

## **Emergency Preparedness**

For people with mobility impairments



## FACTS

"people with mobility impairments represent a segment of the population with one of the highest risks of dying in a fire."

-Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

"According to incident reports filed by local fire departments, physical disability was a factor in an average of 380, or 14%, of home fire deaths per year between 2004 and 2008."

-National Fire Protection Association Fire Analysis and Research Division



## FACTS

"One of the things learned from the response to Hurricane Katrina was that people with disabilities were disproportionately affected by the storm and its aftermath."

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

In 2005 the National Council on Disability reported that:

"Only 47% of people with disabilities had developed plans to evacuate their homes in the event of a disaster and only 54% knew whom to contact about emergency plans in their community"

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## The Purpose

To help you and your caregivers start thinking about how to be prepared for emergencies when you return home.

We will be covering:

- Fire safety at home/work/school
- Natural disasters



## The keys to successful responses for most emergencies are similar:

- 1. Knowing there is an emergency quickly
- 2. Having a thorough, well practiced plan to respond to the emergency
- 3. Having the resources needed to respond on hand ahead of time

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## **Fire Safety**

### Everything you learned in elementary school, plus a bit more!

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## How will you know there's a fire?

Smoke Alarms:

- The sooner you know, the more time you have to react
- Where?
  - Every bedroom, outside sleeping areas, and on every level
- Alarms should be interconnected
- Detailed information about smoke alarms can be found at:
  - <u>www.usfa.fema.gov</u>
  - <u>www.nfpa.org</u>





## Smoke Alarms:

- Test your alarm monthly
- Replace them every 10 years:
  - Technology upgrades
- Replace the batteries at least once a year
- Your local fire department will:
  - Be happy to come to your home and help you install smoke detectors correctly
  - Change out the batteries for you if you ask them!



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## How will you get help?

- Keep an accessible phone handy
- Consider a monitored home fire alarm system
- Make your address easily visible from the street

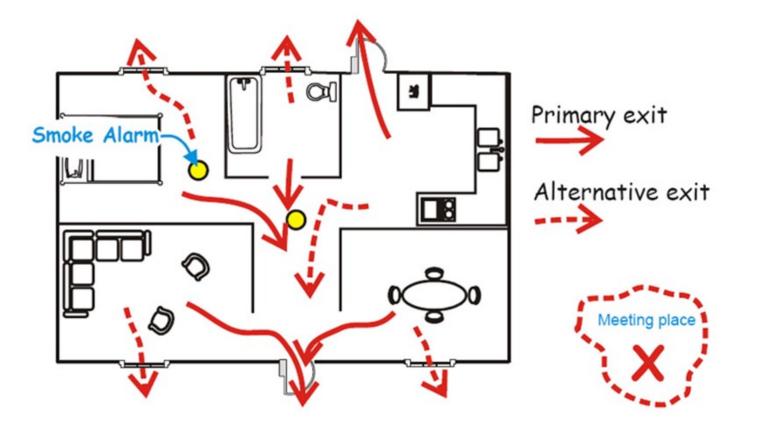






## How will you get out?

- Plan detailed escape plans for home and for work/school and practice them!
- Practice your evacuation plans with all the people who agree to assist you – make sure everyone feels comfortable with their training!
- Make sure to give copies of your evacuation plans to the security personnel at your work or school



• <u>www.nfpa.org/disabilities</u>



## Sample questions from Personal Emergency Evacuation Planning Checklist found at www.nfpa.org/disabilities:

### **TYPE OF ASSISTANCE NEEDED:**

- Can the person evacuate himself or herself with a device or aid?
- What is the specific device or aid?
- Where is the device or aid located?
- Does the person need assistance to evacuate?
- What does the assistant(s) need to do?
- Does the assistant(s) need any training?
- Has the training been completed?
- Where will the assistant(s) meet the person requiring assistance?
- When will the person requiring assistance contact the assistant(s)?

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## In Your Home

- Be sure you have at least two accessible exits
  - Consider ability to open door
- Keep your wheelchair within reach when you're in bed or on the couch/recliner
- Consider sleeping in the most accessible room
- Have a fire extinguisher available
- Sprinkler systems and compartmentation walls are an option

## Fire Safety for People With Disabilities



Millions of Americans live with physical and mental disabilities. It is important to know your risk and build your fire prevention plans around your abilities.

Have smoke alarms on every level of your home, inside bedrooms and outside sleeping areas. Interconnect your alarms, so when one sounds, they all sound.



- If you are deaf or hard of hearing, use smoke alarms with a vibrating pad, flashing light or strobe light. These accessories start when your alarm sounds.
- Test your alarms every month.

### Plan your escape around your abilities.

- Know two ways out of every room.
- If possible, live near an exit.
- ✓ You'll be safest on the ground floor if you live in an apartment building.
- If you live in a multistory home, sleep on the first floor.
- Being on the ground floor and near an exit will make your escape easier.



## Fire Extinguishers:

- Five main types of fire extinguishers
- Important to know so you have the desired one in areas of your home
- Purchase fire extinguishers with an ABC rating (multipurpose) for home use
- Should be replaced every 10-12 years

A	Ordinary Combustibles	Wood, Paper, Cloth, Etc.
B	Flammable Liquids	Grease, Oil, Paint, Solvents
C	Live Electrical Equipment	Electrical Panel, Motor, Wiring, Etc.
D	Combustible Metal	Magnesium, Aluminum, Etc.
K	Commercial Cooking Equipment	Cooking Oils, Animal Fats, Vegetable Oils



## In Your Home:

- Keep at least a few days worth of your medications together so you (or a first responder) can grab them quickly when you evacuate.
- If you use a power chair, be able to verbalize how to put your chair into manual mode
  - You may want to put brightly colored tape on the "brakes" to make it easier to explain



## Oxygen and ventilators







## Oxygen

- Flammable vs accelerator
- Risks
  - Smoking, flames from matches, candles, or furnaces
  - Hot elements in space heaters or hair dryers
  - Electric arc produced when plugging in the television
  - Oxygen tanks used improperly

Steps to reduce risks

- No smoking
- Utilize the 5-foot rule (always 5 feet away)
- Don't use products that can easily burn (i.e., cosmetics, waxes, greases, etc.)
- Store oxygen containers properly (upright)
- Keep a fire extinguisher nearby



## Vents

- ALWAYS have your ambu bag
  - Limited internal ventilator battery life
- Contact your local utility companies and first responders to let them know you have sensitive medical equipment in use at your home.
- If you need to get out quickly, hyperventilate (3-5 breaths) then continue to bag once you are outside.
  - EMS will have means to ventilate once they arrive.



## If you can't get out and must wait for first responders:

- In public buildings, get yourself into the closest stairwell
  - Withstand a fire longer than other areas of the building
  - Path the fire fighters are taking to access the building
- Worst-case scenario:
  - If all other options are out, consider trying to throw yourself to the floor from your bed or wheelchair



## **RESCUE** Program

RESCUE is a comprehensive program designed to provide education to individuals with disabilities about emergency preparedness, to provide education to emergency responders about disability, and to facilitate preemergency communication between community members and emergency responders.





## Will the sticker increase crime?

# There is currently no research to support an increase in crime with use of the sticker!

### Stickers known to decrease home invasions:

- Alarm signs and decals
- Dog signs
- Neighborhood alert signs

## Stickers/circumstances known to increase home invasions:

- Weapons on property signs
- Known drug dealer
- Value of car in driveway





### **Rescue Packet**

### GIVE THIS LETTER TO YOUR LOCAL FIRE DEPARTMENT

Dear Emergency Responder:

The enclosed RESCUE sticker, developed by Shepherd Center in Atlanta, is to be placed in a front window of a home to alert first responders that someone within that residence needs special assistance in the event of an emergency. Shepherd Center is a private, not-for-profit hospital specializing in medical treatment, research and rehabilitation for people with spinal cord injury or brain injury.

With input from DeKalb County Fire Department (Ga.), the RESCUE sticker originated from an emergency preparedness program at Shepherd Center, which educates patients and their families on fire safety for individuals with new cognitive and/or physical limitations. Program participants are provided with the RESCUE sticker and encouraged to inform their local fire department of their specific disability.

The enclosed RESCUE sticker and educational material are also available at shepherd.org/rescue, and through participating fire stations and EMS personnel in Atlanta.

We hope you find the RESCUE initiative helpful in your endeavors to keep your community safe!

For further information, additional stickers or to implement the program in your community, please email us at rescue@shepherd.org.

Thank you very much for your time and attention.



Individuals with disabilities can place the **RESCUE sticker** in a front window of their home to alert first responders that someone within that residence needs special assistance in the event of an emergency.

### **RESCUE Sticker Placement**

- Place the RESCUE sticker in a visible front window of your home. This is the standardized placement recommended by emergency responders.
- Ensure that your address is easily visible from the street so that first responders can find you quickly.
- Take the enclosed letter and form to your local fire department and have them enter your information into their database with health conditions that require special notation. Include the location of your RESCUE sticker.

### **Be Prepared**

- Make sure you can hear and recognize the sound of all smoke or emergency alarms. Test alarms once a month and replace batteries twice a year.
- Keep an accessible phone with you at all times, even at night. Options are a cell phone tucked under your pillow, a sip-and-puff phone next to the bed, or a picture phone.
- Have your medications organized at all times so that you can have someone grab them quickly if necessary.

#### **Plan Your Escape**

- Draw a floor plan of your home with two accessible exits if possible. Discuss with everyone in your home.
  If you have multiple caregivers, post your plan on your
- refrigerator.
- Apply same evacuation tips to your office or place of work.
- Practice your plan at least twice a year.

CONTINUED ON BACK



### **Cognitive Considerations**

- Be sure to follow the specific recommendations from your medical care provider.
- Recognize that you may have slower reaction time to respond to a dangerous situation.
- Post the evacuation plan in your room in order to remember the steps in an emergency.

**More information about basic fire safety,** as well as general safety tips for people with different kinds of disabilities can be found at the following:

#### Shepherd Center shepherd.org/rescue

Shepherd Center, located in Atlanta, Ga., is a private, not-for-profit hospital specializing in medical treatment, research and rehabilitation for people with spinal cord injury, brain injury, multiple sclerosis, and other neurological disorders.



#### United States Fire Administration usfa.dhs.gov

This organization will mail pamphlets to you free of charge. Resources used for this handout: "Fire Risks for the Mobility Impaired" and "Protecting Your Family from Fire."

#### National Fire Protection Association Infpa.org

This is where you can find a copy of the "Personal Emergency Evacuation Planning Checklist."



Shepherd Center 2020 Peachtree Road, NW Atlanta, GA 30309 404-352-2020



## When to visit the fire department? Why?

- Recommend that you visit your local fire department 3 days in a row
- Explain your physical capabilities and limitations
- Give them a copy of your escape plan and ask if they have any suggestions
- Make sure they know which room you sleep in in your home
- Teach them about your chair and educate them on anything else they need to know about you
- Ask them if they have any questions for you!



## **Carries and Evacuations**

- Always
  - Keep open communication between yourself and your helpers
  - Make sure your helpers are using proper body mechanics



## **Proper Body Mechanics**

- Keep your hips under your shoulders
- Use your gluts and quads to lift, not your back or arms (bend with your legs, not with your back)
- Keep the object close to your center of mass (COM)
  - COM is close to your belly button
- Don't twist, keep your feet & hips turned in direction that you are moving, or shift weight from one leg to another
- Adjust the height of the bed or put one knee on the bed to allow you to get closer to the patient and keep your hips under your shoulders.



## Two Person Hold/Carry





## **Two Person Lift/Carry**

- Performed by two people
- Strongest helper lifts the trunk
- Other helper scoops the legs from the side
- Best if head/neck control is present
- The person being lifted bears down with shoulders





## Sheet over Toes Carry

- Bring knees to chest, fold sheet over toes and knees. Criss cross sheet and tuck ends behind knees
- At least two helpers
- Can provide good support to head and neck if necessary and person is not too tall.





## Sheet Drag

- Least desirable due to risk of skin shearing
- Can be done with one helper
- If no sheet is available, it will be best to drag the person out by their legs instead of arms





## Getting someone out of bed with one caregiver

- Be sure to lower the bedrails first and lower the bed as much as possible
- Could possibly turn the mattress sideways and have it act as a slide to lower the person to the floor
- Swing the legs off the side of the bed first and then lower torso and head to the floor
- Grab sheet (or use two-man hold) and lower to the floor



Getting someone out of bed with one caregiver





## Getting someone out of a power chair with one caregiver

- Remove chest strap and seat belt
- Flip up foot plate
- Raise one of the armrests
- Lower person to the floor with the two-person hold





## **Natural Disaster Preparedness**

Natural disasters often occur quickly and without much warning. The key is to be prepared for them ahead of time!



## Natural Disasters: Which are common in your area?

- Air Quality
- Droughts
- Earthquakes
- Floods
- Flus and outbreaks
- Hurricanes

- Lightning
- Rain and snow
- Security
- Tornadoes
- Tsunamis
- Wildfires

You can get information from your state and local Emergency Management Agency (EMA) or Homeland Security Office by visiting their Websites.



## Keep yourself informed

- Wireless emergency alerts (WEA)
- Emergency Alert System (EAS)
- NOAA weather radio
- Real-time hazard maps
  - <u>www.nesec.org</u> Northeast States Emergency Consortium
  - <u>http://nhss.cr.usgs.gov</u> Natural Hazards Support System
  - <u>http://naturalhazardmapping.com/hazard\_maps/interactive</u>



During and following a natural disaster, your whole community may be affected:

- When you get home from Shepherd, register with the Emergency Management Agency (EMA) in your county.
- When there is a community disaster, the American Red Cross contacts the EMA in that county to find out who needs help evacuating their homes
- The Red Cross then will provide transportation to local shelters for individuals registered with that county's EMA



## Shelters

- Equipment people are allowed to take to a shelter is limited due to space limitations. If you are allowed only one piece of equipment at the shelter, your wheelchair cushion may be a good option.
- When you register with the EMA, make it clear that you are dependent for mobility without your wheelchair. This may increase your chances of getting to keep your wheelchair with you at the shelter.
- In the event of a community disaster requiring evacuation, accessible shelters can be found at <u>www.redcross.org</u> or on the Red Cross Shelter smart phone app



## **Emergency Evacuation Considerations:**

- If you are using your own transportation to go to a shelter or to get out of town:
  - Make sure you have enough gas in your vehicle
    - Gas stations along an evacuation route may run out of gas
    - Stations may be closed in an emergency
    - Power outages may affect ability to pump or buy gas
    - Always keep at least 1/2 of tank in your vehicle
- Map out a route and/or alternative routes
- Have cash available
- Notify family and friends of your plans



## Things to consider during a natural disaster:

During and following a natural disaster, you may not have power, water, phone, or cable service. Over the course of a couple of days this could affect your:

- Bowel and bladder care
- Medical equipment needs
  - Ventilator
  - Oxygen
  - Power Wheelchair needs
- Communication with others
  - Cell phones
  - Home phones
  - Internet Access
- Medication refills and medical supplies



## You can prepare by doing the following ahead of time:

- Make your local utilities companies are aware of your medical needs ahead of time – they will likely put you on a list to have your services restored more quickly
- Keep enough non-perishable food on hand for everyone in your home for about three days, as well as a manual can opener
- Consider purchasing a back-up generator for your medical equipment



Downed utility lines, power company blackouts, heavy snow falls or summer storms can all lead to power outages. Many people turn to a portable generator for a temporary solution without knowing the risks.

- Generators should be used in well ventilated locations outside at least 5 feet (1.5 metres) away from all doors, windows, and vent openings. Measure the 5-foot (1.5 metres) distance from the generator exhaust system to the building.
- Never use a generator in an attached garage, even with the door open.
- Place generators so that exhaust fumes can't enter the home through windows, doors or other openings in the building. The exhaust must be directed away from the building.
- Make sure to install carbon monoxide (CO) alarms in your home. Follow manufacturer's instructions for correct placement and mounting height.
- Turn off generators and let them cool down before refueling. Never refuel a generator while it is hot.

NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION The leading information and knowledge resource on fire, electrical and related hazards

 Store fuel for the generator in a container that is intended for the purpose and is correctly labeled as such. Store the containers outside of living areas.

#### s s • A person can be pois

A person can be poisoned by a small amount of CO over a longer period of time or by a large amount of CO over a shorter amount of time.

Just Remember...

When plugging in appliances.

make sure they are plugged

extension cord. The cords

If you must connect the generator to the house wiring

to power appliances, have a

qualified electrician install a

Electrical Code® (NEC) and all applicable state and local

properly rated transfer switch

in accordance with the National

grounding pin.

electrical codes

should be checked for cuts,

tears and that the plug has

all three prongs, especially a

directly into the generator or a heavy duty outdoor-rated

nfpa.org/education ©NFPA 2017

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## You can prepare by doing the following ahead of time:

- Always have enough water available to meet the hydration and hygiene needs of everyone in your household for about three days (don't forget to consider your bowel/bladder care needs!)
- Detailed recommendations for a basic disaster supplies kit can be found at:

https://www.ready.gov/kit







## You can prepare by doing the following ahead of time:

- PWC user: Consider purchasing a extra battery
- Have a manual wheelchair as a back-up option (it will also be easier to transport in a regular vehicle)
- Show others how to operate, assemble, and dissemble wheelchair
- Have a plan to get out of town if necessary, including:
  - Identify and communicate with people who expect you to come stay with them in the event of an emergency
  - Make sure you have written/printed directions to their homes
    - Google Maps may not be an option, and some roads may be closed!



## You can prepare by doing the following ahead of time:

- Medications:
  - Keep up-to-date on your medication refills
  - Keep a list of your prescription medicines including information on dosage, frequency, medical supply needs and allergies.
  - Have a cooler and chemical ice packs for all refrigerated medication
  - Talk to MD and pharmacist about how to create an emergency supply of medications
- What about money?
  - If the power is out ATMs and credit card readers may not be working. Keep enough cash on hand to get you out of town!



## Resources

#### www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/emergencypreparedness.html

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
  - Disability and health, emergency preparedness articles available here

### www.CTIA.org

- The Wireless Association
  - Provides information about wireless emergency alerts for your smart phone

### www.fcc.gov

- Federal Communications Commission
  - Provides information about the Emergency Alert System (EAS)

### www.fema.gov

Federal Emergency Management Agency



## Resources

#### www.gema.state.ga.us

Georgia Emergency Management Agency/Homeland Security

#### www.nfpa.org/disabilities

- National Fire Protection Association.
  - A Personal Emergency Evacuation Planning Checklist can be found at this website

#### www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr

- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
  - Provides information about weather radio stations and weather radios

#### www.ready.ga.gov

- Ready Georgia
  - A statewide campaign supported by the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) aimed at motivating Georgians to take action to prepare for a disaster.



## Resources

#### www.usfa.fema.gov

• U.S. Fire Administration

#### www.ready.gov

- Ready
  - Detailed recommendations for a basic disaster supplies kit can be found at <u>www.ready.gov/basic-disaster-supplies-kit</u>

#### www.redcross.org

- American Red Cross
  - Provides information about local shelters in the event of a community emergency

#### www.shepherd.org/resources/rescue

- Shepherd Center.
  - Additional information about the RESCUE program (and the packet you received) can be found at this website.



## There are smart phone apps for that!

#### American Red Cross

- First Aid by American Red Cross
  - step-by-step instructions to guide you through everyday first aid scenarios.
  - Integrated with 911 so you can call EMS from the app.
  - Available in English and Spanish languages
- Emergency! by American Red Cross
  - Audible siren for alerts related to tornados, hurricanes, floods, and many other weather-related emergency situations
  - Information on what to do before/during/after the event
  - Track the event
  - Enable critical alerts that can override the Do Not Disturb setting on your device
  - Let family and friends know your are okay with the "I'm Safe" alert for Facebook, Twitter, email and text
  - Find open Red Cross shelters in your area when you need help
  - Available in English and Spanish languages



## Ready Georgia: <u>https://gema.georgia.gov/plan-prepare/ready-georgia</u>

- A national public service advertising (PSA) campaign designed to educate and empower Americans to prepare for and respond to emergencies including natural and man-made disasters.
- Create and edit your Ready Profile for customized emergency plans
- Local weather and public health alerts
- Checklist of emergency supplies/kit
- Information on what to do during different types of emergencies
- Hurricane evacuation routes
- Disaster history for your location
- Maps of nearby American Red Cross shelters



## General apps available

### **Emergency contacts**

• Keeps a list of emergency contacts, known allergies, medications you are on, any conditions you have, and your personal identification information on your smart phone.

## Emergency GPS locators

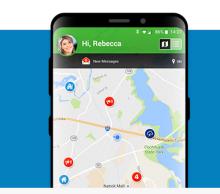
- Built into your phone and can be used in emergency situations to report your GPS position to first responders or family/friends
- Can install GPS apps for more detailed tracking information



### www.smart911.com

Smart911 is a free service that allows citizens across the U.S. to create a Safety Profile for their household that includes any information they want 9-1-1 to have in the event of an emergency.

Anyone in that household dials 9-1-1 from a phone associated with their Safety Profile, their profile is immediately displayed to the 9-1-1 call taker providing additional information that can be used to facilitate the proper response to the proper location.



#### Get the Mobile App

Download the Smart911 App today and have life-saving capabilities at your fingertips, 24/7.



#### Your Safety Profile Is Free, Private, And Secure.

. . . .

Add as much or as little to your profile as you want. It's up to you, and your information will only be seen if you ever have to call 9-1-1.

#### People and Household Info

You can add key information about members of your household that would help anyone you care for in the event of an emergency, whether the call is from the home or any mobile phone.

Learn more 🕨

#### Address and Location Info

Giving responders visual details on an emergency location helps facilitate faster response, as does information on access points like hidden driveways or gate codes.

Learn more

#### Medical Info

No matter where you or your loved ones are, you can always have peace of mind that responders will know any critical medical condition and how to help before they even arrive.

Learn more ►

#### Other Info

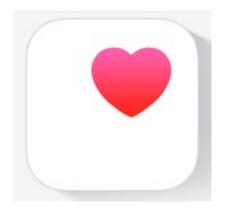
You can also add as much or as little information about your vehicles, pets, service animals, along with any special notes that you would want responders to know.

Learn more >

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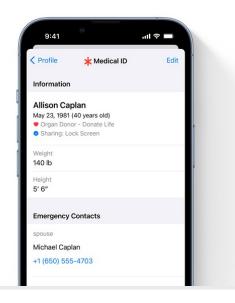
## Health App- IOS

- The Health app was created to help organize your important health information and make it easy to access in a central and secure place.
- There are new ways to share data with your loved ones and healthcare team.
- Create a medial ID to allow first responders to access your critical medical information from the Lock Screen and/or shared during an emergency call.



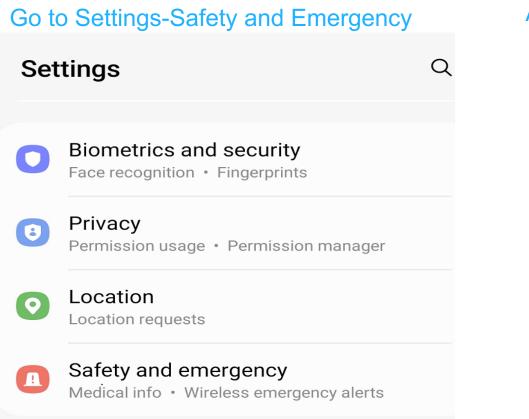
#### Your Medical ID. Always with you.

Create an emergency Medical ID card that allows first responders to access your critical medical information from the Lock Screen.





### Android



#### Add Medical Info and Emergency Contacts

< Safety and emergency	Q
Medical info	
Emergency contacts	
Send SOS messages	
Wireless emergency alerts	
Emergency Location Service	
Earthquake alerts	
Silence notifications while driving	
Emergency mode	



## To recap, when you get home from Shepherd please contact:

Fire Safety:

- Develop your escape plan
- Check smoke detectors
- Your local fire department
- Discuss escape plan and let first responders know what your needs are

**Emergency Preparedness:** 

- Register with the Emergency Management Agency for your county
  - Allow the American Red Cross to be able to accommodate your evacuation needs if a community disaster occurs
- Contact your utility company



# Thank you!