

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

1. **Get a Kit**— Make an emergency supply kit based on your family ' s needs

2. **Make a Plan**—Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so it is important to plan in advance: how you will contact one another; how you will get back together; and what you will do in different situations.

3. **Be Informed**—Knowing what to do during an emergency is an important part of being prepared and may make all the difference when seconds count. Learn more about the potential emergencies that could happen where you live and the appropriate way to respond to them. Learn about the emergency plans that have been established in your area by your county and local governments.

### 4. **Volunteer—Get involved**

Volunteering and working with local emergency response groups can be a valuable way of learning about emergency response and safety while serving your community.

## SHELTER SUPPLY LIST

- **MEDICATIONS** and prescriptions. Bring enough medications and medical supplies for seven days. **Get a refill before you evacuate if you can.**
- A 3-day supply of drinking water. Plan on one gallon of water per day per person.
- Special diet items – shelters will most likely not be able to accommodate special dietary requests.
- Personal grooming and hygiene items. Showers may not be easily available.
- Flashlight with batteries.
- Extra clothing & bedding: pillow w/case, sheets, blankets, sleeping bag, etc.
- Books, magazines, playing cards, etc.
- Personal identification and important documents.
- **Bring medical equipment such as wheelchairs, canes, walkers or a lawn chair if you have difficulty sitting on a cot or the floor. Eyeglasses, hearing aides, etc.**
- **Take your “Go-Kit” — water, food, and personal items you can manage that will make your stay more comfortable.**
- Supplies for service animals if needed.

## SAFE TRAVEL TIPS

- Travel during daylight, if possible.
- If you are planning to travel by a hired vehicle such as a taxi or ambulance, make arrangements in advance.
- If you expect to travel in your own vehicle, plan on leaving early, during the voluntary evacuation stage.
- Follow standard evacuation routes.
- Listen to the radio for instructions and contact information.
- Take your survival supplies with you.
- Take a map, a list of shelters and official evacuation routes.
- Take cash - ATMs and “pay at the pump ” services will not work in a power outage.
- Take a cell phone and charger kit.
- If you plan on using public transportation, listen to the radio station or go to the appropriate website for assistance with times and points of departure.
- Make sure your neighbors have safe transportation! Car pool!
- Let your out of the area contact know your plans!
- Advise your health care providers of your plans and needs.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

# EMERGENCY SHELTERING



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## EMERGENCY SHELTERS IN NEW YORK STATE

New York has three basic types of emergency shelters: General Population Shelters, Medical or Special Needs Shelters and Pet Shelters.

**When making your plans for a disaster, going to a shelter should be considered only if you cannot leave town. You should go to a shelter when:**

- Authorities have ordered an evacuation of the area in which you reside and you do not have the means or time to evacuate to a safe area.
- You are traveling and determine that wind, flooding, winter blizzards, or other conditions are such that continued travel is unsafe.
- Conditions at or around your home are no longer safe. If you require help to evacuate, make sure you arrange for that as soon as possible.
- Your home is without power and you are unable to provide for your basic needs or safety.

**Evacuate Early!** Do not wait and try to leave later – once the storm hits there will be no help available until roads are clear.

**Shelter Locations**—You can find out about shelter locations by listening to your radio or TV station or by visiting your local emergency management website.

## GENERAL POPULATION SHELTERS

General shelters are a refuge for those seeking temporary safety from a disaster or emergency. People go to general, also sometimes called Red Cross shelters, because they have been ordered to evacuate, are caught on the road away from their home, or remaining in their home was no longer safe.

**Shelters offer only minimal necessities and few conveniences.** They are often noisy and crowded. There may not be power and the shelter could be hot, cold or dark. Restroom facilities are public. Food and water should be available, but quality will depend on circumstance. You should plan on taking what you can to make yourself and family members more comfortable, including extra bottled water, snacks, blankets, pillows, etc. ( See shelter supply list ) . There is often a shortage of volunteers to help manage shelters. You could be asked to volunteer as a shelter worker while staying there.

Service animals are always welcome in all shelters.

***...Shelters are  
lifeboats,  
not cruise ships...***

## MEDICAL, FUNCTIONAL, OR SPECIAL NEEDS SHELTERS

These shelters provide supervised shelter to a limited number of people whose medical needs exceed the capabilities of the Red Cross or general population shelters, but are not severe enough to require hospitalization or a nursing home. Simply put, this type of shelter is for people who have specific medical, physical, or mental conditions that make it difficult for them to utilize a public shelter.

These shelters will have first priority for power and medical support. Sometimes the shelters are next to general shelters, but they are not run by the Red Cross. Generally, one or more family members can accompany the individual who needs this type of shelter. **Keep in mind that in the case of a mandatory evacuation, your physician and other health care providers will also have to evacuate.**

**Medical or Special Needs Shelters should be considered only as a last resort.** Plan ahead and explore all other alternatives such as staying with relatives or friends outside the evacuation area, staying in a motel or working with your physician to be admitted to a hospital or nursing home. Please note that the caregiver who assists in meeting your needs at home should be prepared to meet your same needs in the shelter. Only a limited number of nurses will be available in the shelter.

**Home Care Patients:** If you receive home care, discuss your plan and possible shelter needs with your primary nurse and notify your agency of your evacuation plans or shelter location so you can continue to receive care.

If you are oxygen dependent, make arrangements with your durable medical equipment company to bring you extra canisters or refills as needed. Oxygen is usually in short supply during emergencies.

**Registries** Some counties or municipalities keep registries of people who have special medical needs and may need help during an emergency or require evacuation assistance. Check with your local emergency manager 's office to see what is available.

If you or someone in your home is dependent on electricity for life support equipment, you can register in advance with your power company so you will receive priority in power resumption efforts, but it does not guarantee rapid return of power to your home.

## PET SHELTERS

Each county or municipality is planning for pet sheltering, but some have not yet completed their plans. Many areas have plans to locate all three types of shelters in a “campus setting” so owners can take care of and visit their pets. You can contact your local emergency management office or visit their website to find out what your area 's plan is for pets and determine your responsibilities.

If your pet requires medication, be sure to take it with you when you take your pet to a shelter along with their vaccination records.