



Plan to be safe.



**Emergency Preparedness Checklist**

for Nursing Homes,  
Assisted Living Facilities,  
and Group Homes



## Facility administrators comment on the checklist and broader emergency education efforts:

“We’re so lucky to be living in Montgomery County....We feel cared about.”

—**Chandra Kumar,**  
Administrator, Maplewood  
Park Place CCRC, Bethesda

“We appreciate not being forgotten or overlooked in the emergency planning.”

—**Michelle Kraus,**  
Administrator, Mariner  
Health Care, Silver Spring

## Other comments offered during site visits:

“We appreciate all of the good ideas.”

“Thank you for bringing some areas we need to improve on to our attention.”

“We put our plan into place and it worked very well during the hurricane.”

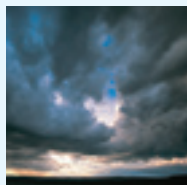
“After the hurricane, we can see some areas we need to improve on, but basically, it was business as usual.”

## GOALS AND USES

The Montgomery County Advanced Practice Center for Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response is pleased to provide public health professionals with this Emergency Preparedness Checklist. The checklist is designed to ensure that health care facilities are not only well prepared but also able to shelter-in-place and remain self-sufficient during a variety of emergencies. It has proven to be a useful tool in:

- Emergency preparedness training, planning, and assessment
- Annual quality-of-care surveys
- Follow-up inquiries and consultation
- Efforts to contact facility administrators during actual emergencies

Although licensing and quality standards vary by jurisdiction, public health professionals and local, state, and federal regulators can view the checklist as a template that is readily adaptable to their needs and uses.



## BACKGROUND

Public Health Services of the Montgomery County, Maryland Department of Health and Human Services developed the voluntary checklist as part of a broader planning and education effort in the wake of the September 11, 2001 attack on the nearby Pentagon and subsequent anthrax and sniper scares in the region. Of particular concern was the likelihood that further emergencies might leave local hospital emergency rooms unnecessarily inundated with residents from nursing homes and other care facilities. Public Health Services’s Licensure and Regulatory Services staff assembled a Disaster Planning Workgroup of nurses, environmental health inspectors, a social worker, a program manager, an administrative specialist, and facility ombudsmen. The Workgroup presented four training workshops on emergency preparedness for administrators and key staff of nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and group homes for minors, the elderly, the chronically mentally ill, and the developmentally disabled. The Workgroup developed the Emergency Preparedness Checklist to assess the effectiveness of the training and identify topics for further education and assistance.

## EFFECTIVENESS

Within a year of the training workshops, all skilled nursing homes and large assisted living facilities in the county had reviewed and up-

dated their emergency plans to include sheltering-in-place. Several facilities had replaced their generators with more powerful models. Although not required by law to have a generator, all but one of the large assisted living facilities had acquired one. A severe storm and later Hurricane Isabel in late summer 2003 put the new systems to the test. With the contact information generated by the checklist, Licensure and Regulatory staff succeeded in reaching almost every facility (about 400) by telephone before the hurricane and found that many were putting their emergency plans into place. Routine calls for emergency transport did occur, and additional follow-up has shown that some facilities still need to purchase a NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) weather radio and establish adequate water supplies for three days’ self-sufficiency.

Licensure and Regulatory Services has incorporated the checklist into its annual quality-of-care surveys of nursing homes and large assisted living facilities. The checklist enables the surveyor to assess each facility’s level of preparedness and helps reinforce the training workshops. Surveyors believe the ongoing surveillance and reinforcement are especially important because of turnover in facility leadership. Moreover, since each facility receives a copy of the checklist, it also serves as a baseline and reminder for the administrators in their efforts to develop and enhance their organization’s preparedness.



# for Nursing Homes, Assisted Living Facilities, and Group Homes

## FACILITY INFORMATION

Facility name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

## ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Completed by \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## PREPAREDNESS CRITERIA

### Facility

1 Does the facility have a plan to shelter-in-place?  Yes  No  In progress. Status: \_\_\_\_\_

2 Is the building secure before and after visiting hours?  Yes  No  In progress. Status: \_\_\_\_\_

3 Can the facility obtain extra medicines from its pharmacy provider in an emergency (overnight and on weekends)?  Yes  No  In progress. Status: \_\_\_\_\_

4a Does the facility maintain a three-to five-day supply of food and water (one gallon per person per day)?  Yes  No  In progress. Status: \_\_\_\_\_

4b Who is the contractor for food and water? Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

5a Does the facility have emergency outlets in all residents' rooms and critical common areas?  Yes  No  In progress. Status: \_\_\_\_\_





**Facility** *(continued)*

5b If not, how does the facility plan to provide illumination in those rooms? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6a Does the facility have an emergency generator?  Yes |  No |  In progress. Status: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6b If so, what fuel does the generator use? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6c What systems will the generator power? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6d How long will the fuel last until it must be replenished? \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount of days

6e Who is the fuel contractor? Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

7a Does the facility have oxygen tanks on the premises?  Yes |  No |  In progress. Status: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7b If so, of what type and how many? Type \_\_\_\_\_  
Number \_\_\_\_\_

7c Who is the oxygen contractor? Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

8 Does the facility have a NOAA weather radio?  Yes |  No |  In progress. Status: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



**Supplies**

9 Has the facility identified and kept in working condition necessary tools and equipment (flashlights, batteries, tarps, radios, cell phones, and fans)?  Yes |  No |  In progress. Status: \_\_\_\_\_

10 Does the facility provide alternative means for hand washing?  Yes |  No |  In progress. Status: \_\_\_\_\_

11 Does the facility maintain a reserve supply of linen?  Yes |  No |  In progress. Status: \_\_\_\_\_

12 How does the facility handle trash, soiled linen, and other waste material? \_\_\_\_\_

**Training**

13 Has the facility provided training or information on emergency preparedness to its staff?  Yes |  No |  In progress. Status: \_\_\_\_\_

14 Has the facility provided training or information on emergency preparedness to the residents' families?  Yes |  No |  In progress. Status: \_\_\_\_\_

15 Does every shift have a staff member trained to turn off the ventilation system?  Yes |  No |  In progress. Status: \_\_\_\_\_

**Community Outreach**

16 Has the facility considered reaching out to its neighbors as a source of assistance during a widespread emergency?  Yes |  No |  In progress. Status: \_\_\_\_\_

17 Has the facility encouraged collaboration with its neighbors by proving emergency preparedness training?  Yes |  No |  In progress. Status: \_\_\_\_\_







In 2004 Public Health Services of the Montgomery County, Maryland Department of Health and Human Services became one of the first eleven public health agencies in the nation to be recognized as Public Health Ready by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The county is home to one of eight Advanced Practice Centers for Public Health Preparedness (APCs) funded by NACCHO through the CDC. The Montgomery County APC developed the Emergency Preparedness Checklist in conjunction with the county's Licensure and Regulatory Services program.

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