

4. People with cognitive disabilities:

- Has the person practiced how to communicate his/her needs?
- Has the person thought about how he/she may react in an emergency and how he/she will cope?
- How does the person communicate their needs?
- Will an emergency affect this person's ability to communicate?
- Does the person have an emergency health information plan which explains how people can best help him/her?

5. People with mobility impairments:

- Can the person evacuate independently from the site?
- Can the person give quick instructions on how to be safely carried?
- Is there an alternative lightweight device that he/she can use if the wheelchair, respirator or other power device cannot be evacuated?

6. People with mental illness:

- What might a rescuer need to know about this person's disability?
- Is it written down for quick reference? (e.g., I have a panic disorder, medication is located in my purse)

7. People who use assistive devices and service animals:

- What will it take to get the assistive device out of the building?
- Has a support team been told how to operate and safely move the equipment and the person if necessary?
- Service animals must be in a harness or on a leash, but need not be muzzled.

8. People with multiple chemical sensitivities (Respiratory/Allergies):

- Are there backup batteries for oxygen? Can they be easily accessed?
- Are there backup inhalers, respirators or masks?

Emergency Preparedness Resources

Ready.Georgia

A user-friendly State website (www.ready.ga.gov) which helps individuals to prepare for emergencies and provides information and links to other community resources. The online *Ready Profile* helps you create a Customized Emergency Plan online which will include a checklist of items you will need following a large-scale emergency along with a Communications Plan.

Also at the www.ready.ga.gov website:

- A list of General Emergency Supplies
- How to develop your Family Emergency Plan
- A list of Emergency Management Agency Contacts within your Community
- Local Emergency Management Links: Citizen Corps Councils, Georgia Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTS), Georgia Medical Reserve Teams, Volunteer in Police Services Programs in Georgia, Neighborhood Watch Programs in Georgia

Prepared by the Georgia Coalition for Emergency Preparedness for Individuals with Disabilities and Elderly Persons, 2009

- American Red Cross – Atlanta
- Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Trust Fund
- DBTAC: Southeast ADA Center
- Disability Resource Group
- Emory Center for Public Health Preparedness
- Georgia Advocacy Office
- Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities
- Georgia Department of Community Health
- Georgia Department of Human Services
- Georgia Emergency Management Agency
- Georgia State Financing & Investment Commission – State ADA Coordinator's Office
- Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities
- Statewide Independent Living Council
- Tools for Life – Georgia Department of Labor

For additional copies of this brochure or to order brochures in alternative formats, contact the State ADA Coordinator's Office.

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Georgia's Emergency Preparedness

For Individuals with Disabilities
and Elderly Persons



Do you know what to do if there is a flood, hurricane, or tornado?

Where will you go if you have to leave your home?

Plan NOW for what to do in an emergency!

If you know what to do & where you will go, you will be ready if there is an emergency.



Things to Think About Before an Emergency!

In An Emergency, Things That You Need May Not Work

1. Your cell phone or your communication device may stop working.
 - Is there another way you can communicate?
 - What will you need to take with you?
2. It may be hard to get more of your medications.
 - Can you get an emergency supply that you can take with you?
3. Can you get into and use the shelters near your home?
 - Check to see if they have accessible doors and bathrooms that you can use.
4. What help do you need in an emergency?
 - Do you need someone to come and help you?
 - Do the police and firefighters know you will need help?
5. Who are some people you know that will come help you? Make a list. Be sure they know you need their help.
 - Family members
 - Friends
 - Neighbors

Some Types of Emergencies

When we think about emergencies, we think of the “big” ones, like tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, or earthquakes. But there are other kinds of emergencies that can happen, too.

Some of these are:

- No electricity for a long time
- No water for a long time
- Very hot or very cold weather
- Explosions (including chemical explosions)
- Train accidents
- House fires
- Wildfires

Your emergency plan should include these emergencies, too. Think about what you will do in each type of emergency. Will you stay in your home? Will you go to a shelter? Will you go to the home of a family member or friend? How will you get there? Be sure you, your family and friends, and support staff know what to do in each type of emergency.

Get Ready for An Emergency

Make two emergency kits. Make one for your home. Make another one for your car. Your emergency kits should have:

1. **Special Equipment and Supplies:** Batteries for your wheelchair, hearing aids, or assistive devices.
2. **Medication:** An emergency supply of all your medication.
3. **Medication List:** The name and dosage of each medication; name, address and phone number of doctors and pharmacist; how often you take each one; how you take it—with or without food.
4. **Medical Records:** Ask your doctor for copies of your medical information.
5. **Contact Information:** Names of family members, their phone numbers and addresses; names of support staff, their phone numbers and agency; names of friends and neighbors and their phone numbers.

6. **Communications Plan:** How will you get information about an emergency? TV? Radio? Friends? How will you get information if there is no electricity? If your phone is not working? You may want to buy an emergency weather radio.

Things to Consider in Emergency Preparedness for Persons with Specific Needs

Support systems that a person normally relies upon may be unavailable. There are many things that you, a caregiver or staff person, may need to consider when making an emergency plan for someone with a specific need.

1. **People who are blind or visually impaired:**
 - Does the person rely on sound clues to move around? If the electricity is out, these may be missing.
 - Are there signs in Braille that designate exits, direction, including floor levels?
2. **People who are deaf or hard of hearing:**
 - Do emergency alarm systems have audible and visible features? Do they have backup batteries?
 - How does the person communicate if there is no interpreter?
 - Does their emergency kit include pen and paper?
3. **People with speech or language impairments:**
 - How will the person communicate without his/her usual communication device?