

# Disaster:

Disaster Tips for People with  
Mobility and/or Medical Needs

## Get a Kit of Emergency Supplies

Have an emergency supply kit ready and be prepared to improvise and use what you have on hand to make it on your own for at least three days, maybe longer. While there are many things that might make you more comfortable, think first about fresh water, food, and clean air.

### Your emergency supply kit should include:

- Water: one gallon per person per day, for drinking and sanitation
- Non-perishable food: at least a three-day supply and a manual can opener
- Battery powered or hand crank radio
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First aid kit, personal medications and a list of personal medications with dosage instructions
- Whistle to signal for help
- Filter mask or cotton t-shirt, to help filter air
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal hygiene
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
- Important family documents
- Cash to buy ice or other supplies
- Items for unique family needs, such as daily prescriptions, infant formula, diapers, or pet food



## Medical Needs

If you take medicine or use medical treatment on a daily basis, be sure to have what you need on hand to make it on your own for at least a week and keep a copy of your prescriptions as well as dosage or treatment information with your first aid kit.

If you use eyeglasses or oxygen, be sure to have extras in your kit. If you use hearing aids or a wheelchair, make sure that there are extra batteries also included. If you have a service animal or pets, be sure to include food, water, collar with ID tag, and other emergency pet supplies.

## Important Documents and Contacts

It is best to keep documents in a waterproof container. If there is any information related to operating equipment or life-saving devices that you rely on, include those in your emergency kit as well. If you have a communication disability, make sure your emergency information list notes the best way to communicate with you. Have cash in your kits to in case you need to purchase supplies.

## Your Emergency Plan

The reality of a disaster situation is that you will likely not have access to everyday conveniences. To plan in advance, *think through the details of your everyday life*.

Develop a Family Emergency Plan. Your family may not be together when a disaster strikes, so plan how you will contact one another and review what you will do in different situations. Consider a plan where each family member calls, or e-mails, the same friend or relative in the event of an emergency. It may be easier to make a

long-distance phone call than to call across town, so an out-of-town contact may be in a better position to communicate among separated family members.

Create a Personal Support Network. If you anticipate needing assistance during a disaster, ask family, friends and others to be part of your plan. Share each aspect of your emergency plan with everyone in your group, including a friend or relative in another area who would not be impacted by the same emergency who can help if necessary. Include the names and numbers of everyone in your personal support network, as well as your medical providers in your emergency supply kit. Make sure that someone in your support network has an extra key to your home and knows where you keep your emergency supplies. If you use a wheelchair or other medical equipment, show friends how to use these devices so they can move you if necessary and teach them how to use any lifesaving equipment or administer medicine in case of an emergency.

Inform your employer and co-workers about your disability and let them know specifically what assistance you will need in an emergency. Talk about communication difficulties, physical limitations, equipment instructions, and medication procedures. Always participate in trainings and emergency drills offered by your employer.

Create a Plan to Shelter-in-Place. There are circumstances when staying put and creating a barrier between yourself and potentially contaminated air outside (sheltering-in-place) can be a matter of survival. If you see large amounts of debris in the air, or if local authorities say the air is badly contaminated, you may want to shelter-in-place and seal the room. Immediately turn off air conditioning, forced air heating systems, exhaust fans, and clothes dryers. Take your emergency supplies and go into the room you have designated. Seal all windows, doors, and vents. Listen to the AM radio for instructions from local emergency management officials. Two local radio stations are: 1380 AM WPHM and 1450 AM WHLS.



Consider Your Service Animal or Pets. Whether you decide to stay put or evacuate, you will need to make plans in advance for your service animal and pets. Keep in mind that what's best for you is typically what's best for your animals. If you must evacuate, take your pets with you, if possible. However, if you are going to a public shelter, make sure that they allow pets. Some only allow service animals. Bring your pet's shot record, vets contact info, and a kennel if you have one, along with you.

Contact Your Local Emergency Information Management Office. Some local emergency management offices maintain registers of people with disabilities and other special needs so you can be located and assisted quickly in a disaster. Contact St. Clair County Emergency Management (810) 989-6965 for more info. In addition, wearing medical alert tags or bracelets that identify your special needs can be a crucial aid in an emergency situation.

## **Be Informed About What Might Happen**

Some of the things you can do to prepare for the unexpected, such as assembling an emergency supply kit and making an emergency plan are the same regardless of the type of emergency. However, it's important to stay informed about what might happen and know what types of emergencies are likely to affect this region. Be prepared to adapt this information to your personal circumstances and make every effort to follow instructions received from authorities on the scene.

Above all, stay calm, be patient and think before you act.



**For more sources of information on this topic visit:**

ST. CLAIR COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT [www.scchealth.co](http://www.scchealth.co)

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES [www.michigan.gov/mdhhs](http://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs)

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF THE CRUELTY OF ANIMALS [www.aspca.org](http://www.aspca.org)

THE HUMANE SOCIETY [www.humanesociety.org](http://www.humanesociety.org)

AMERICAN RED CROSS [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)