



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FOR COMMUNITY-DWELLING AGING ADULTS

HUD Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes – Older Adult Home Modification Program (OAHMP) Emergency Preparedness

Natural disasters are unavoidable and unfortunate occurrences that tend to compromise the safety and livelihood of those involved. As a vulnerable population, older adults who reside in private residences within our communities are at an increased risk for the harmful impact of these unexpected events.

Factors such as medical conditions, memory/cognition, mobility deficits, medical equipment necessity, and accessibility concerns are active concerns that many older adults are faced with in their daily lives. While we cannot prevent natural disasters and adverse events, we can equip these community-dwelling individuals with a working system to enable a prompt and reactive response when disaster strikes.

OAHMP Teams and Occupational Therapists collaborate with community-dwelling older adults and their caregivers to establish effective emergency response planning and preparedness. The following checklist can be used to guide emergency response planning for older adults and their caregivers.

OLDER ADULT EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST

- Educate on safety and preparation strategies for effective evacuation.
- Educate and increase awareness of regional disaster risks and predisposition.
- Identify and mitigate physical and medical barriers that may negatively influence appropriate emergency responses.
- Assess and Identify the Occupational and environmental needs of each client.



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FOR COMMUNITY-DWELLING AGING ADULTS

- Evaluate physical and cognitive capacity to respond effectively to hazards and disasters promptly.
- Establish a plan and emergency supply kit in the event of an unexpected disaster/ emergency encounter.
- Assess individual occupational Roles, physical performance, and hazards within the home environment.
- Provide training for strategies and adaptive tools to manage medications and essential medical equipment in preparation for an emergency.
- Identify and modify entry and exit points of the home to enable clients, their caregivers, and emergency response professionals to navigate safely and consistently.
- Identify and develop a community of support and strategies for emergencies and evacuation necessity.
- Examine/ install fire extinguishers, smoke, and carbon monoxide detectors to mitigate daily risk at home.
- Connect with local/ community partners that offer free or low-cost preparedness resources and training opportunities.
- Establish and build an emergency supply kit with survival essentials.
- Establish and modify a space within the home to shelter in place.

Learn more about Emergency Preparedness and Healthy Homes Disaster Recovery Resources [here](#).

Learn more about the Older Adult Home Modification Program [here](#).