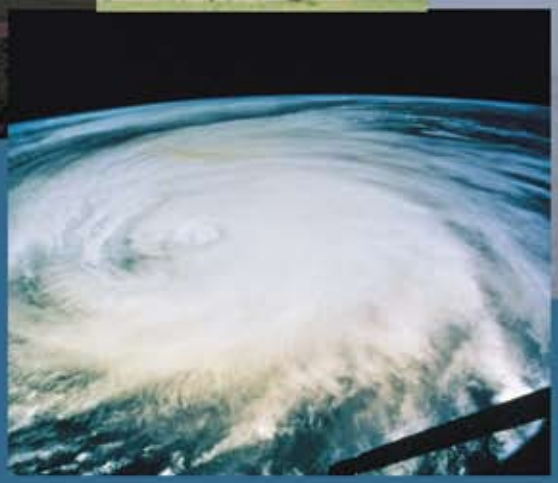
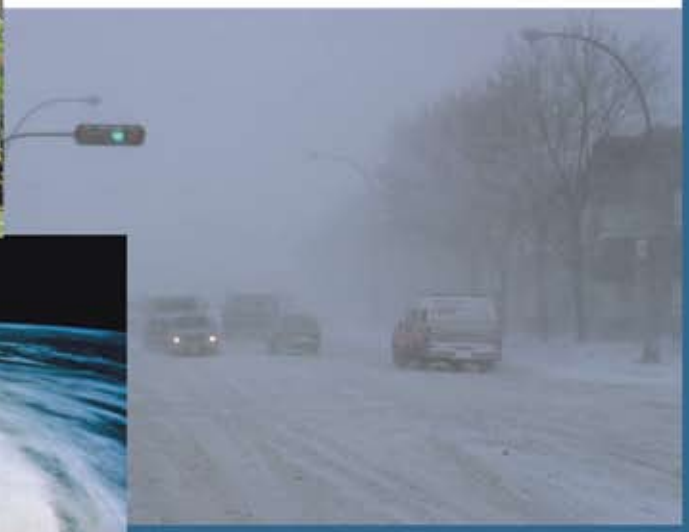
READY FOR ANYTHING

A Disaster Planning Manual for Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs





U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Administration for Children and Families
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Family and Youth Services Bureau

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Introduction

It's midnight. The youth living in your emergency shelter are asleep. You're the lone staff person on duty. Suddenly, you catch a faint whiff of smoke. The fire alarm goes off. Moments later, you hear panicked voices down the hall. You have precious seconds in which to react.

So what do you do? Do you know where your fire extinguishers are? Do the young people you house know how to evacuate the building? Do they know where to meet? What emergency number will you call? What will you bring with you when you evacuate? And what if your facility burns down? Where will you go? How will you get there? What will you do?

It is that final question—what will you do?—that this manual helps you answer. By walking you through the process of preparing for disasters before they happen, it will help ensure that you have an effective response ready. Whether you operate an emergency shelter offering short-term residencies or a transitional living program serving youth who stay for more than a year, this manual will help you take steps to ensure that "disaster" does not equal "catastrophe."

What is a disaster?

Across the country, thousands each year are affected by large-scale disasters: Wildfires in the West. Floods in the North, Midwest, and South. Hurricanes in the Gulf States. Terrorist attacks in major cities.

Disasters can also occur on a smaller scale, caused by everyday events such as power outages, kitchen fires, or burst water mains—anything that has the potential to significantly disrupt the lives of your youth.

But there is good news. While most disasters are impossible to predict, you can plan for them.

Planning for disasters: Your "Ps and Rs"

In disaster planning, there are three areas to consider— a short list we'll call your Ps and Rs:

- **P**revention and Preparedness
- **R**esponse
- **R**ecovery

Prevention and **preparedness** both refer to predisaster planning. Prevention is about taking steps to stop disasters *before* they occur. Preparedness means getting ready for cases when disaster strikes anyway. Chapter 1 will walk you through these crucial steps.

Response refers to your actions during a disaster scenario. Every disaster has two possible responses: **sheltering in place** or **evacuating**. Chapter 2 will help you prepare to make this decision when the time comes.

Recovery refers to the postdisaster period. You will spend this time repairing damaged infrastructure, replacing supplies, and revising your response plan to take into account lessons learned. Chapter 3 will help you with this important self-assessment.

Using this manual

A successful response to disaster begins months, or even years, in advance, when you sit down to develop a plan. This manual is designed to help you construct that plan. In the following pages, you will have the opportunity to answer questions or complete worksheets. Various templates are also included in the appendices to add to your own disaster preparedness binder.

This manual is in no way a final word. There are numerous resources available online; you will find some valuable ones listed

Many communities have also taken significant s in developing their own disaster response plan by establishing emergency shelters, emergenc broadcast stations, evacuation routes, and key government contacts. Be sure to consult with your local or regional government and inquire about existing plans.

Now, grab a pencil and let's get started!

Prevention and Preparedness

The first step in prevention and preparedness is self-assessment. You must take stock of your current situation, considering such factors as location, population, and available resources. Here are some questions to get you started:

- What are the demographics of the young people I serve?
- What are the physical attributes of my facility?
- How ready is my staff for an emergency?
- What supplies and resources do I need?
- How are my facility's records maintained?
- What access to transportation do I have?
- Where would I go during an evacuation?
- What disasters would I most likely face?

This section of the manual will walk you through the above questions. At the end of each question, there will be a checklist that breaks down the concrete actions you can take.

What are the demographics of the young people I serve?

Understanding the demographics of the young people you serve will help you begin to understand the unique needs of your disaster plan. Jot down your answers to the following questions:

- Are you running an emergency shelter with a population that is constantly changing, or a transitional living program where the youth remain for a year or more?

- How many youth are present in your facility at any given time?

- Is your population mixed gender or single-sex?

- Does your population include single mothers and their children?

- Does your population include special-needs youth?

Are you running an emergency shelter with a population that is constantly changing, or a transitional living program where the youth remain for a year or more?

The transient nature of an emergency shelter population means that you will likely not be able to get your young people involved in disaster planning. Instead, you (and your staff) will need to develop a fully realized plan, and then reduce its components to a series of "quick guides" that can be quickly distributed and easily understood. Possible formats for these quick guides might include flash cards, pocket guides, and quick reference lists. These quick guides should be included with the orientation materials you hand out.

With transitional living youth, who can stay in residence for a year or more, you should conduct disaster training and drills. You might also consider involving them in the planning process.

How many youth are present in your facility at any given time?

The size of your population affects every aspect of disaster planning. Since it's impossible to anticipate exactly how many youth will be present onsite during a disaster, plan for your maximum occupancy.

Is your population mixed gender or single-sex?

If you have a mixed-gender population and must evacuate, how will you handle the need for separate sleeping spaces at your evacuation site?

Does your population include single mothers and their children?

An evacuation plan must take into account transportation and livable space for young children or infants. If you are forced to take shelter in your facility, you must also have an adequate stockpile of appropriate supplies (see "What supplies and resources do I need?" on page 19).

Does your population include special-needs youth?

Special needs can refer to any number of unique issues present among the young people you serve. If, for example, you have a youth with hearing disabilities, your alarms should be equipped with strobe lights. You may have youth who require a wheelchair or other physical accommodations. You may also have youth with language barriers, strict dietary requirements, or ongoing medical needs, such as daily insulin injections. (See Appendix I for an emergency power planning checklist for people who use electricity and battery dependent assistive technology and medical devices.)

Moving on

Return to the list of questions you answered earlier. Take some time to jot down your concerns and ideas.

What are the physical attributes of my facility?

Are you running a single shelter, or are the young people you serve scattered across numerous sites around the community? Each of these scenarios requires different considerations.

Single facility

Because you are only planning for one site, issues such as evacuations, supplies, staff management, and communication become less complex than if you were managing several sites at once. One comprehensive disaster guide is almost certainly sufficient.

Multiple sites

Do you shelter youth with host-home families? Do your transitional living program youth live independently in off-site apartments? Do you operate several of your own facilities around town?

For programs with multiple sites, the disaster planning process is complex. The likelihood of small-scale, facility-specific disasters (kitchen fires, basement floods, or power outages, for example) means that each site should have its own unique disaster plan in place. Each site should also conduct its own trainings for residents and staff. On a larger scale, though, you must ensure that your disaster plans address how the different sites will communicate with one another, particularly in events requiring region-wide evacuations or the sharing of limited resources (such as transportation). It is critical that you decide early on in the planning process how your sites will work together in the event of an emergency!

What if I have multiple sites? *Ask yourself:*

- Is each location responsible for its own disaster response planning, or will each be considered an extension of your primary facility?

- If each facility, apartment, or host home is drafting its own emergency plan, how will you ensure the plan is complete and comprehensive?

- How will you conduct drills and training with those off site?

- If you plan to bring offsite youth together at your main facility or an evacuation site in an emergency, how will you provide for their transportation?

- How will you ensure that you have enough emergency supplies to provide for both your normal population and these additional youth?

- How will you communicate with offsite young people in the event of an emergency that knocks out power or phone lines?

- How will you communicate with host home families during an emergency to ensure their safety and the safety of youth in their care?

Taking stock

While local building codes and fire regulations will provide much guidance in risk management and disaster prevention, there are other issues for you to consider on your own. Spend an hour or two touring your facility and completing the following worksheet:

- How many **smoke detectors** does your facility have? Where are they located? Are they all operational? What about fire alarms?

- How many **fire extinguishers** do you have on site? Where are they located? What types of extinguishers are they? Has staff been trained in using the fire extinguisher? Have extinguishers recently been inspected?

- How many **exits** does the facility have? Are all door and window locks working? Are all of the exits accessible? Are they clearly labeled?

- What area within the facility offers the most protection for a "**shelter-in-place**" scenario?

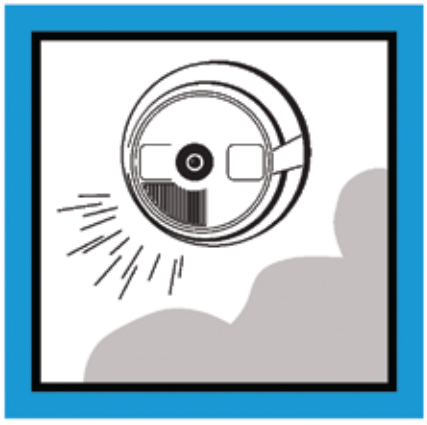
- Where are the water and gas **shut-off valves** located? What about the circuit breaker box? Are they accessible and clearly labeled?

- Are all areas of the facility **well lit**? In cases of power outage, do you have the means to provide emergency lighting?

- Do any areas of the facility **require repair** or extra attention?

How many smoke detectors does the facility have? Where are they located? Are they all operational? What about fire alarms?

Your facility should have, at a minimum, one smoke detector per floor. Ideally, there will be one in every common area, kitchen, and sleeping room. They should be installed either on the ceiling or high on the wall. You should also ensure that they are **dual-sensor smoke detectors**, which combine ionization alarms (which detect flaming, fast-moving fires) and photoelectric alarms (which detect smoldering, smoky fires) into one unit.



Every smoke detector in your facility should be tested once a month. The batteries should be replaced once a year. Track this regular maintenance in the log in **Appendix B**.

If your facility has pull-handle fire alarms, make sure youth and staff know where they are located. All pull alarms should be accessible—not blocked by furniture or other obstacles. If you do not have pull alarms, you must have some other means of sounding a facility-wide alarm (such as a PA system or an air horn) in the event that an immediate evacuation becomes necessary.

How many fire extinguishers do you have on site? Where are they located? What types of extinguishers are they? Have they been recently inspected?

There should be at least one easily accessible fire extinguisher in your facility's kitchen, as well as in any other area where open fires take place. Ideally, you will have at least one fire extinguisher on every floor. Every fire extinguisher in your facility should be rated **ABC**—capable of putting out multiple categories of fires (*see box on page 10*).

Fire Categories

Class A: Fires involving ordinary combustible material (wood, paper, most plastic). Can be extinguished with water.

Class B: Fires involving flammable or combustible material (gasoline, kerosene, grease). Water will spread these fires!

Class C: Fires involving electrical equipment (wiring, outlets, appliances). Water can cause electrical shock!

Be sure that staff feel comfortable using fire extinguishers or are trained in using them.

Every fire extinguisher in your facility should be inspected once a month to ensure that it is fully charged. At least once a year, each extinguisher should undergo a more complete maintenance check, which may require you to contract with a fire safety company or the local fire department. You can schedule and track these monthly and yearly inspections on your maintenance log **(Appendix B).**

How many exits does the facility have? Are all door and window locks working? Are all of the exits accessible? Are they clearly labeled?

Your facility should have at least two unobstructed exits. Ideally, every sleeping room will also have its own means of emergency exit—typically, a window fire escape. Be sure to check that all windows can be opened easily. All window and door locks should be easy to disengage from inside. Spare keys should be available to all staff.

All exits should be clearly labeled, ideally with a lit sign. Clear floor plans should be posted on every floor and in every sleeping room. Each floor plan should show people where they are in the building and give them two possible ways to get outside. The fastest and most direct way should be marked in one color, and the alternate route in another.

What area within the facility offers the most protection for a "shelter-in-place" scenario?

Some disaster scenarios require that you and the young people you serve move to a secure space within your facility—a safe room—to wait for the situation to pass. Look for a room that doesn't have windows and can be closed off from the rest of the facility. Below-ground floors are preferable, although you need to take flood risk into account. If a below-ground shelter is not possible, consider a ground-floor shelter. Avoid choosing a safe room above the ground floor.

Keep in your safe room material that you can use to further seal it off from the rest of the house—duct tape to cover window and door cracks, plastic sheeting to cover vent openings, and so forth. You should also able to access all of your facility's emergency supplies—including a battery-powered or hand-crank radio for news updates—from within the safe room.

Where are the water and gas shut-off valves located? What about the circuit breaker box? Are they accessible and clearly labeled?

Shutting off the water quickly can prevent extensive—and costly—damage from burst water pipes. Shutting off the gas in the event of disasters like tornados and fires can prevent explosions. Shutting off the electricity quickly can save a life. Your shut-off valves and the circuit breaker box should be clearly labeled and easily accessible to all staff. Likewise, every circuit in the circuit breaker box should be plainly identified.

Are all areas of the facility well lit? In cases of power outage, do you have the means to provide emergency lighting?

Good lighting is an important element of disaster prevention. Common areas within your facility—hallways, staircases, bathrooms—should be well lit at all times to prevent accidents. The exterior of your facility should remain lit at night for security.

Electrical outages during disaster scenarios are common. While keeping an emergency generator on site is probably an unnecessary expense (and a potential safety risk as well), having a good supply of battery-powered or hand-crank flashlights is a simple and cost-effective way to provide emergency lighting. Ideally, there will be at least one flashlight in every sleeping room, common room, and office. Flashlight batteries should be tested at least once per month and replaced if necessary. You can track these monthly tests on your maintenance log **(Appendix B)**.

Another option is emergency glow sticks, which can be ordered in large quantities and kept for 2 years or more.

Candles *do not* provide effective emergency lighting. They don't provide much light, and they're a fire risk.

Do any areas of the facility require repair or extra attention?

Adequate building maintenance is an important part of disaster prevention. Loose carpeting, rotting porch planks, stairs with worn tread, and other common "wear and tear" issues can lead to preventable injuries. Minor maintenance problems can lead to larger, more expensive, and potentially more dangerous issues down the road. Take stock of what repairs and general maintenance your facility requires, and then prioritize. Which ones are most important? Which ones can wait? Revisit this list regularly, and set a specific timetable for completing each item.

Check your facility regularly, at least once every season. Each time, add any new maintenance requirements to your list. You can schedule and track seasonal maintenance checks on your maintenance log **(Appendix B)**.

Moving on: Facility checklist

	Test smoke detectors and track monthly checks on the maintenance log (Appendix B)
	Test fire extinguishers and track monthly/yearly inspections on the maintenance log
	Test facility locks; ensure locks can be easily opened from inside
	Ensure facility exits (doors and windows) are unobstructed
	Post facility floor plans (each showing current location within the facility and two exits) in sleeping and common rooms
	Identify facility "safe room"
	Label facility shut-off valves and circuit breaker box
	Inspect facility interior and exterior lighting fixtures; replace burnt bulbs
	Acquire emergency lighting supply
	Inspect battery supply for all existing emergency lighting; schedule and track monthly battery checks on maintenance log
	Inspect overall facility for required maintenance; track seasonal inspections on maintenance log

How ready is my staff for an emergency?

A well-trained and well-prepared staff is a critical component of a disaster plan. Each person on your staff should be given their own copy of your plan. They should also be involved in all future disaster planning.

Your staff should know the answers to these basic questions at all times:

- Where is the facility's disaster plan stored?
- Where are the emergency exits?
- Where are the fire extinguishers?
- Where are spare keys stored?
- How are records stored, and who has access to them?
- Where is the first aid kit?
- Where are the emergency supplies?
- Where is the facility's safe room?
- Where is the rally point in the event of a building evacuation?
- Who is responsible for operating facility vehicles?

You've already thought about some of these questions. You'll think about others in later parts of this manual. What's critical to keep in mind, though, is that it's not enough for you to think about these things. Your staff must, as well.

Taking stock

Just as you took stock of the young people you serve and the attributes of your facility, it is important to take stock of your staff as well. Take a few minutes to answer the questions on the following worksheet:

- How many staff members are normally present on site?

_____

_____

_____

_____

- Who makes important decisions when you are not present?

_____

_____

_____

- Who on your staff can drive your facility's vehicles?

- Who on your staff is trained in first aid and/or CPR? Who is trained to administer medication?

- How is important information relayed to staff in your facility?

- Is your staff able to contact one another when off site? How?

- How often does your staff rehearse emergency response scenarios?

How many staff members are normally present on site?

It is critical for you to know how many staff members are present in your facility at any given time in order to plan how much food, water, and other emergency equipment to have on hand.

You must also consider how responsibilities will be shared among staff members during emergency situations. For example, during the day, when there are usually multiple staff on duty to respond to an emergency, one person might be tasked with calling 911, another with retrieving emergency supplies, and a third with overseeing the building evacuation. Night staff, who tend to work alone or in much smaller numbers, must be trained and ready to assume full responsibility for everything during a disaster.

Later, in the "Response" section of this manual, you will begin to develop individual response guides tailored to the disaster scenarios that are likely to affect your facility.

Who makes important decisions when you are not present?

Obviously, it isn't possible for senior management to always be present. That means you must have clear protocols in place for emergency decisionmaking in your absence. Consider establishing an "emergency management team" within your facility, to ensure that your staff has a clear understanding of who is the designated "emergency manager" at any given moment. Any staff person who might be in a position to make critical decisions should be provided with access to the entire facility—keys to the safe room/emergency supply storage area, access to backup files, and so forth. Furthermore, every staff person should know how to reach your onsite emergency manager quickly (by cell phone or pager, for example) should the need arise.

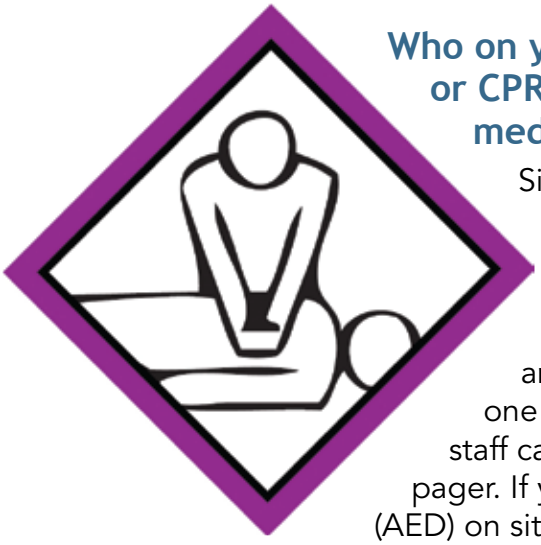
Who on your staff can drive your facility's vehicles?

While most evacuations will take you only steps from your facility, some may require you to go much further (see "Where would I go during an evacuation?" on page 34). It is critical that you have enough vehicles—and drivers—to evacuate all staff and youth.

If your facility has its own vehicle, keep a list of staff members certified to operate it (licensed, trained in its operation, and covered by insurance). At least one certified staff person should be on duty at any given time. Each should have access to vehicle keys, registration and insurance information, and petty cash or credit cards for purchasing fuel.

If you don't have your own vehicle, or if it won't hold your entire population, you will need to arrange to use staff vehicles. Establish well in advance who will drive, how insurance issues will be handled, and how vehicles will be brought to the facility.

For more information on transportation, see "What access to transportation do I have?" on page 29.



Who on your staff is trained in first aid and/or CPR? Who is trained to administer medication?

Since medical emergencies are among the most common crises you can face, having a staff well-trained in basic first aid and CPR is a critical part of disaster planning. If your State doesn't require that all staff be trained in CPR and first aid, ensure that there is always at least one certified staff person on duty and that all other staff can easily reach that person by cell phone or pager. If you have an automated external defibrillator (AED) on site, ensure that at least one staff person on duty at any given time is certified to use it.

Keep track of each staff person's certifications in first aid, CPR, AED use, and administering of medication in his or her personnel file. Since certifications expire after a set period of time, you will need to ensure that staff take regular recertification courses. The Red Cross is an excellent training resource—visit www.redcross.org to learn more about scheduling trainings for your staff.

If you have a residential facility where youth are present for extended periods of time, consider offering them first aid, CPR, or AED training. You can never have too many trained responders!

How is important information relayed to staff within your facility?

During a crisis, your staff must be able to quickly and accurately communicate with you and each other. Ideally, staff should carry walkie-talkies that enable them to contact one another regardless of where they are. Each staff person should understand who is the emergency manager on duty; who is trained in first aid, CPR, or AED usage; who is able to drive the facility vehicle; and who has access to the secure areas of the facility (safe room, emergency supply and file storage). Consider creating a "duty board" to display this information.

It is also important to consider how your staff will obtain important information from outside the facility. If a hurricane is coming, for example, how will your staff know if regional authorities give an evacuation order? Keep a radio or television in a central area of your facility, and ensure that, during a regional disaster, it remains tuned to a local news station so that your staff can remain abreast of developing situations as they occur.

If your facility has a voicemail system, consider creating a special extension on which you can record an emergency message. In the event of a large-scale emergency, off-duty staff can call in and receive critical information and instructions (such as when and where to bring vehicles). If an evacuation becomes necessary, you can continue to receive phone calls and important messages by using the call forwarding feature on your facility's phone.

Finally, if you have a parent agency responsible for making decisions concerning evacuations or other responses to large-scale disasters, ensure that your emergency manager knows how to contact that agency.

Is your staff able to contact one another when off site?

To ensure that staff can communicate even when off site, create an up-to-date staff contact list **(Appendix C)** and post it prominently in a secure location (your main office or staff lounge, for example). The list should include staff member's names, home and cell phone numbers, home addresses, e-mail addresses, and information about whether or not each staff person is certified to operate facility vehicles or is responsible for providing a vehicle during evacuations.

A copy of the list should be given to all staff, included in your staff Go-Bag (see "What supplies and resources do I need?" on page 19), and kept in the glove compartment of each facility vehicle. Regularly update the list to ensure that it is as current as possible.

How often does your staff rehearse disaster response scenarios?

Once you have completed your disaster plan, develop a schedule of drills so that your staff (and, possibly, the young people you serve) can rehearse one or two disaster responses every couple of months. Consider, for example, rehearsing a "shelter in place" scenario to determine how adequate your safe room is, or a medical emergency to practice such steps as notifying emergency responders and retrieving the first aid kit. After each drill, discuss with participants what worked in your response and what could work better, and adjust your plan accordingly (see the "Recovery" section of this manual for more information on revising your disaster plan). Your entire staff should participate in drills; if it is not possible to bring everyone together at once, alternate drills among your various shifts.

Remember that, in preparing effective responses to disasters, repetition is key. Your staff—and your young people—may roll their eyes as they go through the motions of rehearsing various disaster responses. But the more they practice the steps required to deal with a specific disaster, the more likely they'll be able to respond appropriately when it actually occurs.

You can use the maintenance log **(Appendix B)** to schedule and track your disaster response drills.

Moving on

	Assess your staff's level of training in first aid, CPR, AED usage, and medication administering (if applicable). Ensure that each duty shift has at least one staff person on hand who is trained in first aid and CPR. If your staff needs additional training, contact the local chapter of the Red Cross to explore your options. Track each staff person's certification in your personnel files.
	Create a "duty board" for your staff office that lists staff names and other contact information. Include on the board information about each staff person's trainings and certifications and some sort of marker to indicate who is the emergency manager on duty.
	Ensure that your staff has the means to quickly and accurately communicate with each other while on site, even if they are in different locations. Walkie-talkies are a good option.
	Create a staff contact list **(Appendix C)** and post it in a secure area within the facility. Also place copies of the list with your emergency supplies and inside each facility vehicle. Provide each staff person with a copy to take home.
	Develop a bimonthly drill schedule to rehearse disaster response scenarios. Schedule and track your drills on the maintenance log **(Appendix B)**.

What supplies and resources do I need?

Adequate disaster planning requires that you stockpile supplies for emergencies that require either an extended period of sheltering in place or an evacuation. While this manual has already discussed the importance of supplies such as fire extinguishers and emergency lighting, your emergency stockpile requires much more—medical supplies, food and water, and other critical resources that can help you cope with a disaster and its aftermath.

Emergency Supply Storage

Keep all of your emergency supplies in one central location—preferably your facility's safe room. The location should be easy to access, but it should also be locked so that supplies won't be tampered with. On-duty staff (especially the emergency manager) should be able to access the supplies at all times.

Emergency Supply Checklist

What supplies are essential for your emergency stockpile? Here's a list of items that many disaster experts consider essential:

❑ **WATER:** At least a 3-day supply per person. Each person should have access to a gallon of water a day (2 quarts for drinking, 2 quarts for food preparation and sanitation). For instance, if your facility has room for 10 youth and typically has 2 staff people on site, you should store 36 gallons of water (3 days x 12 people). Double that number if your facility is in a very hot climate.

Store water in clean, sealed plastic containers. Date stored water and replace it every 6 months. You can track your water replacement schedule on the maintenance log **(Appendix B)**.

> *While it's true that much of the food and water you store with your emergency supplies will still be good after 6 months, it's much better to be safe than sorry. By replacing your food and water supplies regularly, you ensure that what you have will be usable when you need it. But don't throw old food and water out! Use it!*

❑ **FOOD:** Again, at least a 3-day supply per person. Focus on keeping canned food, dry mixes, and other staples that do not require refrigeration, cooking, or extensive preparation. Avoid salty foods that make people thirsty!

Some good food choices for your emergency stockpile include:

- ❍ ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits, and vegetables
- ❍ protein or fruit bars
- ❍ dry cereal or granola
- ❍ peanut butter
- ❍ dried fruit
- ❍ nuts
- ❍ crackers
- ❍ canned juices
- ❍ nonperishable pasteurized milk
- ❍ comfort foods (chocolate, candy, cookies)

Keep in mind special dietary requirements. If, for example, your facility houses young mothers and their infant children, you will need to stockpile infant formula.

Date stored food and replace it every 6 months. You can track your food replacement schedule on the maintenance log **(Appendix B).**

❑ **MANUAL CAN OPENER:** You might also consider including a utility knife (such as a Swiss army knife) with your supplies.

❑ **MESS KITS:** Enough plastic plates, cups, and utensils and paper towels for your entire population to use. Store plastic plates and cups instead of paper ones so that you can reuse them.

❑ **BATTERY-POWERED OR HAND-CRANK FLASHLIGHTS:** You should already have enough on hand so that every sleeping room, office, and common room has its own flashlight. In addition, keep at least two or three flashlights with your emergency supplies. Check the batteries once a month and track these monthly checks on the maintenance log **(Appendix B).**

❑ **BATTERY-POWERED OR HAND-CRANK RADIO:** Stay abreast of updates on regional disasters, especially during shelter-in-place scenarios, when electricity or television services may be disrupted. Consider getting a NOAA (that's the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) Weather Radio with tone alert. If your radio is battery powered, check the batteries monthly. Track those checks on the maintenance log **(Appendix B)**.

❑ **EXTRA BATTERIES:** It's impossible to have too many. Be sure that you have extras of every battery type you use.

- ❑ **WHISTLE:** Whistles make excellent signaling devices, especially during situations in which you need to assemble everyone quickly. Your stockpile of emergency supplies should include several. Also include one in each youth's and staff person's Go-Bag (see Go-Bags, page 23).

- ❑ **MATCHES:** Strike-anywhere matches are ideal. Make sure they are stored in a water-proof container.

- ❑ **SANITATION AND HYGIENE ITEMS:** Stockpile several rolls of toilet paper, packs of sanitized hand wipes, and feminine hygiene products. If young babies are present, include diapers as well.

- ❑ **DUST MASKS:** To help filter contaminated air, dust masks should be available for each person in your facility. They need to be replaced after they're used.

- ❑ **PLASTIC SHEETING, DUCT TAPE, TOWELS:** For shelter-in-place scenarios, these items can help you further seal off a safe room. Plastic sheeting and duct tape can be used to secure cracks in or around windows, while towels are excellent for stuffing into the space beneath doors. Dampening towels can provide additional protection against fires.

- ❑ **BLANKETS OR SLEEPING BAGS:** Have enough on hand for each person in your facility, both for sleeping and for keeping warm in the event of cold-weather emergencies.

- ❑ **HOUSEHOLD CHLORINE BLEACH, MEDICINE DROPPER:** Mix nine parts water and one part chlorine bleach to make an effective disinfectant. You can also use bleach to treat water by adding 16 drops of bleach per gallon of water. Do not use scented bleaches, color-safe bleaches, or bleaches with added cleaners.

- ❑ **PAPER AND PENCILS:** You never know when you'll need to write something down.

- ❑ **WRENCH OR PLIERS:** These are often necessary to turn off utilities (gas, water).

- ❑ **MAPS:** Have both local and regional maps on hand. Mark key locations (evacuation sites, drug stores, hospitals) and evacuation routes on all local maps.

❑ **NONPRESCRIPTION DRUGS:** Keep a supply of nonprescription drugs that includes the following:

- ❍ aspirin or aspirin-free pain reliever
- ❍ antidiarrhea medication
- ❍ antacid
- ❍ syrup of ipecac (for inducing vomiting)
- ❍ laxative
- ❍ activated charcoal

❑ **FIRST AID KIT:** Keep at least one well-stocked first aid kit with your emergency supplies. It should be stored in an obvious, easy-to-reach location. A well-stocked first aid kit will include, at a minimum, the following:

- ❍ 2 absorbent compress dressings (5 x 9 inches)
- ❍ 25 adhesive bandages (assorted sizes)
- ❍ 1 adhesive cloth tape (10 yards x 1 inch)
- ❍ 5 antibiotic ointment packets (approximately 1 gram)
- ❍ 5 antiseptic wipe packets
- ❍ 1 blanket (space blanket)
- ❍ 1 breathing barrier (with 1-way valve)
- ❍ 1 instant cold compress
- ❍ 2 pairs of latex-free gloves (size: large)
- ❍ 2 hydrocortisone ointment packets (approximately 1 gram each)
- ❍ scissors
- ❍ 1 roller bandage (3 inches wide)
- ❍ 1 roller bandage (4 inches wide)
- ❍ 5 sterile gauze pads (3 x 3 inches)
- ❍ 5 sterile gauze pads (4 x 4 inches)
- ❍ oral thermometer (mercury- and glass-free)
- ❍ 2 triangular bandages
- ❍ tweezers
- ❍ first aid instruction booklet

Preassembled first aid kits can be purchased from the Red Cross or most drug stores.

Any time you use supplies from the first aid kit, replace them without delay. Schedule a regular check (at least once every 3 months) of the first aid kit to ensure that it is complete and ready to use. You can track these checks on the maintenance log **(Appendix B)**.

❑ **AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR (OPTIONAL):** An automated external defibrillator, or AED, is a device that analyzes the heart's rhythm for abnormalities and, if necessary, directs the rescuer to deliver an electrical shock to the victim. This shock, called *defibrillation*, can help the heart to reestablish an effective rhythm of its own. About 200,000 Americans die from sudden cardiac arrest each year. Up to a quarter of those deaths could have been prevented had an AED been on hand.

Ideally, your facility will have at least one AED. However, they are expensive—a single unit can cost well over $2,000.

Portability

In a local or regional evacuation, you may want to bring most of your emergency supplies with you. Therefore, you need to consider portability. Ideally, keep a stockpile of backpacks (large fixed-frame hiking packs work well) or large duffel bags that will allow you to quickly and efficiently transport most, if not all, of your emergency supplies during an evacuation.

For added efficiency, consider keeping the backpacks or duffel bags preloaded with the bulk of your supplies so that they are ready to go in the event of a rapid evacuation.

Go-Bags

In addition to your stockpile of emergency supplies for the whole facility, you will want to prepare individual emergency bags (called Go-Bags) for use in an evacuation. Go-Bags allow individuals, both youth and staff, to carry with them important records and other personal supplies. A Go-Bag can be anything easily carried by one person—fanny packs, for example, work very well.

Go-Bags for Youth

Creating a Go-Bag for each youth entering your facility should be an essential part of your intake process. Each youth's Go-Bag should include the following:

❑ **HEALTH INFORMATION CARD:** A personalized summary of all pertinent health information, including medications, allergies, medical providers, emergency contacts, special needs, and other relevant information. Young parents should have copies of their children's health insurance cards, immunization histories, and other medical records.

❑ **COPIES OF LEGAL DOCUMENTS:** These include copies of a social security card, identification (driver's license, State identity card), consents or waivers, and other personal documents that you might have on file. Young parents should have copies of their children's birth certificates and other pertinent documents.

- ❑ **PRESCRIPTIONS:** A 3-day supply of prescription medicine as well as copies of existing prescriptions.

- ❑ **KEYRING FLASHLIGHT:** Be sure to regularly check all batteries.

- ❑ **SIGNALING DEVICE:** A whistle, bell, or other personal signaling device.

Store youths' Go-Bags with your other emergency supplies; due to the sensitive nature of their contents, Go-Bags should be secured in a locking container or closet to which only staff have access. When one youth leaves your facility, empty his or her Go-Bag and reassign it to the next youth who arrives.

Go-Bag for Staff

You only need to have one Go-Bag for your staff. In the event of an evacuation, it should be carried by the emergency manager. The Go-Bag should contain the following:

- ❑ **YOUTH ROSTER:** A current list of your youth population, listing full name, emergency contact information, and special needs. You can use this list to take attendance in the event of a building evacuation.

- ❑ **STAFF CONTACT LIST:** A current list of your entire staff, listing name, title, address, and emergency contact number.

- ❑ **IMPORTANT NUMBERS LIST:** A current list of phone numbers and addresses of nearby Red Cross Shelters, hospitals, and urgent care centers.

- ❑ **KEYRING FLASHLIGHT:** Be sure to regularly check all batteries.

- ❑ **SIGNALING DEVICE:** A whistle, bell, or other personal signaling device.

- ❑ **PETTY CASH:** At least $250.00 to cover emergency costs in the event of evacuation. If your facility has a credit card, an extra card should be included in the Go-Bag. Be sure that your emergency manager is registered to use the card!

As with youths' Go-Bags, store this Go-Bag with your other emergency supplies and secure it in a locking container or closet to which only staff have access.

Moving on: Emergency supplies

	Select the area within your facility where you will store your emergency supplies (ideally this will be your safe room).
	Use the emergency supply checklist on page 19 to determine which supplies you need to acquire; acquire those supplies and store them in your supply area.
	Obtain several large backpacks or duffel bags and divide the bulk of your emergency supplies among them.
	Begin tracking your stockpiled water and food on the maintenance log **(Appendix B)**; replace these supplies every 6 months.
	Schedule a check of your first aid kit to take place every 3 months; track this check on the maintenance log.
	Create a Go-Bag for each young person and a Go-Bag for staff; store the Go-Bags in a secure container or closet, preferably with your other emergency supplies.

How are my facility's records maintained?

You probably already have a file system in place to store important documents and records. But how secure are these files in the event of a disaster? Think about your "mission critical" files, such as

- ❑ **Private information on the youth you serve.** These files might include medical records, emergency contact information, prescriptions, and legal documents such as birth certificates and social security cards.
- ❑ **Insurance information.** Policies covering the facility, staff, and vehicles.
- ❑ **Registration information.** For facility vehicles.
- ❑ **Staff information.** Contracts, contact information, schedules, and so on.
- ❑ **Provider contracts.** Contracts with outside providers and partnership agreements with facilities that have agreed to provide transportation or shelter in the event of an evacuation (see "What access to transportation do I have?" on page 29 and "Where would I go during an evacuation?" on page 34 for more information).
- ❑ **Financial information.** Bank accounts, credit card accounts, annual budgets, payroll records.

Chances are, you keep most of these documents on paper. Ideally, though, these critical documents will be stored in both paper and electronic formats. This redundancy can help ensure that key documents survive any disaster scenario, including one in which the facility itself is destroyed, such as a fire or tornado. You can turn any paper document into an electronic file by using an electronic scanner, available widely and at very low cost.

Whether your facility's records are stored on paper or as electronic documents, you must carefully consider how to keep them safe.

Paper documents

Security and privacy are important considerations when storing paper documents, particularly when it comes to young people's personal or medical records. But you also need to be concerned with how safe these (and other) critical documents would be in the event of a disaster.

All *original* documents that you keep on site, particularly those of a legal or financial nature, should be stored in a locking, fire- and water-proof container.

If, for ease of access, you keep documents of this sort in regular (locking) file cabinets, they should be duplicates. You might also consider storing original copies of critical documents in an offsite, secure location, such as a bank's safe deposit box. In addition, duplicate paper documents as electronic files as soon as possible, both to increase their redundancy (and, therefore, security) and make them more easily transportable in the event of an evacuation.

Electronic documents

Electronic documents have many advantages over paper documents, particularly when you consider the space required to store them and the ease involved in duplicating them for backup. While legitimate security concerns do exist when it comes to electronic files, these risks do not outweigh the benefits of electronic storage.

Most computer users store electronic documents on their computer's hard drive. This is acceptable as long as the drive is password-protected, with access to sensitive files limited only to trusted staff. However, electronic documents stored on a computer's hard drive are not secure from disaster. If the computer is destroyed, the files are lost as well.

To avoid that possibility, back up your electronic documents to other storage devices—CD-ROMs, flash drives, or floppy disks. Store these backup files in the same sort of container where you store original copies of paper documents—a fire- and water-proof safe, for example, or a bank's safe deposit box. Finally, schedule a regular time to save the most current version of these documents so that your backup files are always up to date.

An even better solution than external storage devices, though, is network storage. Storing your electronic documents on a network, either a local network or the Internet, means that your files will not be affected should some disaster befall your computer. Network file storage also allows you to access your files from anywhere by logging onto the network, which can be very useful in the event of an evacuation.

In the best-case scenario, you should protect your electronic files by using both a storage device and network storage. Redundancy is one of the best ways to ensure that critical information and records remain secure even in the face of disaster.

Moving on: Records checklist

	Ensure that originals of all legal and financial paper documents are stored in a secure, fire- and water-proof location (for example, a safe or bank safe deposit box).
	Create electronic versions of all paper documents.
	Backup all electronic documents onto a storage device, such as a CD-ROM, flash drive, or floppy disk; store these backup files with the original copies of paper documents.
	Move all electronic files to a network drive (either a local network or the Internet) to enable remote access in the event of an emergency evacuation.
	Create a schedule for regular file backups to ensure that your electronic backup files are current.

What access to transportation do I have?

Disasters that require a full evacuation of your facility will be rare. Should one arise, the relocation may be brief—a few days at a partner facility across town, for example, or a day or two spent at a local church or hotel—or it may stretch on for a more extended period. The evacuation may be local, or it may require that you leave the area completely. Whatever the scenario, you must plan in advance how to transport your facility's population from one location to another.

Your first concern is seating. You should have enough seating in facility vehicles to guarantee evacuation for every member of your population. For example, if your facility can house 15 youth and, during peak hours, has 3 full-time staff working, you must be prepared to immediately evacuate 18 people—a number that exceeds the capacity of most large vans. Perhaps your facility has a 15-passenger van on site. How would you transport the remaining three people?

There are three transportation scenarios to consider. In the first, your facility has its own vehicle or vehicles, with enough combined seating that all youth and staff can be transported at once.

The second presumes that your facility does not have its own vehicle(s), or that your facility's vehicle(s) do not have enough combined seating for everyone. In either of these cases, you will have staff provide their own vehicles to help facilitate an evacuation.

What if my organization has scattered-site housing?

Transportation is especially critical if you house youth at more than one site. Different emergency evacuations may require that you transport youth from one site to another, or out of the region entirely.

Consider the following questions:

- Will each site have enough vehicles to handle its transportation needs?
- Will several sites share vehicles?
- Will all of the vehicles be stored in one place?
- Who will be responsible for bringing vehicles to sites affected by a disaster?
- In the event of a large-scale (regional) evacuation, will everyone rally at one site before evacuating, or leave on their own?

There are no right or wrong answers. Weigh your decisions against the realities and needs of your various sites.

The third requires relying on public or third-party transportation. While this is undesirable for several reasons, it may still be an eventuality you'll want to plan for, particularly if you have concerns about access to facility or staff vehicles.

Facility vehicles

The best-case scenario in the event of an evacuation is that you have enough seats in facility-owned vehicles to transport your entire population. However, as with all other aspects of disaster planning, you must take steps to ensure that facility vehicles are ready for this type of use:

- **VEHICLE LOG:** A vehicle log **(Appendix D)** allows you to track a vehicle's maintenance history (see below). It also provides space for you to list the people riding in it (including its driver) during an evacuation. In the event of an evacuation, you can use this list to take attendance at pit stops and ensure that nobody is accidentally left behind. Each vehicle at your facility should have its own vehicle log stored in its glove compartment.

- **REGULAR PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE:** Vehicles designated for use in emergency evacuations must be in good mechanical condition. Regular oil changes as well as inspections to check hoses, belts, brakes, tires, and fluid levels are critical. Vehicles should have a half a tank of gas or more at all times. Track the maintenance history of each vehicle on its vehicle log **(Appendix D).**

- **CURRENT VEHICLE INFORMATION:** Current registration and insurance information should be kept in each vehicle's glove compartment at all times. Copies of this information should also be stored securely with your other records.

- **COMMUNICATION:** If you intend to use more than one vehicle during an evacuation, it is important that the drivers are able to communicate with one another. Each vehicle should be equipped with either a cell phone and charger or two-way radio.

- **NAVIGATION DEVICES AND MAPS:** Ideally, each vehicle will be equipped with a GPS device that is preprogrammed with your evacuation destination (See "Where would I go during an evacuation?" on page 34). Staff who might drive the vehicle should be trained to use it.

  If GPS devices are unfeasible, supply each vehicle with local and regional maps with evacuation destinations clearly marked (and the most direct route to each highlighted in an easy-to-see color). Keep in mind that, during large-scale regional evacuations, some area roads may be closed or designated for emergency vehicles only.

❑ **CHILD SEATS:** If your facility's population includes young mothers and their children, you will need to have enough child seats on hand for every child in your facility. Plan according to the maximum number of children that may be present. Ideally, these child seats will be stored inside the vehicles so that you are ready to go at any time.

❑ **EMERGENCY SUPPLIES:** In addition to communication devices (see above), stock your evacuation vehicles with basic supplies. These include:

- ❍ flashlight with extra batteries*
- ❍ matches or lighter*
- ❍ blankets*
- ❍ first aid kit*
- ❍ multi-purpose pocket tool (with screwdriver and clippers)
- ❍ leather work gloves
- ❍ spare tire, jack, tire iron
- ❍ flares
- ❍ jumper cables
- ❍ brightly colored cloth (for use as a flag or signaling device)
- ❍ small shovel
- ❍ small sack of sand (for generating traction under wheels)
- ❍ extra oil and windshield fluid

**Note: Have these supplies in each vehicle as well as with the facility's emergency supplies. There's nothing wrong with duplication!*

Carrying extra gas inside your vehicle is dangerous, and a full gas can should not be part of your emergency supplies. Also note that you will need to have enough room in your vehicle(s) to carry not just your facility's population, but also your stockpile of emergency supplies.

Staff vehicles

If you do not have enough space in facility-owned vehicles to transport your entire population, you may be forced to use staff vehicles during an evacuation. It is critical, however, that you identify these vehicles before an emergency takes place—you do not want to be in a crisis situation with no volunteers to donate their cars! Consider the following when planning to use staff vehicles in emergency evacuations:

- ❑ **CREATE A VEHICLE LIST:** Create a list of all the vehicles that you would be able to use during an evacuation. Keep track of each vehicle's make and model, license plate number, owner, and available seating (keeping in mind that a "seat" should only be considered a spot in the vehicle with an available seat belt), as well as the phone number to call to reach the vehicle's owner if that person is not on site during the emergency. (See Appendix E for a template.)

- ❑ **DUPLICATE VEHICLE PAPERWORK AND KEYS:** Vital information for each vehicle (registration, insurance information) should be stored securely on site with your other important documents.

In all other respects, treat staff vehicles just as facility vehicles for the purpose of planning for an emergency evacuation. This includes stocking vehicles with supplies, ensuring there is communication between vehicles, using vehicle logs **(Appendix D)**, especially for the purpose of tracking occupants, and so forth.

Third-party transportation

Third-party transportation includes buses, taxis, rental cars, and trains. Where emergency evacuations are concerned, third-party transportation is the least ideal option, primarily because widespread emergencies that might require regional evacuations will often overwhelm the systems that provide such transportation in the first place. Evacuating 20 people on a bus may seem feasible now, but in a disaster scenario, when hundreds or even thousands of people may be competing for the same seats, you may find yourself faced with an impossible dilemma.

But what if third-party transportation is your only viable option? In that case, it is vitally important that you secure your travel arrangements well in advance of a disaster.

Once again, the first question to ask yourself is how many seats you need. All evacuation plans should assume that your facility is full to capacity, with a maximum number of youth and staff present. Once you have determined this number, you must explore what's available. The best (and least expensive) option is to seek out a partnership with individuals in the community or with other agencies (churches, other youth facilities, community centers). If those arrangements aren't possible, contact local transportation companies (bus companies, taxi services, car rental agencies) and inquire about establishing a standing rental agreement in which you reserve the use of that company's vehicles during an emergency evacuation.

Regardless of whether you secure transportation from an individual, an agency, or a company, obtain a signed commitment, or transportation agreement, spelling out the exact terms of your agreement (the number of vehicles reserved,

compensation, drivers). A sample template for a transportation agreement is included in **Appendix F**. You will also need to ensure that you have enough qualified drivers available (either from the person or agency providing the vehicle or your own staff). If, for example, you reserve the use of a bus, you also will need to have someone licensed to operate it.

Post contact information for all of the transportation providers with whom you form agreements so that during an emergency evacuation, staff can request immediate transportation should the situation require it.

Moving on: Transportation checklist

	Determine how many seats you require for an evacuation, taking into account special accommodations (child seats, wheelchair access).
	Determine whether your facility can rely on facility-owned vehicles or whether staff and/or third-party transportation options must be used.
	Ensure that contact information for all staff drivers is included on the staff contact list, and that staff have access to contact information for third-party transportation.
	Create a vehicle log **(Appendix D)** for every facility/staff vehicle.
	Use a vehicle list **(Appendix E)** to track staff vehicles available for use during evacuations.
	Use transportation agreements **(Appendix F)** to spell out transportation arrangements with third-party providers.
	Ensure that each facility or staff vehicle is equipped with adequate emergency supplies, including maps and/or GPS devices, cell phones or two-way radios, and chargers.

Where would I go during an evacuation?

Now that you've thought about the transportation you would use during an evacuation, it's time to consider the next question: Where would you go if you were forced to leave your facility?

There are three kinds of facility evacuations: **building, local,** and **regional.**

- **Building evacuations** are short term and often in response to a fire, bomb threat, or other crisis limited to the facility itself. Your entire population evacuates *on foot* to a secure location within the immediate neighborhood (the "rally point") and waits to return. In the event that a return is impossible, this type of evacuation can become a **local evacuation.**
- **Local evacuations** are due either to a crisis affecting the facility itself (for example, a damaging fire) or one that affects a limited area of the community around the facility (such as a widespread power outage or a water main break). This evacuation is of an indeterminate duration and will involve youth evacuating to another building (or buildings) in the local community until it is safe to return.
- **Regional evacuations** are most typically called for in the face of a looming large-scale disaster (for example, a hurricane) or in the wake of a particularly destructive event (such as a tornado or earthquake). This evacuation involves leaving the affected area, in which alternate local facilities are no longer available, and retreating to a removed area, usually outside a 50- to 100-mile radius.

What if my organization has scattered-site housing?

While building evacuations will be handled on a site-by-site basis, local and regional evacuations raise additional questions.

In the event of a local evacuation, consider the following:

- If one site is affected by a disaster, could you relocate youth to another of your sites?
- If the answer is yes, is each site prepared to handle a short-term influx of youth from another site? And how will youth from one site get to another?
- If the answer is no, how will a different evacuation facility be identified?

In the event of a regional evacuation, consider the following:

- Will each site be responsible for its own evacuation?
- Will youth and staff from all sites rally at one location and then evacuate the region together?
- Will youth and staff from different sites evacuate to the same location, or to multiple locations outside the region?

How will each site handle its transportation needs?

Effective disaster planning requires that you consider all three of these evacuation scenarios. The next few pages will walk you through each one in detail.

Building evacuations

Building evacuations involve moving the youth and staff in your facility to a temporary, safe location a block or so away to wait out the crisis. Most often, you will be able to return to the facility once the crisis has passed.

Here's what to keep in mind as you plan for a building evacuation:

❑ **ESTABLISH A SIGNAL:** Whether this signal is the fire alarm, three blasts on an air horn, a tone sounded over the PA system, or something else, staff and youth should immediately understand that an evacuation is being called for and should know exactly how to respond.

❑ **SELECT YOUR RALLY POINT:** This is a safe, secure location, at least a block from your facility, where your youth and staff can gather, take roll, and decide whether to wait at that site or move to another location. A rally point can be identified by street names ("the corner of Main Street and Fourth Avenue") or landmarks ("in front of the tennis courts"), but it must be easily located, permanent, and mappable (see below).

❑ **DRAW A MAP:** Once you have selected your rally point, draw a map of the local area that shows the location of your facility, the rally point, and the most direct path between the two. This map might be a store-bought local map that you cut out and highlight, or it might be something you draw from scratch. Post copies of the map alongside the facility floor plans you already have on display.

❑ **PREPARE GO-BAGS:** You learned earlier in this manual about the importance of having a portable stockpile of emergency supplies. While it is probably not necessary to bring along everything during a building evacuation, plan on having youth bring their Go-Bags with them. The emergency manager on duty should bring the staff Go-Bag. This will allow you to take roll once you reach the rally point, ensure that critical medications are on hand, and provide access to other resources such as your staff list and emergency money.

What if there are young children on the premises?

If you have young parents in residence, consider how their children will be evacuated.

- Who will be responsible for evacuating the child if the parent isn't present?
- How will you communicate with the parents if they aren't on site?
- If parents and children are separated, how will you reunite them?

Local evacuations

In a local evacuation, youth and staff will move to another building within the local community for an indeterminate period of time, until the crisis is resolved. Local evacuations may be required in the event of water main breaks, fires, long-term electrical outages, and so forth.

Here's what to consider when you're planning for a local evacuation:

- **ARRANGE A FACILITY (OR FACILITIES) TO WHICH YOU CAN EVACUATE:** It seems like a common-sense question, but take a moment to consider: Where within your local community could you take your youth and staff in the event that you had to evacuate your facility for several days?

  If your facility is part of a larger organization, you may have sister facilities throughout the community that could absorb your population. Even if this is the case, make sure your arrangement is clear. Would all of your youth go to one facility? What role, if any, would your staff have at these other facilities? What supplies would the other facilities provide? What would you need to provide? Open, frank communication is essential in successful planning.

  If you don't have sister facilities, you will have to locate alternate, third-party housing for your population. This may sound like a monumental task, but it does not have to be. Research various local options—churches and community centers are great places to start, and schools, local hotels, or even apartment buildings can provide other possibilities. Work on locating a facility (or two) that will agree to become your local evacuation site should an emergency arise. You may not always be able to find an ideal setting—a facility that offers private rooms for youth or sufficient space for meal preparation or private bathrooms—but chances are you can find a place that would make do for a short-term crisis.

  Once you have located a facility, work up an evacuation site agreement with the facility's managers. Spell out clearly expectations regarding cost, duration of stay, notification requirements, and so forth. A sample template for an evacuation site agreement is included in **Appendix G**.

- **VERIFY YOUR TRANSPORTATION:** Confirm that you have transportation for a local evacuation. Depending on the distance to the evacuation facility, walking or public transportation may be an option—but you need to know *before* a crisis strikes how your population will get there. Each vehicle should be equipped with a preset GPS device or a local map clearly showing the route to the evacuation site.

❑ **CHECK YOUR SUPPLIES:** As in a building evacuation, youth and staff should bring their Go-Bags. Because local evacuations last for an indeterminate time, you will probably want to bring the bulk of your emergency supplies with you as well. There is room for common sense here—if, for example, your evacuation site has agreed to provide food for your population, there is little reason to bring your stockpile of food and water. In general, though, ensure that your emergency supplies are fully stocked and portable (packed in duffel bags or backpacks) to facilitate easy transport.

Regional evacuations

Regional evacuations occur in response to drastic, large-scale events such as hurricanes and involve moving youth and and staff to another facility far removed from your current location—typically to a destination 50 to 100 miles away that would not have been affected by the disaster from which you are evacuating. Such evacuations last for an indeterminate amount of time. Once the crisis is resolved, you might return to your normal facility or enter local evacuation mode, if your regular facility is unusable.

Planning a regional evacuation is essentially the same as planning a local evacuation. The complication is that the partnerships you arrange will be with facilities far away from you. A good starting point is to consider what connections you or other members of your staff have to areas far outside your local community—perhaps some members of your staff have friends or relatives who live far away and could provide ideas about possible evacuation sites. Work from the contacts you and your staff have to choose a good evacuation area, then visit that area and research sites with which you could form partnerships.

When you find an evacuation site, create an evacuation site agreement to put your arrangement in writing **(Appendix G)**. Confirm the readiness of your transportation and supplies as you did for your local evacuation plan.

Moving on

	Select a rally point for building evacuations; post maps within the facility showing how to get there.
	Research local facilities that you could use in the event of a local evacuation, and draw up an evacuation site agreement **(Appendix G)**.
	Research facilities well outside of your local area (50 to 100 miles away) that you could use in the event of a regional evacuation; complete an evacuation site agreement.

What disasters would I most likely face?

To effectively plan for a disaster, you must develop individualized response plans for those disasters most likely to affect your facility. Doing so requires that you first assess your risk. Do you live in an area where hurricanes are common? What about earthquakes? Is your facility located in an area considered at high risk for a terrorist strike? And what about smaller-scale disasters, such as medical emergencies and structural fires?

By carefully assessing the real-life risks you face from both large- and small-scale disasters, you can allocate your valuable time toward developing detailed plans for only those scenarios you are most likely to face. There will always be the threat of completely unanticipated disasters, but your overall preparedness should enable you to effectively deal with those situations when they arise.

Large-scale disasters

In its guidebook *Are You Ready? An In-Depth Guide to Citizen Preparedness*, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, known as FEMA, divides large-scale, region-affecting disasters into three basic categories: **Natural, Technological**, and **Terrorism**. Individual disasters within each of these categories are listed below. Circle the disasters you believe represent a realistic threat to your facility.

Natural Disasters

- floods
- earthquakes
- hurricanes
- volcanoes
- thunderstorms, lightning
- land slides, debris flows
- tornadoes
- tsunamis
- winter storms, extreme cold
- wildfires

Technological Disasters

- hazardous material incidents
- chemical emergencies
- nuclear power plant emergencies

Terrorism

- explosions
- nuclear blasts
- biological threats
- chemical threats
- dirty bombs

All of these large-scale disasters are beyond your ability to prevent. However, the planning you've done will go a long way toward ensuring that you can adequately respond to each of these disasters when they occur.

Small-scale disasters

While many people tend to think of the huge, region-affecting disasters listed above when they think about disaster preparedness, the reality is that most disasters are much more localized. Consider, for a moment, which of the following crises could realistically take place in your facility, and circle those you think apply to you:

• building fire • power outage • water main break • gas leak • intruder • bomb threat	• structural collapse (roof, wall) • medical emergencies: - respiratory arrest - drug overdose - cardiac arrest - severe injury - disease, sickness

Did you circle them all? You should have. These are the types of "disasters" that youth facilities can reasonably expect to face on a daily basis, and any one of these events could occur anywhere, anytime. Each one of them can also have a significant impact on your facility's daily operations. Preparing to cope with these small-scale disasters is at least as important as preparing for the larger ones.

Can you think of other small-scale disasters? List them in the space below.

Moving on

By this point, you've accomplished a great deal in your disaster planning. You've prepared your facility, your staff, and your young people. You've considered issues of supplies, transportation, and shelter. You've thought about communication, maintenance, and safeguarding critical records. And you've considered which disasters pose the greatest risk to your facility.

Now, it's time to begin drawing up specific response plans for the disasters you've just identified. You're ready to move on to the next section of this manual, "Response."

RESPONSE

All the preparation in the world will not matter if you do not also plan out the specific course of action you will take when a disaster strikes. Disasters bring with them chaos, confusion, and fear. The most effective way to combat these destructive elements is to have a clear, comprehensive, well-practiced response plan in place. What are your priorities? What supplies are most critical? What phone numbers will you need? What will each staff person's responsibility be? What should the youth who are present do?

This section of the manual will walk you through the process of answering these questions, and will show you how to create your own disaster response plan (using the template located in **Appendix H**) for those disasters that pose the greatest risk to your facility.

The 'big question'

The first decision you must make during a disaster scenario is whether you, your staff, and youth will remain in the facility during the disaster or leave. This decision informs every other part of your disaster plan.

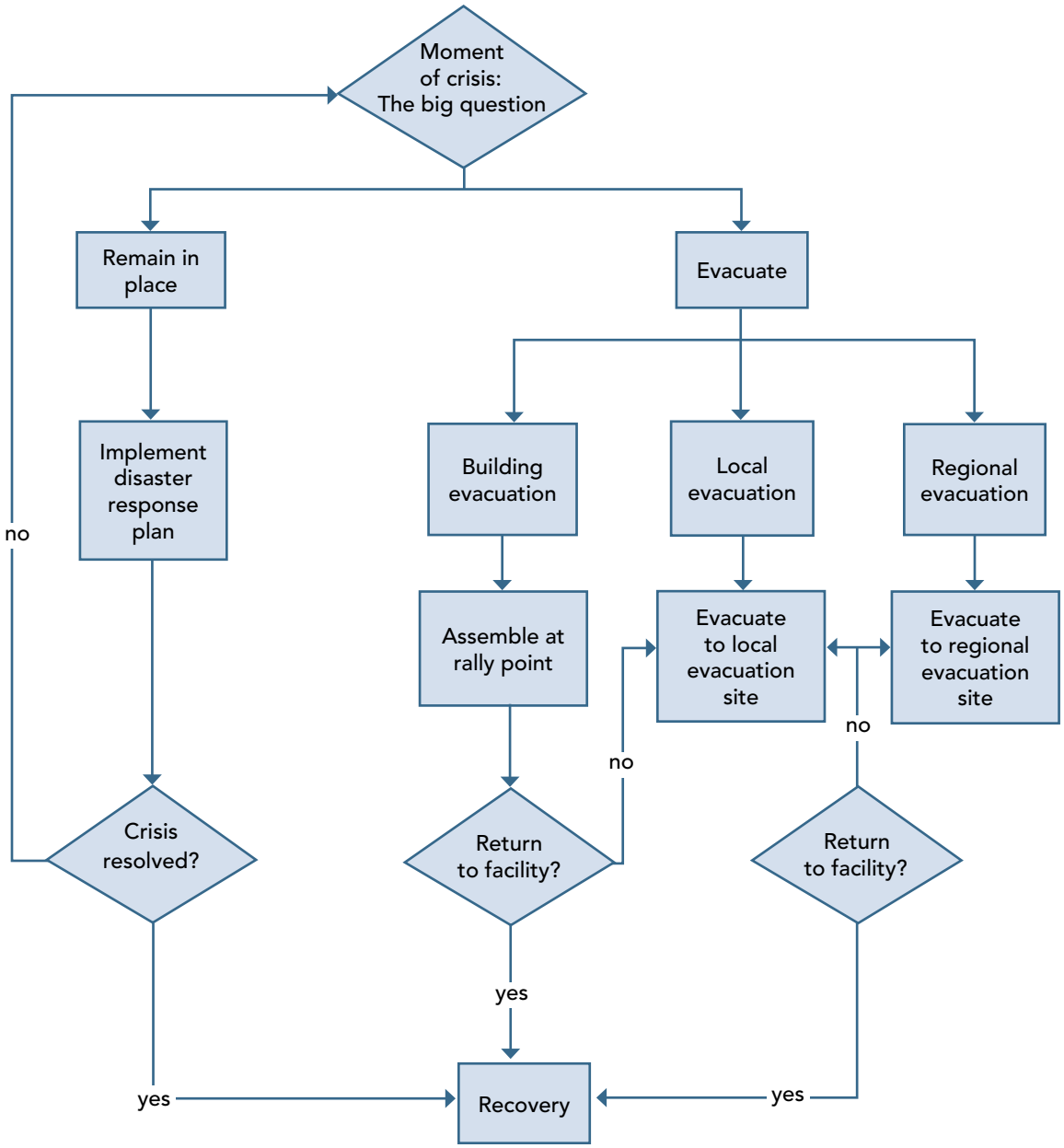
Study the flowchart on the next page. It breaks down the general response options for any disaster scenario, and will help guide you as you draw up your disaster plans.

As you can see, a disaster scenario begins with the "big question" of whether to stay or go and moves through a series of other decisions until you arrive at the recovery stage, at which point the crisis has passed and you can begin to assess your performance, recover from the disaster, and make any necessary changes to your overall plan.

You've already developed your plans for building, local, and regional evacuations, so you know what to do if the answer to the big question is to go.

What if the answer is to stay? Many of the disasters you are likely to experience will not require an evacuation. Instead, you will more often remain in the facility and deal with the crisis at hand, with the goal of resolving the situation as quickly, efficiently, and safely as possible.

"Remain in the facility" can mean different things. It may, in the event of a blizzard or large-scale power outage, simply require that everyone should stay put and wait for the crisis to pass. It may also require aggressive action on the part of facility staff (for example, to put out a fire or resolve a medical emergency). Finally, "remaining in place" can refer to the act of "sheltering"—that is, seeking refuge in the facility's safe room.



Disaster response plans

You've already identified those disasters most likely to affect your facility. Now it's time to begin planning your specific responses to each one. Consider the large-scale disasters that you selected on page 38—which ones would require evacuation, and which ones would have you sheltering within the facility?

On the next page, you will see a completed disaster response plan that uses the template found in **Appendix H**. Spend a moment reviewing this plan, then turn to the following page for a detailed discussion of its various parts.

Disaster response plan for a tornado

Procedures	
1. Move youth & staff to safe room; ensure windows, doors are closed (support staff).	
2. Turn off facility gas; close exterior doors and windows (director); move to safe room.	
3. Ensure critical supplies are present in safe room; pass out Go-Bags, flashlights (support staff).	
4. Turn on radio; wait for all-clear update.	
5. Check facility for habitability; if necessary, implement local or regional evacuation plan.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
Critical Supplies and Resources	
Go-Bags (youth and staff)	
first aid kit	
flashlights	
battery-powered radio	
Contacts	
N/A	
Recovery	
1. (pending)	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

As you can see, the top box on the template is where you identify the specific disaster for which you are planning—in this case, a tornado.

Below that are the procedures. This space is for breaking down, in as much detail as possible, the steps that you, your staff, and youth will take in response to the disaster at hand. The answer to the big question, in this case, is to remain in place—the staff and youth will take shelter in the facility safe room. While the on-duty support staff take responsibility for moving youth there and handing out critical supplies, the director (or lead staff person) takes responsibility for turning off the gas, closing exterior doors and windows, and shutting off lights. Once the entire facility population is in the safe room, they use their battery-powered radio to listen for weather updates; when the all-clear is announced, they leave the safe room and check the facility for damage. If the facility is no longer habitable, the local or regional evacuation plan comes into play.

Below the procedures area is a space to list the *critical* supplies and resources that the specific disaster scenario demands. Since there is a possibility that an evacuation will be necessary in the wake of a tornado, this plan calls for distribution of all the facility's Go-Bags. The first aid kit, if not already in the safe room, would be brought there as well, in addition to extra flashlights and a battery-powered radio for listening to weather updates as they are broadcast.

The area below the supplies and resources section is for listing emergency contact information that applies to the specific disaster scenario. For example, a response plan for a medical emergency might list the local fire, rescue squad, and police emergency numbers. Since the only real response to a tornado involves sheltering and riding it out, there is no number listed here.

The final area on the form is for detailing the recovery processes that will help return life to normal when the disaster is over. See the final section of this manual, "Recovery," for more information on this section.

Crafting your own plans

Sounds straightforward, right? Now, try designing your own! Review everything you've done so far and consider your facility, your resources, and your staff. Then, turn to **Appendix H** and make a copy of the disaster response plan template. Use it to draw up a disaster response plan for a large fire in your facility. Be as thorough as you can. Don't worry about the "Recovery" phase yet.

When you're ready, turn to the next page and compare your plan with the one shown there.

Disaster response plan for a fire in building

Procedures	
1. Pull fire alarm to trigger building evacuation; everyone but emergency manager evacuates to rally point	
2. Emergency manager (EM) evaluates situation	
3. If possible, EM extinguish fire using portable fire extinguisher	
4. EM seals off fire by closing doors and windows	
5. EM calls fire department and evacuates to rally point	
6. After the event, check facility for habitability; if necessary implement local or regional evacuation plan	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
Critical Supplies and Resources	
fire extinguisher	
Go-Bags (for building evacuation)	
Contacts	
911 emergency	
local fire department: 555-555-5555	
Recovery	
1. (pending)	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

So how close was your plan to this one?

Remember that there is no one way to draw up a disaster response plan. The single most important element of any plan is your overall level of preparedness—how much you've done to supply your facility, train staff and youth, and anticipate potential problems *before* they happen. No one plan can account for every possible nuance of every disaster—the best you can hope for is that, by taking the time to anticipate your response, you will be prepared to handle any situation when it arises. But take a few moments now to walk through the fire response plan on the previous page.

Obviously, the answer to the big question here is evacuation. The first step requires the person responding to the fire to pull the fire alarm, which is the facility's signal for an immediate building evacuation, the plan for which is referenced in the procedures. This plan, already designed, specifies who is responsible for gathering needed supplies, what the procedures are for getting to the rally point, and so on.

Next, the responder must evaluate the situation. Depending on the extent of the fire, he or she would either attempt to extinguish it using a portable fire extinguisher (step 3) or seal off the affected area to help prevent the fire's spread to other parts of the facility (step 4). He or she would then call emergency services (two possible numbers to use are listed in the contacts section) and evacuate, joining the others at the rally point.

Two critical resources are listed in the supplies section: a fire extinguisher and the facility Go-Bags, which would have been taken as part of the building evacuation plan.

The end result is a manageable plan that you can teach to staff and youth, one that can be drilled and refined as necessary. It may not be perfect, and it may not anticipate every facet of a fire emergency, but in the end it's a starting point—and that's what any real disaster response plan is: a good start.

Moving on

Return to those disasters, both large- and small-scale, that you believe represent real threats to your facility. Make additional copies of the disaster response plan template **(Appendix H)** and begin drafting response plans for each one. Be thorough. Involve your staff and youth (if possible). Think about how each plan fits into your overall preparedness—your supplies, your evacuation and transportation plans, your communication systems, your staff's training, and so forth.

When you're finished, you'll be ready to move on to this manual's final section, "Recovery."

RECOVERY

After every disaster comes the recovery period. During this time, life returns to normal. You restock your supplies, repair damage to your facility, and deal with any emotional or psychological after-effects among staff or young people. This is the time to assess both your general level of preparedness and the disaster response plan that you followed, and to implement changes that might be necessary to ensure a better, more effective response in the future.

Restock and repair

Restock your emergency supplies as quickly as possible after a disaster, to ensure that you are adequately prepared for the next emergency situation. Check everything that might have been used in response to the recent crisis—the first aid kit, Go-Bags, flashlights, fire extinguishers. Replace used batteries, food, and other supplies, and ensure that your stockpile is organized and ready.

Your facility may need attention, particularly if the disaster was a fire, tornado, or other destructive event. While your facility's insurance policy will probably come into play for large-scale repairs, you'll want to inspect affected areas to ensure that there are no issues requiring immediate attention. Check smoke alarms, windows, locks, and lighting to ensure that your facility is prepared for the next time disaster strikes.

Help youth cope with trauma

A disaster can leave those who experienced it feeling frightened and confused. Youth can detect fear and sadness in the adults around them, which in turn can cause the youth to feel even more fearful and upset than they might otherwise be. Ensuring that your staff is well trained to respond to any disaster situation is one way you can make disaster experiences less traumatic for young people. A confident staff will emote confidence, which will have a calming effect on youth. Involving youth in the creation of your disaster plan is another way to empower them when it comes to coping with disaster.

There is no denying, though, that for youth who are already struggling to cope with a world that may seem uncaring and too big to handle, a sudden disaster can leave them teetering on the edge of personal crisis. They may feel overwhelmed by how unsafe and dangerous the world appears. They may also feel unable to discuss their fears rationally. Older children, in particular, may respond to these feelings with anger and aggression, behavior that can manifest itself in trouble at school, substance abuse, and general withdrawal.

The key to avoiding these types of problems is a fast return to normalcy. Enabling youth to see that even a large-scale crisis can be dealt with efficiently and effectively can go a long way toward showing them that the world is, in fact, manageable—even in the face of disaster. Encourage them to have open and honest discussions about their feelings and experiences. Consider hosting

a facility-wide meeting as soon as possible after a disaster, giving everyone present—staff and youth—the opportunity to share and listen. This type of meeting can be a valuable way to validate each individual's feelings and perceptions, and can also turn into an effective forum for discussing the disaster response plan itself and how it might be improved.

Assess your plan

Continual self-assessment is an essential ingredient of a successful disaster response plan. As you learned in the "Response" section, no single plan can take into account every possible permutation of a disaster; once the crisis has passed, use the experience as an opportunity to refine your plan and ensure that the next time that particular disaster strikes, you're even better prepared than before.

Plan a facility-wide staff meeting as soon as possible after the crisis is resolved. Review the disaster response plan, and discuss what parts of it worked, what parts didn't, and what (if anything) could be done to make the entire plan more efficient. Were there supplies that would have been good to have? Did everybody on your staff know his or her role and act accordingly? Were emergency contact numbers correct? Did youth respond as you'd anticipated?

Don't be afraid to get input from youth as well. Ask them how they felt during the disaster, and listen to their ideas about how to improve your overall response. In addition to helping you update your disaster plan, involving youth in this way can be an excellent method of getting them to discuss any lingering feelings of trauma stemming from the disaster.

When you're ready, revise your old disaster response plan to incorporate your new ideas and procedures. Finally, hold trainings or drills to make sure that everybody understands and is comfortable with the new plan.

Moving on

Return to the disaster response plans you created in the "Response" section of this manual. On each one, consider the specific steps you would want to take during the recovery stage, and list them on the template. Think about the resources you will have used that might need replacement, contacts you may want to make, and meetings you may want to hold. Be as specific as you can.

To help you get started, here's what the recovery section might look like for the fire response plan you reviewed earlier (page 44).

Recovery

1. Inspect, refill fire extinguishers
2. Test, replace smoke alarm batteries
3. Inventory supplies (Go-Bags), return Go-Bags to emergency supplies
4. Inspect facility for damage; contact insurance company (XXX-XXX-XXXX)
5. Hold facility-wide meeting to discuss response and improvements to plan

Remember that there is no one "best" recovery plan—the idea is to list those points you will want to be sure to remember post disaster, and ensure that they happen as an integral part of your overall disaster response plan.

Appendix A

Online resources

Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry - www.atsdr.cdc.gov

Be Ready Campaign - www.ready.gov

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - www.cdc.gov

Citizen Corps - www.citizencorps.gov

Environmental Protection Agency - www.epa.gov

Federal Emergency Management Agency - www.fema.gov

Food and Drug Administration - www.fda.gov

National Child Traumatic Stress Network - www.nctsn.org

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration - www.noaa.gov

National Weather Service - www.nws.noaa.gov

National Wildfire Programs Database - www.wildfireprograms.com

PandemicFlu.gov - www.pandemicflu.gov and links to each States' pandemic planning information

U.S. Department of Agriculture - www.usda.gov

U.S. Department of Commerce - www.commerce.gov

U.S. Department of Education - www.ed.gov

U.S. Department of Energy - www.energy.gov

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services - www.hhs.gov/disasters

U.S. Department of Homeland Security - www.dhs.gov

U.S. Department of Interior - www.doi.gov

U.S. Department of Justice - www.justice.gov

U.S. Fire Administration - www.usfa.dhs.gov

U.S. Geological Survey - www.usgs.gov

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission - www.nrc.gov

U.S. Office of Personnel Management - www.opm.gov/emergency

U.S. Postal Service - www.usps.gov

The White House - www.whitehouse.gov/response

American Red Cross - www.redcross.org

Institute for Business and Home Safety - www.ibhs.org

National Fire Protection Association - www.nfpa.org

National Mass Fatalities Institute - www.nmfi.org

National Organization on Disability's Interactive Map of Disability and Emergency Preparedness Resources – http://www.nod.org/EPIResources/interactive_map.html

Appendix B

Maintenance Log							
Every Month	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete
Test smoke detectors							
Check fire extinguishers							
Test flashlight batteries							
Test emergency radio batteries							
Back up computer files							
Every Two Months							
Hold disaster response drill							
Every Three Months							
Inspect first aid kit							
Every Four Months							
Facility maintenance inspection							

Appendix B (continued)

Maintenance Log (continued)							
Every Six Months	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete
Replace emergency food							
Replace emergency water							
Every Year							
Fire extinguisher maintenance check							
Replace smoke detector batteries							

Appendix C

Staff Contact List

Name	Home Address	Home phone	Cell phone	E-mail	Trained in first aid?	Driver?

Appendix D

Vehicle Log	
Make/model:	
Color:	
License plate number:	
Insurance:	
Maintenance History	
Date	Maintenance (e.g. oil change, brakes checked)
For Use During Emergency:	
Occupants (including driver)	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	

Appendix E

Vehicle List						
Make/model/color	License plate number	Maximum occupancy (including driver)	Owner	Owner contact information	Insurance

Appendix F

Transportation Agreement
_____ [transportation provider] agrees to provide emergency transportation for _____ _____ [runaway and homeless youth center].
The following terms have been agreed upon:
Number of vehicles reserved:
Type of vehicles reserved:
Cost:
Drivers:

Signatures		
Name	Title	Date

Appendix G

Evacuation Site Agreement		
_____ [evacuation facility] agrees to serve as an evacuation site for _____ _____ [runaway and homeless youth center].		
The following terms have been agreed upon:		
Maximum number of people to be sheltered:		
Cost		
Duration of stay:		
Supplies provided during stay:		
Notification requirements:		
Signatures		
Name	Title	Date

Appendix H

Disaster Response Plan Template

Disaster Response Plan for Disaster Type:	
Procedures	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
Critical Supplies and Resources	
Contacts	
Recovery	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Appendix I

Emergency Power Planning for People Who Use Electricity and Battery Dependent Assistive Technology and Medical Devices

This emergency power planning checklist is for people who use electricity and battery dependent assistive technology and medical devices. Electricity and battery dependent devices include:

- breathing machines (respirators, ventilators),
- power wheelchairs and scooters, and
- oxygen, suction or home dialysis equipment.

Emergency Power Planning for People Who Use Electricity and Battery Dependent Assistive Technology and Medical Devices*		
Date Complete	Deos not apply	Item
		Planning Basics
		Create a plan for alternative sources of power.
		Read equipment instructions and talk to equipment suppliers about your backup power options.
		Get advice from your power company regarding type of backup power you plan to use.
		Regularly check backup or alternative power equipment to ensure it will function during an emergency.
		Teach many people to use your backup systems and operate your equipment (see below *Establish a Support Team*).
		Keep a list of alternate power providers.
		• Ask your nearby police and fire departments and hospital if you could use them as a backup for your equipment power if your backup systems fail.

		Label all equipment with your name, address, and phone number. Attach simple and clear instruction cards to equipment and laminate them for added strength.
		Keep copies of lists of serial and model numbers of devices, as well as important use instructions in a waterproof container in your emergency supply kits.
		Life-Support Device Users
		Contact your power and water companies about your needs for life-support devices (home dialysis, suction, breathing, machines, etc.) in advance of a disaster.
		• Many utility companies keep an emergency list and map of the locations of power-dependent customers. They will put you on a "priority reconnection service" list. Contact the customer service department of your utility company (ies) to learn if this service is available.
		• Even if you are on the "priority reconnection service," list, your power could still be out for many days following a disaster. It is vital that you have power backup options for your equipment.
		Let your fire department know that you are dependent on life-support devices.
		All ventilator users should keep a resuscitation bag handy. The bag delivers air through a mask when squeezed.
		If you receive dialysis or other medical treatments, ask for your provider what the plans are in an emergency and where you should go for treatment if your site is not available after an emergency.
		Oxygen Users
		Check with your provider to determine if you can use a reduced flow rate in an emergency to extend the life of the system. Record on your equipment the reduced flow numbers so that you can easily refer to them.

		Be aware of oxygen safety practices:
		• avoid areas where gas leaks or open flames may be present.
		• Post "Oxygen in Use" signs.
		• Always use battery powered flashlights or lanterns rather than gas lights or candles when oxygen is in use (to reduce fire risk).
		• Keep the shut-off switch for oxygen equipment near you so you can get to it quickly in case of emergency.
		Generator Users
		Make sure use of a generator is appropriate and realistic.
		Operate them in open areas to ensure good airing.
		Safely store fuel.
		• The challenge when you live in an apartment is knowing how safely to safely store enough gasoline.
		• Store a siphon kit.
		Test it from time to time to make sure it will be work when needed.
		• Some generators can connect to the existing home wiring systems; always contact your utility company regarding critical restrictions and safety issues.
		A 2,000 to 2,500-watt gas-powered portable generator can power a refrigerator and several lamps. (A refrigerator needs to run only 15 minutes an hour to stay cool if you keep the door closed. So, you could unplug it to operate other devices.)
		Rechargeable Batteries
		Create a plan for how to recharge batteries when the electricity is out.
		Check with your vendor/supplier to find alternative ways to charge batteries. Examples include:
		• Connecting jumper cables to a vehicle battery.

		• Using a converter that plugs into a vehicle's cigarette lighter).
		• Substituting a vehicle battery for a wheelchair battery but it the charge will not last as a charge for a wheelchair's deep-cycle battery
		If you use a motorized wheelchair or scooter, if possible store a lightweight manual wheelchair for emergency use.
		• Stored extra batteries require periodic charging even when they are unused. If your survival strategy depends on storing batteries, closely follow a recharging schedule.
		Know the working time of any batteries that support your systems.
		When you have a choice, choose equipment that uses batteries that are easily bought from nearby stores.
		When Power is Restored
		Check to make sure the settings on your medical device have not changed (medical devices often reset to a default mode when power goes out).
* Review and update this checklist every six months (one way to remember to do this is when you set your clocks forward in the spring and back in the fall).		

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For More Information

Disaster Resources for People with Disabilities and Emergency Managers
http://www.jik.com/disaster.html

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS: TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR SAFETY - Tips for People with Activity Limitations and Disabilities
www.espfocus.org

NOTES

Ready for Anything was developed for the Family and Youth Services Bureau; Administration on Children, Youth and Families; Administration for Children and Families; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services by JBS International, Inc., under contract number GS10F0285K to manage the National Clearinghouse on Families & Youth.

For more information on FYSB programs and priorities,
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