

# Environmental Emergencies DSW Training Curriculum

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# **Personal Preparedness: Preparing Yourself and Your Family for an Emergency**

# OBJECTIVES

- At the end of this session, the participants will be able to:
  - Discuss the value of being personally prepared
  - Discuss components of a Personal/Family Plan
  - List Louisiana's Emergency Hazards
  - Discuss local hazards
  - Explain the steps to making a disaster plan
  - Explain how to assist elders to prepare for disasters
  - Describe the "Prepare to Go" bag

# Personal Preparedness

## **Why prepare?**

For you and your family's safety and health.

# Personal Preparedness

## **Why prepare?**

In order to allow you to work, providing necessary services to protect the public's health.

# What's Missing?

“...even the best training would be ineffective if those needed in an emergency do not show up or are not focused on the task at hand.”

Blessman, J et al. “Barriers to At-Home Preparedness in Public Health Employees: Implications for Disaster Preparedness Training.” *J Occup Environ Med* 2007;49:319.

# Barriers to Reporting to Work During a Disaster

## **2001: Pilot training of 50 nurses in NYC**

DOH School Health Program – 90% reported at least 1 perceived barrier to reporting to work during an emergency.

- 32% child/elder care
- 14% transportation
- 14% personal health issues

Quereshi KA et al. “Emergency preparedness training for public health nurses:

A pilot study.” *Journal of Urban Health* 2002;79:413-416.

# Barriers to Reporting to Work During a Disaster

**2005: Survey of 6,428 HCWs from 47 facilities in greater NYC area.**

**Not able to report to work:**

- 33.4% transportation issues
- 29.1% childcare
- 14.9% personal health concerns
- 10.7% eldercare responsibilities
- 7.8% pet care

**Not willing to report to work:**

- 47.1% fear/concern for family
- 31.1% fear/concern self
- 13.5% personal health concerns
- 1.4% eldercare issues

Quereshi K et al. "Health care workers' ability and willingness to report to duty during catastrophic disasters." *Journal of Urban Health* 2005;82:378-388.



# Barriers to Reporting to Work During a Disaster

**2007: Survey of 99 public health employees at a LHD in Michigan.**

Personal preparedness (21 at-home tasks):

- 8% Most prepared (>15 tasks completed)
- 17% Better prepared (11-15 completed)
- 43% Minimally prepared (6-10 completed)
- 32% Not prepared (0-5 completed)

Reasons for not completing tasks:

- 17% No need
- 24% Unclear of what to do
- 43% Lack of time or resources
- 16% Lack of maintenance of a previously completed task

Blessman et al. “Barriers to at-home-preparedness in public health employees: Implications for disaster preparedness training.” *J Occup Environ Med* 2007;49:318-326.

# Personal Preparedness: Preparing for an Emergency

- Know Louisiana's Hazards
- Develop Your Personal/Family Plan
  - Utilize the Disaster Plan Checklist
  - Personal Healthcare Needs
  - Communications
  - Family Meeting Place
  - Child/Elder Care
  - Pet Care
- Prepare to Stay or Go:
  - Prepare Emergency Supplies
  - Prepare a Go Bag

Personal Preparedness: Preparing  
for an Emergency

# KNOW LOUISIANA'S HAZARDS

# Severe Weather

- Winter – Heat source safety or loss of heat
  - Call Energy Company
- Summer – Extreme Heat
  - Drink lot's of liquid, AC if possible if not -open windows, use fans, outside seek shady areas to rest
- Flash Floods
  - Never attempt to drive your vehicle through standing water
- Tornadoes
  - Bath Tub or safest point in home

# Coastal Storms and Hurricanes

## Know Hurricane Evacuation Routes

Residents in **Regions 1, 3, 4, 5 and 9** face the highest risk of flooding from a hurricane's storm surge. Regions 1, 3, 4 and 5 includes all low-lying coastal areas and other areas that could experience storm surge from ANY hurricane making landfall close to the Louisiana coast.

# Local Hazards

## Utility Disruptions

- Power Outages – Use 24-hour hotlines for Energy Company
- Gas Leaks
  - Evacuate immediately and call 911
- Water/Sewer-Related Problems
  - Call appropriate utility emergency number

# Local Hazards

- **Building Collapse or Explosion**

- If you can't get out – go under sturdy furniture

- If you're trapped – tap on a pipe or wall so rescuers can find you

- **Hazardous Materials, Chemical Spills, Radiation Exposure**

- Poison Control Hotline (La #/Nat'l #)

- Follow city advisories – move out of area, stay away from event, remove outer layer of clothing and wash with soap and water.

# Local Hazards

- **Disease Outbreaks & Biological Events**

Follow DHH – Epidemiology and Surveillance Public Notices and instructions

(See family Readiness Guides)

- **Terrorism**

Follow city guidance and media advisories



Personal Preparedness: Preparing  
for an Emergency

# Develop Your Personal/ Family Plan

# Making Your Disaster Plan

## **Personal Healthcare Needs**

- Maintain list of chronic diseases, medications, and necessary medical supplies in your wallet, with your emergency supplies, in your Go Bag, and at work.
- Maintain emergency supply of medications and medical supplies (if possible) with your emergency supplies, in your Go Bag and at work.

# Making Your Disaster Plan

## **Communications**

- Have redundant communications available in your home – landlines (including phone that does not require electricity), cellular phones (maintain extra charged battery).
- Designate an out-of-state friend/relative whom household members can call if separated during a disaster (out-of-state contact may be able to help you communicate with one another when circuits busy).

# Making Your Disaster Plan

## Family/Household Meeting Place

- Decide where your household will reunite if a disaster compromises your home.
- Choose 2 places:
  - 1 place near your home
  - 1 place outside your immediate neighborhood - (library, community center, friend's home)

# Making Your Disaster Plan

Create a contact card for each family member to keep with him/her. Card will include local and long-distance contact numbers as well as meeting places.

Other Important Phone Numbers & Information:

**Family Communications Plan**

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Out-of-State Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Neighborhood Meeting Place: \_\_\_\_\_  
Meeting Place Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

***Dial 9-1-1 for Emergencies!***

# Making Your Disaster Plan

## **Child Care**

- Teach your children:
  - How to call for help
  - How to shut off utilities
  - When to use emergency numbers
  - To call the family contact if they are separated
- If your children are old enough, help them to memorize the family contact and family meeting places.
- Create a network of neighbors, relatives and friends who may be able to assist with childcare.

# Making Your Disaster Plan

Work with caregivers and schools. Ask:

- Do you have a (written) emergency plan?
- How will you safely get my child to a safe, predetermined location?
- How and when will I be notified if a disaster occurs when my child is in childcare/school?
- If I cannot get to my child during or after a disaster, how will you continue to care for my child?

# Making Your Disaster Plan

- Have you and your staff received training on how to respond to my child's emotional and physical needs during a disaster?
  - What kinds of records on children are kept and made available during a disaster?
  - Will you teach my older child what to do during an emergency?
  - Do you have a disaster kit with enough food, water and other essentials to meet my child's needs for at least 3 days?



# Making Your Disaster Plan

- Do the state and local emergency management agencies and responders know about your child care program and where it is located?
- How may I help you during a disaster?

# Making Your Disaster Plan

## **Elder Care/Individuals with Disabilities**

- The elderly may be especially vulnerable during a disaster.
  - Aging is associated with loss of physiologic reserve that becomes apparent in times of stress
  - Physical limitations, sensory deficits, cognitive disorders, or chronic medical illnesses increase their dependency on others
  - Economic disadvantages and language barriers in older citizens hinder their ability to advocate for themselves

# Making Your Disaster Plan

- Assist elders in preparing for disasters – those who live with you as well as those who live on their own.
  - Develop a plan for every place that he or she spends time
  - Include caretakers in planning
- Create a personal support network – make a list of family, friends and others who will be able to assist elders during a disaster.
  - Transportation, food, etc

# Making Your Disaster Plan

- Evaluate capabilities, limitations, needs, and surroundings to determine how these may change during an emergency.
  - Include evaluation of social services and how these may be disrupted during an emergency
  - Include electric-dependent medical equipment, oxygen
- Ensure that elderly individuals maintain a contact card with life saving information - emergency numbers, meeting places, medical conditions, medications and doses.
  - Provide copies to all caretakers and members of support group

# Making Your Disaster Plan

- Address end-of-life care in advance:
  - Encourage elders to consider and determine their wishes
  - Assist elders in formally creating Advance Directives in the form of a health care proxy, a living will, a health care proxy combined with a living will, or do not resuscitate orders
  - Maintain copies of Advance Directives with emergency supplies and in Go Bag

# Making Your Disaster Plan

## **Pet Care**

- What's best for you is probably what's best for your animals!
- Keep your pet's identification information as current as possible. Ensure that your pet wears a collar with ID tags at all times.
- Keep your pet up-to-date on vaccinations. Keep records of vaccinations with your emergency supplies and Go Bag.

# Making Your Disaster Plan

- Keep a supply of food, bottled water, bowls, litter, toys and bedding on hand.
  - Dry food lighter than canned food. Rotate food and water supplies
  - Make plans in case you have to evacuate your home.
    - Try to bring pets with you
    - Public shelters may not accept pets
    - Plan for shelter alternatives (consider planning, in advance, for places to stay where you may bring your pets)

# Making Your Disaster Plan

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# Personal Preparedness: Preparing for an Emergency

# Prepare to Stay or Go

# Prepare to Stay or Go

- Prepare emergency supplies needed to shelter-in-place.
- Prepare emergency supplies that can be taken with you should you need to or decide to evacuate.

# Prepare Emergency Supplies

- One gallon of drinking water per person per day
- Non-perishable, ready-to eat canned foods
- Manual can opener, cups, eating utensils
- First aid kit
- Flashlight
- Battery-operated AM/FM radio
- Extra batteries
- Whistle
- Iodine tablets or one quart of unscented bleach
- Phone that does not require electricity
- Child care, pet, or other special items
- Large pieces of plastic sheeting and duct tape

# Prepare a Go Bag

- Copies of important documents in a waterproof container
  - Insurance cards
  - Birth certificates
  - Deeds
  - Photos IDs
  - Licenses
- Extra sets of car and house keys
- Copies of credit and ATM cards, cash
- Bottled water and nonperishable food (granola bars)
- Flashlight
- Battery-operated AM/FM radio
- Extra batteries
- List of the medications members of your household take with dosages, copies of prescriptions, doctors' names and numbers

# Prepare a Go Bag

- First aid kit
- Lightweight raingear, Mylar blanket
- Warm clothes
- Contact and meeting place information for household, local maps
- Personal hygiene supplies, including garbage bags
- Dust mask (T-shirt or cloth handkerchief may be used)

# References

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<http://www.aap.org/disasters/>
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- U.S. Department of Homeland Security. *Preparing Makes Sense. Get Ready Now*. Available at [http://www.ready.gov/america/\\_downloads/Ready\\_Brochure\\_Screen\\_EN\\_20040129.pdf](http://www.ready.gov/america/_downloads/Ready_Brochure_Screen_EN_20040129.pdf).

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