

Emergency Preparedness Guidelines for Patients

Our agency believes in your safety and well-being, particularly in situations that involve natural or man-made disasters. The following outlines some specific potential situations and suggestions as to how you and your family members might handle those situations.

Fire

Remove the patient from the area of immediate danger. If safe to do so, turn off electrical power and oxygen equipment, as you go.

Call **911** and inform the operator of your situation.

If unable to remove a bedfast patient, move him or her to the floor, if possible. Close doors, stuff cracks with wet towel, open window and exit room. Stay on scene to notify EMS personnel of patient location.

As soon as possible after incident, notify agency of patient status and location.

Blizzards and Severe Winter Weather

Be prepared for power outage with flashlights or other portable light source.

Consolidate to a few rooms in the house to stay warm. Put a towel or rag underneath doors to avoid losing heat to other rooms or from cold air getting into the central location. Cover windows to conserve heat. If a fireplace, woodstove or other combustible heating source is being used, pay attention to fire safeguards and ventilation.

If patient stability and need for care is such that the patient can remain at home, ensure that foods that do not require cooking are on hand.

Ensure food intake to generate metabolic heat and fluids to prevent dehydration.

Tornadoes, Severe Thunderstorms, and High Winds

Close all doors, windows, blinds, and curtains.

Ambulatory patients should move to the interior portion of the residence (closets and bathrooms are good). Seek shelter under heavy furniture, mattresses, etc.

If bedfast patients cannot be moved to the interior of the residence, move bed away from windows, cover patient with protective material, such as blankets, pillows, or a mattresses, etc.

Flooding

When in transit, **do not** enter a low water crossing which is flooded. This kind of water is very unpredictable and is probably stronger and moving much swifter than it would appear. Your family member should plan alternate routes to your home when possible when assisting you during flooding conditions.

Remember that when water is present, electrical appliances and lights present an electrocution hazard!

If you are in immediate danger by remaining at home, your family member or an agency employee may transport you to the nearest shelter. Notify the office, as soon as possible, of location and status.

Civil Disturbance

All doors, windows, blinds, and curtains should be closed and a minimum of light should be used in the residence.

You and your family are advised to stay away from windows.

As necessary, you or a family member may call **911** for emergencies and notify the agency office of your status.