

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS TRAINING

The provider will comply with all local and state Florida laws and Federal laws. The provider will be held responsible for adhering to all laws whether he reads the material or not. Information on relevant laws is provided here for convenience; however, the most current applicable laws are available on the internet and in all instances the most current laws are the final authority.

For the most current information on emergency preparedness for Pasco County:

<http://www.pascoemergencymanagement.com/what-you-need-to-know/>

<http://www.doh.state.fl.us/chdpasco/shelter.htm>

For the most current information on emergency preparedness for Pinellas County:

<http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency/default.htm>

<http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency/specialneeds.htm>

For information about types of emergencies:

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/>

NOTE: Most of the information in this document is geared toward Pasco County; however, much of the information will pertain to Pinellas County as well particularly the section on Types of Emergencies. Forms for Pasco are found on the Pasco Emergency Management website and forms for Pinellas are found on the Pinellas Emergency Management website.

Any client who will go to a shelter **MUST** complete the Special Needs Registration form (Pasco SNAP or Pinellas Special Needs Registration).

** SNAP Form (2011) Pasco

** Pinellas Special Needs Registration

Other available information:

** Special Needs Shelter Fact Sheet

** Tips for Evacuating Vulnerable Populations - Get A Plan

** Hurricane Guide "Official Guide for the Tampa Bay Area" Pasco County (2011)

** Hurricane Guide "Survive the Storm" Pinellas County

An **Emergency Preparedness Communication & Supplies List** is required for each client and is completed on Intake and Annually (every April) and if there is a change that impacts the individual's information (change of address, phone #, contacts, physician, new emergency management information, etc).

Each client should be informed and educated about what an emergency is, what to do before, during, and after an emergency, and what things are needed to be prepared for an emergency.

When you have completed the training, you will:

- be familiar with emergency preparedness
- be able to help the client and his circle of support (guardian, advocate, family member, etc) complete an **Emergency Preparedness Communication & Supplies List** form
- be able to respond efficiently to an emergency

There are 3 parts to this training:

PART 1 - TYPES OF EMERGENCIES

A. Types of Emergencies

PART 2 - BEFORE, DURING, & AFTER AN EMERGENCY

B. Preparing for an Emergency

- Get Informed
- Be Prepared
- Create a Disaster Preparedness Communication List and Supplies

C. During an Emergency

- Staying Home
- Going to a Shelter
- Special Needs Shelter

D. After an Emergency

PART 3 - RESOURCES

E. Local Emergency Contacts

F. Local Programs

G. Resources & Links

PART 1 - TYPES OF EMERGENCIES

A. TYPES OF EMERGENCIES

There are 8 basic types of emergencies that you should be familiar with and be able to respond to:

1. Cold Weather
2. Heat
3. Fresh Water Flooding
4. Severe Storms
5. Hurricanes
6. Tornadoes
7. Wildfires
8. Hazardous Materials

In addition, there are 9 other emergencies which will not be covered here. You may find information about these types at:

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/hazards-specific.asp>

- * Volcanoes
- * Tsunamis
- * Mudslides & Landslides
- * Bioterrorism - anthrax, plague, smallpox, etc.
- * Chemical Emergencies - ricin, chlorine, nerve agents, etc.
- * Radiation Emergencies - dirty bombs, nuclear blasts, acute radiation syndrome, etc.
- * Mass Casualties - explosions, blasts, injuries, etc.
- * Recent Outbreaks & Incidents - earthquakes, salmonella, melamine, etc.

1. Cold Weather

Florida generally has a warm, sub-tropical climate, but extremely cold temperatures are still possible:

Freezing Temperatures

Because of normally mild temperatures, Florida homes often lack adequate heating and insulation. A Florida outdoor lifestyle can lead to danger for anyone not prepared for freezing temperatures.

Wind Chill

Wind chill describes the rate of heat loss on the human body resulting from the combined effect of cold temperature and wind. When winds increase, heat is carried away from the body at a faster rate causing the skin temperature and eventually the internal body temperature to decrease.

Warnings & Advisories

Freeze warnings - temperatures are forecast to be below 32°F within the next 24 hours

Hard freeze warning - temperature is expected to be below 28°F for at least 3 hours

Wind chill advisories - wind chill is forecast to be 35°F or less and the wind is forecast to be above 5 mph

Cautions if You are not Prepared

- * You may have to cope with power failures and icy roads.
- * Many homes will be too cold.
- * Space heaters and fireplaces increase the risk of household fires and carbon monoxide poisoning.
- * Exposure to cold temperature can cause other serious health problems.
- * When temperatures drop below normal, heat can leave your body more rapidly.

Problems that can result from prolonged cold:

- Hypothermia
- Frostbite
- Carbon Monoxide
- Power Outages

* Cold weather shelters open if there is a risk of temperatures dropping below 36°F, with or without wind chill, for a period of 4 hours or more.

* Normally, cold weather shelters open by 6pm.

* Depending on the areas of impact - not all cold weather shelters open.

* Depending on available funds and donations food, drinks, and blankets may be provided at cold weather shelters.

The Cold Weather Shelter Program for Pasco County is a community effort that includes area churches, non-profit agencies (like the United Way, the Salvation Army, the American Red Cross), the Homeless Coalition, social-service organizations, the Pasco County Office of Emergency Management, the Pasco County Sheriff's Office, and Pasco County Public Transportation.

There are six cold weather shelters in Pasco County; five are located on the west side of the County and one is located in Zephyrhills. You should have decided which shelter to go to BEFORE an emergency occurs. You should also have a map for how to get to the shelter.

2. Extreme Heat

Conditions of extreme heat are defined as summertime temperatures that are substantially hotter and/or more humid than average for location at that time of year. Humid or muggy conditions, which add to the discomfort of high temperatures, occur when a "dome" of high atmospheric pressure traps hazy, damp air near the ground. Extremely dry and hot conditions can provoke dust storms and low visibility.

Droughts occur when a long period passes without substantial rainfall. A heat wave combined with a drought is a very dangerous situation.

People suffer heat-related illness when their bodies are unable to compensate and properly cool themselves. The body normally cools itself by sweating. But under some conditions, sweating just isn't enough. In such cases, a person's body temperature rises rapidly. Very high body temperatures may damage the brain or other vital organs.

Several factors affect the body's ability to cool itself during extremely hot weather. When the humidity is high, sweat will not evaporate as quickly, preventing the body from releasing heat quickly. Other

conditions related to risk include age, obesity, fever, dehydration, heart disease, mental illness, poor circulation, sunburn, and prescription drug and alcohol use.

Heat-related deaths are preventable, so people need to be aware of who is at greatest risk and what actions can be taken to prevent a heat-related illness or death. Although the elderly, the very young, and people with mental illness and chronic diseases are at highest risk, even young and healthy individuals can succumb to heat if they participate in strenuous physical activities during hot weather.

Air-conditioning is the number one protective factor against heat-related illness and death. If a home is not air-conditioned or loses power, people can reduce their risk for heat-related illness by spending time in public facilities that are air-conditioned or have a plan in place.

Heat-related deaths and illness are preventable yet annually many people succumb to extreme heat. Historically, from 1979-2003, excessive heat exposure caused 8,015 deaths in the United States. During this period, more people in this country died from extreme heat than from hurricanes, lightning, tornadoes, floods, and earthquakes combined. In 2001 there were 300 deaths caused by excessive heat exposure.

Summertime activity must be balanced with measures that aid the body's cooling mechanisms and prevent heat-related illness. During hot weather it is important to protect your health when temperatures are extremely high by remembering to be informed, keep cool, and use common sense.

*** Be informed**

- Listen to local news and weather channels or contact your local public health department during extreme heat conditions for health and safety updates

*** Keep Cool**

- Air-conditioning is the number one protective factor against heat-related illness and death. During conditions of extreme heat, spend time in locations with air-conditioning such as shopping malls, public libraries, or public health sponsored heat-relief shelters in your area.
- Drink cool, nonalcoholic beverages and increase your fluid intake, regardless of your activity level.

Warning: Avoid very cold drinks, because they can cause stomach cramps.

Warning: Don't drink liquids that contain alcohol, or large amounts of sugar because they actually cause you to lose more body fluid.

- Drink Plenty of Fluids. During hot weather you will need to increase your fluid intake, regardless of your activity level. Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink. During heavy exercise in a hot environment, drink two to four glasses (16-32 ounces) of cool fluids each hour.

Warning: If your doctor generally limits the amount of fluid you drink or has you on water pills, ask how much you should drink while the weather is hot.

- Dress in cool, loose clothing and shade head and face with hats or an umbrella.
- Limit sun exposure during mid-day hours and in places of potential severe exposure such as beaches.
- Do not leave anyone in a parked car.
- Provide plenty of fresh water for pets, and leave the water in a shady area.

*** Use Common Sense**

- Avoid hot foods and heavy meals - they add heat to your body.
- Drink plenty of fluids and replace salts and minerals in your body.

Warning: Do not take salt tablets unless under medical supervision.

*** Replace Salt and Minerals**

Heavy sweating removes salt and minerals from the body. These are necessary for your body and must be replaced. If you must exercise, drink two to four glasses of cool, non-alcoholic fluids each hour. A sports beverage can replace the salt and minerals you lose in sweat.

Warning: if you are on a low-salt diet, talk with your doctor before drinking a sports beverage or

taking salt tablets.*** Wear Appropriate Clothing and Sunscreen**

Wear as little clothing as possible when you are at home. Choose lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing. Sunburn affects your body's ability to cool itself and causes a loss of body fluids. It also causes pain and damages the skin. If you go outdoors, protect yourself from the sun by wearing a wide-brimmed hat (also keeps you cooler) along with sunglasses, and by putting on sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher (the most effective products say "broad spectrum" or "UVA/UVB protection" on their labels) 30 minutes prior to going out. Continue to reapply it according to the package directions.

*** Schedule Outdoor Activities Carefully**

If you go outdoors, limit your outdoor activity to morning and evening hours. Try to rest often in shady areas so that your body's thermostat will have a chance to recover.

*** Pace Yourself**

If you are not accustomed to working or exercising in a hot environment, start slowly and pick up the pace gradually. If exertion in the heat makes your heart pound and leaves you gasping for breath, STOP all activity. Get into a cool area or at least into the shade, and rest, especially if you become lightheaded, confused, weak, or faint.

*** Stay Cool Indoors**

Stay indoors and, if at all possible, stay in an air-conditioned place. If your home does not have air conditioning, go to the shopping mall or public library—even a few hours spent in air conditioning can help your body stay cooler when you go back into the heat. Call your local health department to see if there are any heat-relief shelters in your area. Electric fans may provide comfort, but when the temperature is in the high 90s, fans will not prevent heat-related illness. Taking a cool shower or bath or moving to an air-conditioned place is a much better way to cool off. Use your stove and oven less to maintain a cooler temperature in your home.

*** Use a Buddy System**

Heat-induced illness can cause a person to become confused or lose consciousness. If you are disabled or 65 years of age or older, have someone check on you twice a day during a heat wave.

*** Monitor Those at High Risk**

Although anyone at any time can suffer from heat-related illness, some people are at greater risk than others.

- Infants and young children are sensitive to the effects of high temperatures and rely on others to regulate their environments and provide adequate liquids.
- People 65 years of age or older may not compensate for heat stress efficiently and are less likely to sense and respond to change in temperature.
- People with chronic medical conditions are more prone to heat stress.
- People who are overweight may be prone to heat sickness because of their tendency to retain more body heat.
- People who overexert during work or exercise may become dehydrated and susceptible to heat sickness.
- People who are physically ill, especially with heart disease or high blood pressure, or who take certain medications, such as for depression, insomnia, or poor circulation, may be affected by extreme heat.

*** Adjust to the Environment**

Any sudden change in temperature, such as an early summer heat wave, will be stressful to your body. You will have a greater tolerance for heat if you limit your physical activity until you become accustomed to the heat.

* Do Not Leave Anyone in a Car

Even in cool temperatures, cars can heat up to dangerous temperatures very quickly. Even with the windows cracked open, interior temperatures can rise almost 20 degrees Fahrenheit within the first 10 minutes. Anyone left inside is at risk for serious heat-related illnesses or even death. Children who are left unattended in parked cars are at greatest risk for heat stroke, and possibly death.

When traveling with children, remember to do the following:

- Never leave infants, children or pets in a parked car, even if the windows are cracked open.
- To remind yourself that a child is in the car, keep a stuffed animal in the car seat. When the child is buckled in, place the stuffed animal in the front with the driver.
- When leaving your car, check to be sure everyone is out of the car. Do not overlook any children who have fallen asleep in the car.

Hot Weather Health Emergencies

Even short periods of high temperatures can cause serious health problems. During hot weather health emergencies, keep informed by listening to local weather and news channels or contact local health departments for health and safety updates. Doing too much on a hot day, spending too much time in the sun or staying too long in an overheated place can cause heat-related illnesses. Know the symptoms of heat disorders and overexposure to the sun, and be ready to give first aid treatment.

Heat Stroke

Heat stroke occurs when the body is unable to regulate its temperature. The body's temperature rises rapidly, the sweating mechanism fails, and the body is unable to cool down. Body temperature may rise to 106°F or higher within 10 to 15 minutes. Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not provided.

Warning signs of heat stroke vary but may include:

- * An extremely high body temperature (above 103°F, orally)
- * Red, hot, and dry skin (no sweating)
- * Rapid, strong pulse
- * Throbbing headache
- * Dizziness
- * Nausea
- * Confusion
- * Unconsciousness

What to Do

Warning: If you see any of these signs, you may be dealing with a *life-threatening emergency*. Begin cooling the victim and have someone call for immediate medical assistance.

- * Get the victim to a shady area.
- * Cool the victim rapidly using whatever methods you can. For example, immerse the victim in a tub of cool water; place the person in a cool shower; spray the victim with cool water from a garden hose; sponge the person with cool water; or if the humidity is low, wrap the victim in a cool, wet sheet and fan him or her vigorously.
- * Monitor body temperature, and continue cooling efforts until the body temperature drops to 101-102°F.
- * If emergency medical personnel are delayed, call the hospital emergency room for further instructions.
- * Do NOT give the victim fluids to drink.
- * Get medical assistance as soon as possible.

Sometimes a victim's muscles will begin to twitch uncontrollably as a result of heat stroke. If this happens, keep the victim from injuring himself, but do NOT place any object in the mouth and do NOT give fluids. If there is vomiting, make sure the airway remains open by turning the victim on his or her side.

Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion is a milder form of heat-related illness that can develop after several days of exposure to high temperatures and inadequate or unbalanced replacement of fluids. It is the body's response to an excessive loss of the water and salt contained in sweat. Those most prone to heat exhaustion are elderly people, people with high blood pressure, and people working or exercising in a hot environment.

Warning signs of heat exhaustion:

- * Heavy sweating
- * Muscle cramps
- * Weakness
- * Headache
- * Fainting
- * Fast, weak pulse rate
- * Paleness
- * Tiredness
- * Dizziness
- * Nausea or vomiting
- * Cool, moist skin
- * Fast, shallow breathing

What to Do

Cooling measures that may be effective:

- * Cool, nonalcoholic beverages
- * Rest
- * Cool shower, bath, or sponge bath
- * An air-conditioned environment
- * Lightweight clothing

Warning: Untreated heat exhaustion may progress to heat stroke. Seek medical attention immediately if any of the following occurs:

- * Symptoms are severe
- * The victim has heart problems or high blood pressure
- * If symptoms worsen or last longer than 1 hour.

Heat Cramps

Heat cramps are muscle pains or spasms—usually in the abdomen, arms, or legs—that may occur in association with strenuous activity. If you have heart problems or are on a low-sodium diet, get medical attention for heat cramps.

Heat cramps usually affect people who sweat a lot during strenuous activity. This sweating depletes the body's salt and moisture. The low salt level in the muscles may be the cause of heat cramps. Heat cramps may also be a symptom of heat exhaustion.

What to Do

If medical attention is not necessary, take these steps:

- * Stop all activity, and sit quietly in a cool place.
- * Drink clear juice or a sports beverage.
- * Do not return to strenuous activity for a few hours after the cramps subside, because further exertion may lead to heat exhaustion or heat stroke.
- * Seek medical attention for heat cramps if they do not subside in 1 hour.

Sunburn

Sunburn should be avoided because it damages the skin. Although the discomfort is usually minor and healing often occurs in about a week, a more severe sunburn may require medical attention. Symptoms of sunburn include red, painful, abnormally warm skin after sun exposure.

What to Do

- * Consult a doctor if the sunburn affects an infant younger than 1 year of age or if these symptoms are present:

- * Fever
- * Fluid-filled blisters
- * Severe pain
- * Avoid repeated sun exposure.
- * Apply cold compresses or immerse the sunburned area in cool water.
- * Apply moisturizing lotion to affected areas. Do NOT use salve, butter, or ointment.
- * Do NOT break blisters.

Heat Rash

Heat rash is a skin irritation caused by excessive sweating during hot, humid weather. It can occur at any age but is most common in young children.

Heat rash looks like a red cluster of pimples or small blisters. It is more likely to occur on the neck and upper chest, in the groin, under the breasts, and in elbow creases.

What to Do

- * Medical attention is usually not required
- * Provide a cooler, less humid environment
- * Keep the affected area dry
- * Use dusting powder to increase comfort

3. Fresh Water Flooding

Anywhere it rains, it can flood. A flood is a general and temporary condition where two or more acres of normally dry land or two or more properties are inundated by water or mudflow. Conditions that can cause a flood include: hurricanes, over-topped levees, outdated or clogged drainage systems, and rapid accumulation of rainfall.

4. Severe Storms

Thunderstorms affect relatively small areas when compared with hurricanes. The typical thunderstorm is 15 miles in diameter and lasts an average of 30 minutes. All thunderstorms are dangerous even when they are small. Of the estimated 100,000 thunderstorms that occur each year in the United States, about 10 percent are classified as severe.

Severe Thunderstorm - A thunderstorm that produces a tornado, winds of at least 58 mph (50 knots), and/or hail at least 1 inch in diameter.

Severe Thunderstorm Watch - Severe thunderstorms are likely to occur. Watch the sky and stay tuned to know when warnings are issued and to know where and when the severe thunderstorms are likely to occur.

Severe Thunderstorm Warning - Severe weather has been reported by spotters or indicated by radar. Warnings indicate imminent danger to life and property to those in the path of the storm.

Tornado - A violently rotating column of air (usually pendant to a cumulonimbus) with circulation reaching the ground. It nearly always starts as a funnel cloud and may be accompanied by a loud roaring noise.

Tornado Watch - Tornadoes are possible in your area. Remain alert for approaching storms. Know what counties or parishes are in the watch area by listening to NOAA Weather Radio or local radio/television outlets.

Tornado Warning - A tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar.

Flash Flood - A flood which is caused by heavy or excessive rainfall in a short period of time, generally less than 6 hours. A dam failure can also cause a flash flood depending on the type of dam and time

period during which the break occurs.

Flash Flood Watch - Current or developing conditions are favorable for flash flooding in and close to the watch area, but the occurrence is neither certain or imminent.

Flash Flood Warning - Issued to inform the public, emergency management, and other cooperating agencies that flash flooding is in progress, imminent, or highly likely.

Lightning

- * Causes an average of about 60 fatalities and 300 injuries each year.
- * Lightning occurs in all thunderstorms; each year lightning strikes the United States 25 million times.
- * The energy from one lightning flash could light a 100-watt light bulb for more than 3 months.
- * Most lightning fatalities and injuries occur when people are caught outdoors in the summer months in the afternoon and evening.
- * Lightning can occur from cloud-to-cloud, within a cloud, cloud-to-ground, or cloud-to-air.
- * Many fires in the western United States and Alaska are started by lightning.
- * The air near a lightning strike is heated to 50,000°F - hotter than the surface of the sun.
- * The rapid heating and cooling of the air near the lightning channel causes a shock wave that results in thunder.
- * When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!

Straight-line Winds - Straight-line winds are responsible for most thunderstorm wind damage. Winds can exceed 100 mph

- * The downburst, one type of straight-line wind, is a small area of rapidly descending air beneath a thunderstorm
- * A downburst can cause damage equivalent to a strong tornado and can be extremely dangerous to aviation
- * A "dry microburst" is a downburst that occurs with little or no rain. These winds are most common in the western US

Flash Flooding

- * Is the #1 cause of deaths associated with thunderstorms...more than 140 fatalities each year
- * Most flash flood fatalities occur at night and most victims are people who become trapped in automobiles.
- * Six inches of fast-moving water can knock you off your feet; a depth of two feet will cause most vehicles to float.

Hail

- * Strong rising currents of air within a storm, called updrafts, carry water droplets to a height where freezing occurs.
- * Ice particles grow in size, becoming too heavy to be supported by the updraft, and fall to the ground.
- * Causes more than \$1 billion in damage to property and crops each year.
- * Large stones fall at speeds faster than 100 mph.

Forecasting Severe Storms

* The National Severe Storms Laboratory (NSSL) is one of NOAA's (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) internationally known research laboratories that investigates all aspects of severe weather.

* The Storm Prediction Center (SPC) is part of the National Weather Service (NWS) and the National Centers for Environmental Prediction (NCEP) and provides timely and accurate forecasts and watches for severe thunderstorms and tornadoes over the contiguous United States. The SPC also monitors heavy rain, heavy snow, and fire weather events across the U.S. and issues specific products for those hazards.

* Weather Forecast Offices of NOAA's National Weather Service issue local Severe Thunderstorm, Tornado and Flash Flood warnings. Severe thunderstorm, tornado, and flash flood warnings are passed to local radio and television stations and are broadcast over local NOAA Weather Radio stations serving the warned areas. *These warnings are also relayed to local emergency management and public safety officials who can activate local warning systems to alert communities.*

* NOAA Weather Radio is the best means to receive warnings from the National Weather Service.

The National Weather Service continuously broadcasts warnings and forecasts that can be received by NOAA Weather Radios, which are sold in many stores. The average range is 40 miles, depending on topography. A radio that has a battery back-up and a Specific Area Message Encoder feature will automatically alert you when a watch or warning is issued for your county or parish.

When conditions are favorable for severe weather to develop, a severe thunderstorm or tornado WATCH is issued. Weather Service personnel use information from weather radar, spotters, and other sources to issue severe thunderstorm and tornado WARNINGS for areas where severe weather is imminent. Severe thunderstorm and tornado warnings are passed to local radio and television stations and are broadcast over local NOAA Weather Radio stations serving the warned areas. *These warnings are also relayed to local emergency management and public safety officials who can activate local warning systems to alert communities. If a tornado warning is issued for your area or the sky becomes threatening, move to your pre-designated place of safety.*

In conjunction with Federal, State, and Local Emergency Managers and other public officials, NOAA Weather Radio (NWR) also broadcasts warning and post-event information for all types of hazards – including natural (such as earthquakes or avalanches), environmental (such as chemical releases or oil spills), and public safety (such as AMBER alerts or 911 Telephone outages).

5. Hurricanes

A tropical cyclone, called a hurricane, is a warm-core, low pressure system that develops over the tropical or subtropical waters, and has an organized circulation. A hurricane can combine storm surge, powerful winds, tornadoes, and torrential rains into a devastating combination.

Watch & Warning Announcements

Tropical Storm

* Watch: tropical storm conditions (sustained winds of 39 to 73 mph) are possible within the specified coastal area within 48 hours.

* Warning: tropical storm conditions (sustained winds of 39 to 73 mph) are expected within the specified coastal area within 36 hours.

Hurricane

* Watch: hurricane conditions (sustained winds of 74 mph or higher) are possible somewhere within the specified coastal area. Because hurricane preparedness activities become difficult once winds reach tropical storm force, the hurricane watch is issued 48 hours in advance of the anticipated onset of tropical-storm-force winds.

* Warning: hurricane conditions (sustained winds of 74 mph or higher) are expected somewhere within the specified coastal area. Because hurricane preparedness activities become difficult once winds reach tropical storm force, the hurricane warning is issued 36 hours in advance of the anticipated onset of tropical storm-force winds.

There are 3 problems associated with each type of hurricane hazard. You should be able to identify the threat before a hurricane arrives, know the evacuation level, identify the evacuation route, and have a plan.

Heavy Rain

Widespread torrential rains, often in excess of 10 inches, can produce destructive floods. This is a major threat to low lying areas that are prone to flooding. Rainfall is generally heaviest with slower moving storms (less than 10 mph).

The heavy rains will cause flooding particularly in low-lying areas, creeks, streams and road run-off areas. Heavy rain added to debris that clogs drainage, may cause roadways to remain flooded for many hours/days.

Never try to cross a flooded roadway. Flooded roads are subject to erosion and damage. While it may look perfectly safe, there could be hidden holes which will trap your car and you.

Storm Surge

The greatest potential for loss of life related to a hurricane is from the storm surge.

Storm surge is water that is pushed toward the shore by the force of the winds swirling around the storm. This advancing surge combines with the normal tides to create the hurricane storm tide, which can increase the mean water level to heights impacting roads, homes and other critical infrastructure. In addition, wind driven waves are superimposed on the storm tide. This rise in water level can cause severe flooding in coastal areas, particularly when the storm tide coincides with the normal high tides. Much of the United States' densely populated Atlantic and Gulf Coast coastlines lie less than 10 feet above mean sea level, so there is great danger from storm tides.

Winds

Hurricane force winds, sustained winds of 74 mph or more, can destroy buildings and mobile homes. Sustained winds are wind speeds that last at least 1 minute in duration. During hurricanes, this refers to the surface winds occurring at the center of hurricane circulation no more than a height of 33 ft.

Winds often stay above hurricane strength well inland and make debris flying missiles. If you do not have to evacuate, it is extremely important to secure your home, windows, and all doors (including garage doors) before the storm and to stay inside.

Mobile homes and manufactured homes are extremely vulnerable to high winds and should be evacuated regardless of their location in Pasco County when a evacuation order is issued.

6. Tornadoes

Tornado - a violently rotating column of air extending from a thunderstorm to the ground.

- * Tornadoes cause an average of 70 fatalities and 1,500 injuries in the U.S. each year..
- * The strongest tornadoes have rotating winds of more than 250 mph.
- * Tornadoes can be one mile wide and stay on the ground over 50 miles.
- * Tornadoes may appear nearly transparent until dust and debris are picked up or a cloud forms within the funnel. The average tornado moves from southwest to northeast, but a tornado has been known to move in any direction.
- * The average forward speed is 30 mph but may vary from nearly stationary to 70 mph.
- * Waterspouts are tornadoes which form over warm water. They can move onshore and cause damage to coastal areas.

The most violent tornadoes are capable of tremendous destruction with wind speeds of 250 mph or more. In an average year, 800 tornadoes are reported nationwide, resulting in about 80 deaths and over 1,500 injuries.

Florida is #1 in the number of tornadoes per square mile. Most are weak; however, strong ones do occur. The Tampa Bay area averages 23 tornadoes within a 125 mile radius. In hurricanes, tornadoes

are most likely to occur in the right front quadrant, but they can also occur in the rain bands, well away from the center of the hurricane.

When associated with hurricanes, tomadoes are not usually accompanied by hail or much lightning.

Tornado Safety

- * Get a **NOAA Weather Radio**. Local media (radio or television) is a good source of relaying NWS tornado watches and warnings, but they are useful only if you happen to have them turned on. The NOAA weather radio is on standby all the time, and will sound an alarm the moment a tornado watch or warning has been issued. If you are expecting severe weather, turn up the volume so you can clearly hear the alert (especially important if you are a sound sleeper).
- * Have your Disaster Preparedness list ready. If a tornado warning is issued, or you spot a tornado heading for you, what will you do if you are at home, at work, or in your vehicle. During imminent danger is not the time to have to think up a plan.
- * If your home does not have a **safe place** that can be used as a tornado shelter (as is the case with mobile homes), find out where in your neighborhood is recommended as a tornado shelter. Most properly managed mobile home parks should have a severe weather plan in place, and such a plan is useful for any neighborhood or subdivision. At work, ask your employer for a copy of their severe weather safety plan. They should have a location where employees can seek shelter in the event of a tornado or other severe weather.
- * Make sure you have an Emergency Kit prepared and place it inside the place you have designated as your tornado shelter.
- * If you own a home with a concrete foundation, a water/fireproof **safe**, bolted to the house foundation, for storage of any irreplaceable documents can be a good choice. These documents should be in the safe at all times. Do not wait until a tornado warning is issued before trying to put things in the safe.
- * Practice a tornado **drill** at least once per year and ensure everyone knows what to do without having to think about it.

7. Wildfires

Wildfires often begin unnoticed as brushfires. They spread quickly igniting brush, trees, and homes. Every year, thousands of acres of wild land and many homes are destroyed by fires that can erupt at any time of the year from a variety of causes including arson, lightning, and debris burning.

Adding to the fire hazard is the growing number of people living in new communities built in areas that were once wild land. Pasco County has approximately one-third of its acreage as undeveloped, forested or pastureland. As more development occurs adjacent to these areas, the County becomes susceptible to wildfire at the wildland/urban interface area.

The predominance of forested acreage, current patterns of development, and historical weather conditions indicate that the probability of occurrence is high. The threat of fires cannot be eliminated but public education and the use of prescribed burns can be used to better manage this hazard.

The probability exists for at least five wild land fires in Pasco County per year.

8. Hazardous Materials

Everyone should know how to respond safely and appropriately to hazardous material emergencies to lessen the chance of serious injury and bring peace of mind.

The Office of Emergency Management is the county department responsible for the oversight of the Pasco County Hazardous Incident Team (HIT). HIT is an inter-agency team comprised of Emergency Management, Fire Department, Sheriff's Office, Health Department, Code Enforcement, and private industry personnel. The team is positioned throughout the county, and is capable of responding to all types of hazardous incidents.

PART 2 - BEFORE, DURING, & AFTER AN EMERGENCY

B. PREPARING FOR AN EMERGENCY

An emergency can strike at any time – sometimes without warning. Every Floridian, especially those with disabilities and other special needs must plan ahead for an emergency situation and know what to do in the event of an emergency.

The best time to prepare for an emergency is well ahead of time. When you prepare from a position of safety and calm, you and your caregivers can better cope with an emergency or disaster situation when it happens. An emergency or disaster may present unique challenges for people with disabilities and special needs. If you or someone you care for has a disability or special need, you may have to take additional steps to prepare yourself.

Included in this training is important information about how to:

- get informed
- prepare for an emergency
- complete the Disaster Preparedness form
- create a personalized emergency kit(s)
- food and water supplies
- important documents and files to collect and protect
- your local evacuation routes
- contact information for local emergency providers
- important things to do before, during and after a disaster

Get Informed

You should know about:

- different kinds of emergencies
- special assistance programs
- community disaster plans and community warning systems
- your community's evacuation routes
- special assistance programs
- registering with Special Needs
- taking First Aid/CPR & AED

Clients of state or federally funded service programs with physical, mental, cognitive impairment, or sensory disabilities who need assistance in evacuating, or when in shelters, must register as persons with special needs.

The special needs shelter should be used as a place of last refuge. The evacuee may not receive the same level of care received from providers in the home, and the conditions in a shelter might be stressful.

Information for Providers

Often persons with special needs have more than one caregiver and may also have more than one provider working with them. Caregivers may be contractors, family members, a friend, or other person. During an emergency situation the person who is the caregiver is called the Attending Caregiver. Staff should ensure that the client who must go to a shelter is either able to care for himself or has an Attending Caregiver.

The Attending Caregiver

- The caregiver should assist with the development of and be familiar with the client's Disaster Preparedness Communication List.
- The caregiver must accompany the client and must remain with the client at the special needs

shelter.

- The caregiver(s) shall be allowed to shelter together in the special needs shelter. If the person with special needs is responsible for the care of individuals without special needs, those persons may also shelter together.
- The shelteree caregiver will have floor space provided. The caregiver must provide his or her own bedding.
- Caregivers who regularly assist the client in the home are expected to continue to do the same care in the shelter.
- The Attending Caregiver should participate in the creation of the Disaster Preparedness Communication List and Supplies to ensure that it takes into account the individual special needs of the client.

The Provider

- Staff will assist each client with training on intake, annually, and when there is a change.
- Staff will assist each client with special needs requiring shelter to register as Special Needs.
- Staff will assist each client with completing the creation of the Disaster Preparedness form at minimum
- Staff will ensure each client understands that clients of state or federally funded service programs with disabilities (physical, mental, cognitive, sensory) who need assistance in evacuating or when in a shelter MUST register as a person with special needs.
- Staff will assist each client with updating the Disaster Preparedness form annually and whenever there are changes and will ensure a copy is provided to the office for filing in the client's casebook and to the appropriate Emergency Management Office.
- Staff will ensure the client and circle of support understands that a shelter is an option of last resort and services may not be equal to what the client received elsewhere.
- Staff will ensure each client has the medications, equipment, and supplies readily accessible, current, and updated in preparation for an emergency.
- Staff will ensure each client's circle of support is aware of and familiar with the client's Disaster Preparedness information
- Staff will NOT be required to continue to provide care to the client in emergency situations that are beyond the staff's control and that make it impossible to provide services (such as when roads are impassable, when the client is not in the location specified in his Disaster Preparedness form); however, staff will document all reasonable attempt made to provide continuous service to the client.

Preparing for an Emergency

To prepare for an emergency, you will need to:

- make an assessment of your daily needs
- make medical arrangements
- learn about your community disaster plans
- meet with your circle of support
- know your transportation needs
- know your evacuation options and routes
- prepare your home
- prepare your equipment
- prepare yourself
- create your Disaster Preparedness Communication List and Supplies

• Complete an Individual Assessment of Daily Needs

Have a detailed, predetermined list of daily living requirements and medical needs to ensure you have accounted for everyday necessities and that you have resources for meeting your needs. Account for what you can do for yourself and what assistance you will need Before, During, and After an emergency. Include information about your daily living needs (personal care/personal care equipment, adaptive

feeding devices and electricity-dependent equipment, medications, special food), your ability to get around before, during and after a disaster (cleaning up disaster debris, transportation and blocked roads), going to a shelter, and evacuating if necessary.

- * Special equipment for feeding or respiration
- * Particular foods to meet dietary requirements
- * Personal care equipment such as a shower bench
- * Regular medical treatments and/or regimens
- * Step-by-step instructions for other caregivers should you need their support
- * Communications equipment such as adaptive hearing or sight devices
- * Additional energy sources for electricity-dependent equipment
- * Minimum two-week supply of medicine or prescriptions
- * Mobility aids such as a wheelchair or walker
- * Service animals and supplies for their feeding and care

• **Make Medical Arrangements**

If you rely on special medical equipment, medications or treatments, include arrangements for those services in advance of an imminent disaster. Know how to operate back-up equipment and create an emergency plan with your regular service providers (such as home care, transportation, dialysis, etc.) to ensure you receive the attention you need to survive. Make sure you know how to contact the Attending Caregiver, the Provider, and others in your circle of support in the event of an emergency. Courses with American Red Cross can teach you First Aid and CPR/AED (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation/Automated External Defibrillation). American Red Cross courses can accommodate people with disabilities but you will need to discuss your needs when you register for the classes.

Contact the client's physician to discuss emergency planning, if necessary. Make any pre-Agreements with the physician if the client has special requirements for care in a hospital.

• **Medication Requirements**

One of the most critical preparation steps you can take is ensuring you have enough of your required prescription medications available should a disaster prevent you from getting a refill. It is recommended that you have a minimum two-week supply of all your prescription medications. Be sure your extra supply is kept current and has not expired. Keep a Medication List of all your prescription medications, dosages and any other special instructions with your emergency medication supply.

Emergency 30-Day Refills

According to Florida law, you can obtain a 30-day refill of your prescription medication even if you have just refilled it ONLY if you reside in county that:

- * Is under a hurricane warning issued by the National Weather Service
- * Is under a state of emergency executive order declared by the Governor
- * Has activated its emergency operations center/emergency management plan

Under these specific circumstances, any health insurer, managed care organization, or other entities licensed by the Office of Insurance Regulation must waive the "refill too soon" restrictions on prescriptions.

• **Learn About Community Disaster Plans**

Every community in Florida has a local emergency management office that can help inform you about your community's disaster plan. Individuals with special needs are required to preregister for admittance to a special needs shelter which could also provide additional medical or transportation assistance in an emergency situation.

The local emergency management office can also provide you with a list of general population shelters, and evacuation and community response plans.

You should call your local utility company if you are electricity-dependent because of medical equipment. Your utility company should be able to flag the household to bring power back quickly. You may also consider purchasing a generator and battery back-ups.

You may also make pre-agreements with the local power and utility company, with local emergency management offices to determine how to approach specific areas within a disaster area so a provider can reach clients.

You may also pre-authorize local emergency response teams to establish permission for the team to enter your residence for rescue purposes in the event of an emergency.

In addition to the local emergency management office, call your area hospitals to learn what services they could provide in times of emergencies for those with critical medical needs. If you require the assistance of a service animal, find out which shelters will admit the animal.

Florida Emergency Information Line (FEIL) - 1-800-342-3557

You can call the FEIL number anytime you feel you are in danger or an emergency threatens your well-being.

• **Meet With The Client's Circle of Support** (family, guardian, advocate, WSC, Attending Caregiver, etc) - the people who should be involved in the individual's emergency planning and can help in an emergency situation

- Discuss the Disaster Preparedness information
- Discuss the client's plan with someone outside the area so that everyone knows what to do
- Have a Contact list so that a designated person can be contacted after a disaster to let them know that the client is all right and where the client will be if his home is damaged
- Give at least one trusted member of the circle of support a key to the house or apartment
- Show the circle of support where the emergency kit is stored and run through what is included
- Have at least three or more people in the circle of support, if possible
- Arrange for more than one person in the circle of support to check on the client in an emergency
- Make sure everyone knows if the client chooses a place to meet after a disaster or how each person will be contacted if separated

• **Know Your Transportation Needs**

Will you be able to evacuate independently without relying on an auditory alert? Are there other options for you to leave your home if the elevator no longer is in service? Would you be able to relocate if your mobility aid suddenly malfunctions?

If you are uncertain about answers to any of these questions, it is essential that you sign up for the special needs registry. Preregistration to this service is invaluable. Do not wait until a disaster is imminent to find out what your options are - even if you think you would only use it as a last resort.

If you are not capable of driving yourself, it is necessary that you make arrangements for transportation well in advance of a disaster situation. If someone in your circle of support agrees to transport you, make sure the person can accommodate any emergency kits, equipment, and supplies you might need to take with you.

If you registered for transportation, units would be dispatched to your location and if there is time, you would receive a confirming phone call. Residents who require transportation will be taken to public shelters, Special Needs Units, or medical facilities. Transportation is not provided to private homes, hotels, or outside of the county, etc.

• **Decide On Evacuation Options and Routes**

Determine Your Evacuation Options

One of the most important decisions made during an emergency situation is whether to evacuate or stay in your home or current location. Determining factors such as your unique circumstances and the nature of the emergency should be carefully evaluated before either option is decided upon. As a person with disabilities/special needs or a caregiver of individuals with special needs, your disaster plan should consider and have options for both situations.

Evacuation Routes

Many times evacuations are ordered at the last minute, leaving little to no time to prepare. As part of your emergency plan, you should have several evacuation routes and options that can help get you out of harm's way regardless of the potential hazard.

If an evacuation is ordered make sure you have several options and different locations you can seek refuge. Your evacuation options should include a number of different places you could stay that are located throughout the region and even out of state. If a natural disaster suddenly turned for the worst, putting one of your evacuation options in harm's way, you could still have a safe place to go. Be sure to make a list of general population shelters and the home of someone in your circle of support, if possible, in case of a mandatory evacuation. Reach out to family or friends who are unlikely to be evacuated from their homes and obtain their commitment to share their homes with you. This list should also include the emergency contact numbers and addresses for all your evacuation options for easy reference when you need the information most.

Map Your Evacuation Routes

Once you have determined your geographically varied evacuation locations, map out how you or your agreed transporter could get to each location. Keep in mind all of the obstacles that might come along with travel during an emergency such as traffic, weather conditions, road closures, down power lines and other obstructions. While you cannot predict where these incidents or travel hazards might occur, your evacuation routes should provide several other options should your evacuation be jeopardized.

Be Familiar with Your Evacuation Routes

Familiarize yourself with all of your different routes for each evacuation location, so you will know exactly what to do when an emergency strikes. Take a trial road trip to each location and make sure you understand the slight nuances of each excursion. Pay close attention to your exits, locations of gas stations and rest stops along the way. It may even prove useful to write down the mile markers of these landmarks. Remember, emergencies can be unpredictable so make sure your evacuation routes are flexible enough to handle any change of plans.

Public Shelters

A public shelter should not be your first choice. It is not a hospital, nursing home or hotel. The shelter is generally a local school. Public shelters available under emergency conditions will accept anyone who is self-sufficient and needs no outside professional assistance in performing Activities of Daily Living (ADL). Shelters are opened on an as needed basis. Keep yourself informed of the current emergency situation to find out which shelters have been made available.

If you have any questions concerning shelters, call the Resident Information Center at (727) 847-8959.

• **Prepare Your Home**

Inventory Home Possessions

- Make a record of your possessions - in writing or video - to help you claim reimbursement in case of loss or damage
- Check with your insurance agent or carrier to make sure you have adequate insurance coverage

Reduce Home Hazards

- Keep the shut-off switch for oxygen equipment near your bed or chair so you can get to it quickly if there is a fire
- Have defective electrical wiring and leaky gas connections repaired
- Place large, heavy objects on lower shelves
- Hang pictures and mirrors away from beds
- Have cracks in ceilings and foundations repaired

Utilities

- Know how and when to turn off water, gas and electricity at the main switches and valves
- Keep any tools you will need near gas and water shut-off valves (such as a wrench or pliers to turn off utilities)
- Show your personal support network members and everyone in your household how to shut off utilities when necessary
- Turn off utilities only if you suspect lines are damaged or if local officials instruct you to do so

Safety Devices

- Be sure your caregivers and everyone in the household know where your fire extinguishers are located and how to use them
- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, especially near the bedrooms
- Individuals with sensory disabilities should consider installing smoke alarms with strobe lights and vibrating pads
- Several times a year, test your smoke alarms to ensure they are working properly

• Know Your Plan for Food, Water, & Ice

It is recommended to have a three-day supply of non-perishable food. Non-perishable means food that can stay good for a long time without needing to be in the refrigerator. It is also good if the food doesn't need to be cooked. Keep food in a dry, cool location.

Remember to replace your food supplies every six months to ensure freshness. A good way to remember when to replace your foods is by doing so at the same time when you change your clocks for Daylight Savings.

Storing drinking water is one of the most important things you can do before a disaster. In a disaster, water pipes may be broken or the water may become contaminated. To be ready, you should have at least a 3-day supply of drinking water at your home. Plan to have at least one gallon of water for each person per day.

Buying 1 Gallon jugs of bottled water is suggested, but you can fill your own water containers if needed. Be sure to store your water in plastic containers. Plastic soft drink bottles are fine for use, but don't use milk cartons or glass bottles!

You will also need one gallon of water for each person per day for things like cooking and personal hygiene (like brushing your teeth).

Buying 1 Gallon jugs of bottled water is suggested, but you can fill your own water containers if needed. Be sure to store your water in plastic containers. Plastic soft drink bottles are fine for use, but do not use milk cartons or glass bottles!

Ice is an important item to have in times of disaster, especially when living in a hot, tropical climate such as Florida. To be prepared, you should have a 3-day supply of ice ready. Plan to have about one bag of ice for each person per day.

• **Make a Pet/Service Animal Plan**

Whether you decide to evacuate or stay in your home, you will need to make plans in advance for your service animals or pets. Service animals and pets need appropriate evacuation plans just like you. If you must evacuate your home, take your pets and service animals with you when possible.

If you are going to a public emergency shelter, it is important to remember that most shelters DO NOT PERMIT PETS, although they DO PERMIT SERVICE ANIMALS. There may be pet-friendly shelters located in your area, but you will need to research that in advance to find out where those pet-friendly shelters are located. If there are no pet-friendly shelters in your area, or if you think you will be unable to travel to the nearest one, you will need to identify alternatives that suit your needs, as well as those of your pets, such as a secure vet, family, or friends.

Contact your vet or kennel

Contact friends or family

Reserve space in a pet-friendly motel/hotel that is not in the evacuation zone

For admittance to a public shelter for service animals or a private kennel for pets, your animal must be up-to-date on all shots and vaccinations and you must have proof of this. To make things easier for yourself and your pet or service animal, prepare a Pet Emergency Kit.

• **Prepare Equipment You May Need**

- Know how to connect and start a back-up power supply for essential medical equipment
- Learn about devices and other technology available to assist you in receiving emergency instructions and warnings from local officials
- If you use an electric wheelchair or scooter, have a manual wheelchair as a back-up
- Label medical equipment, assistive devices and any other necessary equipment and attach laminated instructions for equipment use, and include your identification information (serial numbers, style, etc.)
- Store back-up equipment (mobility, medical, etc.) at an alternate location (friend's, family member's, neighbor's or caregiver's home, school or workplace)
- Teach anyone who may assist you in an emergency how to operate necessary equipment

• **Prepare Yourself**

- Get Cash (without power, credit cards are unusable. Get small bills - \$5,10,20's)
- Have a cell phone with an extra battery
- Consider getting a medical alert system that will allow you to call for help if you are immobilized in an emergency
- Make copies of important documents and keep them in a waterproof container or keep them in a safe deposit box or other safe location:
 - Insurance documents (home insurance and health insurance)
 - Birth certificates
 - Marriage certificates
 - Social security cards
 - Bank account numbers
 - Tax returns for previous 2 years
 - Two current bills (power, utilities, phone)
 - Other (passport, will, deed, rental agreement, medical/immunization records)
- If you live in an apartment, ask the management to identify and mark accessible exits and access to all areas designated for emergency shelter or safe rooms
- If you are unable to use the television or radio or have visual/sensory disabilities, you need someone to contact you with essential emergency information

• **Know about Special Needs Shelters**

Special needs shelters differ from general population shelters in that they have supplementary power and are capable of providing safe housing for people who need assistance with a health condition or

need special supervision of that condition by a health care professional during times of emergencies. Although special needs shelters provide more care than a general shelter, they do not provide the level of care found in a medical facility. A special needs shelter is a temporary emergency facility capable of providing care to residents whose medical condition is such that it exceeds the capabilities of the Red Cross Shelter but is not severe enough to require hospitalization. Health Department nurses support these shelters.

Special needs shelters provide more care than a general shelter, but they do not provide the same level of care found in a medical facility. To the extent possible, these specialized shelters provide a safe environment and basic assistance to maintain your level of health. It is important to note that not every person with a disability needs to evacuate to a special needs shelter. In fact, some people with disabilities can be safely accommodated in general population shelters. Persons eligible for special needs shelters have a physical or mental condition that requires limited medical and/or nursing assistance that cannot be provided in a general population shelter.

A special needs shelter is only for individuals who require sheltering assistance due to physical impairment, mental impairment, cognitive impairment or sensory disabilities during periods of evacuation or emergency situations. In addition to voluntary registration prior to an emergency, a person with disabilities/special needs must meet certain eligibility requirements to be admitted to a special needs shelter. Eligibility requirements might be different depending on the county in which you live.

Contact your local emergency management office to find out more about special needs shelters and what is required to register.

It is important to note that a special needs shelter is a shelter of last resort - a place to go when you have no other sheltering option.

Residents who need evacuation assistance to a Special Needs Shelter must register prior to June 1st in advance of hurricane season. This will help to determine which shelter they should go to and what, if any assistance they require to evacuate.

Each client must pre-register and complete a Special Needs Registration form.

The SNAPP form for Pasco County along with an Information Packet is available at:
<http://www.pascoemergencymanagement.com/what-you-need-to-know/prepare/special-needs-program/>

Pasco County Office of Emergency Management
7530 Little Road New Port Richey, FL 34654

The Special Needs form for Pinellas is available at:
<http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency/specialneeds.htm>

You MAY be eligible for a special needs shelter if you meet the following eligibility guidelines that include, but are not limited, to persons who require:

- * Special medical necessities but do not require hospitalization
- * Precautions or isolation which cannot be handled in a general population shelter due to a contagious health condition(s)
- * Oxygen that can be manually supplied
- * Full-time care or is accompanied by a caregiver at the shelter
- * Assistance with medications and everyday tasks due to a chronic condition
- * Periodic wound care assistance
- * Accommodations beyond what can be facilitated at a general population shelter

If you meet one or more of the requirements, you should register with your local emergency

management office for admittance to a special needs shelter. Registering before disaster strikes will ensure you have a back-up plan should you be ordered or choose to evacuate. Speak with your emergency management official about your particular needs and they will be able to provide all the specifications and registration requirements that are necessary for you to access a special needs shelter in your area.

All Florida emergency management offices keep a current list of people within a community who have a disability/special need so you can be quickly located and assisted in the event of an emergency.

Register in advance with your local emergency management office. Registering with your local emergency management office not only provides vital information to the county should you need assistance in an emergency, but may also qualify you for special sheltering or transportation programs.

Update these forms annually and make sure your information is always current.

SNAPP (Special Needs Assistance Population Program) Unit

Pasco County provides SNAPP registration to any resident requesting assistance in notification, transportation, or sheltering. Pinellas County provides a Special Needs registration as well.

Pasco County sponsors Special Needs Units within American Red Cross public shelters. Special Needs Units are available for those individuals who require assistance with Activities of Daily Living (ADL). Basic medical assistance and monitoring will be available. Special Needs Units are NOT equipped with advanced medical equipment, medications, or staffed to provide advanced medical care. If you need 24 hour skilled nursing care, a hospital bed or if you are electric dependent for life support, you are not a good candidate for Special Needs Units.

Individuals who need assistance with evacuation during an emergency must be pre-screened to determine the level of assistance required. Ensure the individual completes the Evacuation Registration Request Form for special needs registration. The SNAPP Form must be submitted to the PASCO COUNTY Office of Emergency Management. The individual must keep a copy of:

- *The Special Needs Shelter Fact Sheet

- *The SNAPP Form (Pasco)

- * Registration Form (Pinellas)

Registrants are pre-screened to determine the level of assistance required.

- * Notification is provided to residents in the affected evacuation area only.

- * Transportation is provided to public shelters, Special Needs Units, County hospitals and nursing homes.

- * Transportation is not provided to private destinations.

- * Transportation is provided to residents in the affected evacuation area only, with priority being given to those most susceptible to the immediate impact of the hazard (i.e. for a Level C evacuation, Level A and mobile home residents would receive first priority).

- * Residents are assigned to a type of shelter and location based upon their health/medical needs.

Applicants who do not meet the criteria for the Special Needs Unit are assigned to the American Red Cross portion of the shelter.

Remember:

1. Notify the provider of where you will be during a hurricane and when care can be re-established.
2. If you are homebound and under the care of a physician, contact your physician.

If your physician has decided that you need to be cared for in a skilled nursing facility, such as a hospital or nursing home during an emergency, he/she needs to arrange pre-admittance prior to evacuation with a specific facility.

You MUST have a copy of the pre-admission letter or prescription from your Doctor stating that you are to be taken to a specific in-County hospital or nursing home and arrangements have

been made with the facility for admittance.

A copy of your pre-admission letter **MUST** be sent with your Special Needs registration form and the original **MUST** accompany you when you are evacuated. Medicare will only pay for hospitalization claims that are deemed medically necessary and therefore arrangements must be made in advance.

If any costs arise from your admittance, you are responsible for those costs.

If you require respirators or other electric dependant medical equipment, you should make prior medical arrangements with your physician.

3. You should also register in advance with your local power company if you are not located within a hurricane evacuation zone or live in a mobile home.
4. Register with your local power company to see if it will flag your home.
5. If you require oxygen, check with your supplier about emergency plans.
6. If you evacuate, remember to take your Disaster Preparedness List
7. For assistance in an evacuation, each client must REGISTER with the Pasco County Special Needs Assistance Population Program (SNAPP).

Now that you have all of the basic information about emergency preparedness, you will find that making a Disaster Preparedness List an easy task to complete.

• **Complete the Disaster Preparedness & Communication List – REQUIRED**

Simply print out and complete the form with the client.

What to Think About

The Disaster Preparedness Communication List and Supplies should help you as a quick reference for contacts, transportation needs, prior agreements made with a physician, local power company, and local emergency response teams, and medications, equipment, and supplies needed during an emergency.

Equipment & Supplies

- Equipment
Medical devices, communication devices (hearing/sight/speech), mobility aids (wheelchairs, canes, walkers), nebulizers, oxygen tanks, feeding equipment, catheters, syringes, etc. Include style and serial number
- Supplies
Special dressings, refrigerated medications, additional energy sources (batteries), refills, etc.

Pre-Agreements, if needed

- Physician Pre-Admission Letter, Orders (if nursing care in a hospital is required)
- Local Power Company Agreement (to flag the household to bring power back quickly if needed)
- Local Emergency Response Team Agreement (pre-authorizing access to your home for rescue purposes)

Medications
Prescriptions

Create a Plan Of Action

Each individual must have a personalized plan of action for what to do before, during, and after an emergency. The plan of action should be easy to understand, easy to get to, and easy to follow. Describe the individual's personal plan of action for an emergency. This will include what you will do, where you will go, and who you will call before, during, and after the emergency.

Create an Emergency Kit

When a disaster strikes, or is about to strike, you will probably not have time to shop for essential items. Whether you are sheltering in place or need to evacuate, you need a number of basic items. It is critical that every household assemble an emergency kit ahead of time and keep it current. You should review the contents of your kit at least once a year and refresh any expired or outdated items. Your emergency kit should have supplies **specific** to your special needs.

This kit should include daily necessities, medications and other supplies that will help you survive an emergency situation and potentially live on your own for at least three days. Resources can suddenly become scarce in the midst of a disaster and your Emergency Kit should include items that get you through your unique daily routine

Use the Supplies list to create your Emergency Kit. An Emergency Kit may consist of a Basic Survival Kit, a First Aid Kit, a Special Food Kit, and Pet/Service Animal Care Kit. You may not need special food and you may not have a pet or service animal and in that case you can omit those two kits. You will, however, need a Basic Survival Kit and the First Aid Kit. What you put into those kits is entirely up to you. The form has many listed items and you can choose to keep those in your kit, omit some, and add some of your own. Ensure the kit is in an easily accessible location. Ensure that the kit items are labeled, maintained, and current. Check the items at least once a year. These kits are essential whether you go to a shelter or stay at home.

People with mobility disabilities should consider including the following in their emergency kit:

- Pair of heavy gloves to use while wheeling or making your way over glass and debris
- Extra battery for your motorized wheelchair or scooter
- Jumper cables or specific recharging device to be connected to an automobile's cigarette lighter
- Patch kit or can of "seal-in-air product" to repair flat tires
- Spare cane or walker

People with sensory disabilities should consider including the following in their emergency kit:

- Pad of paper with pens or pencils for writing notes
- Extra batteries for tape recorders, portable TTYs, etc.
- Extra pair of eye glasses
- Extra pair of dark glasses, if medically required
- Extra set of hearing-aid batteries
- Folding mobility cane

People with developmental or cognitive disabilities should consider including the following in their emergency kit:

- Alternate power source or spare batteries for communication device
- Paper and writing materials

Listen to Emergency Announcements and Follow Their Directions

C. DURING AN EMERGENCY

Go or Stay?

One of the most important decisions made during an emergency situation is whether to evacuate or stay in your home or current location. Determining factors such as your unique circumstances and the nature of the emergency should be carefully evaluated before either option is decided upon. As a person with disabilities/special needs or a caretaker of individuals with special needs, your disaster plan should consider and have options for both situations. It is also important to use all the information you can from local officials or the news to determine if there is immediate danger. Use your best judgment as no one knows your needs as well as you do.

Certain emergency and disaster situations require immediate evacuation. If you are specifically ordered to evacuate, it is vital you do so immediately. If your daily activities require additional travel time or transportation assistance, your Disaster Preparedness Communication List should include travel arrangements.

When a hurricane threatens your area, you will have to make the decision whether to evacuate or whether to ride out the storm in safety at home.

If local authorities recommend evacuation, you should leave. Their advice is based on knowledge of the strength of the storm and its potential for death and destruction.

Staying Home

If evacuation is not necessary and your residence can provide a safe environment during a storm or other emergency situation, then you may want to take shelter at your own home or that of a family member, neighbor or friend. If your special needs require assistance for day-to-day tasks, make sure you have an Attending Caregiver, family member or friend that can stay with you at all times. Remember, the best place to shelter for every Floridian is outside the evacuation area, in a safe and secure structure. If your home meets safety requirements though, it may just be your best option.

Monitor the Situation

Oftentimes, emergencies or natural disasters can go from bad to worse in a very short time. It is very important to monitor the situation on radio or television news reports in the event an evacuation is ordered. If local authorities do order an evacuation, remember it is in your best interest to do so immediately. Visit the Evacuation and Shelters section of the Web site for important evacuation information.

Be Prepared

Your Emergency Kit should be compatible for both an in-place sheltering and an evacuation. At a minimum, your kit should include all your daily necessities and basic resources that would allow you to survive for 5 to 7 days.

Safety Tips

Although your home can be a safe place to ride out an emergency, there are potential hidden dangers that may not be obvious at first glance.

- * If necessary, take refuge in an interior hallway or smaller room with no windows, such as a closet near load-bearing walls
- * Keep a fire extinguisher nearby and only use hand cranked, solar powered or battery-operated lamps or flashlights
- * Be sure to leave a clear path to exit in case of a fire
- * If you need assistance getting out of your building and rely on an elevator, make sure you have a way to leave your home before you decide to shelter in-place
- * Make sure there are other exits such as stairs, windows or ramps that you could use if the electricity goes out and the elevator does not work
- * Have a list of personal contacts you could call on a cell phone that could help you evacuate if you need to leave your home or building and need assistance
- * Prepare for several different types of disasters (fire, floods, hurricanes, acts of terrorism, etc.) and determine the safest place in your home for each emergency

Know Where Your Emergency Kit Is

If anyone becomes injured during an emergency situation, a First Aid Kit may be needed to treat the injured person. Having a First Aid Kit with basic supplies will allow you to assist someone who has been injured. Many injuries are not life threatening and do not require immediate medical attention. Knowing how to treat minor injuries can make a difference in an emergency. It is also recommended that you take a first aid class.

Going to a Shelter

When disasters occur, the state provides safe refuge in temporary emergency shelters often located in schools, office buildings, tents or other facilities. General population shelters are well stocked with basic necessities for survival including food, water and a warm place to sleep. However, shelters will not be able to provide the same level of convenience as a family member's home or a hotel. Shelters can be crowded, noisy, boring, short-staffed and have very little privacy.

In Florida, there are two types of shelters - general population shelters and special needs shelters. It is important to note that not every person with a disability is eligible to evacuate to a special needs shelter. The best place to shelter for every Floridian is outside the evacuation area, in a safe and secure structure, with family and friends.

While evacuating to a general population shelter, Floridians should bring some of their own supplies such as bed linens or blankets, clothing, toiletries/hygiene items and personal medications. Other resources available at general population shelters may vary. To assure your needs can be accommodated, contact your local emergency management office.

Although a general population shelter is able to provide basic first aid, a person with disabilities/special needs should PRE-REGISTER as Special Needs for a special needs shelter if their particular medical condition requires daily assistance.

For the most current available shelters, always check:

<http://www.pascoemergencymanagement.com/what-you-need-to-know/prepare/shelters/>

<http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency/specialneeds.htm>

Always try to use evacuation routes which have been pre-selected by local authorities. Using shortcuts may cause evacuation delays due to roads impassable, dangerous, or unknowingly closed.

If you decided to stay, but an official order is issued to vacate the area, you must have a plan for evacuating your home.

Leave the Area

The best place to be when danger strikes is away from it. Use an evacuation route guide which should be in your Emergency Kit so that you can go to one of the several predetermined safe locations such as a shelter or a family member's home that is outside of the evacuation area or away from the disaster zone. If you are going to someone else's home, choose the one that is least likely to be evacuated (based on flooding, wind damage, etc.). For individuals with mobility limitations, be sure you have a back-up plan in case an elevator is not operating.

Go to a Secure Location

The best place to shelter is outside the impact area with your family or friends. With this in mind, your disaster plan should include information on where you would go and how you will get there if disaster strikes.

Go to a Special Needs Shelter

To ensure your needs can be met at whichever shelter you include in your evacuation route, it is imperative that BEFORE the emergency occurs, you PRE-REGISTER and contact your local emergency management office to find out the best emergency accommodations for your unique situation.

Whether you stay or leave, keep your Disaster Preparedness Communication List and all of its components with you. This plan contains all of the information you need for an emergency. Remember, this includes all components of your Emergency Kit.

Anyone who is oxygen dependent must bring extra tanks, concentrators, nebulizers, and any other

necessary equipment to the shelters. Dialysis clients must complete treatment immediately prior to departing for the Special Needs Unit. All residents must be accompanied by their Attending Caregiver. Volunteer medical staff will be unfamiliar with your medical condition and treatment.

If the volunteers do not report to the shelter, there will be no hands on care other than your Attending Caregiver and a Pasco County Health Department Manager (R.N.) to assist should an emergency arise.

D. AFTER AN EMERGENCY

When you return home, keep safety first in mind. Wind, rain and flooding can cause structural, electrical and other hazards in the wake of the passing storm.

Be patient, because access to affected areas may be controlled. You may not be able to return to your home until search and rescue operations are complete and safety hazards, such as downed trees and power lines, are cleared.

In harder hit areas proper identification may be required to reenter. Ensure that you have current identification and a recent utility bill, lease, or proof of ownership with you.

After a disaster, emergency workers may not be able to reach everyone right away. In some cases it may take 3 or more days for help to arrive.

If you evacuated the area, listen for the local authorities to announce the "ALL CLEAR" that will let you know it is safe to return home.

Contact your Safety Liaison to make sure it's OK to go home, that your Circle of Support is aware that you are going home, and so that any disrupted nurse registry services can be re-started.

Ask for help to:

- * Check for damage in your home (use flashlights-do not light matches, candles, or turn on electrical switches in case of a gas leak)
 - * Report broken or damaged water, sewer, and electrical lines
 - * Contact your insurance provider to report any damages
 - * Clean up spilled medicines, bleaches, gasoline and other flammable liquids immediately
 - * Repair or block off access to anything in your home that is damaged and could cause injuries
 - * Check food and water for spoilage
- Stay away from downed power lines
Drive carefully; watch for dangling electrical wires, undermined roads, flooded low spots
Don't sight-see
Use caution re-entering home

PART 3 - RESOURCES

E. LOCAL EMERGENCY CONTACTS

In planning for a disaster, you should learn about the emergency departments in your community and their services. Before, during, and after a disaster, listen closely to the information they provide. They will supply you with details regarding the disaster event including shelter openings/closings, safety tips to consider, and instructions to follow to ensure your safety.

Emergency Management contacts for Pasco County, Pinellas County, and the State of Florida

Pasco County

Pasco County Emergency Management
8744 Government Drive - Bldg A
New Port Richey, FL 34654
Phone: (727) 847-8137
Fax: (727) 847-8004

<http://www.pascoemergencymanagement.com/>

Florida Division of Emergency Management
2555 Shumard Oak Boulevard
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-2100

Pinellas County

Pinellas County Emergency Management: (727) 464-3800 | www.pinellascounty.org/emergency
Pinellas County Emergency Operations Center
Department of Emergency Management
Citizen Information Center
(727) 464-3800
During an emergency activation call (727) 464-4333

Find your evacuation level: (727) 453-3150 | www.pinellascounty.org/emergency/knowyourzone.htm

Register for special needs transportation: (727) 464-3800 | www.pinellascounty.org/forms/special-needs.htm

Sign up for the Community Notification Service to receive text emergency information on your cell phone: (888) 689-8905

Set your Specific Area Message Encoding (SAME) equipped all-hazards alert radio for Pinellas County:
Enter code 012103

When a disaster threatens or strikes, the Red Cross provides shelter, food, and health/mental health services to address basic human needs. They also feed emergency workers, handle inquiries from concerned family members outside the disaster area and help those affected by disaster to access other available resources. The Red Cross can also provide emergency shelter information.

Tampa Bay Chapter
3310 West Main Street
Tampa, FL 33607
Phone: 813-348-4820
Fax: 813-348-4830

<http://www.flwestcoastredcross.org>

National Hurricane Center
www.nhc.noaa.gov

American Red Cross Tampa Bay Chapter
www.westfla-redcross.org/

Florida Division of Emergency Management
www.floridadisaster.org

The Weather Channel
www.weather.com

<http://www.FloridaDisaster.org>

F. LOCAL PROGRAMS

The Pasco County Office of Emergency Management offers volunteer programs to educate local citizens so that the programs may best serve their community during times of disaster.

*** Community Emergency Response Team**

A "CERT" is a group of people that is organized as a team and receives special training that enhances their ability to recognize, respond to, and recover from a major emergency or disaster situation. They are trained by emergency responders and emergency management personnel in basic emergency care in areas that will help them take care of themselves and others before, during, and after a major emergency. As an organized team, they can provide vital services in the absence of emergency responders, whose arrival may be delayed due to the scope of the event.

Various reports of "Lessons Learned" from different disasters including the most recent weather disasters; Hugo in 1989, Andrew in 1992 and the "Unnamed Storm of 1993", indicate that emergency responders can't be everywhere and citizens will take independent action to help themselves and others.

CERTs are formed by a variety of groups (Neighborhoods/Homeowners' Associations, Crime Watch Organizations, Scouting Troops, Church Groups, School Groups, etc). To get more information on the Pasco County CERT program and to check on the next available CERT training classes, contact the CERT Coordinator for Pasco County at (727) 847-8959 or for Pinellas at <http://www.lealmancert.org/> or the Lealman Fire District 4360 55th Avenue North St. Petersburg, FL 33714 (727) 526-5650.

*** Pasco County Citizen Corps Council**

The Pasco County Citizen Corps Council:

- increases public awareness to the issues confronting the community at large
- offers preventative measures through education and training
- brings together local leaders, citizen volunteers, and volunteer first responder organizations to share resources and training
- provides citizens with the training needed for preventing and responding to threats of all kinds
- ensures utilization of the trained volunteers in the event of a local disaster or emergency

For more information about the Pasco County Citizen Corps Council contact the Office of Emergency Management at (727) 847-8137. For information on the Pinellas County Citizen Corps Council:
<http://www.citizencorps.gov/cc/showCouncil.do?id=47532>

* **Pasco County Amateur Radio Communications (ARES) & Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES)**

RACES is a radio communications service, conducted by volunteer licensed amateur radio operators, for providing emergency communications support to State and local governments. RACES Station is an amateur radio station licensed civil defense organization, at a specific land location, to provide the facilities for a amateur radio communications.

Amateur Radio Communications (ARES) is noncommercial radio communications by or among amateur radio stations solely with a personal aim and without pecuniary or business interest.

The ARES/RACES Group supports and enhances the communications needs of its served agencies with the resources of trained amateur radio operators in order to serve the public interest in times of emergency or special need.

Local Government Role

- to establish and train a RACES organization designed to provide or supplement emergency communications within their local jurisdiction

State Government Role

- to establish and train a RACES organization designed to provide or supplement emergency communications between elements of State Government and between State and local governments

FEMA's Role:

- to provide planning guidance, technical assistance, and funding for establishing a RACES organization at the State and local government level

For information on the Pinellas ARES: <http://www.pcacs.org/ares.htm>

For information on the Pasco ARES: <http://fl-pascocounty.civicplus.com/index.aspx?NID=1087>

G. RESOURCES & LINKS

Pasco County Health Department

<http://www.doh.state.fl.us/chdpasco/shelter.html>

http://www.doh.state.fl.us/chdpasco/publications/SpNS/SpNS_Fact_Sheet_English.PDF

Florida Disaster Planning & Information & Videos

<http://floridadisaster.org/>

<http://www.floridadisaster.org/disability/index.html>

<http://www.floridadisaster.org/disability/Video/index.htm>

<http://www.floridadisaster.org/disability/documents/Tips%20for%20Evacuating%20Vulnerable%20Populations.pdf>

<http://www.floridadisaster.org/feil.htm>

Pasco Emergency Management

<http://www.pascoemergencymanagement.com/>

SNAPP Information Kit and SNAPP Registration Form

<http://www.pascoemergencymanagement.com/what-you-need-to-know/prepare/special-needs-program/>

Disaster Kit

<http://www.pascoemergencymanagement.com/what-you-need-to-know/prepare/prepare-your/disaster-supply-kit/>

Disability Preparedness

www.DisabilityPreparedness.gov

National Organization on Disability

www.NOD.org

FEMA

www.Ready.gov