



**Critical Emergency Planning Guidelines**

**Life Care Services, LLC**

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The emergency planning guidelines below represent critical thinking and planning requirements to ensure that the senior care environments are well prepared to endure emergency events and aftermath survival efforts. Plans should be developed by each facility and be specific to the nuances and special needs of the setting.

One should assume the following impacts and outcomes will result from most emergency situations. The guidelines should be considered comprehensively in March of each year or ahead of anticipated storm season, keeping these elements in the forefront of planning decisions.

The aftermath expectations:

1. Critical resource plans and supply lists must endure beyond 72 hours. Most supplies and resources will be inaccessible locally; therefore resource acquisition shall be obtained through a group purchasing entity who may act as the liaison for supply orders outside the disaster affected area.
2. Power and water restoration as well as routine resources such as fuel will be unavailable at times and often for extended periods, generally up to 10 days.
3. The development of resource relationships with corresponding communication strategies must occur early, 6-8 months prior to the commencement of the June 1 – November 31 emergency weather ‘season’.
4. Evacuation orders are earlier and for longer duration than previously experienced. Plans should be in place for alternate living arrangements should the community be uninhabitable post storm event.
5. Be prepared for good state approved emergency plans to fail and have back up plans established. Resources must focus on survival in the most unimaginable of situations and back up plans are essential as planned services often do not come to fruition.

6. There are not enough Skilled Nursing Facility beds generally speaking to always transfer Health Care residents to a like facility, so creative solutions must be identified to triage SNF residents in alternate physical locations.
7. 911 and other emergency services will be suspended and thus only life threatening situations will be addressed by the local hospitals. Emergency management plans will be required to address critical patient care needs absent the use of hospital emergency rooms. Local Lab, X-ray and other contracted support services will likely be affected by the storm event, so back up resources will be needed.
8. Staff members will be affected by the storm event, so plans should be made for back up staffing requirements from outside the affected area.
9. The communication infrastructure may be obliterated, so emergency communication processes should be explored for alternate ways to communicate. Expect phones, cell phones, E-Communications, and electricity to not work, thus alternate communication plans must be established so as to effectively let family members know the status of their loved ones, facilitate supply and resource needs and manage emergency issues that arise.
10. Temperatures may be extreme, so efforts to prevent dehydration, ensure skin integrity and prevent hyperthermia or hypothermia are measures to be assessed and addressed as needed.
11. Water will be contaminated and so emergency drinking water must be on hand, plumbing issues must be managed and non-potable sources identified.
12. Cash will likely be the only resource to pay for supplies in the local affected area. Credit cards will not always be accepted.
13. Safety and security provisions should be considered because desperate people will take desperate measures to survive.
14. Fire and emergency electronic systems may not function, so assume the need to manage fire watches which are labor intensive

*Resources to 'plan for' include the following:*

**1. Generators and contracted electrician**

- i. Know in advance what the generators are hooked to. Critical elements include: Cooler, ice machine, Cooking facilities, emergency outlets for fans and O2 operation, elevators, lift stations, laundry, A/C and critical lighting such as bathrooms and common areas where residents will gather.
- ii. Have relationship with electrician (See Contractor Management Standard) who is qualified to safely change generator connections based upon needs. Staff members are generally not qualified or skilled to address this task.
- iii. Know in advance how much fuel will run the critical connections for what period of time and based upon how much fuel is stored on-site, how long can the community function with its personal resources. Expand fuel tank capacity where possible.
- iv. Identify fuel delivery resources through local suppliers as well as state petroleum associations.
- v. Temporary generators may be used from time to time. In such an event, equipment should be set up away from air intakes to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning and located where they are not vulnerable to flying debris. Wiring should be secured and safe from accidental damage, fuel should be safely stored and caution should be taken to prevent over-load situations that result in over-heated generators which may result in a fire hazard.
- vi. Confirm emergency phone contact numbers.

**2. Ice/Water/Water sources/plumbing**

- i. Plan water resources for both potable and non-potable purposes.
- ii. If possible, install on-site water storage tank. If not, identify all sources of water such as Water heaters, Wells, bottled water, blister containers that hold 5+ gallons etc. Denote whether the source is potable or not potable. Ensure adequate supply is on hand.
- iii. Ensure method is established for managing sewage. Ensure residents and staff members are trained in method of flushing with non-potable water. Port-O-Potty service should be contracted in

the event that lift station is inoperable. Establish contract a with sewage-removal company who can evacuate lift stations when all other efforts fail.

- iv. Average amount of water needed: 3 gallons per patient/resident per day for potable water.
- v. If facility is sprinkled for fire purposes, back up plan should be developed to manage situation in the event of their inoperability. Arrange fire watch protocols, ensure additional extinguishers are available throughout the facility and have a 'no candles' policy for lighting to ensure prevention of accidental fire.
- vi. Encourage residents and staff to be self sufficient with water supply.
- vii. Confirm emergency phone contact numbers.

### **3. General Contractor/Building Structural Engineer**

- i. Ensure pre-storm contract with a general contractor/or Building Structural Engineer whose purpose is to assist with assessment of community habitation post storm event. Further, the role of the general contractor/structural engineer can be expanded to manage the subcontractors, restoration personnel and the debris removal contractors.
- ii. The general contractor may also be engaged to assist with employee housing damage. The quicker the employees get assistance to address home damage, the quicker they return to work.
- iii. In the best scenario, the general contractor/Structural Engineer is located at the site prior to the storm to also assess readiness activities, provide guidance to the Plant Operations Director and be available immediately following the storm so as to expedite re-habitation.
- iv. Confirm emergency phone contact numbers.

### **4. Restoration Company**

- i. Coordinate a contract with a restoration company in conjunction with insurance company to ensure that the actions post storm event will be consistent with insurance company expectations.

- ii. Pre-negotiate costs associated with the desired services to prevent price gauging.
- iii. Detail responsibilities such as water extraction, furniture movement or elevate furniture with foil or Styrofoam to prevent water penetration (may need a moving company as well to assist with these tasks if not covered by the restoration company's contract), boarding up windows, pulling up wet carpet, mold remediation, etc.
- iv. Confirm emergency phone contact numbers.

## **5. Roofing Company**

- i. Negotiate roofing contract well in advance (perhaps with a company that already repairs roofs for the community). Ensure contract prices will hold during the emergency situation to avoid price gauging.
- ii. Introduce general contractor to roofing company contact to ensure communication efforts result in desired outcomes.
- iii. Determine what priority the community is compared to other work the roofing contractor may have.
- iv. Identify and have on hand all of the necessary supplies to ensure that a temporary roofing fix can be made to mitigate further water penetration until the permanent roofing repairs can be made.
- v. Confirm emergency phone contact numbers.

## **6. Food/supplies**

- i. Have residents and staff members plan for own food and survival supplies for period of 10 days.
- ii. Make arrangements for food and supplies to be drop shipped by Purchasing Services, to location of emergency where staff and residents will be housed. This saves a tremendous amount of labor time in loading and unloading efforts.
- iii. Identify method of ensuring that food and supply deliveries will continue when communication of needs is interrupted.

## 7. Transportation

- i. Develop contracts with multiple bus companies to ensure evacuation transportation if needed. Be sure busses have restroom facilities.
- ii. Know travel restrictions as dictated by specific companies. For example if winds reach 35+ MPH will transportation opportunity cease?
- iii. Make certain that transportation is for departure and return home.
- iv. Develop directions that are specific and detailed that take into account the routes to be used in the event of an emergency. Certain bridges/roads will be closed at some point. Determine primary and secondary routes. Avoid, to the extent possible, bridges and low-level roads.
- v. Ensure emergency phone contact numbers.
- vi. Plan what gratuities will be paid.
- vii. Ensure staff members are identified to assist with loading and unloading the more frail residents. Contemplate the physical needs when assigning staff to transfer the residents. Make certain training is provided for all employees who will assist in resident transfers.
- viii. Develop plans for back up fuel needs.
- ix. Ensure supplies for the bus are well thought out and planned (first aid, water, medications, snacks, Oxygen, wet wipes, and incontinent products). Research appropriate ways to transport Oxygen.
- x. Stagger departure times so as to ensure that all residents do not arrive at evacuation sites at the same time. This prevents chaos and ensures proper hospitality efforts are achieved as residents are assisted to their accommodations.
- xi. Confirm emergency phone contact numbers.

## **8. Housing/Hotel logistics for evacuation purposes**

- i. Identify housing location for skilled nursing residents that is in like facility. This effort will likely be provided by a sister facility, but not always. A formal contract and operational protocols should be established with receiving facility. i.e. Where will the residents sleep, dine, receive personal care, receive assist with restroom needs, medications, engage in activities; how will their dignity be maintained. Where will the staff take breaks, sleep, shower, eat, prepare food, chart/document, etc.? Hospitals should not be depended upon for transfer of SNF residents as they are actively discharging and cannot accommodate our residents unless life threatening.
- ii. Identify housing location for IL/AL residents. May be in hotel, but not always. If so, pre-negotiate rates. Should plan for local hotel, but also for facility inland more than 3 driving hours away. Identify same issues as above and additionally include the following: How will emergency needs be managed and communicated; triage residents based upon needs (dementia, ambulation assist, terminally ill, medically complex, oxygen dependent, dialysis dependent, etc.); How will medication be acquired when the IL resident forgets to pack it?
- iii. Have floor plan and housing assignments prior to evacuation.
- iv. Meet with receiving facility staff to determine whose staff will do what and determine what facilities will be available for use.
- v. Identify methods of communication with residents and detail how this will be accomplished absent electricity.
- vi. Where will supplies be drop shipped and stored?
- vii. Identify back up housing strategy in the event that community and evacuation site are uninhabitable post storm.

## **9. Staffing**

- i. Establish clinical staffing assignments in each location and ensure adequate clinical staffing to meet the needs of the population.
- ii. Assign staff to pre emergency event and post storm event teams. Communicate when the staff is expected to report and under what circumstances, e.g. report post storm once winds drop below 35

MPH. and listen to radio channel X and T.V. channel Y for information about returning to work.

- iii. Identify in the employee handbook what is expected of employees with regard to their participation in the emergency event and illustrate the consequences for non-compliance. Establish which employee situations are exempt from working the pre-storm activities. For example: single mothers/fathers with child under 1 year old; parent with disabled child; parent caring for aging parent; parent who has children, but spouse has hurricane emergency responsibilities as part of employment. These exempt Employees should be advised that they are required to report to work as soon as the storm winds are below 35 MPH. Employees shall seek permission upon hire and have documented where they fall into these categories. If the employees who have exclusions are not able to help with the evacuation, they shall be expected to assist with pre and post activities.
- iv. Establish 12 hour rotating shifts with sleeping break times scheduled.
- v. Ensure housekeeping, F & B, and maintenance staff are properly assigned for intense clean up needs and meal service needs.
- vi. Establish list of duties for the various employees so that they know what their responsibilities are once in the emergency readiness mode.
- vii. Develop pay expectations and communicate this to employees, i.e. overtime compensation, round the clock compensation, establish beginning and ending timeframes for the additional compensation. Organize bonus payment plans. Consider compensation during all hours the employees are with the evacuation team. Compensation should be provided even for sleep hours as they are on call to assist. Ensure plan is consistent with Wage and Hour laws. Provide method of providing paychecks where IT systems are not functional; this should be coordinated to include cash payrolls where possible.
- viii. Complement clinical staffing protocols with Home Health Personnel and Case Managers through Home Health group. In the hotel setting these staff members can be assigned to care for a group of residents in a particular area based on triaged need. Discussions with home health Directors should be facilitated prior to the emergency event so that they are prepared to support the community's needs and support the execution expectations.

- ix. Establish the expectation about how children and pets will be accommodated. Set up day care setting managed by rotating employees. Or, if practical establish a relationship with a child care agency willing to provide services during an emergency. Establish contract and ensure management of the relationship is consistent with the 'Contract Management' Standards.
- x. Identify resource for auto fuel for the employees so that they are able to drive to and from work post storm event.
- xi. Identify a means to transport employees in the event they are dependent during the course of the emergency.
- xii. Creating the payroll payment register when the power or internet access is not available:

The preferred, and simplest solution, is to produce the payroll payment register with the hours and information available at the time it becomes evident that your facility may be in harms way.

It is understood that this may not always be possible, therefore your within your geographic region to share their access to the LCS infrastructure so that during an emergency, your accounting and payroll system functions and processing may be accessed thru this satellite location. Your same protocols and security will still be in place.

In an extreme emergency, it may be possible for personnel in the LCS IT department to produce your payroll payment register and send it by courier to your location, or to a functioning LCS facility near you. Understand this should not be relied upon as an alternative because it may not be possible for the payroll to be processed or sent to your location – the best way to insure that you will obtain a payroll payment register are thru one of the two previous steps.

Once you have obtained the payment register, it may be preferable to provide employees with cash. To facilitate this establish a plan through your bank relationship manager to make available the currency you will need to issue a payroll in cash. Normally a bank will have other locations in your geographic area that maintains a vault (the plan should not anticipate receiving the cash from the vault in your immediate area). Determine in advance, what denomination of currency will provide the series needed to pay each employee. Ideally the series of amounts will be smaller

(twenty dollar bills and below) so that they are actually useable by the employee. You may wish to pay to the nearest whole dollar – rounded up from the check stub amount.

If your main bank is not capable of providing this service, consider other regional banks within your area.

Contemplate securing within your plan, transport of the cash by an armored vehicle (you or your employees may not wish to transport this volume of cash personally). Your bank may wish for you to negotiate this directly with an outside provider, but they should be able to provide names of dependable couriers. Often this will require supplying the courier with copies of photo identification to the bank in advance that will allow the driver of the armored vehicle to release the funds to the signor (if possible more than one responsible employee should be on file with the transport company).

The emergency procedure plan with a courier may require an annual fee which secures access the priority access to transport.

Determine from your selected bank and courier the timing of how far in advance a request must be made of each to provide this service. Retain this information and relevant phone numbers in your emergency file.

## **10. Communications**

- i. Communicate with residents and employees in May of each year to convey how the hurricane emergency management will be handled. Cover the following:
  - a. What type and amounts of supplies are they required to personally secure on their own. (Medication 30 day supply, Food/Water 10 day supply, luggage-1 bag limit, flashlight/Batteries/lanterns, clothing/toiletries, personal documents, sleeping bags etc.)
  - b. When, will certain services, such as: food, housekeeping, maintenance and transportation, be suspended. What is the food service expectation?
  - c. What are the evacuation plans and to where will the residents be evacuated?

- d. Let residents and employees know how they will be communicated with before, during and following a power outage.
  - e. Advise residents and employees to communicate with families about the LCS Hurricane website where up to date status information may be obtained every four-six hours by logging on to [www.lcsnet.com](http://www.lcsnet.com). It is recommended that post cards be prepared each year containing this information and distributed to residents, employees and emergency contacts.
  - f. Advise residents and employees to communicate with families about the LCS emergency hotline where LCS home office employees will answer questions and secure required information about their loved ones throughout the duration of the emergency event.
  - g. Identify a spokesperson to manage the communication with the media. Ensure proper training in media management and organize public service announcements ahead of time so as to put the community in the most favorable light possible.
  - h. Advise the residents that in the event that an evacuation is ordered by the local and/or state authorities that the community will proceed with evacuation actions. Employees will not remain at the community, services will be suspended and this includes Health Care management, electricity will be turned off, etc. Residents need to be informed that if they refuse to evacuate it is at their own risk. They will need to sign a waiver releasing the owner of liability and accepting the responsibility of their personal decision. Confirm next-of-kin information. The emergency contact will be notified and advised of the situation. That individual will be encouraged to address the matter with the resident. The local authorities shall be notified to advise that there are residents who chose to 'not evacuate as instructed'. The names and key emergency contact information should be provided to the authorities.
- ii. ***Communication with state authorities, Insurance contacts, emergency management and establishment of an emergency command center and corresponding duties.***
- a. Meet early with insurance company or agency to determine what type of coverage the community has and what the

documentation protocols are post-storm event. Know when coverage is effective and understand what costs are not covered that should be budgeted. Coordinate communication protocols with the community's assigned adjuster and corporate risk manager to ensure post storm adjusting coordination. Know the insurance company's expectations with regard to evacuation. Understand the legal ramifications of not evacuating once ordered.

- b. Meet early with local/state Emergency Management personnel to ensure coordinated effort in the event that planned systems fail and the community needs emergency support post storm.
- c. Identify who among the personnel will be responsible for notifying the State Agencies as to evacuation status, location, and timing of return and departure.
- d. Establish an emergency command center (guidelines found in NFPA) that at a minimum accomplish the following:
  - i. Maintain accountability of all residents and employees.
  - ii. Maintain emergency contact information in centralized location and method for contacting those individuals during the emergency event.
  - iii. Maintain insurance information for timely assistance with claims adjusting activities.
  - iv. Maintain critical records.
  - v. Account for personnel work hours and reporting of such.
  - vi. Management of phone in-take and E-Mail communications, as well as phone messaging once evacuation has occurred.
  - vii. Posting of signage when evacuation has occurred indicating location and time of departure.
  - viii. Management of Media Relations, pre, and post storm. Coordination of public service announcements using support from Marketing

Department and all in conjunction with the 'Managing the Media during a Crisis' manual.

- ix. Ensure phones are used that provide the best coverage and service during a storm event. Include Analog, satellite in addition to wireless Cellular. Install repeaters and secure to ensure maximum effectiveness. Investigate the practicality and use of satellite electronic management systems that are often used by media in storm affected areas
- x. Establish comprehensive list with key contact phone numbers to include at a minimum:
  - 1. Staff
  - 2. State Association
  - 3. General Contractor
  - 4. Electrician
  - 5. Home Health Personnel
  - 6. Roofing Contractor
  - 7. Insurance adjuster
  - 8. Fuel Source
  - 9. Oxygen supplier
  - 10. Purchasing group
  - 11. Media contacts.
- xi. Record message on primary phone system that explains evacuation details and community status. This should be accomplished early and not when it is needed to ensure that calm is conveyed.

## **11. Supplies**

- i. Along with routine supplies ensure that the following are on the list of must haves: Fans, Flash lights, lanterns, batteries, fiber optic light sticks, oxygen and portable concentrators, Battery operated radios and televisions, cots, egg crate mattresses, linens, folding chairs, food, water, ice and first aid kits. See comprehensive list of supplies for recommendations.
- ii. Alternate source for nursing supplies when supplies run low or residents forget their medications. Establish protocol with pharmacy and Medical Director for such needs. Identify back up plan for Lab, X-ray, therapy and other diagnostic related services should the routine providers be unavailable.
- iii. Coordinate supply lists with purchasing agent and provide direction as to what and where supplies are to be delivered.

1. ***Once the storm has passed, evaluate the community for habitation using the support of the general contractor, structural engineer and restoration company. Commence with activities to ensure safe and comfortable re-entry:***
  - i. Evaluate status of roofing and building structure.
  - ii. Check that all elevators are properly working on the generators.
  - iii. Prevent water from further penetrating building by securing roofing and windows if possible.
  - iv. Evacuate water to prevent mildew.
  - v. Assess status of water. Boil if ordered.
  - vi. Where there is no electricity, ensure generators are in good working order. Log in fuel consumption and monitor fuel resources for enduring power outage. Seek additional fuel resources where possible.
  - vii. Commence with debris removal, tree trimming and other activities to ensure safe entry to the community.
  - viii. Evaluate the status of sewage management and address with the resources needed.
  - ix. Establish plans for emergency power to come back on so that systems cycle on and do not overload with the restored power.
2. ***Once the general contractor/structural engineer provides the ‘all clear’ for re-entry, notify the State authorities to inspect and clear the community for mold issues and sound structural integrity.***
3. ***Once the residents re-enter the community, ensure their safety by facilitating the following:***
  - i. Force fluids to prevent dehydration.
  - ii. Clean out refrigerators to ensure residents do not consume spoiled food.
  - iii. Establish cool common place where fans are used to help with comfort.

- iv. Monitor Health Care resident temperatures and ambient temperatures with the prevention of hyperthermia the key objective.
- v. Resume food service as soon as practical.
- vi. Conduct room and apartment rounds to ensure fire watches are in place if emergency systems are compromised; check resident body temperatures; check on medication status and on re-order needs; force fluids; check skin for the more compromised residents; open windows and assess room/unit temperatures; check on overall medical conditions; Ensure availability of water; ensure proper toilet flushing techniques; ensure the availability of incontinent supplies and other hygiene needs; remove spoiled food from refrigerators; assess psycho-social needs.
- vii. Provide Activities' program to ensure that the residents are engaged in productive and meaningful events that help to occupy their time in a stress-relieving manner.

4. ***Post storm Employees who are scheduled to work focus on clean up efforts, while employees who facilitated the evacuation return home. Keep in mind the following where employees are concerned:***

- i. Adjust employee schedules to accommodate their needs to address personal losses such as housing damage.
- ii. Relax uniform standards. Assist with laundry where possible.
- iii. Assist with meals and force fluids to avoid dehydration.
- iv. Ensure paychecks continue and in cash if need be. Employees should log in their hours worked and identify what tasks they performed. Supervisors should verify the accuracy of time and tasks.
- v. Assist employees to access FEMA, State Health Care and Red Cross support where needed.
- vi. Try to establish an employee relief fund with resident support.

- vii. Plan recognition activities and acknowledge staff contributions. Further acknowledge resident patience and understanding over the inconveniences they experienced.

5. ***Post storm communication and physical plant follow up should include the following:***

- i. The LCS corporate risk manager and insurance company adjuster should be on-site as soon as practicable following the storm to document the damage in a comprehensive manner in a way that ensures maximization of claim/damage recovery. The General Contractor/structural engineer should be on hand to address questions as they arise.
- ii. Department Directors should be given disposable cameras to photograph damage as they observe it. They should be instructed to document their observations.
- iii. Identify Capital improvements for physical plant structural failures. For example: Note that gable trusses, mechanically fastened single-ply roofs, ballasted roofing and roofing shingles are no longer recommended, but the 5 ply roofing and standing seam proved effective during the last storm event.

Other physical plant improvements might be: increased generator capacity, additional fuel storage containers, rooftop A/C fasteners, impact glass windows, water storage containers, retrofitting of sky lights with impact resistant glass, etc.

- iv. Media management and prepared public service announcements should be coordinated to maximize the positive elements of the emergency and reflect the community in the most favorable light.
- v. There should be a staff evaluation of the event and the state approved emergency plan should be updated to reflect what worked effectively in the plan and also adjust procedures for the elements that did not work so well.
- vi. Document all items destroyed and discarded. Protect items that can be salvaged.