

Chapter 25

Emergency Preparedness

Disaster Preparedness Checklist for People with Disabilities

The following list is intended to provide suggestions for disaster preparedness planning that may be taken by individuals with disabilities.

Self-Networks

- ___ Discuss your disability and needs with relatives and friends.
- ___ Develop a network of people who know your needs and location, who will be able to assist you or alert emergency personnel on your behalf. Do not depend on only one person.

Medical Equipment and Supplies

- ___ Evaluate equipment for repairs and obtain and keep spare parts.
- ___ Order the full allotment of supplies that your insurance allows, such as protective briefs, leg bags, suction tubing, hearing aid batteries, etc. Stockpile unused items.
- ___ Assemble a first aid kit. It should include: sterile adhesive bandages in assorted sizes, assorted sizes of safety pins, cleansing agents/soaps, latex gloves (2 pairs), 4-6 sterile gauze pads (2-inch and 4-inch), three triangular bandages, non-prescription drugs, three rolls each of 2 and 3 inch sterile roller bandages, scissors, tweezers, needle, moistened towelettes, antiseptic, thermometer, two tongue depressors, and a tube of petroleum jelly or other lubricant.

Medications and Medical Needs

- ___ Create a list of current prescriptions, names and dosages. Remember to update this list, as needed.
- ___ Keep a list of the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of doctors and pharmacists.
- ___ Prepare a detailed description of your medical regimen and personal care needs.
- ___ Order a full 30-day supply of necessary medications. Check with your insurance carrier.

checklist continued on page 109



Communication

- ___ Make sure your cell phone battery and any extra batteries are kept fully charged.
- ___ Pre-arrange alternative methods to reach family, friends, or personal care attendants if ordinary communications are disrupted.
- ___ Consider keeping a notepad, portable white board, or picture boards available to facilitate communication.

Personal Assistant Care

- ___ Consider checking into a nursing home or hospital if a disaster is anticipated. Staff will be available to meet personal care needs. Also, backup generators will be operating to assist people who use power wheelchairs and/or ventilators.
- ___ Contact your personal care attendant provider to discuss disaster preparedness and maintain a list of phone numbers of those who can assist in obtaining personal care for you.

Food and Water

- ___ Three day supply of water/three gallons of water per person
- ___ Keep a supply of canned, dehydrated, and no-cook foods.
- ___ Keep cases of nutrients available for tube feeding.
- ___ Keep foods for special dietary needs, such as diabetic and high caloric diets.
- ___ Pack adaptive equipment needed for eating or drinking such as large grip utensils, or cup-holders.

Service Dog

- ___ The animal always should wear an identification tag with all necessary contact information.
- ___ Keep shots and medical records current and service animal ID numbers available.
- ___ Your animal will need plenty of food and water, kept in sturdy storage containers.
- ___ Consider large capacity self-feeders and water dispensers.
- ___ Keep contact information on your service animal's veterinarian available.
- ___ Check with your local emergency management officials for companion animal procedures in emergency shelters.

checklist continued on page 110

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Contact numbers for NJ utility providers:

PSEG:

1-800-436-7734

JCP&L:

1-888-544-7734

Atlantic City Electric:

1-800-833-7476

Rockland Electric Company:

1-877-434-4100



Power

- ___ Extended power outages may affect ventilators, heating and/or cooling units, which may be a matter of life or death for some people with disabilities. **Contact your utility provider if you require power to support your special need or circumstance.**
- ___ Investigate emergency contingency plans in your building/community/municipality.
- ___ Explore care facilities, especially if you use a ventilator or have other complex medical needs.
- ___ Consider staying with friends or family out of your area if you anticipate possible power outages, especially if you have medical equipment that is dependent upon power.
- ___ Contact your local fire department and Red Cross for information and registries of people with disabilities.
- ___ Keep clear pathways in your home to allow for safer mobility if lighting is affected.

Oxygen

- ___ Buildings where oxygen is kept must display an “Oxygen in Use” emblem.
- ___ Oxygen must be kept in containers specifically manufactured for that purpose.
- ___ Alert emergency response staff to the use of oxygen.
- ___ Oxygen is flammable, so avoid sparks and flame. Demand that people not smoke near an oxygen container.

Miscellaneous

- ___ Keep battery-operated flashlights and/or lanterns with lots of extra batteries.
- ___ Blankets and warm clothes should be packed in an emergency.
- ___ Keep the gas tank in your car full.
- ___ Have a battery-powered radio and extra batteries on hand.
- ___ Keep ample cash on-hand. ATMs and banks may not function during power outages.
- ___ Have a non-electric can opener.
- ___ Keep a supply of assorted plastic bags.



For more information on developing an individualized disaster preparedness plan, or for current information on Homeland Security Advisory System recommendations, contact:

State

NJ Special Needs Registry

www.registerready.nj.gov

(Call 211 for registration or help)

New Jersey Office of Emergency Management

www.ready.nj.gov

County Emergency Management Coordinators:

<http://ready.nj.gov/about-us/county-coordinators.shtml>

New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness

www.njhomelandsecurity.gov

Federal

US Department of Homeland Security

www.ready.gov

www.Listo.gov (Spanish)

1-800-BE-Ready

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

1-800-621-FEMA (1-800-621-3362)

www.fema.gov

Local

American Red Cross

www.redcross.org

Residential Disability and Oxygen Emblems Program

The Division of Fire Safety distributes emblems you can display to alert first responders of an oxygen hazard or that an individual with a disability resides in the home. Emblems are distributed free of charge. An application can be obtained online at: <https://www.state.nj.us/dca/divisions/dfs/forms/>

For more information, contact the Division of Fire Safety at (609) 633-6106.



Register Ready:
New Jersey's Special
Needs Registry for
Disasters

Allows NJ residents with disabilities or access and functional needs and their families, friends and caregivers an opportunity to provide information to emergency response agencies, so emergency responders can better plan to serve them in a disaster or other emergency.

**Remember to
register annually.**

**For more
information:**
www.ready.nj.gov

