

Research POSSIBLE DISASTERS FOR YOUR AREA:

- Types of disasters include:
 - Hurricanes
 - Wildfires
 - Earthquakes
 - Blizzards
 - Heat waves
 - Thunderstorms & Tornadoes
 - ... And more
- Remember that your area can have multiple risks!
- Consider climate change: will emergencies be different in the future?

Learn THE DETAILS OF YOUR LOCAL RISKS:

- How likely are these disasters? How bad are they?
 - A town in “hurricane country” may experience a tropical storm every other year, a small hurricane every decade, & a Category 4 or 5 hurricane every four decades.
 - A town in the California woods will be in danger of wildfires, but a wildfire may never touch the town. On the other hand, a nearby town could experience multiple wildfires in just a few years’ time.
- Is it possible for two emergencies to happen at the same time?
 - For example, Seattle could get an earthquake and a strong storm in the same week.
 - However, it is not possible for a heat wave and blizzard to hit at the same time.
- How will it affect your home and area? Some examples include:
 - Power and other utility shutoffs: how widespread and for how long?
 - Damaged property, including items inside your home.
 - Evacuations: how long, how far, and how much heads-up might you have?
 - Public services, from paramedics to social service offices.
 - Communication: will your telephone or Internet work?
- If you can, focus on your own neighborhood. Even a half-mile can make a big difference: for example, somebody living next to a river may experience a flood, but their cousin living on a nearby hillside won’t be flooded.
- Could nearby disasters affect you? For example, you could have bad air quality from a fire in another county or state, even though you don’t need to evacuate.

Outline HOW THAT AFFECTS YOU PERSONALLY:

- Start with the basics:
 - Will you need to hunker down or evacuate?
 - If you need to evacuate, what are your options?
 - Will you have advance warning, or will you need to be ready right away?
 - Who in your life can help before, during and after the disaster?
- Will the disaster affect you physically? For example:
 - Some people with spinal cord injuries cannot sweat to cool down. This is tough in heat waves and power outages.
 - Smoke from wildfires may be especially harsh for quads with limited lung capacity or people who use ventilators.
 - People who can’t feel their legs may be at risk of frostbite in a winter freeze.
- Will a disaster affect your support networks?
 - Will you still be able to reach caregivers, family, government, and medical services?
 - If your network is affected, can you be flexible? Can you find alternatives? Will you need to plan ahead?
 - If you evacuate, are there people in your support network who can come with you?
 - If you “hunker down,” is there anybody that can stay with you?
- Will it affect physical access? For example, a storm may flood a sidewalk and a power outage could shut down your building’s elevator or garage door.

Find LOCAL RESOURCES & ORGANIZATIONS:

- Government agencies at the state, county, and local level. Agencies focusing on disaster management services, social services and disability access are good to know.
- Your local Center for Independent Living, plus other disability nonprofits.
- Elected officials: a call to your City Councilmember, State Senator or other elected official can be helpful in some cases.
- Transportation & shelter resources if you must evacuate.
- Bookmark useful websites, including with real-time information.
- Sign up for your local emergency notification system.

