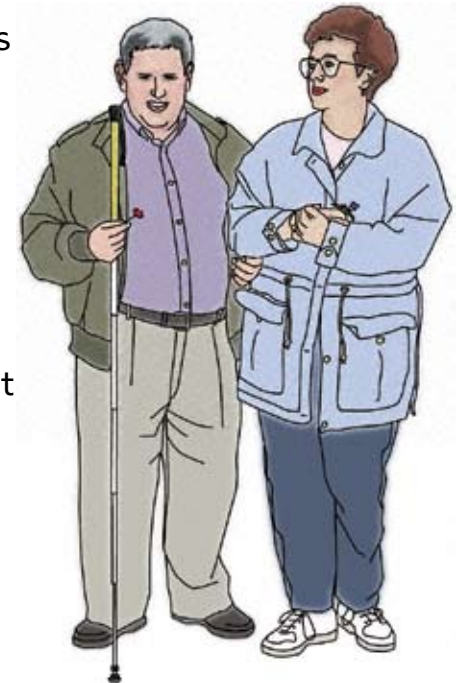
3. Evacuating

- Building exits, such as other exits if the elevator is not working
- Getting help, how to get help leaving the building
- Mobility aids, such as service animals and assistive technology
- Ramp access, such as other options if the ramp is broken or separated from the building
- Service animals/pets, and how to provide food, shelter and veterinary attention after a disaster

Disability Etiquette

Person First

In speaking or writing, remember that children or adults with disabilities are like everyone else - except they happen to have a disability. Here are a few tips for improving your language related to disabilities.

1. Speak of the person first, then the disability.

2. Emphasize abilities, not limitations.

3. Do not label people as part of a disability group - don't say "the disabled." Say "people with disabilities."

4. A "disability" is a functional limitation that interferes with a person's ability to walk, hear, talk or learn. A "handicap" is a situation or barrier imposed by society, the environment or ones self.