

Senior 911

Hurricane, Tornado, Wildfire Seasons Prompt Senior Care Network to Issue Disaster Safety Preparation Tips for Seniors

The Home Instead Senior Care® Disaster Preparedness Checklist for Seniors:

___ **Tune in.** Contact the local emergency management office to learn about the most likely natural disasters to strike your area. Stay abreast of what's going on through your local radio or television.

___ **Take stock.** Decide what your senior can or can't do in the event of a natural disaster. Make a list of what would be needed if a disaster occurred. For example, if your loved one is wheelchair-bound, determine an evacuation strategy ahead of time. Prepare for whatever disaster could hit the area.

___ **To go or to stay?** When deciding to evacuate, older adults should go sooner rather than later. By waiting too long, they may be unable to leave if they require assistance.

___ **Make a plan.** Schedule a family meeting to develop a plan of action. Include in your plan key people – such as neighbors, friends, relatives and professional caregivers – who could help.

___ **More than one way out.** Seniors should develop at least two escape routes: one to evacuate their home and one to evacuate their community. The local emergency management office can tell you escape routes out of the community.

___ **Meet up.** Designate a place to meet relatives or key support network people outside the house, as well as a second location outside the neighborhood, such as a school or church. Practice the plan twice a year.

___ **Get up and “Go Kit.”** Have an easy-to-carry backpack including three days of non-perishable food and water with an additional four days of food and water readily accessible at home. Have at least one gallon of bottled water per person per day. Refresh and replace your supplies at least twice a year. And don't forget the blanket and paper products such as toilet paper.

___ **Pack extras and copies.** Have at least a one-month supply of medication on hand at all times. Make ready other important documents in a waterproof protector including copies of prescriptions, car title registration and driver's license, insurance documents and bank account numbers, and spare checkbook. Also take extra eyeglasses and hearing-aid batteries. Label every piece of important equipment or personal item in case they are lost.

___ **Your contact list.** Compile a contact list and include people on a senior's support network as well as doctors and other important health-care professionals.

____**If you can't be there.** If you're not living close by to help your loved one, enlist the help of family or friends, or contact a professional caregiving company.

For more information about disaster preparedness, please contact the Home Instead Senior Care network at www.homeinstead.com