

# EMERGENCY INFORMATION

- Earthquakes**
  - ◆ Sudden movements/trembling caused by movement of Earth's tectonic plates.
  - ◆ Can cause severe structural damage.
  - ◆ Can also cause interruption in utility services and infrastructure.
  - ◆ Since 1900 there have been 54 earthquakes felt in MD, most of them minor.
- Extreme Heat & Droughts**
  - ◆ Can pose a danger to the elderly and medically fragile.
  - ◆ Can lead to power outages.
  - ◆ Can affect the City's water supply and lead to rationing.
  - ◆ Baltimore suffered a major drought in 2002 that led to imposed water restrictions.
- Flooding**
  - ◆ Occurs when rivers, streams, bodies of water become overwhelmed with rain or melting snow from higher ground.
  - ◆ In Baltimore this typically occurs along Patapsco River tributaries such as the Gwynns Falls and Jones Falls.
  - ◆ Baltimore is also subject to tidal flooding in the Northwest Harbor and Middle Branch of the Patapsco.
- Hazardous Materials Release**
  - ◆ Harmful substances released into the environment.
  - ◆ Can be the result of an industrial accident or terrorism.
  - ◆ In 2001 the Howard Street Tunnel fire involved hazardous materials. Camden Yards was evacuated and major roads were closed for days.
  - ◆ Many citizens were instructed to shelter in place.
- Hurricanes**
  - ◆ Large, intense storms originating in tropical and sub-tropical waters
  - ◆ Hurricane winds from 74mph to upwards of 154mph depending on category (1-5).
  - ◆ Tropical storms have wind speeds below 74 mph.
  - ◆ Bring torrential rains causing flooding.
  - ◆ High winds can damage/destroy structures.
  - ◆ Can cause massive storm surge (coastal flooding)
  - ◆ Can spawn tornadoes.
  - ◆ Tropical Storm Isabel caused major coastal flooding around Baltimore's harbor in 2003.
- Tornadoes**
  - ◆ One or more twisting, funnel-shaped clouds
  - ◆ Spawned by powerful thunderstorms or hurricanes.
  - ◆ Cause uprooted trees, carries debris, power outages and fires.
  - ◆ Fujita scale speeds range from 40mph to 300mph.
- Power outages**
  - ◆ Caused by extreme winter weather, extreme heat, mechanical failure.
  - ◆ Vary in size, location, and length.
  - ◆ Especially dangerous for vulnerable populations.
  - ◆ In 2003, a massive power outage caused a blackout across the Northeast United States and Canada.
- Winter Weather**
  - ◆ Includes ice storms, heavy snow, sleet, high winds.
  - ◆ Blizzards are intense storms combined with several of these features.
  - ◆ Can shut down transportation and major transportation routes.
  - ◆ Baltimore normally experiences 21.1 inches of snow per year.

# PARTNERS IN PREPAREDNESS

## Emergency Planning Guide for:

- Nursing Homes
- Assisted Living Facilities
- Homeless Shelters
- Supportive Housing
- Treatment Centers
- Senior Housing
- Mental Health Facilities
- Adult Day Care Centers

**CITY OF BALTIMORE**

Mayor Sheila Dixon



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# EMERGENCY INFORMATION

(Tear this page out or copy, and post in key locations)

**TO REPORT AN EMERGENCY IN YOUR FACILITY DIAL 911**

**TO REPORT A NON-EMERGENCY DIAL 311**

**If you hear the emergency warning sirens for an extended period of over a minute:**

Turn on your radio or television to one of the Emergency Alert System (EAS) Stations:

\* WBAL Radio - 1090 AM \* WBAL TV - Channel 11 \*

For emergency updates, turn to Baltimore City Cable TV Channel 25

LISTEN for instructions

FOLLOW these instructions

DO NOT evacuate unless instructed to do so

DO inform staff members of the situation and prepare to shelter in place if necessary.

**Know what to expect when you hear these weather watches and warnings:**

**Flood Watch:** High flow or overflow of water from a river is possible in the given time period. It can also apply to heavy runoff or drainage of water into low-lying areas. These watches are generally issued for flooding that is expected to occur at least 6 hours after heavy rains have ended.

**Flood Warning:** Flooding conditions are actually occurring or are imminent in the warning area.

**Flash Flood Watch:** Flash flooding is possible in or close to the watch area. Flash Flood Watches are generally issued for flooding that is expected to occur within 6 hours after heavy rains have ended.

**Flash Flood Warning:** Flash flooding is actually occurring or imminent in the warning area. It can be issued as a result of torrential rains, a dam failure, or ice jam.

**Tornado Watch:** Conditions are conducive to the development of tornadoes in and close to the watch area.

**Tornado Warning:** A tornado has actually been sighted by spotters or indicated on radar and is occurring or imminent in the warning area.

**Severe Thunderstorm Watch:** Conditions are conducive to the development of severe thunderstorms in and close to the watch area.

**Severe Thunderstorm Warning:** A severe thunderstorm has actually been observed by spotters or indicated on radar, and is occurring or imminent in the warning area.

**Tropical Storm or Hurricane Watch:** Tropical storm or hurricane conditions with sustained winds over 39 mph are possible in the watch area within the next 36 hours.

**Tropical Storm or Hurricane Warning:** Tropical storm or hurricane conditions are expected in the warning area within the next 24 hours.

## SAMPLE EMERGENCY PLAN OUTLINE

This is an example of how to structure an emergency plan for your facility. Each facility should consider its unique circumstances and organizational structure in creating its plan.

### I. OBJECTIVES

- A. Your Policy
- B. Your Priorities
- C. What needs to be accomplished in an emergency

### II. FACILITY INFORMATION

- A. Physical Structure
- B. Residents
- C. Staffing
- D. Surroundings

### III. VULNERABILITIES & HAZARDS

- A. Vulnerabilities
- B. Hazards

### IV. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

- A. Protective Actions
  - 1. Shelter in Place
  - 2. Evacuation
- B. Continuity of Essential Functions
- C. Communications & Coordination

### V. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Executive Director
  - B. Facility Administrator
  - C. Director of Security
  - D. Director of Maintenance
  - E. Shift Supervisor
- (These are examples. Use as many positions as apply to your organization)

### VI. PREPAREDNESS

- A. Education & Training
- B. Exercises
- C. Evaluation & Revision

- Appendix A Staff Emergency Contact List & Call-Down Procedure
- Appendix B List of Contracts, Vendors, and Other Important Outside Entities
- Appendix C Hazard-Specific Procedures  
(Create a procedure to follow for each potential type of emergency)
- Appendix D Facility & Neighborhood Maps

## From the Mayor



Dear Friends,

Ensuring the safety and security of our citizens is the first responsibility of government. I know that the many health care and human services facilities in Baltimore share that sense of obligation to their residents. Both government and the operators of these facilities play critical roles in making sure that collectively, we are prepared to protect those most vulnerable in the event of a major emergency.

As we have seen, Baltimore can be affected by any number of natural or manmade disasters. Tropical Storm Isabel brought the harbor into the streets of our City. We have been through blizzards that made business as usual nearly impossible. Since the attacks of September 11, 2001, we have lived with the threat of terrorism. And we all remember the devastation wrought by Hurricane Katrina, and its disproportionate impact on those who have the least and those who depend on others for medical care, basic human services and transportation.

Today, we use the lessons of Hurricane Katrina as motivation in continuing our preparedness efforts.

We must engage in a collaborative process to ensure that plans and resources are in place to communicate and to act decisively in an emergency. There must be clear expectations as to who will do what, and when. Our local emergency responders are prepared to provide rapid assistance to your facilities if they are impacted by an isolated emergency. But recent history has shown that when a community is overwhelmed by a massive disaster, the preparedness of individual citizens, organizations, and facilities like yours are key to coping with the impact.

The importance of this type of planning was further highlighted by the passage in 2006 of new legislation concerning preparedness for licensed facilities. Incorporated into law as Maryland Code, Public Safety Article §14-110.1, "Emergency plans for human service facilities," the new law requires licensed facilities to develop detailed plans that include evacuation, shelter in place, and continuity of operations.

The actions you take today can save lives in an emergency. I hope you will take the time to go through this planning guide and make sure that your facility is as prepared as possible. And I urge you to return the completed preparedness checklist, along with your facility's emergency plans, to the City's Emergency Management Office, so that we can better plan to coordinate the assistance that may be needed in a disaster.

I would like to thank you in advance for being proactive in preparing your facility for emergencies, and for taking the initiative to be a true partner in preparedness. I look forward to working with you in our shared commitment to protecting our most vulnerable citizens.

Sincerely,

Sheila Dixon  
Mayor

# HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

## This planning guide is intended to serve two purposes:

- ◆ It is a resource for you to help improve your facility's emergency preparedness.
- ◆ It is a tool for building a partnership between your organization and local government to collaboratively plan for emergencies.

## Along the way, it will also help you accomplish the following:

- ◆ Create and maintain a quick reference checklist of your facility's physical resources and liabilities, functions, supplies, occupant needs, personnel and contact information.
- ◆ If you already have a plan in place, this guide is intended to be used as an assessment tool of your facility's plans, and to take action to increase your preparedness.
- ◆ If your facility does not already have a plan in place, this guide will assist you in creating one. Both the plan guidance and the Sample Emergency Plan Outline are intended to help you focus your information into a workable plan.
- ◆ While there will be repetitive information contained in the checklist and the emergency plan sections of this guide, it is important that information is contained in both. The checklist will help you increase your emergency plan's effectiveness or help you create one if needed.

Send us your completed checklist along with a copy of your facility's current plans. This will allow us to better understand your facility's vulnerabilities, needs, and procedures in an emergency, and plan accordingly. If you and your staff need any assistance in creating your emergency plan, please contact the Office of Emergency Management.

Please submit completed checklists and plans via:

Email: [EOC@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:EOC@baltimorecity.gov)  
Fax: 410-377-6782

Or mail to:  
Emergency Operations Center  
1201 East Cold Spring Lane  
Baltimore, MD 21239  
410-396-6188

You can also find this guide online at [www.baltimorecity.gov/emergency](http://www.baltimorecity.gov/emergency)

Conducting seminars, strategy sessions, or training workshops that focus on emergency preparedness will engage personnel in the planning process and help them to understand what will be expected of them in an emergency. Also consider ways to include residents in preparedness activities. If you make emergency preparedness training a part of your facility's regular schedule of activities, it will increase familiarity and convey the message that your organization takes preparedness seriously.

### **B. Exercises**

The only way to know if your facility's plans will work is to test them. You should test your emergency plan on a regular basis by conducting exercises (drills). An exercise should simulate an emergency scenario, and force your employees to react realistically to the situation.

There are different types of exercises. You can conduct a "tabletop" exercise in which your organization's leadership and key staff are presented with a potential emergency scenario and they work their way through a discussion of how they would handle it. You can also conduct a "functional" exercise in which personnel are presented with a scenario and instructed to actually undertake different actions in response. An exercise does not need to test all aspects of an emergency plan. For example, your facility could conduct a shelter in place exercise every two months in which you check your emergency supplies, review procedures, and practice communicating with personnel.

### **C. Evaluation & Revision**

No plan is perfect when first written. Through the process of training personnel and conducting drills, you should receive feedback and learn lessons about what works well and what does not. These lessons must be recognized and appropriate changes must be made to the emergency plan. These changes should then be communicated throughout your organization, personnel should be trained, and the revised plan should be exercised. It is through this continuous process of training, testing and making changes that your facility will be prepared for an emergency.



### **C. Communications and Coordination**

In an emergency it is critical that your staff be able to communicate with each other and with the outside world. Without a means of communication, it is difficult to coordinate your organization's actions, ensure that your staff executes its responsibilities, receive instructions from authorities, or request help. Your emergency plan should answer the following questions:

- ◆ How will decisions be made and communicated in an emergency?
- ◆ How will your staff communicate with residents and with their family members?
- ◆ How will you receive information from authorities or request outside assistance?
- ◆ If your primary communications systems fail, what are your backups?

### **V. Roles & Responsibilities**

If people know ahead of time what is expected of them in an emergency, they are much more likely to be comfortable with their responsibilities and capable of performing them. Your emergency plan should clearly establish who will do what in an emergency.

The simplest way to do this is to make a list of the staff positions in your organization, and then list the duties that correspond to each position. These duties should be specific enough that the responsible person(s) understand what action they should take, under what circumstances. These responsibilities should be communicated to the personnel who hold the respective positions. You should also consider who would fulfill the responsibilities of a particular position if the person who holds that position is unavailable in an emergency. These responsibilities need to be communicated to these "backups" as well.

### **VI. Preparedness**

Writing a solid emergency plan is an important first step. But once the plan is written, there are three related activities that are essential to preparing your facility to execute the plan successfully in an emergency.

#### **A. Education & Training**

The people responsible for executing an emergency plan must be trained to do so. All personnel should be provided with a basic understanding of the facility's emergency plan. But it is not enough to just distribute copies of the plan to employees. Consider different ways that you can increase awareness of emergency procedures and build a coordinated team approach to managing potential emergencies.

# **YOUR EMERGENCY PLAN**

Every facility has unique circumstances that it must consider in its emergency plan. The plan should reflect the risks that your facility faces and the procedures that you have in place to address a wide range of emergency scenarios. The plan should be structured such that it is easily understood by those who are responsible for executing it. You will be able to use the information listed in the Preparedness Checklist (Sec. 2). At a minimum, the following items should be included in your facility's emergency plan:

### **I. Objectives**

Begin the plan by stating your facility's objectives in an emergency. Objectives should be simple and specific. Anyone who reads the objectives should understand what your facility is responsible for doing in an emergency. This could consist of:

- ◆ Your policy
- ◆ Your priorities
- ◆ What must be accomplished

### **II. Basic Facility Information**

- A. Physical Structure (Description from Sec. 3 of Preparedness Checklist)
- B. Occupants (Description from Sec. 2 of Preparedness Checklist)
- C. Personnel (Description from Sec. 5 of Preparedness Checklist)
- D. Physical surroundings around your facility.

### **III. Vulnerabilities & Hazards**

The planning process begins with an understanding of your facility's risk. Analyzing risks allows you to answer the question "What am I planning for?" This question can be difficult to address as a whole. By breaking down your facility's vulnerabilities and hazards that can affect it, you can develop a solid understanding of the risks to your facility.

#### **A. Vulnerabilities**

Identify the entire range of potential effects that various hazards would have on your facility and its residents. This range reflects your facility's vulnerabilities. While you should identify and address all of your facility's vulnerabilities, it is most critical to prepare and protect against those vulnerabilities that present the greatest risk.

To establish these vulnerabilities, consider:

In what ways is your building structure susceptible to the potential effects of these different hazards?

- ◆ Flooding
- ◆ Dangerous winds (hurricanes, tornados, thunderstorms)
- ◆ Extreme winter weather (ice storm, blizzard)
- ◆ Hazardous materials release
- ◆ Power outage

What types of systems, services, or supplies do you rely on, which could be cut off in an emergency?

What factors make it dangerous or difficult to suspend operations or evacuate your facility?

## **B. Hazards**

Identify the manmade and natural hazards that can actually impact your facility, and what their effects would be. Consider what hazards historically affect the Baltimore area, what hazards your facility faces by virtue of its specific location (if you are located in the floodplain, for example), and what hazards pose the most danger:

What are the most likely hazards?

What are the most dangerous hazards?

What are the most prolonged hazards?

\*\* For a list of hazards that can impact Baltimore, see Section 4 (Emergency Information).

## **IV. Procedures**

### **A. Protective Actions**

In a major emergency, City government will provide instructions via several media on what action citizens should take to protect themselves. There are two basic actions that you may be instructed to take: shelter in place or evacuate. It is important that your staff as well as your residents understand what these actions entail and that your facility has plans in place to execute them.

### **1. Shelter in Place**

Very often the safest thing to do in an emergency is to stay put. When this is the case, instructions will be issued to "shelter in place." Depending on the hazard, this may involve different actions. If a hurricane is approaching, you may need to board up windows and move residents to interior areas. If a hazardous chemical is released, you may need to turn off air handling systems and seal windows and doors. Under all of these circumstances, you will need to be able to secure the facility and provide basic supplies and services for your residents, perhaps without any support from the outside for a period of days. The items listed in the Preparedness Checklist (Section 3) will help your facility cope. These include:

- ◆ Water (1 gallon per person per day)
- ◆ Non-perishable food
- ◆ Battery-powered radio
- ◆ Flashlight with extra batteries
- ◆ Basic medical supplies
- ◆ Plastic sheeting and duct tape

### **2. Evacuation**

If it is not safe to shelter in place, instructions may be issued for particular areas or facilities to be evacuated. It is critical that your facility have plans for where you will transport your residents if you are ordered to evacuate, and what modes of transportation you will use to get them there. The items listed in the Preparedness Checklist (Section 6) will help your facility cope. These include:

- ◆ Number of residents who can self-evacuate.
- ◆ Number of residents needing assistance.
- ◆ Transportation for its occupants
- ◆ Identified sites to which occupants would relocate.
- ◆ Partnership with local community relocation assistance.

### **B. Continuity of Essential Functions**

Identify the functions that your facility performs that are essential. These are functions that result in unacceptable consequences if they are interrupted. Essential functions could include provision of food and water, emergency medical care, or maintenance of ventilators. Non-essential functions are those that can be suspended for a period of time without serious repercussions. These might include a variety of administrative tasks.

Determine how your organization will preserve these essential functions if they are disrupted in an emergency. Where can you obtain the resources you require if your primary source is unavailable? What procedures can be implemented to maintain critical services with diminished supplies, systems, and staffing?