

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY



MASSACHUSETTS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
June 15, 2008

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**MEMA OFFERS HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS TIPS**

***What Families Need To Do To Prepare For The Hurricane Season***

Framingham, MA - As we enter the 2008 Hurricane Season, which experts are predicting to be very active, the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) is offering personal preparedness tips for the all of the citizens of the Commonwealth.

“Every home and business should have a basic supply kit that could be used for any emergency, regardless of the time of year,” states MEMA Director Don Boyce. “Everyone should keep certain items around the house in the event of a hurricane or other severe weather. A portable radio, flashlight, extra batteries extra non-perishable food, water and a first aid kit are all essential to help your family weather the storm.”

Each household should have a supply of canned goods and other non-perishable foods that do not need cooking, along with bottled water, extra prescription medication, and extra food and supplies for infants and pets. A manual can opener and a basic first aid kit are also essential.

“All families should develop a ‘Family Emergency Communication Plan’ to help ensure everyone is safe. You should contact your local authorities to learn about potential evacuation routes and the location of emergency shelters in your community,” said Boyce. “It is important to familiarize yourself with your Community’s Emergency Plans before an emergency situation occurs.”

The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) is the state agency responsible for coordinating federal, state, local, voluntary and private resources during emergencies and disasters in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. MEMA provides leadership to: develop plans for effective response to all hazards, disasters or threats; train emergency personnel to protect the public; provide information to the citizenry; and assist individuals, families, businesses and communities to mitigate against, prepare for, and respond to and recover from emergencies, both natural and man made. For additional information about MEMA and Hurricane Preparedness Month, go to [www.mass.gov/mema](http://www.mass.gov/mema).

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## **HURRICANE DISASTER SUPPLY KIT**

- ❑ Canned goods and nonperishable foods that do not need cooking:
  - Canned meats and fish
  - Canned fruits and vegetables
  - Canned soups and puddings
  - Canned fruit juices
  - Dried fruit and nuts
  - Bread, cookies and crackers
  - Peanut butter and jelly
  - Coffee and tea
- ❑ Manual can opener
- ❑ Bottled water (1 gallon per person/per day)
- ❑ Prescription medication (2 week supply)
- ❑ Extra eyeglasses
- ❑ Pet food/supplies
- ❑ Water purification tablets (halazone)
- ❑ Disposable plates, cups, and utensils
- ❑ Infant care items:
  - Disposable diapers
  - Baby wipes
  - Baby food
  - Formula
- ❑ First aid supplies
- ❑ Masking and duct tape
- ❑ Flashlight or lantern, with extra batteries
- ❑ Battery operated radio, with extra batteries
- ❑ Watch or battery operated clock
- ❑ Ice chest
- ❑ Matches
- ❑ Canned heat (sterno)
- ❑ Portable outdoor camping stove or grill with fuel supply
- ❑ A certain amount of cash
- ❑ Important documents (Such as wills, deeds, prescriptions, passports, birth certificates, health record, proof of address, Social Security number)
- ❑ Plastic trash bags
- ❑ Plastic sheeting or tarp
- ❑ Chlorinated bleach
- ❑ Personal hygiene items
- ❑ Other useful items:
  - Work gloves
  - Sun lotion
  - Insect repellent
  - Hammer
  - Screwdriver
  - Pliers
  - Wrenches
  - Handsaw
  - Razor knife
  - Ax or chainsaw
  - Rope caulking
  - Nails and screws
  - Rope and wire
  - Broom, mop and bucket
  - All-purpose cleaner
  - Ladder
  - Sandbags
  - Portable generator
  - Tree pruner
  - Shovel, rake and wheelbarrow
  - Sheets of plywood

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## **FAMILY EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS PLAN**

Develop a Family Emergency Communications Plan in case family members are separated from one another during an emergency (a real possibility during the day when adults are at work and children are at school, camp or at a friend's house). This plan should also address reunification after the immediate crisis passes.

- Ask an out-of-state relative or friend to serve as the Family Emergency Communications Plan contact person. During and immediately after a disaster occurs, it is often easier to access a long distance telephone number than a local one. Also, calling outside a disaster area is usually easier than calling into the same area.
- Make sure everyone knows the name, address and telephone number of the Family Emergency Communications Plan contact person.
- Designate two meeting areas for family members – one within your community (your primary location), and one outside of your community (your alternate location). Sometimes an emergency could impact your neighborhood or small section of the community, so a second location outside of your community would be more accessible to all family members.
- Be familiar with the Emergency Plans at your children's school and camp, as well as your place of business.

A Family Emergency Communications Plan can help reassure everyone's safety and minimize the stress associated with emergencies

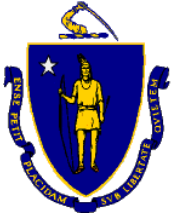
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
August 4, 2008

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**HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS FOR UNIQUE POPULATIONS**

FRAMINGHAM, MA - For many of the citizens in Massachusetts who have physical, medical, sensory or cognitive disabilities, as well as the elderly and other populations with unique needs, emergencies such as Hurricanes present real challenges. Therefore, the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) offers a number of important steps to help ensure the safety of yourself and all of our friends, neighbors, and family members.

“We have listed a number of tips, covering a variety of issues which those with Unique Needs should consider, as they prepare for the Hurricane Season,” stated MEMA Director Don Boyce. “This planning is important, not just in preparation for hurricanes, but year-round, for any type of emergency.”

- Create a ‘Personal Support Network’ or ‘Self-Help Team’. They can help you identify and acquire resources, as well as assist you before, during and after the hurricane has passed. Your Team should include roommates, relatives, friends, neighbors and co-workers because disasters might strike when you are at home, school, the workplace, a volunteer site, or wherever you spend a lot of time.
- Teach others on your Team to operate any special equipment you might utilize, as well as where you keep your emergency supplies.
- Complete a Personal Assessment of what you can do for yourself and what assistance you may need to respond to the challenges of a hurricane, based on the environment during and after the storm, your capabilities, and your limitations.
- Become informed. Learn your area’s vulnerabilities in a hurricane, as well as your community’s Emergency Management Plans, including potential evacuation routes and shelter locations.
- Find out about your community’s Alerting/Warning Systems. Learn what methods are utilized in your community. They could include: outdoor sirens or horns, the Emergency Alert System (EAS) which provides information over the radio and television, the NOAA Weather Alert Radio, one of a number of automated telephoning system for sending recorded messages such as ‘All Call’, ‘Reverse 911’ or ‘Code Red’, commercial News Media, Residential Route Alerting, which dispatches Public Safety vehicles through neighborhoods announcing messages with public address systems or literally ‘knocking on doors’, U.S. Coast Guard Marine Broadcast, and Teletypewriters (TTY).

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- Contact your local Emergency Management Director to learn of potential Special Needs Notification, Transportation and/or Assistance Programs in your community. Your specific information will be treated with confidentiality.
- Develop the standard Disaster Supply Kit for your home, with supplies to accommodate you for up to 3-5 days. Also, from that you can pull key items for a ‘Portable Kit’ if asked to evacuate. Depending upon your needs, you may want to include extra eyeglasses, hearing aid batteries, wheel chair batteries, oxygen, the style and serial number of your medical devices, a list of your medications including dosage, a list of your allergies, medical insurance information and medical cards, and if you utilize a wheelchair include heavy gloves to help make your way over glass and debris.
- Make an Emergency Plan. As part of your overall planning, include a Family Communication Plan to best inform others of your condition and whereabouts. If you receive regular services, make a plan with each provider about their disaster plans and how to contact them. Work with them to identify back-up services.
- Wear medical alert tags or bracelets to help identify your disability.
- Label with your contact information any special equipment including wheel chairs, walkers or canes.
- If asked to evacuate, inform your Team where you are staying, because it may not always be the first choice in your Plan. (a public shelter, relative, friend, hotel)
- Find the location of the main utility cutoff valves and switches in your home, and how and when to disconnect them during an emergency, either by yourself or a Team member.
- Prepare an Emergency Kit for your service animal and pets; include collars & leashes, a three-day supply of food, a manual can opener, plenty of water, bowls, litter boxes, photographs, and a week’s supply of your pets’ medications and instructions in case you and your animals are separated.
- Service animals may become frightened or confused during or after a hurricane. Be prepared to calm your animal and keep it confined or on a leash or harness. Make sure your service animal is familiar with your Team members, who may be asked to help care for them following the storm.
- Keep pictures of your pets or service animals for identification purposes, in case you are separated.
- In case your service animal is unable to assist you, be prepared to use alternative ways to negotiate your environment.
- Most people should be able to function well at a regular public shelter, although people with more serious needs might be directed to a “special populations” shelter where medical issues can receive appropriate attention.
- When needed, be sure to ask for an accommodation from disaster personnel.

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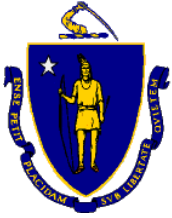
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August 11, 2008

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**ENSURE THE SAFETY OF YOUR PETS DURING A HURRICANE**

Framingham, MA – Taking your pets along is the most important thing individuals or families can do for their animals during a hurricane evacuation. Pets left behind can be injured, lost or killed during a storm, or in its aftermath. Pet owners should include their animals in their Family Hurricane Planning, before a storm threatens.

“Sometimes the family pet can be overlooked until the final moments before you and your family are about to evacuate,” states Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency Director Don Boyce. “Take the time now to develop a plan and assemble your pet’s Disaster Kit to ensure your animal’s safety and care if you are asked to evacuate.”

You go, they go!

- Ordinarily, only service animals are usually allowed inside public shelters, although SMART (The State of Massachusetts Animal Response Team) may be able to assist with animal sheltering in areas where public shelters exist.
- Make plans ahead of time to take your pet to stay at relatives, friends or a kennel outside the affected area.
- Know the locations of pet-friendly hotels and motels.
- Prepare a list of boarding facilities and veterinarians who could shelter animals in an emergency; include 24-hour phone numbers.
- Ask local animal shelters if they provide emergency shelter or foster care for pets in a disaster. Animal shelters may be overburdened caring for the animals they already have, as well as those displaced by a disaster, so this should be your last resort.
- Prepare an emergency kit for your pets; include collars & leashes, a 3-5 day supply of food, a manual can opener, many bottles of water, bowls, litter boxes, photographs, and a week’s supply of medications that your pet may be taking, including instructions (in case you and your pet are separated).
- Have copies of your pets’ vaccinations, medical records and prescriptions.

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- Make sure your pets wear collars with current license and rabies tags, and identification tags that include information on where you will be staying during the emergency.
- Use a pet carrier for each of your pets to make transportation easier.
- Birds should be transported in a secure travel cage or carrier. During warm weather, carry a plant mister to mist the birds' feathers periodically. Do not put water inside the carrier during transport.
- Provide a few slices of fresh fruits and vegetables with high water content. Have a photograph for identification and leg bands. If the carrier does not have a perch, line it with paper towels and change them frequently. Try to keep the carrier in a quiet area. Do not let the birds out of the cage or carrier.
- Exotic or dangerous pets are generally dealt with on a case-by-case basis, to ensure that they are handled, transported and cared for by trained personnel at appropriate facilities. To insure the safety of their animals, owners of this type of pet should have advanced planning preparations ready for their pet's special needs.

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