EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND SOUTH ASIANS

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

- Natural (such as earthquakes, hurricanes, infectious disease outbreaks, etc.) or man-made (such as acts of terror, accidents, etc.) emergencies can occur anytime and anywhere.
- Emergencies come in many forms and have short- and long-term consequences such as flooding, power outages, infrastructure and economic disruption, and emotional/mental health impacts.
- Given the impact emergencies can have, it is important to "plan for the worst and hope for the best." Those more prepared are likely to be less impacted when an emergency does strike.
- South Asian communities in particular have unique needs - whether linguistic, cultural or otherwise - that make advanced emergency preparation crucial.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- **Build an emergency kit.**
  - Include items such as non-perishable food and water (if you have canned food, make sure you also have a can opener!), battery-operated or hand crank radio, flashlights, batteries, blankets, food for pets, medications, and a first aid kit.
  - Your kit should have enough materials for you/your family to survive for up to 3 days if you have to shelter at home or evacuate.

- **Be familiar with communication options.**
  - During an emergency, cell phone and landline phones may not have service for hours or days. Websites may be overloaded due to increased traffic.
  - Be ready to use a number of different communication options during emergencies.
  - Make sure your family knows how to use texting functions on a cell phone, since this will likely still work even if you are unable to make or receive calls on your cell phone.
  - If you become separated from family members, it's important that everyone knows how to contact each other and where to meet.

- **Understand your & your family's needs.**
  - Knowing what you and your family need before an emergency is important. Some things to consider may include:
    - Will you need translation services if you have to evacuate?
    - Do you or a loved one have special medical needs, such as medications, equipment, or specialized care?
    - Do you have children or elderly parents that have additional needs?
    - Do you have dietary restrictions that should be taken into consideration?
  - Remember needs may change during an emergency so do your best to plan ahead.
  - Communicating such unique needs to emergency response agencies and other community partners is important and should be done in advance of an emergency as much as possible.
• Ask your local emergency management office or health department if they have a system that can allow you to voluntarily pre-register a special need and provide you updates via phone or email during an emergency – if they do, then SIGN UP!!

➢ **Remember you live in a larger community.**
  • Be aware of the needs of those around you since others in your community may depend on you for help during the time of an emergency.
  • Make sure you know the plans of your community including your employer and your child's school or daycare.

➢ **Understand your surroundings.**
  • Learn the types of emergencies that may occur in the area where you live and work. Events can range from those affecting only you/your family (like a fire or medical emergency) to those affecting your entire community (like an earthquake or a flood).
  • Knowing what kinds of emergencies might occur in your area can help you prepare more effectively.

➢ **Stay informed.**
  • Pay attention to your local health and emergency management agencies as well as the media for specific instructions if an emergency does occur in your community.
  • Remember, emergency information may be broadcast using a variety of means including television, radio, and internet.

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**RESOURCES**

Be sure to visit the following websites and those of your local/state health agencies and emergency management offices for specific resources for you and your community!

**National**

- **American Red Cross**
  - Website: [www.redcross.gov](http://www.redcross.gov)

- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**
  - Website: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

- **Federal Emergency Management Agency**
  - Website: [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)

- **Health Information Translations**
  - Website: [www.healthinfotranslations.org](http://www.healthinfotranslations.org)

- **National Resource Center on Advancing Emergency Preparedness for Culturally Diverse Communities**
  - Website: [www.diversypreparedness.org](http://www.diversypreparedness.org)

- **Ready.gov**
  - Website: [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)

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