

Disaster Preparedness for People with Disabilities

Tips For People With Mobility Concerns

Storage

- Store emergency supplies in a pack or backpack attached to your walker, wheelchair or scooter.
- Store needed mobility aids (canes, crutches, walkers, wheelchairs) close to you in a consistent, convenient and secured location. Keep extra aids in several locations, if available.

Emergency Kit

- Keep a pair of heavy gloves in your supply kit to use while wheeling or making your way over glass and debris.
- If you use a motorized wheelchair or scooter, consider having an extra battery available. A car battery can be substituted, however, it will not last as long as a wheelchair's deep-cycle battery. Ask your vendor if you can recharge your batteries (in the event of a power outage) by connecting jumper cables to a vehicle battery or using a special converter that plugs into your vehicle's cigarette lighter.
- If you do not have puncture-proof tires, keep a patch kit or can of "seal-in-air" to repair flat tires and/or keep an extra supply of inner tubes.
- Store a lightweight, manual wheelchair if available.

Evacuation Plan

- Arrange and secure furniture and other items to create barrier-free passages in your home and office.
 - If you spend time above the first floor of an elevator building, plan and practice using alternate methods of evacuation. If needed, enlist the help of your personal support network.
 - There will be instances where wheelchair users will have to leave their chairs behind in order to evacuate safely. If you cannot use stairs, familiarize yourself with lifting and carrying techniques that will work for you. Alert rescue personnel to any areas of vulnerability. For example, the traditional "fire fighter's carry" may be hazardous for people with respiratory weakness. You need to be able to give brief instructions regarding how to move you.
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Checklist

- Store needed aids in a consistent, convenient and secured location.
- Compile emergency kit extras.
- Arrange and secure furniture and other items to create barrier-free passages.
- Practice using alternate methods of evacuation.

Excerpted from:

Independent Living Resource Center San Francisco
(<http://www.ilrcsf.org/resources/publications.shtml>)