

# Disaster Preparedness for People with Disabilities

## Tips For People With Hearing Impairments

### Batteries

- Store extra batteries for hearing aids and implants. If available, keep an extra hearing aid with your emergency supplies.
- Store extra batteries for your TTY and light phone signaler. Check your manual for proper maintenance advice.

### Hearing Aids

- Store hearing aids in a consistent, convenient and secured place, so you can quickly and easily locate them after a disaster. Consider storing them in a container attached to your night stand or bed post. Missing or damaged hearing aids will be difficult to replace or fix following a major disaster.

### Alarms

- Install both audible alarms and visual smoke alarms. At least one should be battery-operated.

### Communication

- Determine how you will communicate with emergency personnel if there is no interpreter or if you do not have your hearing aid(s). Store paper and pens.
- Consider carrying a pre-printed copy of key phrases, such as "I speak American Sign Language (ASL) and need an ASL interpreter."
- If possible, obtain a battery-operated television that has a decoder chip for access to signed or captioned emergency reports.
- Determine which broadcasting systems will provide continuous news that will be captioned and/or signed.

### Advocacy

- Recruit interpreters to be Red Cross emergency volunteers.
  - Maintain pressure on TV stations to broadcast all news and emergency information in open caption format and/or secure on-camera interpreters for emergency duties.
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- When you travel, ensure hotels have access packets for deaf and hearing impaired persons, including audible alarms. Ask for them when you check in.

### **Checklist**

- Store and maintain extra hearing aids and batteries.
- Install both audible alarms and visual smoke alarms.
- Write down key phrases for emergency personnel.

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Excerpted from:

Independent Living Resource Center San Francisco  
(<http://www.ilrcsf.org/resources/publications.shtml>)