

Emergency Preparedness for Adults with Hearing loss

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Emergency and Disaster Preparedness

- You and your family could be anywhere when disaster strikes...
 - *How will you find them and what will you do?*
- Emergencies can strike quickly and without warning...
 - *What will you do if basic services -gas, water, electricity - were cut off?*

Preparing in advance is
key!!!!

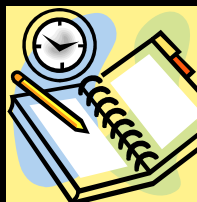


Four steps to preparedness

- 1) Get Informed
- 2) Make a Plan
- 3) Build a Kit
- 4) Maintain your Plan and Kit

Step #1 Get Informed

- *Community Hazard Assessment*
 - What hazards threaten your community?
 - Think both natural and human-caused.
 - Ex: Hurricanes, flooding, earthquakes, hazardous materials
 - Make a list on how they might affect you



Get Informed

- *Self Assessment*
 - What are your personal abilities and limitations that may affect your response to a disaster?
 - Do you live alone?
 - What are your communication preferences?
 - Do you use ASL?
 - Do you lip read?
 - Do you need an interpreter?
 - Are you able to hear in the telephone?

Get Informed

- *Community Disaster Plans*
 - Ask about emergency plans and procedures that exist in places you spend time
 - What if your child's school needs to reach you in a disaster?
 - How can you work with community emergency entities to include your communication and hearing needs in their plan?

Community Warning Systems

- Make connections with your neighbors.
- Have at least three people contact you in an emergency
 - At least one person should be out of state in case power and/or phone lines are cut off



Community Warning Systems

- Local neighborhood emergency teams
 - Ex: Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), neighborhood watch, community block associations, etc.
- Local volunteer fire departments
- Let them know about your needs!



Community Warning Systems

- *Local EAS (Emergency Alert System) TV Stations*
 - TV stations are mandated to display emergency broadcasts (including captioning, scroll texts)
 - <http://www.emergencyemail.org/>
 - Sign up for free to receive immediate emergency alerts that can be sent via e-mail, text message, pager, or PDA

Community Warning Systems

- *NOAA Weather Radio / All Hazard Alert Radio*
 - Provides one of the earliest warnings of weather and other emergencies
 - Programmed to alert you to hazards in your specific area

Community Warning Systems

- *NOAA Weather Radio*
 - Strobe light with an auditory signal
 - Display shows what type of watch, warning, or advisory has been issued
 - Pillow vibrator/bed shaker is available
 - Future model will have full text version of report
 - *www.nws.noaa.gov*

Community Warning Systems

- *Reverse 911*

- Some communities can contact you in case of an emergency.
- Contact your local emergency management office to check its availability.

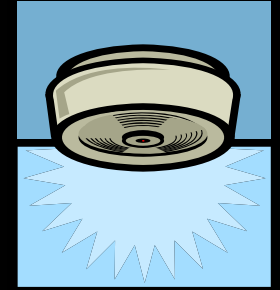
- *Internet Sites*

- Certain websites can provide you with breaking emergency alerts.
- www.weather.gov (NOAA)
- www.fema.gov

Step #2 Make a Plan

- Meet with family members or friends
 - Share information about community hazards and plans
- Know escape routes and meeting places
- Plan for your pets or service animals
 - If you have a hearing ear dog, make sure you have proper ID and equipment.
 - Keep a copy of ID in your disaster kit

Make a Plan



- *Smoke Detectors and other alternatives*
 - Consider strobe or vibrating alert systems
 - Low-frequency smoke alarms
 - Fire sprinkler system
- *Visual and Vibrating Alerting Devices*
 - Ex: alarms, telephone, door bell
 - Determine whether they are battery operated or have battery back-up

Make a Plan

- *Hearing Aids*

- Consider storing your hearing aids in a container attached to nightstand using Velcro
 - Some disasters (ex: earthquakes) may shift items and may be difficult to find

- *Key Phrases Card*

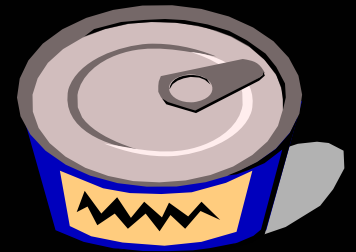
- Pre-printed card that has key phrases to help you communicate
 - “I need announcements written or signed”
 - “I cannot hear sirens or alarms”

Step #3 Build a Kit

- Having appropriate supplies ready is important whether you need to evacuate or need to stay inside
- Keeping your kit up to date is also important!
- Consider having emergency kits in each of your vehicles and at your workplace

Disaster Kit Supplies

- *Basic Needs and Supplies*
 - Three-day supply of nonperishable food (canned, dry, etc)
 - Three day supply of water
 - Manual can opener
 - Flashlight with extra batteries
 - First aid kit
 - Medications
 - Cash
 - Personal Items



Disaster Kit Supplies

- Basic Needs and Supplies continued...
 - Extra clothing
 - Vehicle supplies
 - Extra battery operated radio
 - Important documents
 - Driver's License, Passport, Social Security Card, etc.
 - Copies of your audiogram as well as the make and model of your hearing aid and/or cochlear implant

Disaster Kit Supplies

- *Items for people who are hard of hearing or deaf:*
 - Extra hearing aid or implant batteries
 - Battery operated lantern
 - Notebook and pen
 - Extra batteries for visual or sensory alerts

Disaster Kit Supplies

- Items continued...
 - Personal assistive listening device
 - Car charger for pager/communication devices
 - Hearing ear service animal identification
 - Portable TTY and/or phone amplifier
 - Other??

Step #4 Maintain Your Plan and Kit

- Review your plan every six months with friends and family
- Check your disaster supplies kit every six months and rotate all perishable items
- Conduct fire and emergency evacuation drills on a regular basis w/ family
- Change batteries in all essential devices every six months

Advocacy

- Recruit interpreters , audiologists, or people who are familiar with hearing loss to be Red Cross emergency volunteers
- Encourage TV stations to broadcast all news and emergency information in open caption format
- When you travel, ensure hotels have services for deaf and hard of hearing, including visual alarms

Sources

- Telecommunications for the Deaf, Inc (TDI)
 - <http://www.tdi-online.org/>
- National Association of the Deaf
 - www.nad.org
- Greater Rochester Red Cross
 - [http://www.rochesterredcross.org/Portals/1/RRC-pdfs/Deaf Preparedness Brochure.pdf](http://www.rochesterredcross.org/Portals/1/RRC-pdfs/Deaf%20Preparedness%20Brochure.pdf)
- Lise, Hamlin. (2006). Emergency Preparedness and You. Hearing Loss Association of America Magazine.

Other Useful Websites

- www.redcross.org
- www.ready.gov
- www.noaa.gov

Stay Safe, Everyone!!!

