



Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
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Disaster Preparedness

Some of the roles that MCC members can play are to assist first responders when requested, prepare their families and communities prior to emergencies, assist neighbors during an emergency, and respond to a disaster as a responder until help can arrive. By learning how to work as a team, the MCC will be able to do the greatest good for the greatest number after a disaster. Importantly, with Jesus as your friend and guide, a positive impact will be wrought beyond what you can imagine. By being close to people in times of great need, an opportunity occurs for witnessing which would otherwise never happen.

Community Preparedness: Roles

To lessen the impact of a disaster requires that a community prepare. This needs the engagement of **government, leaders from private and civic sectors, and the public**. The hazards and vulnerabilities of the area need to be addressed with the existing infrastructure and resources locally available.

Government

The **government** has the responsibility to develop and define the emergency operations plans, ensure that emergency responders have adequate skills and resources, and provide services to protect and assist its citizens.

Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)

All government agencies work to organize and coordinate their activities before an emergency occurs. The EOP is a **document that assigns responsibility to organizations and individuals** for carrying out specific actions at a time and place. This sets the line of authority and communication channels. Personnel, equipment, facilities, and supplies are identified for use during the response and recovery operations.

Community Leaders

The **leaders from the private and civic sectors** are to participate in community preparedness. This includes local collaborative planning councils, integrating appropriate resources into government plans, and ensuring facilities and staff or population are prepared and trained for preparedness actions.

The Public

The public needs to learn about community alerts and warnings, evacuation routes, to develop a network to help others, to report suspicious activity, to practice skills and make personal plans, and to volunteer.

Despite advances in technology, a functioning community is based on complex and interdependent systems driven by human forces. Becoming part of MCC and a trained CERT member allows all these goals to be met.

Hazards and their Potential Impact

There are many types of disasters: Natural, Technological, Terrorism, Pandemics, and Home fires. MCC members are training to be volunteers in large-scale events in their communities. The key elements of disasters have some elements in common: they are unexpected, have increased demands for resources, and endanger lives, health and the environment.

Local Hazard Vulnerability

Assessing your community allows prioritization for preparedness actions.

- Identify the most common disasters that occur
- Identify possible hazards with the most severe impact
- Consider recent and historical events
- Identify susceptible locations in the community for specific hazards: people, buildings, and infrastructure
- Consider what to expect for disruption of services and length of restoration.

Impact on the Infrastructure

Think about the impacts of a hurricane on Florida. The possible impacts to infrastructure can be far ranging. Several categories can be impacted in multiple ways. Review the charts below. Have you been impacted during one of these events?

Infrastructure at Risk	Possible Impacts
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roads are closed and/or impassable • Responders may be delayed in reaching areas of need • Flow of needed supplies (e.g., food, water) is interrupted
Structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damaged critical facilities (e.g., hospitals, fire stations, police precincts, airports) unable to function • Increased risk of damage from falling debris
Communications Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survivors unable to phone for help or reach service providers • Coordination of services is hampered

Infrastructure at Risk	Possible Impacts
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families and friends cannot communicate
Utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of service • Increased risk of fire or electrical shock • Limited access to fuel (e.g., pumps that may not work)
Water Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical facilities hampered • Inadequate water flow, which results in notice to boil water and hampered firefighting capabilities • Increased risk to public health
Fuel Supplies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased risk of fire or explosion from fuel line rupture • Flow of fuel is interrupted by impassable roads
Financial Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ATMs do not work • Credit card systems inoperable

Anticipate the types of damage from your area's most likely events. For instance broken glass from older windows on the ground, older homes can be moved off their foundation, roofs can be flung far distances, broken power lines strewn over the roadways, and small fires started in multiple-unit dwellings. Also, large oversize roof spans add a hazard of disruption of public spaces (airports, malls, warehouses).

The consequence of damage to the infrastructure can restrict many of the emergency response systems. Many agencies will be only able to respond to the most threatening hazard as they are overwhelmed. This is where the MCC member can play a role. They can help with first aid, small fire suppression, utility safety measures, and with comfort and support.

Preparing for a Disaster

Research indicates that usually only two thirds of people have enough food in the house to last 3 days. Many people do not keep all the important documents in one place in case of need to evacuate. Most do not have supplies stored for use in multiple sites.

One way to help your community to prepare is to plan and prepare for your own family. Things to consider are the following:

- Where will you meet family members? There should be a location outside the house and one outside the neighborhood.
- Identify an out-of-state contact person.
- Have a plan to either shelter in place or evacuate.
- What are the escape routes for home, work, school, and church?
- What are the options for evacuation routes?
- How will your family stay in touch?
- How do you receive information or warnings about an impending event?
- What are community resources that can help you in the time of an event?
- What are some local resources that can help to prepare for disasters?

Assembling and Storing Disaster Supplies

FEMA has a recommended list for items to be kept on hand.

Food Items		Kitchen Items	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits, and vegetables • Canned juices, milk, soup (if powdered, store extra water) • Sugar, salt, pepper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-energy foods (Peanut butter, jelly, crackers, granola bars, trail mix) • Foods for infants, elderly persons, or persons on special diets • Comfort and stress foods (Cookies, hard candy, sweetened cereals, lollipops, instant coffee, tea bags) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manual can opener • Mess kits or paper cups, plates, and plastic utensils • All-purpose knife • Small cooking stove and a can of cooking fuel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trash bags • Household liquid bleach to treat drinking water • Aluminum foil and plastic wrap
Personal Sanitation Items		Clothing and Bedding Supplies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toilet paper, towelettes* • Feminine supplies* • Household chlorine bleach • Disinfectant • Plastic garbage bags, ties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soap, liquid detergent* • Personal hygiene items* • Plastic bucket with tight lid • Liquid hand sanitizer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sturdy shoes or boots* • Blankets or sleeping bags* • Thermal underwear • One complete change of clothing and footwear per person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rain gear* • Hats and gloves* • Sunglasses* • Remember to cycle clothing for different seasons
Disaster Kit First Aid Items		Disaster Kit Tools	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First aid manual • Two-inch sterile gauze pads (4-6) • Hypoallergenic adhesive tape • Needle • Antibacterial ointment • Tongue depressors (2) • Assorted sizes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four-inch sterile gauze pads (4-6) • Triangular bandages (3) • Moistened towelettes • Thermometer • Tube of petroleum jelly or other lubricant • Cleaning agent/soap 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency preparedness manual* • Battery-operated weather radio and extra batteries • Tube tent • Duct tape • Matches in a waterproof container • Plastic storage containers • Paper, pencil* • Work gloves • Flashlight and extra batteries* • Fuel for vehicle and generator • Plastic sheeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-sparking shutoff wrench to turn off household gas and water • Pliers • Compass* • Fire extinguisher (small canister, ABC type) • Signal flare(s)* • Needles, thread • Medicine dropper • Whistle • Landline telephone
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four-inch sterile roller bandages (3 rolls) • Sunscreen • Tweezers • Aspirin or non-aspirin pain reliever • Antacid (for upset stomach) • Laxative • Sterile adhesive bandages in assorted sizes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scissors • Hot and cold compress • Anti-diarrhea medication • Allergy medication and, if necessary, epinephrine • Activated charcoal 		

Water Storage

The rule of thumb to determine the amount of water needed for emergency storage is 1 gallon of water per person, per day. This comes from using 3 quarts for drinking and 1 quart for food preparation and sanitation. This is the minimum amount, if doing heavy physical activity or pregnant more will be needed.

If the water is questionable, purify it before drinking. Heat water to a rolling boil for 1 minute or use commercial purification tablets. Regular household liquid chlorine bleach (5.25-6.0 % sodium hypochlorite) also can purify water. Do not use perfumed bleach or blended products. After adding the bleach, shake or stir the water container and let it stand for 30 minutes before drinking.

- Use 4 drops of bleach to 1 quart of water.
- Use 8 drops of bleach to 1 gallon of water.
- Use 1/3 teaspoon bleach to 4 gallons of water.
- Store water in plastic containers
- Look for the triangular recycling symbol with a number 1 on the bottom of the bottle.
- Wash the container with soap and warm water. Dry. Fill with water from the tap (potable).
- Cycle the water through every 6 months with a fresh supply.

Protective Actions

Many disasters can occur with little or no warning. The first actions taken can make a big impact on how well people fare after the impact.

- Assess the situation: Take a few seconds to determine the most effective next steps
- Decide to stay or change locations. If not in immediate danger, individuals should stay where they are.
- Seek clean air and protect breathing passages.
- Protect from debris and signal rescuers if trapped. Bang on an object or blow a whistle. Yelling is last resort.
- Remove contaminants from yourself or the environment if able.
- Practice good hygiene. This prevents disease.

Sheltering

There are different types of sheltering used in disasters.

1. Shelter in place. Sealing a room is a way to protect from contaminants in the air for a short period until it can dissipate. Identify an internal room at home, work, or other places that can be used. Prep the room with items stored for use later if the plan is to stay longer than a couple hours.
2. Shelter for extended stay. As for a pandemic, staying in one place for a couple weeks or months may be needed. Supply storage is more important to be thought out and done ahead of need. Food stock should be rotated every year for non-perishable items.

3. Mass care/community shelter. These have been used for short term shelter, providing the water, food, and basic sanitary facilities. But, if possible, take your own 3 day supply with you for additional items you may need.

Mitigation

This means to reduce the effect on life and property by finding ways to reduce the impact. This includes any activity that can prevent an emergency, reduce the likelihood of occurrence, or reduce the damaging effects of unavoidable hazards such as making structural changes, and purchasing insurance for the hazard.

Examples of Precautions to Use for Mitigation

Structural:

- Bolt older houses to the foundation.
- Install hurricane straps to the roof.
- Strap propane tanks and chimneys.
- Strap mobile homes or trailers to a concrete pad
- . Raise utilities above a flood line.

Non-structural:

- Anchor furniture.
- Secure appliances and office equipment in place.
- Use childproof fasteners on cabinet doors
- Locate and label shut offs for gas, electricity, and water.
- Secure water heaters to a wall
- Install hurricane storm shutters to protect windows.
- Use flexible fittings on plumbing and gas lines
- Keep vegetation at least 300 feet from a home to reduce wildfire risk.

Personal Protective Equipment.

The first job at all times is to stay safe. It is important to have a go bag packed with your personal protective equipment inside. This includes a helmet, goggles, mask, gloves (work and non-latex), sturdy shoes and boots.

Protection for Disaster Workers

Generally, the “Good Samaritan” laws protect MCC volunteers who provide care in a **prudent and reasonable manner**. There are also laws for protection in each state. The key though is to act in **accordance with the training that they have received.**

Table top-Exercises

Building a tower and a team

1. Split the group into small teams of 3-4 members. Give each team a pair of scissors, roll of tape, two pieces of cardboard (8x10 inches) and forty pieces of construction paper (8.5 x 11 inches).
2. Spend 10 minutes planning a freestanding tower standing at least 5 feet tall.
3. The first 5 minutes they may not touch the materials, just discuss and plan during that time.
4. Then build the tower in 5 minutes. Each team starts at the same time.
5. Finally, discuss the skills and/or abilities that were used during the process.

Practice Drills Planning

1. What drills or exercises does your church participate with? What about your school or work places?
2. What are the hazards in your area to be familiar with? What preparation does your family or church group take?

Family Disaster Plan

1. Draw a plan with all members about how to prepare for disasters for your area.
2. Plan how to stay in contact with each other if separated.
3. Make a business card sized list of family and friends' phone numbers (not just in a cell phone) and keep in a wallet or with important papers.

Practice Evacuation

1. Distribute paper and pencils to each member. Have each member make a list of what to take with them from their home if they only have 5 minutes to take it and leave. Beside each item listed, write where the item is kept in their home. Stop the time allotted after only 4 minutes to add urgency to the problem.
2. Make a list of items to keep and where to put them for rapid retrieval.
3. Make a separate list for additional needs, i.e. pet food, baby supplies, medicines from prescriptions.

Shelter in Place

1. Now try making a list of items that would add to a shelter in place order for your comfort and safety.
2. Note how the items are different from evacuation, yet contain similar items.

Disaster Preparedness


For course certification, the form must be filled out.


Member Name (Print) _____ Instructor Name (Print) _____

Member Position Number _____ Instructor Position Number _____

Member FEMA SID _____ Instructor FEMA SID _____


Date of Instruction _____

 List the key players that have roles in preparing communities for a disaster.

 Identify categories of Infrastructure and potential disruptions from a hazard.

 List materials and supplies recommended for a disaster supply kit..

_____ Understand the basics of mitigation for disasters.

 Perform the table top exercises.

With a complete sheet of initials, the instructor's signature signifies certification of completion for the Disaster Preparedness course.

Instructor Signature _____