

What You Need to Know

Emergency Sheltering


Today's Topic

- Critical Thoughts
- Overview
- Shelter Types
 - ~ General Population
 - ~ Medical and Functional (merging with General)
 - ~ Animal
 - ~ Temporary – heating or cooling
 - ~ Shelter-in-Place
 - ~ Alternate Care Sites
- Evacuation

Definition

◎ Disaster Shelter - A place of refuge that provides life-sustaining services in a congregate facility for individuals who have been displaced by an emergency or a disaster (FEMA).


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Keep in Mind

**Shelters are a Life Boat,
Not a cruise ship.**

Take basic supplies, especially if you have special dietary or life sustaining needs.



When are Shelters Needed?

In New York, generally as a result of:

- Floods (with or without hurricanes)
- Ice and snow storms
- Power outages

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Who Opens and Runs Shelters?

- Most frequently – the American Red Cross
- Medical Shelters may be opened by County Health Departments
- Local firehouses, churches may also open shelters
- Pet shelters are often run by local pet protection agencies
- Municipalities may open cooling or warming shelters

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**Why are Shelters
Important To You????**

Because knowing about them can
save your life, your patients' lives
and you families lives!

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PLANNING - PLANNING - PLANNING
You may not have warning...

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Plan for yourself and your family – agree on what shelter area you'll go to so you all go to the same one; set up communication plans
- Keep aware of news and weather that may affect your patients (and yourself)
- Find out what your agency's plan is and what your role is in it
- Encourage planning
 - Where will people go?
 - What is expected of the agency and you

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Critical Issues

- If possible, it is generally better to evacuate in advance, out of harm's way (hurricane, ice storm)
- Roads, bridges do close when event is imminent
- The more fragile the patient, the more important it is for there to be prior arrangements for a safe place – shelters are NOT a good place to be
- Medications are a must!

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Shelter Location Information


- Often not available until the event
- Generally in schools
- Listen to news for announcements of shelter locations
- If possible, look on local OEM website



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General Population Shelters

- Often called “Red Cross Shelters” 
- Usually set up in schools, but may be at fire house or church
- No animals other than service (seeing eye or therapy animals)



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Functional Needs Support

- Current move towards incorporating functional needs support (such as assistance with ADLs) into general shelters, but most areas are not yet ready to do this

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Medical Needs Shelters

- For individuals who may need help with ADL's or have some medical needs, but do not require hospitalization
- Many home care patients fit in this category

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Pet Shelters

- Most areas are now planning for pet shelters
- Red Cross does not allow animals (other than service animals) in their shelters – must be separate location
- Sometimes pet shelters are located next to general shelters

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Heating and Cooling Shelters

- Intended for short term use, generally during power outages
- May not have food or sleeping areas

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Patient Shelter Needs

- ◉ No matter why type of sheltering situation, patients should take their critical health care supplies with them
 - Medications
 - Oxygen
 - Special Dietary items
 - Assistive Equipment (walkers, wheelchairs)
- ◉ Shelters may not have personalized resources on hand

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Shelter-in-Place

- ◉ Used when
 - It is not safe to go outside (chemical, or radiological release, for example)
 - Unsafe to travel (weather)
 - Unable to travel – transit strike, road closure, etc.
 - Health emergency (infectious event)
- ◉ “Stuck at Home”

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"Shelter-in-Place"

- ◉ Means to take immediate shelter where you are—at home, work, school or in between—usually for just a few hours.
- ◉ Local authorities may instruct you to "shelter-in-place" if chemical or radiological contaminants are released into the environment.

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Shelter-in-Place & You

- ◎ Make a family plan
 - Work
 - Children's school and activities
 - Family members
 - Contact information
 - Disaster kit – minimum 3 days supplies

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Shelter-in-Place & Your Patient

- ◎ Remember the partnership?
 - Encourage planning on their part
 - Know what to do
 - Let others know

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How will you know when you need to "shelter-in-place"?

Warning procedures could include:

- ◎ Reverse 911 - automated system for sending recorded messages, sometimes called "reverse 9-1-1"
- ◎ Emergency Alert System (EAS) broadcasts on radio or TV
- ◎ NY-Alert or local city alert systems via text, cell, email
- ◎ Outdoor warning sirens or horns
- ◎ News media sources—radio, television and cable
- ◎ NOAA Weather Radio alerts
- ◎ Residential route alerting - public address systems

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What do you do?

- The appropriate steps depend on the emergency situation.
- If you hear a warning signal, listen to local radio or television stations for further information.
- You will be told what to do, including where to find the nearest shelter if you are away from your "shelter-in-place" location.

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"Hole up" or "Hunker Down"

- Take the disaster supply kit
- Know where a safe place is in the house - stay away from windows and doors
- Listen to the radio
- Keep a phone with you if possible
- Keep everyone together
- Generally shelter-in-place is needed only for a few hours

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If you are in your car...

- If you are very close to home, your workplace or a public building, go there immediately and go inside.
- If you are unable to get indoors quickly, pull over to the side of the road in the safest place possible. Turn off the engine. Close windows and vents.
- Listen to the radio periodically for updated advice and instructions. (Modern car radios consume very little battery power and should not affect your ability to start your car later).
- Stay where you are until you are told it is safe to get back on the road. Be aware that some roads may be closed or traffic detoured. Follow the directions of law enforcement officials.
- Check in...let someone know where you are!

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When is it Safe?

- ◎ Situation dependent
- ◎ Understand “time-distance-shielding”
- ◎ Listen to the radio and follow instructions

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Alternate Care Sites



- ◎ (Medical) Shelter type generally affiliated with a hospital and would most likely be used during a pandemic as a means to increase surge capacity
- ◎ Can be defined as alternate operating locations used for healthcare services when existing healthcare facilities are inaccessible due to a disaster or when the volumes of patients exceed the capabilities of those facilities

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Your Role in Emergency Sheltering

1. Understand different types of shelters
2. Know how to access information about shelter locations
3. Know your patients' needs and plans
4. Know your agency's plan
5. Have your own plan

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 **TALS** 

◎ **Transportation Assistance Levels**

- Identification of amount of assistance an individual needs to evacuate their home or place of residence.

◎ **Do they:**


- Use their own or family transportation;
- Walk unassisted to public transportation;
- Need assistance to public transportation;
- Need ambulette or handicapped transport; or
- Need ambulance/EMS service?

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TALS

◎ **NYSDOH is working on creating TALS consistent with EMS triage**

◎ **Agency should assist patient in evacuation planning and be aware of their planned destination**

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REVIEW

Most important “take-aways”

- ◎ Shelter types and who is appropriate for which
- ◎ Supplies needed - **MEDICATIONS**
- ◎ Information sources
- ◎ Importance of planning and communication
- ◎ Your role

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Resources

- ◎ The Red Cross www.redcross.org
- ◎ Homeland Security:
<http://www.ready.gov/>
- ◎ HCA: www.homecareprepare.org
- ◎ NYC Office of Emergency Management:
<http://www.nyc.gov/html/oem/html/home/home.shtml>

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