



Preparedness makes sense for older adults & their loved ones

As we age, our needs and abilities change. Planning ahead for an emergency or disaster becomes even more important.

Whether you live alone, in a retirement community, or depend on a caregiver, it's important to have a plan for what to do before, during and after a disaster. This applies if you are in good health or have physical limitations. It's empowering to identify what you need and to ensure those needs are met when a disaster strikes.

Create a personal support network of neighbors, relatives and friends in case you need help during an emergency or disaster. Discuss your needs and make sure your support network knows:

- Your medications (ideally you have this in a list that you give them);
- Your physical needs and how to operate necessary equipment for your life and safety;
- Emergency plans for the retirement or care center where you may reside;
- Your local and out-of-state contact information.

About MPC Ready

The MPC Ready organization's mission is to work collaboratively to help build disaster prepared, and climate-change ready, neighborhoods through advocacy, education and training, resources, organization and support.

In a disaster, studies show that our most immediate source of help will be the neighbors living closest to us. Emergency response personnel will be overwhelmed and there won't be nearly enough to go around.

Neighborhood-level disaster preparedness efforts, such as those from MPC Ready, help to meet *major gaps in community-wide disaster preparedness*. These efforts will increase our community's resiliency and hasten recovery following a disaster.

For More Information

Visit www.mpcready.org. Call 650-380-3028 or email info@mpcready.org.

Daniel P. Aldrich. *Building Resilience: Social Capital in Post-Disaster Recovery*.

Kathleen Tierney. *Disasters: A Sociological Approach*.

Amanda Ripley. *The Unthinkable: Who Survives When Disaster Strikes – and Why*. 2008.

Oregon Office of Emergency Management:
Two Weeks Ready & Central United States
Earthquake Consortium: Two Weeks Ready

Preparedness for Older Adults



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Getting prepared makes sense

Introduction

Preparing for disasters can be done over time. The traditional advice to have three days' worth of supplies is a good start, and helpful for short-term emergencies.

However, a large earthquake may leave much of our region's transportation routes severely impacted. Delivery of assistance and supplies may be difficult or impossible initially. People will have to count on each other in the community, workplace and at home in order to be safe until help can arrive. It is recommended that we strive to be self-sufficient for two weeks.



Electronic payments

Switch to electronic payment for your Social Security benefits. Federal benefit recipients can sign up by calling (800) 333-1795 or at www.godirect.org.

Check medications, batteries, and other supplies for expiration dates. Refill prescriptions as soon as you are eligible in order to maximize the amount of medication you have on hand.



Communications

If you don't already know how to send text messages, now would be a good time to learn. Following a disaster, phone lines may be overwhelmed and/or not operating. However, text messages typically can go through.

Have a frank conversation with your support network to determine in advance where you will go and who will be able to care for you for at least two weeks.

Ideally, you can stay with family or friends should you need to evacuate your home or from a retirement or care community.

Make a Plan

Label any equipment such as canes, walkers, oxygen tanks or wheelchairs with your name and contact information. Keep hearing aids, glasses and other assistive devices near the bedside. You may want to attach the equipment with Velcro. Some disasters, particularly earthquakes, may cause items to shift. One idea would be to put these small items in a plastic grocery bag and tie it to the bed post (or hang it there if possible).

Hazard Hunt

Conduct a "hazard hunt" in your residence to remove any items that could hinder your movement away from a dangerous area:

- Secure or remove throw rugs and carpet
- Make sure evacuation routes are passable, given any limitations you may have

Keep support items, such as wheelchairs, walkers and other assistive devices, in a designated place so they can be found quickly.



Personal emergency kit

In addition to an emergency kit, older adults should keep specialized items ready, including extra wheelchair batteries, oxygen, catheters, medication, food for service animals and any other items you might need.

Keep a list of the type and model numbers of the medical devices you use. Include extra eyeglasses and hearing aid batteries.

Keep copies of insurance, Medicare cards, and other important documents in your kit in a waterproof bag. You can also have these on a flash drive, but paper is recommended.