

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.

Travel Considerations for Individuals with Special Needs



When traveling locally or internationally, people with disabilities and seniors with special needs should take extra time to research and plan their trip to make their travel experience safe and enjoyable. This includes preparing in advance, an emergency plan and “ready-to-go-bag” with emergency survival items.

Your Emergency Plan

- before traveling, get tips from the Foreign Affairs and International Trade website at www.voyage.gc.ca where you can register and order a free copy of the booklet “Bon Voyage But...” containing contact information for your destination’s Canadian Office and Emergency Operations Centre
- discuss your particular accommodation needs with your travel agent
- discuss your trip with your doctor to prepare contingency plans in case of illness
- obtain necessary travel medical insurance
- divide your medications and medical supplies between your carry-on and check-in baggage, keeping them in their original labeled containers, and bring copies of your prescriptions with you
- always wear your MedicAlert bracelet
- inform your travel companions on how to assist you in an emergency
- if traveling alone, establish a network (e.g. hotel staff) that can assist you during an emergency
- if you have difficulty using stairs, request a room on a lower floor

- review the hotel emergency exit plan
- if needing to evacuate, bring your emergency “ready-to-go-bag” and any assistive devices you may need

Dos - Assisting People with Disabilities

- check on fellow travelers with visible disabilities or 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 and how they might need your help
- if they speak in a foreign language that you do not understand, try to communicate using gestures
- during an emergency evacuation if time permits, offer to carry the person’s emergency survival kit along with any special assistive devices they will need
- review previous categories in this series of pamphlets on how to assist people with specific disabilities or special needs

Don’ts - Assisting People with Disabilities

- do not let the person become separated from their wheelchair or mobility aids



Remember: individuals are best at knowing their own needs and these should be respected

Additional Items for Your Emergency Survival Kit

- supply of food items appropriate to your dietary restrictions
- supply of medications/assistive devices appropriate to your disability (eg. Glucagen Injection if you manage your diabetes with insulin and you are traveling to a remote location that does not have ambulance service)
- laminated personal information card (identifying your special needs, medications, contact information, next of kin etc.) that you keep on your person at all times when traveling
- copy of your travel medical insurance and other important travel documents
- a personal alarm that emits a loud noise to draw attention to your whereabouts
- small container that can store or disintegrate syringes or needles safely (if applicable)
- anti-nausea and anti-diarrhea pills and pain medication
- Sunblock, insect repellent
- dictionary to help you communicate in a foreign language any other contingency supplies unique to your disability or special needs

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