

Disaster Preparedness for People with Disabilities

Step 3: Be Informed

Some of the things you can do to prepare for the unexpected, such as assembling an emergency supply kit and making an emergency plan, are the same regardless of the type of emergency. However, it's important to stay informed about what might happen and know what types of emergencies are likely to affect your region.

Contact your local emergency management office or American Red Cross Chapter to gather information you will need to create a plan.

- **Community Hazards** Ask about the specific hazards that threaten your community (e.g. hurricanes, tornados, earthquakes) and about your risk from those hazards. Additionally, hazard information for your local area can be obtained at www.hazardmaps.gov.
- **Community Disaster Plans** Learn about community response plans, evacuation plans and designated emergency shelters. Ask about the emergency plans and procedures that exist in places you and your family spend time such as places of employment, schools and child care centers. If you do not own a vehicle or drive, find out in advance what your community's plans are for evacuating those without private transportation.
- **Community Warning Systems** Find out how local authorities will warn you of a pending disaster and how they will provide information to you during and after a disaster. Learn about NOAA Weather Radio and its alerting capabilities (www.noaa.gov).
- **Assistance Programs** Ask about special assistance programs available in the event of an emergency. Many communities ask people with a disability to register, usually with the local fire or police department, or the local emergency management office so needed help can be provided quickly in an emergency. Let your personal care attendant know you have registered, and with whom. If you are electric-dependent, be sure to register with your local utility company.

Excerpted from:

Considerations for Individuals with Access and Functional Needs (<http://www.ready.gov/individuals-access-functional-needs>)

Preparing for Disaster for People with Disabilities and other Special Needs (<http://www.redcross.org/www-files/Documents/Preparing/A4497.pdf>)