

Disaster Preparedness for People with Disabilities

Tips For People With Visual Disabilities

Canes

- If you use a cane, keep extras in strategic, consistent and secured locations at work, home, school, volunteer sites, etc. to help you maneuver around obstacles and hazards.
- Keep a spare cane in your emergency kit.

Alternative Mobility Cues

- If you have some vision, place security lights in each room to light paths of travel. These lights plug into electrical wall outlets and light up automatically if there is a loss of power. They will, depending on type, continue to operate for 1 to 6 hours and can be turned off manually to be used as a flashlight.
- Store high-powered flashlights (with wide beams) and extra batteries.
- If you wear soft contact lenses, plan to have an alternative available because you will not be able to operate the cleaning unit without power.
- Service animals may become confused, panicked, frightened or disoriented in and after a disaster. Keep them confined or securely leashed or harnessed. A leash (or harness) is an important item for managing a nervous or upset animal. Be prepared to use alternative methods to negotiate your environment.
- Plan on losing the auditory clues you normally rely on following a major disaster.

Label Supplies

- If helpful, mark emergency supplies with large print, fluorescent tape or Braille.

Secure Computers

- Anchor special equipment such as computers. Create a back-up system for important data and store it off site.

Advocacy Issues

- Advocate that TV news not only post important phone numbers but also announce them slowly and repeat them frequently for people who cannot read the screen.

Excerpted from:

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