



**NPM 2014 UCDOH EMPLOYEE E-MAIL: Week 2:**

Distribution Date: September 12, 2014

**Subject line:**

Knowing how to plan for specific needs before a disaster



September is National Preparedness Month (NPM). It is a time to prepare yourself and those in your care for emergencies and disasters. This September, please prepare and plan in the event you must go for three days without electricity, water service, and access to a supermarket, or local services for several days. Just follow these four steps:

- Be Informed
- Make a Plan
- Build a Kit
- Get Involved

While each person's abilities and needs are unique, every individual can take steps to prepare for all kinds of emergencies. By evaluating your own personal needs and making an emergency plan that fits those needs, you and your loved ones can be better prepared.

For seniors and for those with disabilities and special needs consider this:

~It's possible that you will not have access to a medical facility or even a drugstore. Plan to make it on your own, at least for a period of time.

~Identify what kind of resources you use on a daily basis and what you might do if they are limited or not available.

~Create a network of neighbors, relatives and friends to aid you in an emergency. Discuss your needs and make sure everyone knows how to operate necessary equipment. If you work, 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.

~Have enough medications and supplies for at least a week or longer

~ If you use eyeglasses, hearing aids and hearing aid batteries, wheelchair batteries or oxygen, be sure you always have extras in your emergency supply kit. Also have copies of your emergency documents, such as medical insurance, Medicare and Medicaid cards readily available.

~Make arrangements for any assistance to get to a shelter or have a plan to shelter-in-place.

Consider two emergency supply kits. In one kit put everything you will need to stay where you are and make it on your own for a period of time. The other kit should be a light-weight, smaller version you can take with you if you have to leave your home.

If you evacuate your home, **DO NOT LEAVE YOUR PETS BEHIND!** Pets most likely cannot survive on their own and if by some remote chance they do, you may not be able to find them when you return.

If you are going to a public shelter, it is important to understand that animals may not be allowed inside. Plan in advance for shelter alternatives that will work for both you and your pets; consider loved ones or friends outside of your immediate area who would be willing to host you and your pets in an emergency.

Make a back-up emergency plan in case you can't care for your animals yourself. Develop a buddy system with neighbors, friends and relatives to make sure that someone is available to care for or evacuate your pets if you are unable to do so. Be prepared to improvise and use what you have on hand to make it on your own for at least three days, maybe longer.

If you have a service animal, be sure to include food, water, collar with ID tag, medical records and other emergency pet supplies.

For more information on emergency plans, contact the Ulster County Department of Health Public Health Preparedness Program or visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) today!

**UCDOH Public Health Preparedness Program 334-5540/5538**

**Source: The Ready Campaign**