
A GUIDE FOR RESIDENTS WITH ACCESS AND FUNCTIONAL NEEDS TO PLAN FOR EMERGENCIES

A joint publication from the:

**West Hartford Office of Emergency Management, West Hartford Fire Department,
and West Hartford-Bloomfield Health District**



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How to use this Guidebook

Emergencies occur every day of the year. Whether it is a neighborhood fire, large scale power outage, snow storm, or hurricane, it is important to prepare in advance by creating a preparedness plan that identifies your needs.

During an emergency, you can maintain independence and care for yourself. Maintaining independence requires planning and consideration of all available strategies, services, devices, tools, and techniques.



This Guidebook provides you with:

- Templates and planning documents needed to create a preparedness plan prior to an emergency and record important information related to your daily living, health, medical, housing and transportation needs, social networks, resources, equipment, and skills.
- Knowledge on how to create a plan involving shelter-in-place or, when directed, to evacuate and build an emergency preparedness kit.

This guidebook can to be used by anyone, regardless of age, gender, disability, living arrangement, etc. to prepare for emergencies. Not all sections or information in the guidebook may apply to you. Each preparedness plan should be tailored to best suit your needs and preferences.



Are You Prepared?

Building Your Resilience Before, During and After an Emergency

It is very important to understand the types of disasters that are more likely to threaten our communities. This allows for more enhanced and tailored planning, thereby increasing community resiliency. The more prepared a community is collectively, the more resilient they will be.

- Develop your strengths and skills by participating in trainings such as CPR / First Aid Classes, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training, and cultural sensitivity trainings. Know the skills you can provide to others during an emergency, such as emotional support and counseling, interpreting other languages, assisting with pet care, and preparing meals.
- Develop your health and medical needs by having access to items such as backup batteries for durable medical equipment and assistive technology like hearing aids, cochlear implants, and wheelchairs. Make sure to document and inventory durable medical equipment and medications, food, and water for yourself, your family, and your pets.
- Develop your support network by identifying neighbors, family, friends, care providers, and co-workers. Together, you can create a plan on assistance needed during an emergency and non-emergency.
- Determine your community resources by educating yourself on what is available within your neighborhood and Town. Identify alternate sites to receive care and support such as dialysis centers, gas stations, recreational centers, libraries, and urgent care. Alternate sites can be helpful resources when primary locations are damaged or lose power.

Types of Emergencies and Disasters

Emergencies occur every day and there are many ways of describing disasters, such as the number of people affected, the amount of property damage, or category of the storm. Disasters such as hurricanes can be very large and affect entire towns or counties, or disasters such as floods can be more isolated and affect only a limited area, such as stream flooding a neighborhood. Large and small disasters can be overwhelming and cause significant damage to property, people, and animals.

It is critical you are prepared by creating an emergency preparedness plan, being aware of possible impacts from disasters, staying informed, and being resilient and self-reliant by developing a support network and identifying critical resources.

This section of the guidebook provides information on emergencies and disasters that Town residents may experience, how the emergency can impact the community, and tips and resources for how to prepare and get through these emergencies.

Please note this is not a complete list of all the emergencies that can occur in the Town.



A brush fire burned 10-15 acres on Lamentation Mountain in Berlin the evening of Oct. 21, 2024. (Greg Salici)



Photo credit CT Insider

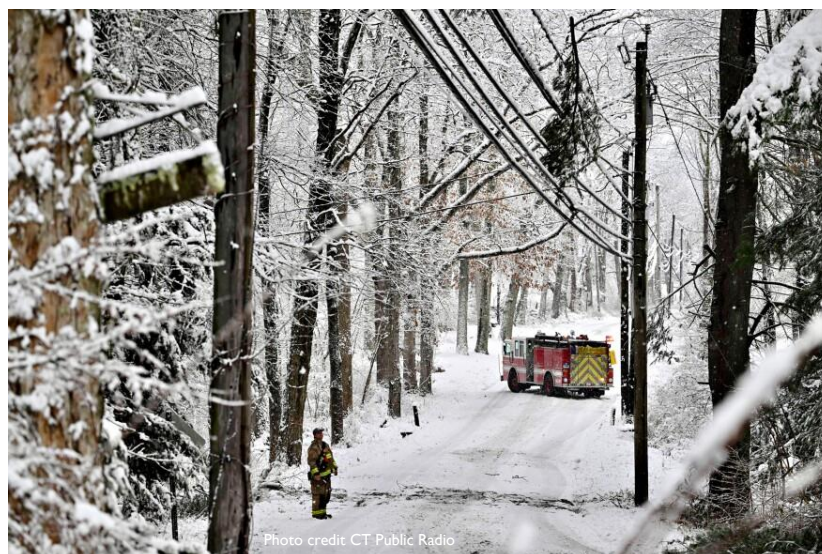


Photo credit CT Public Radio

Be Aware. Make A Plan. Be Prepared.

1. Develop an emergency preparedness plan that includes key contact information of those in your network, such as family, friends, home health providers, and medical providers.
2. When creating your preparedness plan, be mindful of durable medical equipment, consumable medical supplies, animal needs, assistive technology, communication tools, service providers, and anything that you regularly use and need.
3. Keep a minimum of a three-day supply of food and water (1 gallon per person per day) in your emergency preparedness kit.
4. Prior to an emergency, notify the power company of dependence on electricity. Keep in mind that doing this does not guarantee you a first response in power recovery or rescue.
5. Notify West Hartford Emergency Management (860-561-8310) or oem@westhartfordct.gov of any special needs or accommodations you may need in an emergency.
6. Stay informed about what is impacting your neighborhood by signing up for emergency alerts from <https://www.westhartfordct.gov/how-do-i-2/get-notified>.
7. During an emergency, stay indoors and shelter-in-place in a safe space away from windows unless ordered by emergency officials to evacuate.
8. Try to remain calm. Disasters and emergencies can be very overwhelming for everyone.



Severe Weather / Natural Disasters

- Extreme heat
- Severe thunderstorms, tornadoes, hurricanes
- Extreme cold
- Blizzards, ice storms
- Flooding

Consider using “blue sky days” (routine or typical days) to tackle some of the recommendations contained within this guidebook before an emergency occurs.

Part of building your preparedness plans and enhancing your resiliency, is to understand that in certain circumstances emergency services may not be able to immediately respond if you call for help. This has been seen sometimes during large-scale power outages where there is increased demand in service requests or in severe weather events when roads are blocked. Oftentimes severe weather occurs with little warning or time to prepare. Unfortunately, after a disaster occurs, the needs of the public are greater than what emergency services are able to handle compared to the “blue sky days” when there is adequate staff and resources to respond to any call. Therefore, it is very important to take this into consideration as you build your emergency plans and kits. You’ll want to aim to be self-sufficient for at least 3 days after an emergency.

Differences between severe weather warnings:



Retrieved from <https://townofwindsorct.com/emergency-management/faqs/what-is-a-watch-vs-warning-vs-advisory/>

Extreme Heat

Heat Wave

A heat wave is a prolonged period of excessive heat, generally 10 degrees or more above average, often combined with excessive humidity. Weather forecasters use the following terms: Excessive Heat Watch, Excessive Heat Warning, or Heat Advisory.

What to do:

1. Stay indoors in an air-conditioned environment as much as possible. If you don't have access to a cool-temperature location, locate one of the Town's Cooling Centers by calling 2-1-1. Note the cooling centers are only activated when necessary.
2. Limit exposure to the sun, especially between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.
3. **DO NOT** leave children, older adults, pets, or anyone in vehicles, even if you think it's just for a short amount of time.
4. Drink more water than usual; do not wait until you feel thirsty.
5. Wear light-colored, lightweight, and loose-fitting clothes.
6. Apply sunscreen at least 20 minutes before going outside and re-apply as needed.
7. Watch for symptoms of heat exhaustion such as clammy skin, dizziness, headache, weakness, excessive sweating, and extreme thirst.
8. Check on friends and neighbors.
9. Cooling centers may be opened to public to cool off, also water pads or public pools may be opened to the public.



Severe Thunderstorms, Tornadoes, Hurricanes

Severe weather in the spring, summer, and early fall months can occur almost anywhere. Monitoring weather reports daily will prepare you for upcoming threats of severe weather. Weather forecasters use the following terms: Advisories, Watches, or Warnings may be issued for any of these severe weather threats.

What to do:

Depending on the type of threat, some of these actions may vary. Generally, the following applies to any of the threats listed above:

1. Be alert for and heed evacuation orders by local officials. Use a battery-operated radio for updates (some NOAA (National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration) radios include captions and can link to personal assistive technology).
2. Keep your preparedness kit close to you.
3. Secure outdoor objects, such as lawn furniture, that could blow away or cause damage or injury.
4. Shutter windows securely and brace outside doors (hurricane or extreme wind events).
5. Avoid water, bathtubs, water faucets, and sinks during thunderstorms because lightning can travel through plumbing with metal pipes.
6. Review and discuss your emergency plans, and check supplies and your safe room (lower level, interior room away from windows).
7. Be ready to act quickly if a warning is issued or you suspect a tornado is approaching.
8. If a warning is issued, immediately go underground to basement, storm cellar, or an interior room (closet, hallway, and bathroom). If you are in a multi-story building, go to the first or second floor.
9. Take pictures of storm damage and if / when prompted, share with the West Hartford Emergency Management.



Extreme Cold

The definition of extreme cold varies depending on the climate in your geographic location. The level of moisture in the air, and strength of wind can influence the feel of these temperatures. Weather forecasters use the following terms: Extreme cold weather advisory, Watch, or Warning.

What to do:

1. Stay indoors in a heated environment as much as possible. If you don't have access to a warm-temperature location, locate one of the Town's "Warming Centers" by calling 2-1-1. Note the warming centers are only activated when necessary.
2. Dress in layers, and minimize any time spent in damp or wet clothing materials.
3. DO NOT leave children, older adults, pets, or anyone in vehicles, even if you think it's just for a short amount of time.
4. Drink more hot liquids.
5. Wear appropriate outdoor clothing covering all exposed skin- hats, gloves, scarves, warm or lined boots. Limit time outside exposed to cold temperatures.
6. Watch for symptoms of hypothermia such as shivering, confusion, decreased mental status, sleepiness, difficulty speaking, and stiff muscles.
7. Use extreme caution if using portable space heaters, as these can easily overheat and start fires.
8. Check on friends and neighbors.
9. Engage in light exercise or movement to increase blood flow (be mindful to change damp or wet clothes as soon as exercise is completed).



Severe Winter Storms, Blizzards, Ice Storms

Winter storms can range from a moderate snow over a few hours to a blizzard with wind driven snow that lasts for several days. Some winter storms are large enough to affect several states, while others affect only a single community. Many winter storms are often accompanied by dangerously low temperatures and sometimes by strong winds, icing, sleet, and freezing rain. Regardless of the severity of a winter storm, be prepared in order to remain safe during these events.

Weather forecasters use the following terms: Advisories, Watches, or Warnings may be issued for any of these severe weather threats.

What to do:

Depending on the type of threat, some of these actions may vary. Generally, the following applies to any of the threats listed above:

1. Stay indoors in a warm environment. Use caution when using gas or wood stoves, fireplaces, or space heaters for fire and carbon monoxide safety. Locate one of the Town's Warming Centers by calling 2-1-1. Note the warming centers are only activated when necessary.
2. Never use a gas range or oven to heat a home and never use a generator, grill, camp stove, or other gasoline, propane, natural gas, or charcoal-burning devices inside an enclosed space. This can cause carbon monoxide poisoning resulting in death.
3. Ensure smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are installed properly and change batteries twice per year.
4. Wear several layers of loose fitting, lightweight, and warm clothing rather than one layer of heavy clothing.
5. Leave all water taps slightly open so they drip continuously and insulate water lines so the water supply is less likely to freeze.
6. Recognize signs of hypothermia (shivering, exhaustion, confusion, drowsiness, stumbling, and numbness) and frostbite (white and waxy appearance of skin, numbness).
7. Limit travel during the day, stay on main roads, and keep gas tank full.
8. Keep winter go-bag in the car with jumper cables, bottled water, non-perishable snacks, blanket, shovel, flashlight, and bag of gravel or cat litter to use if car gets stuck in snow.
9. Be mindful of tree damage or downed trees and wires due to heavy snow or ice accretion.
10. Take pictures of storm damage and send to West Hartford Emergency Management.



Flooding

Floods are among the most frequent and costly natural disasters. Conditions that cause floods include heavy or steady rain for several hours or days that saturate the ground. Flash floods occur suddenly due to rapidly rising water along a stream or low-lying area.

Weather forecasters use the following terms: Advisories, Watches, or Warnings may be issued for floods.

What to do:

Several of these recommended tasks are best to do beforehand.

1. Determine if you live in a flood prone area and purchase flood insurance if available.
2. Plan and practice a flood evacuation route.
3. If necessary, buy and install sump pumps with back-up power.
4. For drains, toilets and other sewer connections, install backflow valves or plugs to prevent floodwaters from entering your home.
5. Anchor fuel tanks which can contaminate the basement if torn free. An unanchored tank outside can be swept downstream and damage other houses.
6. Have immunization records readily available or be aware of your last tetanus shot, in the event of a puncture wound or a wound that becomes contaminated during or after the flood.
7. Never attempt to drive over a flooded road. This could cause you to be trapped and stranded. The depth of the water is not always obvious, there could be large debris or downed power lines in the water, and the road could easily and quickly be washed away.

Turn Around, Don't Drown!

8. Take pictures of storm damage and if / when prompted, share with the West Hartford Emergency Management.



Power Outages

Power outages are a common occurrence any time of year, but are particularly common with severe weather. If a power outage lasts for two hours or less, don't be concerned about losing perishable foods. For prolonged power outages, there are steps to take to minimize food loss, to keep refrigerated medications cold and all members of the household safe. If long-term power outages are a concern during a storm, consider having a plan to move to an overnight shelter if opened, or travel out of the area to stay at a hotel or with family / friends if able.

What to do:

1. Ensure several flashlights and spare batteries are always available (monitor batteries routinely).
2. Charge all electronic devices as much as possible before or during a storm. Consider purchasing a solar charger that can be used to power devices.
3. Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible. An unopened refrigerator will keep food cold for about four hours. A closed, full freezer will keep the temperature for about 48 hours (24 hours if it is half-full). Use non-perishable foods after using food from the refrigerator and freezer- **when in doubt about food safety, throw it out.**
4. If it looks like the power outage will continue beyond a day, prepare a cooler with ice or cold packs for freezer items and refrigerated medication.
5. Avoid using candles, as they are a fire hazard. Never leave a candle burning unattended.
6. To prevent surge damage, turn off and unplug all unnecessary electrical equipment, including sensitive electronics, turn off or disconnect any appliances (like stoves), equipment or electronics that were in use when the power went out.
7. Leave one light turned on so it is obvious when the power turns back on.
8. Never use a generator, grill, camp stove or other gasoline, propane, natural gas or charcoal-burning devices inside an enclosed area. Locate unit away from doors, windows and vents that could allow carbon monoxide to come indoors.
9. Prepare for alternative locations to store refrigerated medication and to access power for durable medical equipment until the power is turned back on.
10. Always report a power outage and / or damaged or downed lines to your provider, such as Eversource or CT Natural Gas.



Fires

Sixty-five percent (65%) of house fire deaths occur in homes with no working smoke alarms. During a home fire, working smoke alarms and a fire escape plan that has been practiced regularly can save lives. If a fire occurs: get out, stay out, and call 9-1-1.

What to do?

1. Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, inside and outside the sleeping area(s). There are now smoke alarms that include a flashing light to alert those who are deaf or hard of hearing.
2. Test your smoke detectors every month and replace batteries twice a year, or purchase devices with extended battery life. Contact the West Hartford Fire Department at 860-561-8300 or the West Hartford Fire Marshall's Office at 860-561-8320 for a home fire safety or prevention inspection and free smoke detectors.
3. Create a fire escape plan and practice it at least twice a year with all house-hold members.
4. Have at least one or more fire extinguishers in the house, and know how to use it- this is especially important if someone in the house has difficulty ambulating or cannot leave the house.
5. Notify West Hartford Emergency Management (860-561-8310) or oem@westhartfordct.gov of any special needs or accommodations you may need in an emergency (especially mobility challenges). Consider installing an electronic keypad for front door and / or garage to allow emergency services easier access to the residence (note, you'll need to call police / fire dispatch to provide the code for their records).
6. Never leave lit candles unattended.
7. Never leave a stove unattended when cooking.
8. Keep matches and lighters away from children.
9. Replace frayed, chewed, or exposed electrical wires.
10. Pay attention to fire danger announcements, and never light a fire outside if dry and windy conditions are present.



Earthquakes

Earthquakes are not very common in New England, and Connecticut (CT) in particular; however, there is a large fault that runs below southern New England. CT experienced the after-effects of a 4.0 magnitude earthquake centered in New Jersey in 2024 that left many residents uneasy. Fortunately, no significant damage or injuries were reported, but it highlights the need to prepare and to be aware that the threat exists. Earthquakes are largely unpredictable, unless there have been recent earthquakes, volcano eruptions, or tsunamis in a close geographic area.

What to do:

1. **DROP** down onto your hands and knees before the earthquake.
2. **COVER** your head and neck (and entire body if possible). Seek shelter under a table or desk, bed, or door frame. Try to stay away from windows.
3. **HOLD ON** to shelter (or to head and neck) until the shaking stops.
4. If you use a mobility device, try to get under a doorway or into an inside corner of a wall, lock the wheels on wheelchairs, and cover head with arms or duck your head down. Remove any items that are not securely attached to the wheelchair.
5. Stay inside, do not run outside during an earthquake. However, if you are outside when it occurs- stay outside and away from buildings and vehicles.
6. If you are in your bed or a chair, and do not have enough time to get under shelter, cover yourself with blankets and pillows.
7. Anchor large furniture to wall to avoid being injured if they tip over (this is a preparedness step).

Medical Resilience in Emergencies

Being able to prepare, withstand, rebound / recover well after an emergency can be classified as being resilient. Medical resiliency is all of that, but while being focused on your medical status.

Part of being prepared is understanding your current circumstances, medical condition(s) and any triggers that might worsen your illness or circumstances. If you know those on a normal every day basis, you'll be able to identify and perhaps even stop any triggers from occurring during an emergency.

Being medically resilient also means understanding your medications and having a plan in place with your doctors, your pharmacy, and insurance to ensure that you have at least a weeks' worth of medication available focusing on those life sustaining priority medications (i.e. insulin, cardiac medications, etc.).

Medical resiliency also encourages residents to conduct a home safety assessment to identify potential hazards that can affect or worsen pre-existing health status. Consider fall safety. You may be at an increased risk for falls in general or in an emergency such, as a power outage; if you are older than 65, or have any medical conditions such as:

- Low blood pressure or heart rate
- Osteoporosis/osteopenia
- Difficulty walking or use any mobility devices
- Vision problems
- Vertigo (dizziness)
- Paralysis or stroke

Conducting a home assessment is good practice for anyone to identify the hazards that exist and that can be remedied easily before an emergency occurs. This might include:

- Remove area rugs or rearrange furniture to ensure a wide walking path
- Eliminate any clutter, especially on floors and stairs
- Install automatic / motion sensor lights in the hallway, stairway, bedroom and bathroom (battery-powered ones are great for power outages as well!)
- Grab bars installed in bathrooms
- Consider resources or devices that can alert family or 9-1-1 if you fall- there are numerous options (check with insurance to see if any are approved by them)
- Take fall prevention classes through senior center or other agencies

Practical tips to ensure your safety in an emergency is to follow trusted recommendations by experts in emergency management and healthcare. The [West Hartford Social Services](#) department is a great resource to use to help develop plans, conduct assessments, and offer recommendations on specific resources.

- Have preemptive conversations with your doctor about wanting to create a medical plan in the event of an emergency (this might need to be done at a separate consult visit rather than an office well-visit).
 - Ask them what they recommend you have in place ahead of an emergency, or on hand at all times that will provide you with some medical security.
 - Find out if any of your medication needs cold storage, and what you can do to ensure that it's available in power outages, or if evacuation needs to occur.

Individuals who have intellectual / emotional / behavioral problems are also at an increased risk during emergencies. Therefore, it is important to prepare for their individual needs before a disaster or emergency occurs. There are numerous resources available, including <https://www.ready.gov/disability>.

It's important to also recognize that during routine "blue sky days", the 9-1-1 emergency services response time is quick. However, during a disaster or widespread emergency, response times are expected to take much longer or responses may need to be prioritized. Therefore, preparing yourself ahead of time may prevent you from needing to call 9-1-1 in an emergency.

The better prepared and educated you are before an emergency, the more resilient you will be during the event.



Resources and Templates

Use the templates below to document your specific needs, the needs of members in your household, and of your service / emotional support animals, / pets during an emergency.

Keep copies of important health records and medications in your Emergency Preparedness Go-Bag either on a USB or hard copies in a water proof container. This information should include doctor's contact information, vaccinations, health conditions, allergies, and other information you would need during an emergency.

Writing down your plan helps those assisting you with important information when you may not be able to state your needs.

Share your completed emergency preparedness plan with those in your household and in your personal support network.

Exercise plans

- It is recommended to test your emergency plans at least twice per year to refresh memory, skills, and to rotate any stock (batteries or food, water).
- Use timing exercises to determine how long it takes you to get to your emergency bag in the event you need something urgently.
- Practice using alternate routes and communication with your support network during drills.

Medical History & Provider Contact Information Template

Health Care Provider Contact Information

	Name of Health Care Provider	Physician (Primary care or specialist (type)-designate which)	Street Address	Telephone Number	E-mail Address
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7.					

Other Medical Providers

	Name of Provider	Type of Provider	Street Address	Telephone Number	E-mail Address
1					
2					
3					

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Health Conditions

If you have any medical conditions, it is important to understand these conditions may be exacerbated by an emergency. Use this form to document your conditions and consider how they may be affected during an emergency, and what you can do now to prevent them from worsening.

Additional pages are available if needed or if significant changes are necessary. Update this form at least every year, or as medical conditions change. Please mark in pencil on this form if you experience any of the following conditions:

Condition	Yes	No	Notes
Mental Health concerns (anxiety [panic], depression, schizophrenia, bipolar, etc.)			
Dementia / Alzheimer's			
Stroke			
Paralysis			
Arthritis			
COPD or Asthma			
Other respiratory disorder			
Heart attack			
CHF			<i>Ex. Ready to eat meals are high in sodium. If you have CHF, eating high quantities of sodium can worsen CHF.</i>
Dizziness (vertigo)			
Other cardiac disorder			
Diabetes			
Gastrointestinal disorder (including urgency or incontinence)			
Genitourinary disorder (including urgency or incontinence)			
Kidney Failure requiring dialysis (specify type)			
Electrically dependent to power medical devices			
Other			

Medications

Keeping a log of medications including the information as listed on the chart below is critical to have in emergencies. It is recommended that if you take regular medications, that you work with your physician(s) and pharmacy to ensure you have enough medication on hand always- enough for at least a week. This is important because there may be times during emergencies where pharmacies may not be open or you cannot obtain refills. These conversations should be done in advance of an emergency.

Name	Dose	Frequency	Why you take?	Refrigeration Yes / No?	Injection Yes / No?

Pharmacy:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Health Conditions (extra copy)

If you have any medical conditions, it is important to understand that those conditions may be exacerbated by an emergency. Use this form to document your conditions and consider how they may be affected during an emergency and what you can do now to prevent them from worsening.

Additional pages are available if needed or if significant changes are necessary. Update this form at least every year, or as medical conditions change. Please mark in pencil on this form if you experience any of the following conditions:

Condition	Yes	No	Notes
Mental Health concerns (anxiety [panic], depression, schizophrenia, bipolar, etc.)			
Dementia / Alzheimer's			
Stroke			
Paralysis			
Arthritis			
COPD or Asthma			
Other respiratory disorder			
Heart attack			
CHF			<i>Ex. Ready to eat meals are high in sodium. If you have CHF, eating high quantities of sodium can worsen CHF.</i>
Dizziness (vertigo)			
Other cardiac disorder			
Diabetes			
Gastrointestinal disorder (including urgency or incontinence)			
Genitourinary disorder (including urgency or incontinence)			
Kidney Failure requiring dialysis (specify type)			
Electrically dependent to power medical devices			
Other			

Medications (extra copy)

Keeping a log of medications including the information as listed on the chart below is critical to have in emergencies. It is recommended that if you take regular medications, that you work with your physician(s) and pharmacy to ensure you have enough medication on hand always- enough for at least a week. This is important because there may be times during emergencies where pharmacies may not be open or you cannot obtain refills. These conversations should be done in advance of an emergency.

Name	Dose	Frequency	Why you take?	Refrigeration Yes / No?	Injection Yes / No?

Pharmacy:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Preparedness Checklists

Use the following recommendations to build an individualized emergency plan and kit for your household. Refer to page 6 for general items to include for any person.

Tips:

- Prepare and maintain the following kits, tailored to your specific needs and abilities.
- Store kits in waterproof, secure, and easily accessible locations.
- Plan for up to two weeks of supplies where feasible, but adjust based on what you can realistically carry or store.

Individuals who have mobility challenges or use mobility devices to get around should consider developing a plan for both shelter-in-place and evacuation scenarios. Sheltering-in-place, means to stay where you are and not leave. Whereas, evacuation requires you to leave the immediate area. Emergency officials will likely provide alternate locations you can go to, especially if the evacuation is expected to be lengthy.

Preparing an Evacuation Plan for Individuals with Mobility Challenges (including vision loss)

- Identify all exits in your home or building, including primary and secondary routes. Note barriers such as stairs, narrow doorways, or heavy doors that may impede evacuation.
- For multi-story buildings, determine if there are accessible exits (e.g., ramps) or designated areas of refuge.
- Conduct a home safety assessment and remove obstacles like clutter or rugs that could hinder mobility device use or pose fall risks during an emergency.
- Identify transport method for evacuation.
- Map out the safest and quickest routes to exit your home or building.
 - Practice these routes regularly, including during power outages, to familiarize yourself with navigating in low-light conditions.
- Prepare Mobility Devices:
 - Ensure mobility devices (e.g., canes, wheelchairs, scooters, walkers) are in good working condition. Regularly check batteries, tires, and brakes.
 - Ensure spare parts (e.g., inner tubes, battery chargers) and a lightweight manual wheelchair (if applicable) available for backup.
 - Attach a small emergency kit to your mobility device with essentials like a flashlight, whistle, and a list of emergency contacts.

Essential items for Go-bag

- ✓ Emergency health information
- ✓ Copies of emergency contacts and prescriptions
- ✓ Cell phone and charger

- ✓ Cash (small bills and change)
- ✓ Essential medications (e.g., minimum 3-day supply if limited by space, otherwise one week supply)
- ✓ Flashlight
- ✓ Signaling device (e.g., whistle, horn, bell)
- ✓ Sharpie pen
- ✓ Extra batteries for critical devices (e.g., hearing aids, cochlear implants)
- ✓ Glasses
- ✓ Non-perishable foods, including manual can opener
- ✓ Water (one gallon per person per day (including extra water for animals))
- ✓ First aid kit
- ✓ Spare clothes and shoes
- ✓ Multi-tool and duct tape

Other Considerations

Speech / Communication Needs:

- ✓ Pre-printed statements (e.g., “I use ASL” or communication needs)
- ✓ Communication card (pictograms) for language barriers

Hearing Needs:

- ✓ Pre-printed statements (e.g., “I use ASL,” “Write announcements”)
- ✓ Extra batteries for hearing aids

Vision Needs:

- ✓ Mark supplies with fluorescent tape, large print, or Braille
- ✓ Extra glasses or contacts

Allergies / Breathing Needs:

- ✓ Towels, masks, or respirators for air filtration
- ✓ Necessary medication, including respiratory or breathing treatment medication or devices, oxygen (and equipment)
- ✓ EpiPen (if prescribed)

Service Animals:

- ✓ Food, water, blankets, waste bags, medication, harness

Wheelchair/Scooter Users:

- ✓ Lightweight manual wheelchair (backup)
- ✓ Patch kit or sealant for tires
- ✓ Label equipment with “how to use/move” instructions
- ✓ Charger if scooter or wheelchair is battery operated
- ✓ Backpack including pared-down “essential items” discussed above

Car Kit (if applicable):

- ✓ Supplies for evacuation or emergencies near your vehicle.
- ✓ Flashlights, light sticks, and extra batteries
- ✓ Emergency food and water
- ✓ Resealable plastic bags
- ✓ Road flares
- ✓ First aid kit and manual
- ✓ Emergency blankets (reflective, lightweight)
- ✓ Tools (screwdriver, pliers, pocket knife, can opener, duct tape)
- ✓ Battery jumper cables
- ✓ Reflective vest
- ✓ Rain poncho
- ✓ State and local maps

Resources:

ADA National Network: 1-800-949-4232, Emergency Supply Kits:

<http://adainfo.us/ADAsupplykit>

Red Cross: www.redcross.org

Disability Preparedness: www.jik.com/disaster.html

Safety Guide:

<http://lacoa.org/PDF/ESP%2006/ESP%20Disabilities%20Guide%20FINAL%202006.pdf>

CTReady: <https://portal.ct.gov/dph/public-health-preparedness/main-page/personal-preparedness-guide>

West Hartford Emergency Alert System: <https://www.westhartfordct.gov/how-do-i-2/get-notified>

CT Emergency Alert System: <https://portal.ct.gov/ctalert/common-elements/common-elements/sign-up-for-ct-alerts>

West Hartford Emergency Management: OEM@westhartfordct.gov

