

# Mercer MRC

## A Newsletter for and about our volunteers



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### National Preparedness Month

September is National Preparedness Month. This month serves as a reminder that we should all take actions to prepare, now and throughout the year, for emergencies that could affect us where we live, work, and travel. The theme for this year is: "Disasters Don't Plan Ahead. You Can." This theme is particularly appropriate given the recent devastation caused by Hurricane Harvey in Texas. This issue focuses on preparing to shelter in place during an emergency, and emergency evacuation if unable to shelter in place.

Visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) for more information on how to prepare.



Flooding in the Houston, TX area from Hurricane Harvey.

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## Individual preparedness

Now is the time to plan for an emergency.

Everyone should:

- ⇒ Make a kit
- ⇒ Make a plan
- ⇒ Stay informed



### Make a kit

Things to include:

- ⇒ 3-day supply of non-perishable food (dried fruit, canned tuna fish, peanut butter, etc.)
- ⇒ Can opener
- ⇒ Paper plates, plastic cups and utensils, paper towels
- ⇒ Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- ⇒ Water – at least a gallon per person, per day for drinking and hygiene
- ⇒ First aid kit
- ⇒ Prescription medication and glasses
- ⇒ Change of clothes to last for at least 3 days, including sturdy shoes
- ⇒ Pet supplies
- ⇒ Toothbrush, toothpaste, soap and other personal items
- ⇒ Feminine hygiene supplies
- ⇒ Battery-powered or hand-cranked radio and extra batteries
- ⇒ Flashlights and extra batteries
- ⇒ Cell phone with charger, extra battery and solar charger
- ⇒ Sleeping bag or warm blanket for everyone in your family
- ⇒ Cash or traveler's checks
- ⇒ Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, ID, and bank records in a waterproof, portable container



## Make a plan

Everyone should have an emergency family communications plan. Because your family may not be together if a disaster strikes, having a communications plan in place will help ensure peace of mind regarding the safety and security of your family members. Before an emergency occurs, you should have a plan in place that outlines how you will send and receive information from your family. This plan should then be activated during the emergency. The following are questions to consider and elements to include in your emergency plan:

*What if something happens and I'm not with my family?" "Will I be able to reach them?" "How will I know they are safe?" "How can I let them know I'm OK?"*

Your plan should be able to answer these questions and provide a method to address the following:

- ⇒ How your family/household will receive emergency alerts and warnings?
- ⇒ How your family/household will get to safe locations?
- ⇒ How the family/household will get in touch with each other if cell phone, internet, or landline doesn't work?
- ⇒ How members of the family/household will let others know they are safe?
- ⇒ How the family/household will get to a meeting place after the emergency?

Planning in advance will help ensure that all members of your household—including children and people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs, as well as outside caregivers—know how to reach each other and where to meet up in an emergency.

For more information on creating a family emergency communications plan, visit: <https://www.ready.gov/make-a-plan>

<i>Family Communications Plan</i>	
Contact name	_____
Telephone	_____
Out-of-town contact	_____
Telephone	_____
Neighborhood meeting place	_____
Meeting place telephone	_____

## Stay informed

- ⇒ How will I receive emergency alerts and warnings?
- ⇒ How will I receive updates/ongoing information?





## Emergency Evacuation

### Before you evacuate:

Plan how you will leave and where you will go if you are advised to evacuate.

- ⇒ Identify several places you could go in an emergency such as a friend's home in another town or a motel. Choose destinations in different directions so that you have options during an emergency.
- ⇒ If needed, identify a place to stay that will accept pets. Most public shelters allow only service animals. Plan how you will care for your pets in an emergency now.
- ⇒ Be familiar with alternate routes and other means of transportation out of your area.
- ⇒ Always follow the instructions of local officials and remember that your evacuation route may be on foot depending on the type of disaster.
- ⇒ Assemble supplies that are ready for evacuation, both a "go-bag" you can carry when you evacuate on foot or public transportation and supplies for traveling by longer distances if you have a personal vehicle.

### If you have a car:

- ⇒ Keep a full tank of gas in it if an evacuation seems likely. Gas stations may be closed during emergencies and unable to pump gas during power outages.
- ⇒ If you do not have a car, plan how you will leave if needed. Make arrangements with family, friends or your local government.

### During an evacuation:

- ⇒ Listen to a battery-powered radio and follow local evacuation instructions.

Take your emergency supply kit.

- ⇒ Leave early enough to avoid being trapped by severe weather.
- ⇒ Take your pets with you, but understand that only service animals may be permitted in public shelters.
- ⇒ Secure your home by closing and locking doors and windows.
- ⇒ Unplug electrical equipment such as radios, televisions and small appliances. Leave freezers and refrigerators plugged in unless there is a risk of flooding. If there is damage to your home and you are instructed to do so, shut off water, gas and electricity before leaving.
- <sup>4</sup>  
⇒ Check with neighbors who may need a ride.



## MRC trainings and events

MRC volunteers have participated in several trainings and programs this summer including:

- ⇒ May 18: Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosives (CBRNE) training
- ⇒ June 10: Ewing Health Dept. rabies clinic
- ⇒ June 20: Lyme & other tick-borne diseases

Upcoming event: Trailer re-organization

WHAT: Organize Mercer LINCS' POD and Medical Needs Shelter Trailers

WHEN: September 15th, 3 p.m.-approx. 6 p.m.

WHERE: Dempster Fire Training Center, Lawrenceville

WHY: Our three trailers need to be organized and prepared to be deployed to a shelter or POD site in the event of an emergency. Mercer LINCS has purchased load bars, ratchets, and bungee cords to assist with securing the medical equipment and other materials inside the trailers.

If you are available and would like to help organize and secure materials, please contact Stephanie Mendelsohn—[smendelsohn@mercercounty.org](mailto:smendelsohn@mercercounty.org)

\*\*Please note that this activity is expected to be physically demanding as it involves repetitive lifting and lowering of potentially heavy boxes and other materials, climbing in and out of multiple trailers, and extensive use of wrist, back, knee, and other joints and muscles.



If you know someone who may be interested in joining the MRC, or you are currently not a member and are interested in joining, please contact Stephanie Mendelsohn, MRC Coordinator, at: [smendelsohn@mercercounty.org](mailto:smendelsohn@mercercounty.org) or call 609-989-6898. 5