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LARGE PRINT

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

[Prepare.org Home](#)

[Seniors](#)

[People with Disabilities](#)

[Glossary & Reference](#)

[Children & Schools](#)

[Basic Preparedness](#)

[Animal & Pet Owners](#)

[Additional Links](#)

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In 1984, the Los Angeles Chapter of the American Red Cross created a booklet titled *Disaster Preparedness for the Disabled and Elderly*. That booklet, which is no longer in print, served as the foundation for material contained here. **Disaster Preparedness for People With Disabilities** has been designed to help people who have physical, visual, auditory, or cognitive disabilities to prepare for natural disasters and their consequences. Anyone who has a disability or anyone who works with, lives with, or assists a person with a disability can also use this information.

Ten important steps are listed below to get you started, or you can [click here](#) for a full-length PDF (Portable Document Format) file of the booklet. (In order to open it you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which can be downloaded for free from the [Adobe](#) website).

1. Know what kinds of **disasters** could happen in your area and consider what your **environment** might look like after one occurs. Certain resources or utilities may not be available and conditions could hamper your **independence**.
2. Complete a **personal assessment**. Decide what you will be able to do for yourself and what assistance you may need before, during and after a disaster (based on the disrupted environment, your capabilities and your limitations).
3. Create a **personal support network** of family, friends, relatives, neighbors, roommates and co-workers who could assist you at a moment's notice. Discuss your special needs with them, including evacuation plans and medical information lists.
4. Make an **emergency information list** so others will know whom to call

if they find you unconscious, unable to speak or if they need to help you evacuate quickly. Include the names and numbers of out-of-town contacts, as well as everyone in your network.

5. Compile a **medical information list** that contains the names and numbers of your doctors, your medications, dosage instructions, and any existing conditions. Make note of your adaptive equipment, allergies, and any communication difficulties you may have.

6. Keep at least a **seven-day supply of medications** on hand. Ask your doctor or pharmacist what you should do if you cannot immediately get more. If you undergo treatments administered by a clinic or hospital, ask your provider how to prepare for a disruption caused by a disaster.

7. Install at least one **smoke alarm** on each level of your home and test them once a month. Know the location of main **utility cutoff valves** and learn how and when to disconnect them during an emergency. Identify **evacuation routes** and **safe places** to go during a disaster.

8. Complete a **summary checklist** to make sure that your personal disaster plan is comprehensive. Be sure to include your medical needs, evacuation routes, care plans for your service animals, an alternative place to stay, etc.

9. Keep a **disaster supply kit** in your home, car, workplace or anywhere you may spend your time. Include such items as food, water, a first aid kit, adaptive equipment, batteries, and supplies for your pets or service animals.

10. Make your **home or office** safer by checking hallways, stairwells, doorways, windows and other areas for hazards that may keep you from safely leaving a building during an emergency. Secure or remove furniture and objects that may block your path.

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