

Emergencies can occur at any time and your best defense is to be prepared. The Regional pamphlet series on emergency preparedness for people with disabilities/special needs includes:

- Hearing
- High-rise Safety
- Mobility
- Non-Visible Disabilities*
- Seniors With Special Needs
- Travel Considerations
- Vision

* This can include communication, cognitive, sensory, mental health, learning or intellectual disabilities.



Personal Support Network

A personal support network is a group of at least three people you know and trust and who would help you during an emergency.

How do you create a support network?

- Ask people you trust if they are willing to help you in case of an emergency. Identify contacts for important locations such as home, work or school. Neighbors are often the closest and most available contacts in an emergency.
- Tell these support people where your emergency kit is stored. Give one member a key to your home.
- Include a support network contact who is far enough away that they are unlikely to be affected by the same emergency.
- Work with your support network to develop a plan that meets your needs.
- Practice your emergency plan with your network. If applicable, show them how your special needs equipment works.

This Information is drawn from the Emergency Preparedness Guide for People with Disabilities/ Special Needs from Public Safety Canada. This brochure has been prepared by the Regional Director of Emergency Management from the Town/County of St. Paul; Town of Elk Point and the Summer Village of Horseshoe Bay.

High-rise Safety for Individuals with Special Needs/Disabilities



High-rise buildings present unique challenges when evacuation is necessary during an emergency. Residents should make themselves aware of:

- building superintendent's name, phone number and alternate number
- names of individuals who monitor the floors (if established) from a safety perspective
- frequency of evacuation drills and who conducts them
- location of fire extinguishers, automated external defibrillator units and oxygen tanks where applicable
- location of fire alarm pull stations

Your Emergency Plan

- advise your building manager of your special needs and/or requirements prior to an emergency; ask about large printed signs that you can place in your window should you need assistance
- familiarize yourself with your building's evacuation plan know where all escape routes and locations of emergency doors/ exits are on each floor
- know the location of emergency buttons in the building and exits that are wheelchair accessible if applicable
- request that an emergency evacuation chair be installed on the floor you live or work on, preferably close to the stairwell

- if you live in a high rise building, create a buddy system with your neighbors and regularly practice your emergency response plan with them
- if you rely on any life sustaining equipment/apparatus, develop an emergency back-up plan that will ensure the equipment is operable in the event of a power outage

Dos - Assisting People with Disabilities

- check on neighbors and/or co-workers with special needs to find out if they need your help during an emergency or evacuation
- listen actively to what the individual with special needs is saying
- during an emergency evacuation (if time permits), offer to carry the person's emergency survival kit along with any special equipment or assistive devices
- review previous categories in this series on how to assist people with specific disabilities and/or special needs

Don'ts - Assisting People with Disabilities

- in general, avoid attempts to lift, support or assist in moving a person down the stairs, unless you are familiar with safe techniques



IS YOUR FAMILY
PREPARED?

Additional Items for Your Emergency Survival Kit

- personal alarm that emits a loud noise to draw attention to your whereabouts
- supply of food items appropriate to your dietary restrictions
- supply of medications and assistive devices as required
- supply of plastic bags for storing garbage/personal waste
- names and contact information of your neighbors, superintendent and property/building manager
- laminated copy of your building's evacuation plan and diagram of escape routes and location of emergency doors/ exits on each floor
- any other contingency supplies unique to your special needs



TIP: expand your network by getting to know your neighbors.