



Got A Plan?

Emergency Preparedness Self-Help Resources

May 2, 2011

The Atlantic hurricane season is June 1st through November 30th. In addition, fires, floods, and other emergencies can strike at any time throughout the year. All Floridians need to prepare in advance for disasters. This document provides links to helpful websites, videos, articles, and other information about emergency preparedness for persons with disabilities.

1. The **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)** advises preplanning:

Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so plan how you will contact one another. Think about how you will communicate in different situations.

Complete a contact card for each family member. Have family members keep these cards handy in a wallet, purse, backpack, etc. You may want to send one to school with each child to keep on file. Pick a friend or relative who lives out-of-state for household members to notify they are safe.

Family Communications Plan which should be completed and posted so the contact information is readily accessible to all family members. A copy should also be included in your family disaster supplies kit.

http://www.fema.gov/pdf/areyouready/appendix_c.pdf

The **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)** has posted important information regarding emergency management preparedness for individuals with disabilities on its website at: <http://www.fema.gov/plan/prepare/specialplans.shtm>.

Are you Ready? Is a comprehensive guide to emergency preparedness. This publication provides a step-by-step approach to disaster preparedness by walking the reader through how to get informed about local emergency plans, how to identify hazards that affect their local area, and how to develop and maintain an emergency communications plan and disaster supplies kit.

The publication is available on the FEMA website at <http://www.fema.gov/areyouready/index.shtm>.

Telephone: 1 (800) 621-FEMA (3362) / TTY (800) 462-7585

2. Disaster Ready

The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council offers a comprehensive 83 page planning guide for persons with disabilities at:
<http://www.fddc.org/sites/default/files/file/publications/Disaster%20Preparedness%20%20Guide.pdf>.

3. ADA Guide for Local Governments

The United States Department of Justice offers guidance for local governments. Its publication “Community Emergency Preparedness and Response Programs Accessible to People with Disabilities” is available at: <http://www.ada.gov/emergencyprep.htm>

4. To contact the Florida Division of Emergency Management go to:
<http://www.floridadisaster.org>. Or you may contact the Division by phone at the following numbers.

Emergencies Only: 1-800-320-0519 / (850) 413-9911

Non-Emergencies: (850) 413-9900

The Florida Division of Emergency Management website offers resources and information specifically tailored to help individuals with disabilities/special needs and their families prepare for emergencies, protect themselves, and be survivors. For information, go to:
<http://www.floridadisaster.org/disability/index.html>

To locate the **Emergency Preparedness Management** office closest to you or within your county go to: http://www.floridadisaster.org/fl_county_em.asp.

5. Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT)

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. For more information, visit their website at: <http://www.citizencorps.gov/cert/>.

6. What is the FCC's Emergency Alert System (EAS)?

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) designed the [Emergency Alert System](http://www.fcc.gov/eb/eas/) (EAS) (see <http://www.fcc.gov/eb/eas/>) so officials can quickly send out important emergency information targeted to a specific area. After conducting extensive tests of competing technologies, the FCC ruled that the EAS would be a digital-based automated system and use coding protocols similar to [NOAA Weather Radio](http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/) (NWR) <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/> [Specific Area Message Encoding](http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/nwrsame.htm) (SAME) <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/nwrsame.htm>.

EAS sends out alerts not just to broadcast media but also to cable television, satellites, pagers, Direct Broadcast Satellite, High Definition Television, and Video Dial Tone. EAS also accounts for the needs of special populations such as the deaf and those with special language requirements. In 1996, EAS replaced the Emergency Broadcast System.

7. General information on how **NOAA Weather Radio (NWR)** can be an alerting tool for individuals with hearing loss is available at: http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/special_need.htm.

To access the latest weather forecasts, **track storms through NOAA weather satellites**, get the latest weather maps, and learn how to protect yourself and your community from severe weather go to: <http://www.noaawatch.gov/>.

8. The **American Red Cross** provides information on its website regarding emergency disaster response and preparedness. Go to: <http://www.redcross.org/>. You may also contact the Red Cross by phone at the below number.

Toll-Free Phone: 1 800 RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767)

To view a **Red Cross video** on people with disabilities and disaster preparation, go to: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SJQr40wJ5MA&feature=related>

9. To access information on emergency preparedness by the **Florida Department of Health**, visit their website at <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/>. Select the search function and type "emergency preparedness."

10. The National Organization on Disabilities launched an Emergency Preparedness Initiative to help emergency managers address disability concerns during an emergency, and to ensure that people with disabilities are included in planning, response, and recovery. A variety of publications in that regard are available at http://www.nod.org/research_publications/emergency_preparedness_materials/.

11. For information about video conference communications services for individuals with hearing loss in hurricane shelters or other emergency situations, see:

<http://cilsfla.blogspot.com/2008/05/videoconferencing-services-available.html>

Deaf Link's website: <http://www.deaflink.com/>

12. Westcot Portable Emergency Beds for Individuals with Disabilities

<http://www.emergencyresources.com/westcot400.html>

13. Software for police, fire departments, and officials manning shelters to communicate with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing

<http://www.vcom3d.com/index.php?id=ssstudio>

14. For a suggested list of items to take with you to **Special Needs Shelters, go to**

<http://www.bradford-co-fla.org/emergency%20man/What%20to%20Bring.pdf>.

15. Go to www.ready.gov, a website sponsored by the federal government, to learn more about what you can do to protect yourself and your family in case of an emergency.

16. For comprehensive emergency management planning criteria for **Hospice, see www.doh.state.fl.us/PHNursing/SpNS/FAC58A-2.026.doc.**

17. What should I know about service animals or pets in an emergency?

According to the [Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act \(PETS\) of 2006](http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h109-3858) (<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h109-3858>), state and local emergency preparedness operational plans must address the needs of individuals with household pets and service animals following a major disaster or emergency if they want to qualify for grant money from FEMA. The Act gives FEMA authority to help communities develop pet-friendly shelter facilities and practical assistance for individuals with pets and service animals, and the animals themselves, following a major disaster. For more information, go to: http://www.animallaw.info/statutes/stusfd2006pl109_308.htm.

Additionally, visit <http://www.floridapets.net/petfriendlyshelters.html> for a county-by-county list of pet-friendly motels and hotels. This site also provides updates about pet-friendly shelters. *Remember, your service animal is not a pet and is allowed in all shelters.*

18. Go to www.myflorida.com for general information on emergency preparedness management. In the search function of this website, type "emergency preparedness."