

Institute for Disability Studies
ShareCare Notes: Disasters and How to Take Them Standing Up
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1. New Materials on Emergency Preparedness from AOA

In light of hurricane season being upon us, in this edition of the ShareCare notes we are looking at options for emergency preparedness. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Aging has a very good Web site with step-by-step plans for getting yourself and your loved ones ready in case of emergencies. In their National Family Caregiver Support Program, the department has a resource guide which gives a three-step approach to being prepared.

1. Know the basics. You need to know about your community and how the area might be at risk. Do you live near the coast or on a fault line (risk for earthquakes)? What is the evacuation route? Do your neighbors know what extra help you might need in an emergency?
2. Have your emergency supplies ready. The program recommends that you have two sets of supplies. The first is your "stay at home" supplies consisting of water, food, flashlight, hand-operated can opener, first aid kit, medications, emergency contact list, etc. The second set of supplies is the "evacuation bag." This bag would include items such as personal hygiene items (include alcohol wipes and hand sanitizer), extra pair of glasses, change of clothing, good walking shoes, bottled water, sleeping bag, copy of your emergency contact list, and your medication list. Remember if you have pets to keep extra food on hand for them too!
3. Make a personal plan. Plan ahead. If you need special services, such as home health care, talk to these people and find out how they would handle power outages and emergencies so that you or your loved one could receive the care needed. If you use an electric wheelchair, keep the old manual one on hand for emergencies. During Katrina evacuations, many people were without wheelchairs because the electric ones shorted out in flood waters. If you or someone in your household has limited mobility, you may want to register with the local fire department or emergency services so that they are aware of your special needs. If you need assistance with this, ShareCare Bank offers a registration service with

the Forrest County Emergency Operations Center for those living in Forrest County. Contact Christy.harrison@usm.edu or Stella.fair@usm.edu. This emergency guide also provides checklists which go along with each of these steps, so you will not leave anything out of your planning. An emergency contact list and current medication worksheets are also provided.

http://www.aoa.gov/PROF/aoaprogram/caregiver/overview/Just_in_Case030706_links.pdf

If you or your loved one need an alternative format for this preparedness guide, the AOA also provides a companion video at the following Web site at

<http://www.aginginstride.org/emergencyprep/default.htm>

2. Red Cross Disaster Checklists

Other great resource guides are available through the American Red Cross. People from this organization are often first on the scene during natural disasters and emergencies and they have come up with many helpful hints to help people prepare. Their checklist includes making a plan, building a kit, getting trained (in such techniques as CPR and first aid), volunteer (to be better able to help your friends, family and neighbors), and give blood. This organization has brochures on how to prepare your family, what to put into your kit, how to make a plan, and even such things as knowing what to do when a hurricane warning is issued and what to do when a hurricane is over. These tips are not only good to know, they can also help save lives. Contact your local Red Cross, they will be happy to send you information or have you come to their office and pick it up or visit

<http://www.redcross.org/>.

3. Disaster Planning Guide from Mississippi State Department of Health

The Mississippi State Department of Health publishes 'A Community Guide for Disaster Planning', a very useful guide especially for people within Mississippi. This guide outlines the types of disasters, such as natural disasters (earthquakes, extreme heat, floods, hurricanes, etc.), human-caused disasters (chemical accidents, fires, industrial disasters, structural failures, wars and terrorism, etc.), and environmental disasters (disease, water-borne, vector-borne diseases, communicable diseases, epidemics, pandemics, etc.). The guide goes on to describe the four phases of disaster activity mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. The guide gives explicit instructions on how to act during each phase or how to be ready for each stage. The appendix in this guide may be one of its most helpful parts. It contains a Quick Reference Checklist, a place to write/draw your evacuation route, contact information for the Mississippi Department of Health district offices, federal agencies, state and local agencies, car rental information, and Mississippi shelter listings. This guide is available by contacting your local health department or by going online to

http://www.msdh.state.ms.us/msdhsite/_static/44,0,122.html.

These Web sites might also be of help when preparing for emergencies:

National Organization on Disability	http://www.nod.org/emergency
Telecommunications for the Deaf, Inc.	http://www.cepintdi.org/
U.S. Department of Homeland Security	http://www.ready.gov/

4. Upcoming Events - NEW Caregiver Support Series Begins July 19

ShareCare Bank will be offering a new six session series for family caregivers beginning July 19, "Powerful Tools for Caregivers." For more information, see

<http://www.usm.edu/sharecare/pdf/powerfultoolscaregiversJuly2006.pdf>

If you would like to learn more about ShareCare Bank and have a fun evening with good food. Join us on July 20 for an "All American Potluck Supper."

For more information, see

<http://www.usm.edu/sharecare/pdf/potluckJuly202006.pdf>

A note from Project ShareCare: The staff at Project ShareCare select books, articles and news stories to share with you from the news wires, scientific/medical journals and other selected media. We aim to provide you with relevant and timely information to help you in your role as a caregiver. The articles we share with you are not necessarily the opinion expressed by Project ShareCare. We strongly encourage you to please read the original articles and form your own opinions.

Project ShareCare Bank, funded by the Mississippi Council on Developmental Disabilities, is a community building project that provides networking and neighborly services for families who have an adult member with a disability or chronic condition.

ShareCare is sponsored by the Institute for Disability Studies (IDS), Mississippi's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD). IDS provides university training, community service activities, research, and information that promote the independence, productivity, and community inclusion of individuals with disabilities and their families.

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