EMERGENCY Disasters in Homecare

GUIDE TO FIRE SAFETY AND DISASTER PLANNING

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FIRE! FIRE! FIRE!

Purpose of Section 1
To discuss the benefits of fire safety in homecare.

Objectives of Section 1
By the end of this section you will be able to:

- ✓ name some of the fire hazards that homecare workers face
- ✓ identify through risk mapping potential fire hazards around the client's home.
- ✓ Ways to improve fire safety in the client's home

TASK **1** **Can there be multiple fire-hazards in the client's home?**

What is your group's response to a co-worker who makes this statement?

"My client has Alzheimer's and is a smoker. She has so many newspapers all around the apartment, and hates getting rid of any paper. I also recently noticed a lot of devices plugged into one electrical extension cord in every room. I think I am in danger!"

Question: What are some important things your co-worker should know?
Use the **Factsheets A -E** to help you complete this Task.

SECTION ONE FACTSHEET A

This is Fire

Every day Americans experience the horror of fire. But most people don't understand fire. Only when we know the true nature of fire can we prepare ourselves and our families. Each year more than 4,000 Americans die and approximately 25,000 are injured in fires, many of which could be prevented.

The United States Fire Administration (USFA), a division of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), believes that fire deaths can be reduced by teaching people the basic facts about fire. Below are some simple facts that explain the particular characteristics of fire.

Fire is FAST! There is little time!

- In less than 30 seconds a small flame can get completely out of control and turn into a major fire. It only takes minutes for thick black smoke to fill a house. In minutes, a house can be engulfed in flames. Most fires occur in the home when people are asleep. If you wake up to a fire, you won't have time to grab valuables because fire spreads too quickly and the smoke is too thick. There is only time to escape.

Fire is HOT! Heat is more threatening than flames.

- A fire's heat alone can kill. Room temperatures in a fire can be 100 degrees at floor level and rise to 600 degrees at eye level. Inhaling this super hot air will scorch your lungs. This heat can melt clothes to your skin. In five minutes a room can get so hot that everything in it ignites at once: this is called flashover.

Fire is DARK! Fire isn't bright, it's pitch black.

Fire starts bright, but quickly produces black smoke and complete darkness. If you wake up to a fire you may be blinded, disoriented and unable to find your way around the home you've lived in for years.

(**Continued**)

This is Fire

Fire is DEADLY! Smoke and toxic gases kill more people than flames do.

- Fire uses up the oxygen you need and produces smoke and poisonous gases that kill. Breathing even small amounts of smoke and toxic gases can make you drowsy, disoriented and short of breath. The odorless, colorless fumes can lull you into a deep sleep before the flames reach your door. You may not wake up in time to escape.

SECTION ONE FACTSHEET **B**

Fires in the past

Quick Stats

The Overall Fire Picture – 2007 (NFPA)

- There were 3,430 civilians that lost their lives as the result of fire.
- There were 17,675 civilian injuries that occurred as the result of fire.
- There were 118 firefighters killed while on duty.
- Fire killed more Americans than all natural disasters combined.
- 84 percent of all civilian fire deaths occurred in residences.
- There were an estimated 1.6 million fires in 2007.
- Direct property loss due to fires was estimated at $9.8 billion.
- An estimated 32,500 intentionally set structure fires resulted in 320 civilian deaths.
- Intentionally set structure fires resulted in an estimated $733 million in property damage.

Structure Cooking Fires

• Cooking is the leading cause of fires and fire injuries in structures. Deaths and property losses due to cooking, however, are among the lowest.

• In 2002, cooking fires and injuries peaked at 6 p.m.—the dinner hour. There was a slight decrease in cooking fires in the summer when more outdoor barbecuing and family vacationing occur.

• The leading type of material ignited in cooking fires is food, especially fats, oils, and grease.

• Cooking left unattended is the leading factor contributing to cooking fires.

• A smoke alarm was present and alerted the occupants in 45% of cooking fires.

SECTION ONE FACTSHEET **C**

Common Types of Fire Hazards

COOKING

CANDLES

SMOKING

ELECTRICAL

CHEMICAL

PAPER

SECTION ONE FACTSHEET **D**

Workplace Fires (Client's Home)

Who's at risk

- Client
- Family
- Workers

What Saves Lives

- Fire safety plan
- Smoke detectors
- Fire alarms
- Kitchen fire extinguisher
- Flash lights with extra batteries
- A whistle
- Cell Phone
- Unblock walkways/ hallways

Fire Safety Tips

In the event of a fire, remember time is the biggest enemy and every second counts!

Escape first, then call for help. Develop a home fire escape plan and designate a meeting place outside. Make sure everyone in the family knows two ways to escape from every room. Practice feeling your way out with your eyes closed. Never stand up in a fire, always crawl low under the smoke and try to keep your mouth covered. Never return to a burning building for any reason; it may cost you your life.

Finally, having a working smoke alarm dramatically increases your chances of surviving a fire. And remember to practice a home escape plan frequently with your family.

SECTION ONE FACTSHEET **E**

Keep Your Client's Home Safe

The National Fire Protection Association reports 85% of fire deaths occur in the home, making fire prevention a top priority in every home.

Here is a list of some of the less obvious tips for fire prevention, based on the most common causes of fires:

Cooking equipment

Cooking is the number one cause of home fires.

Keep appliances clean, and wipe surfaces after spills. Clean stove surfaces and ovens regularly.

Wear tight-fitting sleeves, or roll them up when cooking

Keep flammable objects, including pot holders, dish towels and curtains, at least three feet away from the stove.

Assure microwaves have enough room to breathe, that all the vents are cleared of obstructions.

If there is a microwave fire, keep the door closed and unplug the microwave. Make sure to have the microwave oven serviced before you use it again.

A **grease fire** occurs when oil or greasy foods are heated and ignite. The simplest way to fight a grease fire is to carefully slide a lid over the pan. Turn off the burner, don't move the pan, and keep the lid on until the pan cools completely. Baking Soda may also be used to suffocate the fire. NEVER PUT WATER ON A GREASE FIRE. Water causes the grease to splatter and the fire to spread. Also, NEVER attempt to take a grease fire outdoors. It will be too hot to carry and you will drop it, causing a major house fire.

Heating Equipment is the leading cause of home fires during the winter months of December, January and February, and is the second-leading cause of home fires year-round.

SECTION ONE FACTSHEET **E**

Keep Your Client's Home Safe

Continued

Electrical Distribution Equipment

Wiring, outlets, switches, circuit breakers and other electrical devices are the third leading cause of home fires and the second leading cause of fire deaths

Replace or repair loose or frayed cords on all electrical devices.

- If outlets or switches feel warm, shut off the circuit and have them checked by an electrician.
- Try to avoid extension cords. If you feel an extension cord is necessary, make sure that it is not frayed or worn. Do not run it under carpet or around doorways.
- Never overload a socket. The use of "octopus" outlets or "power bar", outlet extensions that accommodate several plugs, is strongly discouraged. Try to limit one high-wattage appliance into each individual outlet at a time.
- If a circuit breaker trips or a fuse blows frequently, cut down on the number of appliances on that line. In many older homes, the capacity of the wiring system has not kept pace with today's modern appliances and can overload electrical systems. Some overload signals include: dimming lights when an appliance goes on, fuses blowing frequently or shrinking TV picture.
- Assure there's plenty of air space around home entertainment units such as the TV and stereo to avoid overheating.

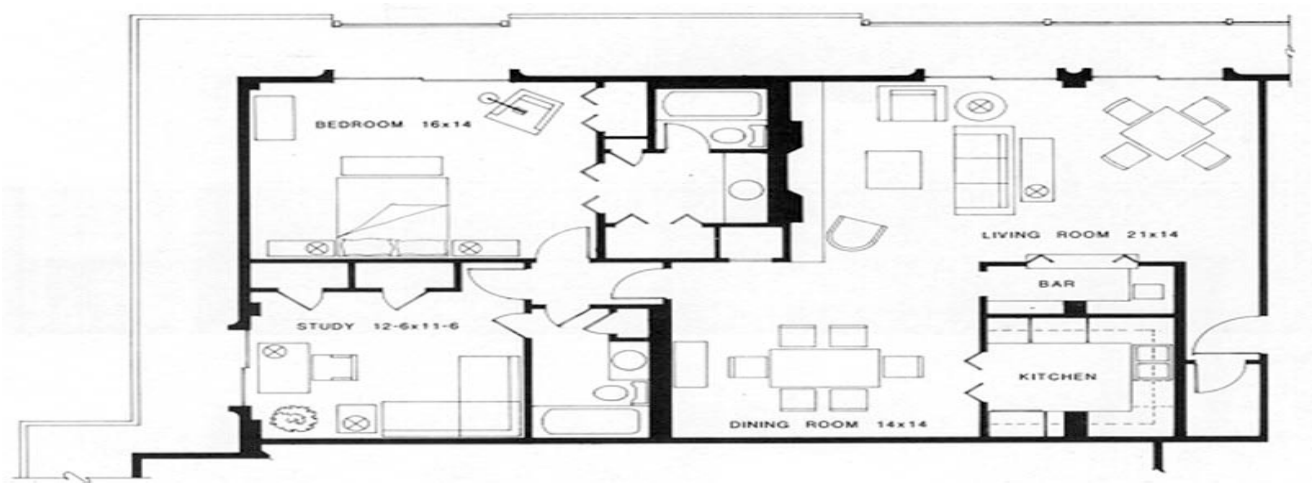
Smoking

Smoking is the leading cause of home fire deaths in the United States.

More to think about

- Get rid of stored newspaper or other unnecessary materials. Newspapers stored in a damp, warm place may ignite spontaneously.
- Install smoke detectors on every level of your home and outside of sleeping areas.
- Mount a fire extinguisher in the kitchen, garage and workshop.
- Agree in advance on an escape plan. There should be at least two exits in every room.

Note: Half of all home fire deaths occur at night, so fire hazard checks and special attention to fire prevention should occur before going to bed.



TASK 2 Risk Mapping Fire Hazards

In your groups, draw the floor plan of your client's home. Identify where all possible **fire hazards** could exist. Use markers and the flip chart paper to draw and label each area on your map. Label all of the places where a:

1. Fire hazard could exist **(place red dot)**
2. Smoke detector should go **(place green dot)**
3. Fire extinguisher should go **(place a blue dot)**

Think about these questions below and be prepared answer in your group's report back:
(Use your experience and all factsheets F-J)

1. On your map, where did possible fire hazards exist?
2. Would you place different types of fire extinguishers in different areas of the home? Why or why not?
3. Is it important to check smoke detectors? why or why not?
4. In a fire emergency, how would you determine if you should stay or leave the home?

SECTION ONE FACTSHEET **F**

Know your Class!

Class A Extinguishers will put out fires in ordinary combustibles, such as wood and paper. The numerical rating for this class of fire extinguisher refers to the amount of water the fire extinguisher holds and the amount of fire it will extinguish.

Class B Extinguishers should be used on fires involving flammable liquids, such as grease, gasoline, oil, etc. The numerical rating for this class of fire extinguisher states the approximate number of square feet of a flammable liquid fire that a non-expert person can expect to extinguish.

Class C Extinguishers are suitable for use on electrically energized fires. This class of fire extinguishers does not have a numerical rating. The presence of the letter "C" indicates that the extinguishing agent is non-conductive.

Multi-Class Ratings
Many extinguishers available today can be used on different types of fires and will be labeled with more than one designator, e.g. A-B, B-C, or A-B-C. Make sure that if you have a multi-purpose extinguisher it is properly labeled.

To operate a fire extinguisher, remember the word **PASS**:

- **Pull** the pin. Hold the extinguisher with the nozzle pointing away from you, and release the locking mechanism.
- **Aim** low. Point the extinguisher at the base of the fire.
- **Squeeze** the lever slowly and evenly.
- **Sweep** the nozzle from side-to-side.

SECTION ONE FACTSHEET **G**

Location, location, location!

Having a fire extinguisher is one thing, having it handy in case of an emergency, is another.

It is recommended to have at least one fire extinguisher on each floor of your home. Also, keep them in plain sight and no more than five feet above the floor. Do not put them in closets because that will cost you valuable time when you are reaching for it. And even though a fire extinguisher may not match your décor, do not put it behind curtains or drapes.

The most important places to have a fire extinguisher are in areas that are more susceptible to fire. These areas are the kitchen and the garage.

Kitchen: According to U.S. Fire Administration statistics, the kitchen is the place where fires most often start. If you have a fire extinguisher in the kitchen, most grease fires can be contained. Do not put the fire extinguisher near the stove as it will be out of your reach if the fire is on the stovetop. You should not have to risk burns just to reach your extinguisher. Therefore, the best place to put the fire extinguisher is by the door of the kitchen so you have easy access to it.

Garage: It is a good idea to keep a fire extinguisher here because in most homes, this is the place we use as storage. Often, leftover paints, solvents, and building materials will be piled up without a second thought. Again, the best location to mount the fire extinguisher is by the door.

SECTION ONE FACTSHEET **H**

Smoke Alarms

In the event of a fire, properly installed and maintained smoke alarms will provide an early warning signal to your household. This alarm could save your own life and those of your loved ones by providing the chance to escape.

THE IMPACT OF SMOKE ALARMS

In the 1960's, the average U. S. citizen had never heard of a smoke alarm. By 1995, an estimated 93 percent of all American homes - single - and multi- family, apartments, nursing homes, dormitories, etc. - were equipped with alarms. By the mid 1980's, smoke alarm laws, requiring that alarms be placed in all new and existing residences - existed in 38 states and thousands of municipalities nationwide. And smoke alarm provisions have been adopted by all of the model building code organizations.

What if the alarm goes off while I'm cooking?

Then it's doing its job. Do not disable your smoke alarm if it alarms due to cooking or other non-fire causes. You may not remember to put the batteries back in the alarm after cooking. Instead, clear the air by waving a towel near the alarm, leaving the batteries in place. The alarm may have to be moved to a new location.

Placing your smoke detector

For minimum protection, **install a smoke detector outside of each bedroom** or sleeping area in your home. For extra safety, install smoke alarms both inside and outside the sleeping area.

Keep your bedroom doors closed while you are asleep. Better, **install detectors on every level of your home**.

Keep your smoke detectors properly maintained. **Test them once a week** to ensure that the detectors are working properly.

Every Spring and Fall **when you change your clocks, remember to change your smoke alarm batteries**. Use only the type of batteries recommended on the detector.

Always follow the manufacturer's installation instructions.

SECTION ONE FACTSHEET I

Carbon Monoxide

What is carbon monoxide?
Carbon Monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless, tasteless, non-irritating gas produced whenever any carbon-based fuel such as wood, charcoal, gasoline, oil, kerosene, propane, or natural gas is not burned properly (incomplete combustion). CO exposure is responsible for more fatal unintentional poisonings in the United States than any other agent, with the highest incidence occurring during the cold-weather months.

Where does carbon monoxide come from?
Potential sources of CO include: unvented kerosene, propane, and gas space heaters; leaking chimneys and furnaces; back-drafting or spillage from furnaces, gas water heaters, wood stoves, and fireplaces; gas ovens and ranges; and automobile exhaust fumes. Tobacco smoke, including second hand smoke, is also a source of CO exposure in homes with smokers.

How can carbon monoxide poisoning affect my health?
Exposure to CO can be deadly. The Consumer Product Safety Commission reports that approximately 200 people per year are killed by accidental CO poisoning with an additional 5,000 people injured.

CO enters the bloodstream and reduces the delivery of oxygen to the body's organs and tissues. Symptoms vary widely based on exposure level, duration, and the general health and age of an individual. Mild exposure symptoms may mimic the flu and include: mild headache and weakness, dizziness, sleepiness, shortness of breath, tightness in the chest, nausea and/or vomiting. High or prolonged exposures to CO can cause: confusion, loss of muscle control, blurred vision, extreme headache and weakness, fainting, convulsions, and death.

What should you do if carbon monoxide poisoning is suspected?

* Move the victim to fresh air immediately.
* Open doors and windows to improve ventilation.
* Turn off combustion appliances and **leave the house.**
* Get to the *Emergency Room* of a local hospital and tell the physician you suspect CO poisoning. However, the victim should not drive if the symptoms are severe or persist once outside. Call for medical assistance.

Protect yourself. Get a carbon monoxide detector!!

SECTION ONE FACTSHEET **J**

Stay in, or Get out (For High Rise Structures)

If The Fire is in Your Apartment

- Get everyone out. Stay low as you go out. Close but don't lock all doors in the apartment as you leave.
- Alert others on the floor by knocking on doors. Activate the fire alarm if there is one.
- Go down the nearest STAIRWAY, holding the railing.
- Call the Fire Department from a floor BELOW THE FIRE or from a street fire alarm box outside.

If the Fire is NOT in Your Apartment

- Stay inside rather than entering smoke-filled hallways, especially if the fire is on a floor **below** your apartment.
- Keep your door closed.
- Unless flames or smoke are coming from below, open your windows a few inches at the top or bottom. Don't break the windows; they may need to be closed later.
- Call the Fire Department with your apartment number and a description of the conditions in your apartment. Firefighters will be directed to your location.
- If you feel you are in grave danger, open a window and wave a bed sheet for firefighters to spot you.

NOT ALL HOMES ARE THE SAME SO BASIC FIRE PLANNING IS ESSENTIAL

GET OUT SAFELY! (All Other Structures)

- Everybody in the household must understand and practice an escape plan from every room.
- If possible, plan multiple exits (at least 2) then practice from each exit.
- Rehearse escape plan both day and night.
- Choose an outside meeting place and take attendance (i.e. neighbor's house, a light post, mailbox, or stop sign)
- Plan how to get infants, small children, and elderly or handicapped family members out quickly and safely.

Section 1
Things to Remember:

1. Fire injuries can be reduced by teaching people about fire safety.

2. Some common types of fire hazards include: Cooking, candles and smoking.

3. An Easy and effective way to prevent fire injuries is with a fire extinguisher and a smoke alarm.

4. Planning and preparation saves lives

"We may brave human laws, but we cannot resist natural ones."

-Jules Verne

(20,000 leagues under the sea)

Disaster/Emergency Readiness

Purpose of Section 2
To learn about the different types of emergency disasters homecare workers may be exposed to.

Objectives of Section 2

By the end of this section you will be able to:

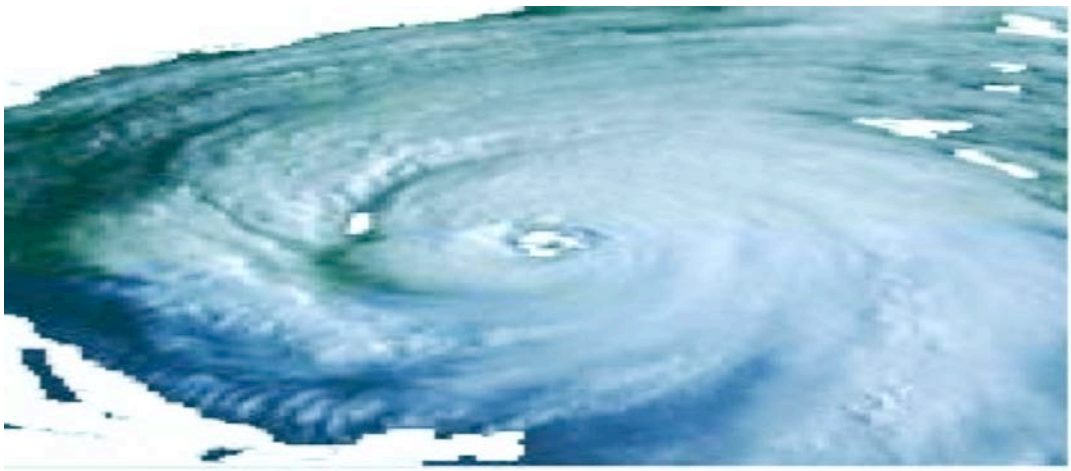
- ✓ Name some of the natural and man-made diasters that homecare workers face
- ✓ Solve real life "what should you do scenarios" (case studies)

TASK 1

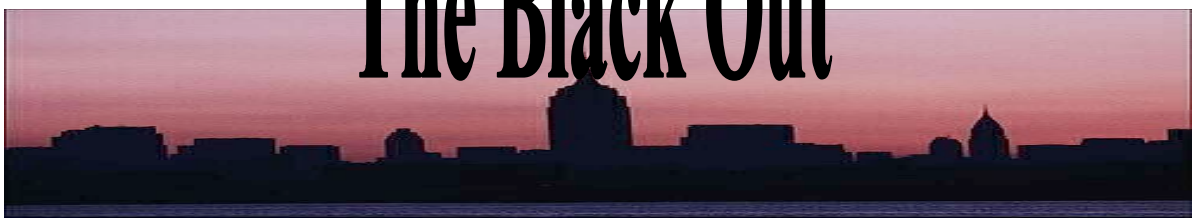
What Could we learn from others?

Often times we hear of situations and wonder what we had done if we were there. This is our opportunity to critically think about how we would react in emergency situations.

Read the following case studies and answer the questions that follow using your group's experience.



The Black Out



Marge a homecare worker, was with her client one evening. Her client suffers from Alzheimer's. Suddenly, the power goes out, several minutes later Marge realizes that they're in a blackout. She looks out the windows and sees everything is dark. She panics and considers leaving the apartment with her client. It was clear the client was scared and did not want to leave the apartment. Marge then searches around for flashlights and finds some old candles. She lights them in every room. Marge tells her client to stay near the candle in the bedroom while she finds out what's going on.

1. In your opinion, was done well?

2. In your opinion, what would you do different?

Our Groups Response is:

Sharon is a homecare worker who works for a client who has Alzheimer's and uses a wheelchair. Her client lives on the 15th floor of a large complex building. While cooking her client's food, she is called by the client to take her to the bathroom. While in the bathroom, Sharon starts smelling smoke and the smoke alarms go off. She searches the apartment and finds that the smoke is coming from kitchen. The food she was cooking is on fire. She panics, wondering if she should leave the apartment with her client or stay. She quickly realizes the fire is still small enough to put out, so she grabs the handle and puts the frying pan into the sink and runs the water. She opens the window to air out the room.

1. In your opinion, was done well?

2. In your opinion, what would you do different?

Our Groups Response is:

"Action springs not from thought, but from a readiness for responsibility."

-Dietrich Bonhoeffer

TASK 2 Major Disasters

In a major disaster, it might be several days before vital services are restored.

Imagine that you have no electricity, no gas, no water and no telephone service. Imagine that all the businesses are closed and you are without any kind of emergency services. What will you do until help arrives?

In your groups, **pick 1 natural** and **1 man-made disaster** from the list on the next page. Discuss how you would prepare yourself and your client for that disaster. Be prepared to share your answers with the whole group.

Use the **Factsheets A-I** to help you complete this Task, and answer these questions?

1. What disasters did your group pick? why?

2. Describe how you would prepare.

Types of Disasters

NATURAL DISASTERS	MAN-MADE DISASTERS
EARTHQUAKES	NUCLEAR & RADIOLOGICAL ACCIDENTS
FLOOD & FLASH FLOODS	**HOME & BUILDING FIRES**
HURRICANES	**HAZARDOUS MATERIALS ACCIDENT**
TORNADOES	**TERRORISM**
THUNDERSTORMS & LIGHTNING	AVIATION ACCIDENTS
SNOW, ICE, & WINTER STORMS	SHIP/MARITIME ACCIDENTS
HEATWAVE & DROUGHT	TRAIN/RAILROAD ACCIDENTS
LANDSLIDES & MUDFLOWS	RIOTS/CIVIL UNREST
TSUNAMIS & OTHER TIDAL ACTION	BRIDGE COLLAPSES
VOLCANOES	DAM BREAKS
WILDFIRES	**POWER OUTAGES**

Disaster-VS-Emergency

WHAT IS A DISASTER?

A disaster (from Greek meaning, "bad star") is a natural or man-made event that negatively affects life, property, livelihood or industry often resulting in permanent changes to human societies, ecosystems and environment.

WHAT IS AN EMERGENCY?

An emergency is a sudden unforeseen crisis (usually involving danger) that requires immediate action. It is a situation that poses an immediate threat to human life or serious damage to property.

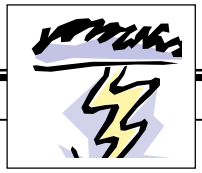
SECTION TWO FACTSHEET **B**

Black Out/Power Outages

What Do I Do During A Blackout? Turn off or disconnect any appliances, equipment (like air conditioners) or electronics you were using when the power went out. When power comes back on, it may come back with momentary "surges" or "spikes" that can damage equipment such as computers and motors in appliances like the air conditioner, refrigerator, washer, or furnace.

- Only use a flashlight for emergency lighting. Never use candles!
- Do not run a generator inside a home or garage.
- If you use a generator, connect the equipment you want to power directly to the outlets on the generator. Do not connect a generator to a home's electrical system.
- Leave one light turned on so you'll know when your power returns.
- Leave the doors of your refrigerator and freezer closed to keep your food as fresh as possible. If you must eat food that was refrigerated or frozen, check it carefully for signs of spoilage.
- If you have a telephone instrument or system at home or at work that requires electricity to work (such as a cordless phone or answering machine), plan for alternate communication, including having a standard telephone handset, cellular telephone, radio, or pager.
- Use the phone for emergencies only. Listening to a portable radio can provide the latest information. Do not call 9-1-1 for information -- only call to report a life-threatening emergency.

Specific Information for People With Disabilities If you use a battery-operated wheelchair, life-support system, or other power-dependent equipment, call your power company before rolling blackouts happen. Many utility companies keep a list and map of the locations of power-dependent customers in case of an emergency. Ask them what alternatives are available in your area. Contact the customer service department of your local utility company(ies) to learn if this service is available in your community



SECTION TWO FACTSHEET C

Terrorism

Devastating acts, such as the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, have left many concerned about the possibility of future incidents in the United States and their potential impact. They have raised uncertainty about what might happen next, increasing stress levels. Nevertheless, there are things you can do to prepare for the unexpected and reduce the stress that you may feel now and later should another emergency arise. Taking preparatory action can reassure you and your client that you can exert a measure of control even in the face of such events.

If Disaster Strikes

- Remain calm and be patient.
- Follow the advice of local emergency officials.
- Listen to your radio or television for news and instructions.
- If the disaster occurs near you, check for injuries. Give first aid and get help for seriously injured people.
- If the disaster occurs near your home while you are there, check for damage using a flashlight. Do not light matches or candles or turn on electrical switches. Check for fires, fire hazards and other household hazards. Sniff for gas leaks, starting at the water heater. If you smell gas or suspect a leak, turn off the main gas valve, open windows, and get everyone outside quickly.
- Shut off any other damaged utilities.
- Confine or secure your pets.
- Call your family contact—do not use the telephone again unless it is a life-threatening emergency.
- Check on your neighbors, especially those who are elderly or disabled.

What Shelter-in-Place Means: One of the instructions you may be given in an emergency where hazardous materials may have been released into the atmosphere is to shelter-in-place. This is a precaution aimed to keep you safe while remaining indoors. (This is not the same thing as going to a shelter in case of a storm.) Shelter-in-place means selecting a small, interior room, with no or few windows, and taking refuge there. It does not mean sealing off your entire home or office building. If you are told to shelter-in-place, follow the instructions at the red cross website

SECTION TWO FACTSHEET **D**

Home/Building fires

Make Your Home Fire Safe

- Smoke alarms save lives. Install a smoke alarm outside each sleeping area and on each additional level of your home.
- If people sleep with doors closed, install smoke alarms inside sleeping areas, too.
- Use the test button to check each smoke alarm once a month. When necessary, replace batteries immediately. Replace all batteries at least once a year.
- Vacuum away cobwebs and dust from your smoke alarms monthly.
- Smoke alarms become less sensitive over time. Replace your smoke alarms every ten years.
- Consider having one or more working fire extinguishers in your home. Get training from the fire department in how to use them.
- Consider installing an automatic fire sprinkler system in your home.

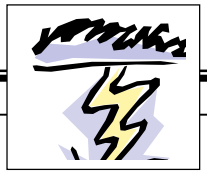
Plan Your Escape Routes

- Determine at least two ways to escape from every room of your home.
- Consider escape ladders for sleeping areas on the second or third floor. Learn how to use them and store them near the window.
- Select a location outside your home where everyone would meet after escaping.
- Practice your escape plan at least twice a year.
-

Escape Safely

- Once you are out, stay out! Call the fire department from a neighbor's home.
- If you see smoke or fire in your first escape route, use your second way out. If you must exit through smoke, crawl low under the smoke to your exit.
- If you are escaping through a closed door, feel the door before opening it. If it is warm, use your second way out.

But, If smoke, heat, or flames block your exit routes, stay in the room with the door closed. Signal for help using a bright-colored cloth at the window. If there is a telephone in the room, call the fire department and tell them where you are.



SECTION TWO FACTSHEET E

Heatwaves

Know What These Terms Mean...

- **Heat wave:** Prolonged period of excessive heat and humidity. The National Weather Service steps up its procedures to alert the public during these periods of excessive heat and humidity.
- **Heat index:** A number in degrees Fahrenheit (F) that tells how hot it really feels when relative humidity is added to the actual air temperature. Exposure to full sunshine can increase the heat index by 15 degrees F.
- **Heat cramps:** Heat cramps are muscular pains and spasms due to heavy exertion. Although heat cramps are the least severe, they are an early signal that the body is having trouble with the heat.
- **Heat exhaustion:** Heat exhaustion typically occurs when people exercise heavily or work in a hot, humid place where body fluids are lost through heavy sweating. Blood flow to the skin increases, causing blood flow to decrease to the vital organs. This results in a form of mild shock. If not treated, the victim may suffer heat stroke.
- **Heat stroke:** Heat stroke is life-threatening. The victim's temperature control system, which produces sweating to cool the body, stops working. The body temperature can rise so high that brain damage and death may result if the body is not cooled quickly.
- **Sunstroke:** Another term for heat stroke.

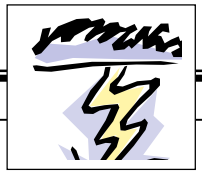
If a Heat Wave Is Predicted or Happening...

- Slow down. Avoid strenuous activity. If you must do strenuous activity, do it during the coolest part of the day, which is usually in the morning between 4:00am and 7:00am
- Stay indoors as much as possible. If air conditioning is not available, stay on the lowest floor, out of the sunshine. Try to go to a public building with air conditioning each day for several hours. Remember, electric fans do not cool the air, but they do help sweat evaporate, which cools your body.
- Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing. Light colors will reflect away some of the sun's energy.
- Drink plenty of water regularly and often. Your body needs water to keep cool.
- Drink plenty of fluids even if you do not feel thirsty.
- Water is the safest liquid to drink during heat emergencies. Avoid drinks with alcohol or caffeine in them. They can make you feel good briefly, but make the heat's effects on your body worse. This is especially true about beer, which dehydrates the body.

Signals of Heat Emergencies...

- **Heat exhaustion:** Cool, moist, pale, or flushed skin; heavy sweating; headache; nausea or vomiting; dizziness; and exhaustion. Body temperature will be near normal.

- **Heat stroke:** Hot, red skin; changes in consciousness; rapid, weak pulse; and rapid, shallow breathing. Body temperature can be very high-- as high as 105 degrees F. If the person was sweating from heavy work or exercise, skin may be wet; otherwise, it will feel dry.



SECTION TWO FACTSHEET **F**

Winter Storms

Stay Tuned for Storm Warnings . . .

- Listen to Weather Radio and your local radio and TV stations for updated storm information.
-

Know What Winter Storm WATCHES and WARNINGS Mean

- A winter storm WATCH means a winter storm is possible in your area.
- A winter storm WARNING means a winter storm is headed for your area.
- A blizzard WARNING means strong winds, blinding wind-driven snow, and dangerous wind chill are expected. Seek shelter immediately!
-

When a Winter Storm WATCH is Issued...

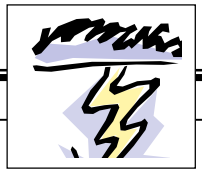
- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio, local radio, and TV stations, or cable TV such as The Weather Channel for further updates.
- Be alert to changing weather conditions.
- Avoid unnecessary travel.

When a Winter Storm WARNING is Issued... Stay indoors during the storm.

- If you must go outside, several layers of lightweight clothing will keep you warmer than a single heavy coat. Gloves (or mittens) and a hat will prevent loss of body heat. Cover your mouth to protect your lungs.
- Understand the hazards of wind chill, which combines the cooling effect of wind and cold temperatures on exposed skin.
- As the wind increases, heat is carried away from a person's body at an accelerated rate, driving down the body temperature.
- Walk carefully on snowy, icy, sidewalks.
- After the storm, if you shovel snow, be extremely careful. It is physically strenuous work, so take frequent breaks. Avoid overexertion.
- Avoid traveling by car in a storm, but if you must...Carry a Disaster Supplies Kit in the trunk.

If You Do Get Stuck...

- Stay with your car. Do not try to walk to safety.
- Tie a brightly colored cloth (preferably red) to the antenna for rescuers to see.
- Start the car and use the heater for about 10 minutes every hour. Keep the exhaust pipe clear so fumes won't back up in the car.
- Leave the overhead light on when the engine is running so that you can be seen.
- As you sit, keep moving your arms and legs to keep blood circulating and to stay warm.
- Keep one window away from the blowing wind slightly open to let in air.



SECTION TWO FACTSHEET G

Thunderstorms

Before Lightning Strikes...

- Keep an eye on the sky. Look for darkening skies, flashes of light, or increasing wind. Listen for the sound of thunder.
- If you can hear thunder, you are close enough to the storm to be struck by lightning. Go to safe shelter immediately.
- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio, or television for the latest weather forecasts.

When a Storm Approaches...

- Find shelter in a building or car. Keep car windows closed and avoid convertibles.
- Telephone lines and metal pipes can conduct electricity. Unplug appliances. Avoid using the telephone or any electrical appliances. (Leaving electric lights on, however, does not increase the chances of your home being struck by lightning.)
- Avoid taking a bath or shower, or running water for any other purpose.
- Turn off the air conditioner. Power surges from lightning can overload the compressor, resulting in a costly repair job!
- Draw blinds and shades over windows. If windows break due to objects blown by the wind, the shades will prevent glass from shattering into your home.

If Caught Outside...

- If you are in the woods, take shelter under the shorter trees.
- If you are boating or swimming, get to land and find shelter immediately!

Protecting Yourself Outside...

- Go to a low-lying, open place away from trees, poles, or metal objects. Make sure the place you pick is not subject to flooding.
- Be a very small target! Squat low to the ground. Place your hands on your knees with your head between them. Make yourself the smallest target possible.
- Do not lie flat on the ground--this will make you a larger target!

If Someone is Struck by Lightning...

- People struck by lightning carry no electrical charge and can be handled safely.
- Call for help. Get someone to dial 9-1-1 or your local Emergency Medical Services (EMS) number.
- The injured person has received an electrical shock and may be burned, both where they were struck and where the electricity left their body. Check for burns in both places. Being struck by lightning can also cause nervous system damage, broken bones, and loss of hearing or eyesight.
- Give first aid. If breathing has stopped, begin rescue breathing. If the heart has stopped beating, a trained person should give CPR. If the person has a pulse and is breathing, look and care for other possible injuries.

Flood and Flash Floods

Know What to Expect

- Know your area's flood risk--if unsure, call your emergency management office, or planning and zoning department.
- If it has been raining hard for several hours, or steadily raining for several days, be alert to the possibility of a flood.
- Listen to local radio or TV stations for flood information.

Floods Can Take Several Hours to Days to Develop

- A flood WATCH means a flood is possible in your area.
- A flood WARNING means flooding is already occurring or will occur soon in your area.

Flash Floods Can Take Only a Few Minutes to a Few Hours to Develop

- A flash flood WATCH means flash flooding is possible in your area.
- A flash flood WARNING means a flash flood is occurring or will occur *very* soon.

When a Flood WATCH Is Issued . . .

- Move your furniture and valuables to higher floors of your home.
- Fill your car's gas tank, in case an evacuation notice is issued.

When a Flood WARNING Is Issued . . .

- Listen to local radio and TV stations for information and advice. If told to evacuate, do so as soon as possible

When a Flash Flood WATCH Is Issued . . .

- Be alert to signs of flash flooding and be ready to evacuate on a moment's notice.

When a Flash Flood WARNING Is Issued . . .

- Or if you think it has already started, evacuate immediately. You may have only seconds to escape. Act quickly!
- Move to higher ground away from rivers, streams, creeks, and storm drains. Do not drive around barricades . . . they are there for your safety.

If your car stalls in rapidly rising waters, abandon it immediately and climb to higher ground.

Chemical Emergencies (Hazardous material accident)

Some chemicals which are safe, and even helpful in small amounts, can be harmful in larger quantities or under certain conditions. Chemical accidents do happen . . . at home and in the community.

How You May Be Exposed to a Chemical You may be exposed to a chemical in three ways:

- Breathing the chemical
- Swallowing contaminated food, water, or medication
- Touching the chemical, or coming into contact with clothing or things that have touched the chemical.

Remember, you may be exposed to chemicals even though you may not be able to see or smell anything unusual.

Major Chemical Emergencies A major chemical emergency is an accident that releases a hazardous amount of a chemical into the environment. Accidents can happen underground, on railroad tracks or highways, and at manufacturing plants. These accidents sometimes result in a fire or explosion, but many times you cannot see or smell anything unusual.

How You May Be Notified of a Major Chemical Emergency In the event of a major chemical emergency, you will be notified by the authorities. To get your attention, a siren could sound, you may be called by telephone, or emergency personnel may drive by and give instructions over a loudspeaker. Officials could even come to your door.

Listen carefully to radio or television emergency alert stations (EAS), and strictly follow instructions. Your life could depend on it.

Do not call the telephone company, and do not call EMS, 9-1-1, or the operator for information. Dial these numbers only for a possible life-threatening emergency.

Section 2
Things to Remember:

1. Disasters take many forms, When disaster strikes, the best protection is knowing what to do.

2. During power outages, use flashlights instead of candles

3. Make your home fire safe and plan escape routes

4. Plan ahead and prepare for extreme weather conditions

5. Some chemicals which are safe, and even helpful in small amounts, can be harmful in larger quantities or under certain conditions. Chemical accidents do happen . . . at home and in the community.

DISASTER PLANNING

Purpose of Section 3

To understand the importance of planning and practicing a universal disaster plan

Objectives of Section 3

By the end of this section you will be able to:

- ✓ Learn about workplace disaster plan
- ✓ Talk to your clients about what to do in an emergency
- ✓ identify and prioritize the most important items needed in your "go-bag".

TASK **1**

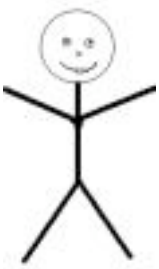
Creating a disaster plan!

A disaster plan is the documented policies and procedures intended to either prevent damage, minimize damage, or recover from damage.

Take a look at fact sheets A-F and determine what are the 8 most important things you should include in your disaster plan..

Fill out the "My disaster plan would include" form on the next page.

Important items for My plan



My Disaster Plan Would Include:

1._____

2._____

3._____

4._____

5._____

6._____

7._____

8._____

SECTION THREE FACTSHEET A

Household Disaster Plan

Talk with your client about the potential disasters that can happen and why it's necessary to prepare for them. Involve member of the client's family in the planning process. By showing them simple steps that can increase their safety you can help reduce their anxiety about emergencies.

* Make sure **everyone knows** where to find your disaster supply kit and go-bags.

* Plan **where to meet after a disaster** if your home becomes unsafe. Choose two places, one just outside your home and one outside your neighborhood in case you are told to evacuate.

* Draw a floor plan and determine the **best escape routes** from your home. Try and identify two escape routes.

* Make sure each member knows who **your family's out-of-state contact** is and instruct them to call this person and tell him/her where they are.

* Locate the gas main and other utilities and **make sure family members know when and how to turn them off**.

*** Practice your evacuation routes.**

Plan how to take care of your pets in case of an evacuation. Pets are not allowed in public emergency shelters for health and safety reasons.

SECTION THREE FACTSHEET **B**

Persons with disabilities

Emergencies can present additional challenges for seniors and people with disabilities. Being prepared for any emergency takes planning. While the City responds to disasters, only you can take steps to identify the risks you may face and ensure your safety. Plan to be self-sufficient for several days without help or emergency services. When a disaster occurs, your personal needs, such as replacing medications and equipment, may not be met right away. Work out a plan that fits your needs and is simple to put into action. By planning ahead, you will feel more confident about protecting yourself following any emergency, whether it is a house fire, power outage, hurricane, or terrorist attack.

- Establish a personal support network with family, friends, neighbors, and coworkers, and determine how you will help each other in any emergency. Do not depend on one person only.
- If you receive home-based care (e.g. homecare attendant, home health aide, visiting nurse service), include caregivers in developing your plan and familiarize yourself with your homecare agency's emergency plan.
- If you have a pet or service animal, also plan for his or her needs (i.e. temporary relocation, transportation, etc.).
- If you rely on home-delivered meals, always stock nonperishable food at home in case meal deliveries are suspended during an emergency.
- Have a plan with your doctor that addresses emergency prescription refills, if possible.
- If you receive dialysis or other medical treatments, find out your provider's emergency plan, including where your back-up site is located.
- If you rely on medical equipment that requires electric power, contact your medical supply company for information regarding a back-up power source such as a battery. Follow the manufacturer's directions when installing the equipment and the battery back-up. If you use a portable generator for emergency power, follow manufacturer's directions for safe operation, and check with local fire and building officials for regulations governing generator and fuel use. Ask your utility company if the medical equipment qualifies you to be listed as a life-sustaining equipment customer.
- If you rely on oxygen, talk to your vendor about emergency replacements.

SECTION THREE FACTSHEET C

Disaster Evacuation

Evacuation should be addressed as part of everyone's planning efforts. City officials will tell you when to evacuate through the media and direct warnings. Evacuation is used as a last resort when a serious threat to public safety exists. **If you must evacuate, your first plan would always be to stay with friends or family.** In a widespread evacuation affecting a large number of people, the City may open disaster shelters for those who cannot stay with friends or family outside the evacuation zone.

In an unplanned evacuation, such as for a hazardous material spill, officials will advise affected residents to leave the immediate area until the danger can be removed. Always have your Go Bag prepared and easily accessible in case of any evacuation. You may not have time to assemble your belongings, and you may not be allowed back until the danger has passed.

EVACUATE IMMEDIATELY WHEN YOU:

- Are directed to do so by an emergency official.
- Are in immediate danger.

BE PREPARED TO EVACUATE:

- Determine whether you live in a hurricane evacuation zone.
- Know evacuation plans for all the places you and your household members spend time. Often buildings have floor marshals who are responsible for evacuation plans.
- Make alternate transportation plans; the means of transportation you usually use may not be available.
- Practice plans through regular drills. People who practice escape drills can evacuate with greater ease than those who are unfamiliar with the procedures.

WHEN YOU EVACUATE:

- If there is time, secure your home: close and lock windows and doors, and unplug appliances before you leave. Authorities will instruct you if it is necessary to turn off utilities.
- Wear sturdy shoes and comfortable, protective clothing such as long pants and long-sleeved shirts.
- Bring your Go Bag with you.
- Do NOT use an elevator during a fire or other emergency unless directed to do so by emergency personnel. If power goes out or is shut off, you may become trapped.

Remember, evacuation routes change based on the emergency so stay tuned to the local news for the latest information.

Go to the nearest safe place or shelter as soon as instructed.

SECTION THREE FACTSHEET **D**

Shelter In Place

Shelter in Place

When evacuation to shelters is either inappropriate or impossible, you may be asked to stay where you are. This could be as simple as remaining at home while officials clear hazards from a nearby area, or it could require more active measures during emergencies involving contaminated air.

Identify a room with few doors or windows to shelter in place. Ideally the room should allow at least 10 square feet per person.

When officials advise you to shelter in place, act quickly and follow instructions. Your main objective should be to get to a safe indoor location. You will likely be in your "safe room" for no more than a few hours. Once inside:

- If there is time, close and lock all windows and doors, close fireplace dampers.
- Turn off ventilation systems.
- Make sure your Emergency Supply Kit and Go Bag are ready and available.
- Tune in to local radio or TV stations to receive updates from emergency officials.
- Only seal doors and windows when instructed to do so by emergency officials.

If your children are at school, do not pick them up until the danger has passed and shelter-in-place orders have been lifted. School officials have shelter-in-place procedures. You will only endanger yourself by leaving a safe area during the emergency.

SECTION THREE FACTSHEET **E**

Go BAG

What to Have in Your Hand: Go Bag

Every household should consider assembling a Go Bag (a collection of items you may need in the event of an evacuation). Each household members Go Bag should be packed in a sturdy, easy-to-carry container such as a backpack or suitcase on wheels. A Go Bag should be easily accessible if you have to leave your home in a hurry. Make sure it is ready to go at all times of the year.

- Copies of your important documents in a waterproof and portable container (insurance cards, photo IDs, proof of address, etc.)
- Extra set of car and house keys
- Credit and ATM cards and cash, especially in small denominations. We recommend you keep at least $50-$100 on hand.
- Bottled water and non-perishable food such as energy or granola bars
- Flashlight, battery-operated AM/FM radio and extra batteries. You can also buy wind-up radios that do not require batteries at retail stores.
- Medication and other essential personal items. Be sure to refill medications before they expire. Keep a list of the medications each member of your household takes, why they take them, and their dosages.
- First aid kit
- Sturdy, comfortable shoes, lightweight raingear, and a mylar blanket
- Contact and meeting place information for your household, and a small regional map
- Child care supplies or other special care items

SECTION THREE FACTSHEET **F**

Emergency Preparedness Kits

Emergencies can strike at any time. Be prepared with an Emergency Preparedness Kit, Adult 1- or 3-day. These backpack-style kits contain either one or three days of supplies for an adult, including water, food, radio, a flashlight, batteries and more.

Emergency Preparedness Kit (Adult, 3-day)

An Emergency Preparedness, Adult 3-day, is a complete kit, sufficient for one person, to provide essential items an adult will need for at least three days after a disaster and is intended for storage at home, and to be used at home or in a place where someone may go if local authorities ask for an evacuation. The Red Cross online store offers both a regular and deluxe (higher quality content material) model of the Emergency Preparedness Kit, Adult 3-day

Emergency Preparedness Kit (Adult, 1-day) for the Workplace

An Emergency Preparedness Kit, Adult 1-day, is a complete kit, sufficient for one person, to provide essential items that an adult will need for at least one day after a disaster or emergency strikes in or near the workplace. Workplace kits may be tailored to the unique circumstances of the workplace. For example, if the workplace already provides and makes available OSHA-complaint first aid kits in facilities, then Workplace Emergency Preparedness Kits do not have to contain first aid supplies. If the workplace stores food and water in bulk quantities to be available in emergencies for building occupants, then the workplace kits do not need to have separate food and water in them.

Intended Use of the Items in an Emergency Preparedness Kit

Flashlight

Use the flashlight to find your way if the power is out. Do not use candles or any other open flame for emergency lighting.

Battery-powered Radio

News about the emergency may change rapidly as events unfold. You also will be concerned about family and friends in the area. Radio reports will give information about the areas most affected.

Plastic Sheeting and Duct Tape (Adult, 3-day only)

Use the plastic sheeting and duct tape for sheltering-in-place verses evacuation.

SECTION THREE FACTSHEET **F**

Emergency Preparedness Kits (Continued)

Food

Enough non-perishable food to sustain you for at least one day (three meals) if close to a workplace with stored food or three day supply if at home or other location, is suggested. Select foods that require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking, and little or no water. The following items are suggested:

- Ready-to-eat canned meals, meats, fruits, and vegetables;
- Canned juices; and
- High-energy foods (granola bars, energy bars, etc.).

Water

Keep at least one gallon of water available, or more if you are on medications that require water or that increase thirst. Store water in plastic containers such as soft drink bottles. Avoid using containers that will decompose or break, such as milk cartons or glass bottles.

Medications

Include usual non-prescription medications that you take, including pain relievers, stomach remedies, etc. If you use prescription medications, keep at least three-day's supply of these medications at your workplace. Consult with your physician or pharmacist how these medications should be stored, and your employer about storage concerns.

First Aid Supplies

You should have the following essentials:

- Absorbent Compress 5x9 Dressing
- Adhesive Bandages (Assorted Sizes)
- Adhesive Cloth Tape 5 yds/1"
- Antibiotic Ointment Packets (approx 1g)
- Antiseptic Wipe Packets
- Packets of Aspirin (162mg)
- Pair of Non-Latex Gloves (Size Large)
- Scissors
- Roller Bandage 3"
- Sterile Gauze Pads 3x3
- First Aid Instruction Information

General Information

Your kit should be adjusted based on your own personal needs.
Do not include candles, weapons, toxic chemicals, or controlled drugs unless prescribed by a physician.

DISASTER PLANNING

TASK **2**

Talking to our Clients

(Role play)

Let's see how talking to our client's can assure them that in an emergency, things will be ok.

During the role play, think about the following questions:

- **What was said and done well by the homecare worker?**
- **What would you do or say differently?**

Setting up the role play… At your table pick 1 person who will play the client who doesn't want to discuss a disaster plan, and one person who would play themselves as the homecare worker who must discuss a disaster plan. Use "what if" scenarios with the client to get the client involved if needed.

Things to remember

1. **Develop a disaster plan with your client and their family members, include what to do, how to find each other and how to communicate in an emergency.**

2. **Practice plans by having regular drills**

3. **Always include your client in any disaster planning discussions.**

4. **Shelter in place is when you may be asked to stay where you are (at home or work) until officials clear the area**

5. **You should prepare a "go bag" with all the important information inside it.**

6. **Emergency cards should be filled out for everyone in the home.**

Factsheet Information Resources

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