

South Carolina Long Term Care Emergency Preparedness e-Newsletter:

Fall 2023

Welcome, we're glad you're here.

Another perk of attending a South Carolina Long Term Care Emergency Preparedness - Basic/Advanced Course is gaining access to this bi-annual newsletter curated for nursing home staff members like you.

Be sure to check out our webpage for other helpful resources.

[SC LTCEP Webpage](#)

NEW EDUCATIONAL VIDEO! Emergency Preparedness Kits



Upcoming Courses:

Click [here](#) to download the full schedule with links to register.

Remember, emergency preparedness is **everyone's** responsibility. All positions are invited to attend!

DATE	COURSE	REGION	LOCATION	REGISTER
OCT 12, 2023 (THURS)	BASIC	LOW COUNTRY	AERONAUTICAL TRAINING CENTER: 7000 RIVERS AVENUE, NORTH CHARLESTON, SC 29406	HERE
NOV 9, 2023 (THURS)	ADVANCED	MIDLANDS	MANCHESTER MEADOWS: 337 E MT GALLANT RD, ROCK HILL, SC 29730	HERE
NOV 10, 2023 (FRI)	BASIC	UPSTATE	UNIVERSITY CENTER GREENVILLE: 225 SOUTH PLEASANTBURG DRIVE, SUITE A7, GREENVILLE, SC 29607	HERE
JAN 25, 2024 (THURS)	BASIC	PEE DEE	FLORENCE CENTER: 3300 WEST RADNO DRIVE FLORENCE, SC 29501	HERE
JAN 26, 2024 (FRI)	ADVANCED	UPSTATE	JAMES SELF CONFERENCE CENTER: 620 NORTH EMERALD ROAD, GREENWOOD, SC 29646	HERE
FEB 8, 2024 (THURS)	ADVANCED	PEE DEE	HGTC GRAND STRAND CAMPUS AT MARKET COMMONS: 950 CRABTREE LANE, BUILDING 600, MYRTLE BEACH, SC 29588	HERE
FEB 9, 2024 (FRI)	BASIC	MIDLANDS	COOPERATIVE CONFERENCE CENTER: 169 LAURELHURST AVE, COLUMBIA, SC 29210	HERE
MAR 21, 2024 (THURS)	ADVANCED	LOW COUNTRY	USCB BLUFFTON CAMPUS CENTER: 65 UNIVERSITY PARKWAY, BLUFFTON, SC 29909	HERE

Focus Area: Mitigation Strategies

As we transition into the winter season, now is the time to review your emergency plan, policies & procedures and identify ways to make improvements.

Mitigation is the effort to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters. - Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

There are four key areas that affect your facility's ability to provide care for your residents. The areas are: Space, Staff, Supplies, and Systems. We'll cover some mitigation strategies for each.



Space



There are several spaces within your facility that are required to provide care on a normal day. During a disaster, those spaces can often be modified and used for different functions.

Remember, facilities that were initially certified after October 1, 1990 must maintain a temperature range of 71° to 81° F. However, this does not apply to the entire building, only where residents are being cared for. If your facility's relocation plan is to move residents from their rooms to the dining area, make sure the space is large enough to hold them and staff who are caring for them.

If your resident care space is relocated within your facility or to an alternate care site after evacuating, consider what other staffing, supplies, and system needs will be necessary to provide care.

Other space considerations are listed below:

- Trim or remove trees or other landscaping near your facility's roofs, HVAC system, storage buildings, power lines or other areas which could be impacted if a tree were to fall.
- Install 'frost-proof' faucets on exterior building spigots.
- If your facility is evacuated for an extended period, ensure your emergency preparedness plan includes HVAC and plumbing inspections before returning. If left unattended, water can remain in the pipes and produce Legionella bacteria. Also, in sub-freezing temperatures, undrained water in pipes may freeze and cause them to break or burst meaning water leaks for your facility.
- If your plan includes staff staying at the facility for multiple shifts, ensure there are spaces for them to rest and shower.
- Include other groups in your plans for space such as volunteers, residents' families, staff families, and their pets.
- Before a storm, your facility may order additional supplies such as medications, linens, or food and water. Where will those additional items be stored? Are there any special storage requirements such as refrigeration?
- If utilizing the incident command system (ICS) consider what space may be needed for an emergency operations center or incident command post.

Staff



Clinical and non-clinical staff are critical in providing care to residents. See below for staffing considerations:

- Express the importance of family preparedness to your staff members. The more their household is prepared for disasters, the more likely they are to report to your facility in times of need.
- Maintaining high resident and staff morale during a disaster is crucial. A [study](#) from nursing homes who were impacted by Hurricane Irma in 2017 found that facilities who focused on entertaining residents and staff, such as by playing card games, experienced better health outcomes - physically and mentally.
- Ensure all staff know the facility staffing plan prior to a disaster. Implement refresher training before being impacted - if a hurricane is on its way, review who is on the staff A team and their schedules.
- Don't forget about volunteers! Get connected with your community partners and local volunteer groups and then invite them to your preparedness trainings and exercises.

Supplies



There is a long list of supplies needed to provide care on a normal day, and even more may be needed during a disaster. When reviewing your emergency preparedness plans, policies, and procedures, make sure each of the following categories are considered for supply needs. This is **not** a comprehensive list.

- Food**
 - additional food for staff and family members who may arrive
 - non-perishable items - items that require minimal cooking and do not require water are preferred
 - manual can openers
 - supplies for preparing and serving food in different areas, while transporting to another facility, or at an alternate care site
- Water**
 - drinking water
 - bathing/showering
 - toileting
 - food preparation
 - linens/laundry
 - handwashing
 - many anti-bacterial bathing wipes
 - buckets
 - water filters/water purification tablets
 - pocket guides/reference cards on how to filter and/or disinfect water
 - hand sanitizer
 - reminder - watch our video on Emergency Water for LTC [here!](#)
- Temperature Regulation**
 - portable heaters
 - portable air conditioning units
 - fans
 - ponchos
 - ice/ice maker
 - warm hats and blankets
 - emergency blankets
 - remember: extension cords cannot be used to connect portable generators to electrical equipment inside the facility!
- Medications/Medical Supplies**
 - pharmaceuticals
 - bleeding control kits and supplies
 - medical gases including tanks
 - medical equipment
 - personal protective equipment
 - drug information guides
 - oxygen wrench
 - hardcopy/paper Medication Administration Records
 - pens, clipboards
- Lighting**
 - personal lighting: flashlights and headlamps (for all staff/volunteers)
 - area lighting: lanterns and light stands
 - many extra batteries and chargers for lights
- General Tools**
 - multi-tools
 - duct tape
 - zip ties
 - cords/rope
 - tarps
 - Ziploc bags
 - reminder - watch our video on Emergency Preparedness Kits for LTC [here!](#)
- Transportation**
 - resident tracking supplies or systems
 - evacuation kits/bags
 - medical transport equipment: wheelchairs, beds, cloth litters, stair chairs, etc.
 - proper storage of medical gases (e.g. tank holders, carts)
 - bags and/or boxes to transport supplies along with many Ziploc bags in assorted sizes
- Sleep**
 - Whenever staff or residents are sleeping somewhere unfamiliar, make the experience more comfortable with appropriate supplies: air mattresses, cots, blankets, pillows, sleep masks, ear plugs, fans, etc. Restful sleep is critical for physical and mental health, especially in a crisis.
 - Include in your plans, policies and procedures strategies to prevent the theft of supplies in a disaster.

Systems



The healthcare industry is becoming more reliant on a multitude of systems to operate on a daily basis. Think through each of the systems below and consider how to modify or replace each if a system outage or failure were to occur.

- Utility Systems**
 - power
 - water
 - natural gas
 - medical gas/vacuum (suction)
 - sewage
- Communications Systems**
 - phone
 - internet/intranet
 - radio
 - electronic health records
 - reminder - watch our video on Emergency Communications for LTC [here!](#)
- Transportation Systems**
 - blocked roadways (incoming and outgoing paths)
 - supply shortages
- Suppliers/Services**
 - pharmaceuticals
 - linen service
 - medical waste
 - medical gases
 - staffing agencies
 - HVAC
 - plumbing
 - medical supplies

Resources

- [South Carolina Emergency Management Division Website](#)
- [South Carolina Healthcare Coalition Webpage](#)
- [South Carolina Healthcare Coalition Contact List Flyer](#)
- [South Carolina Healthcare Coalition Map](#)
- [South Carolina Public Health Region Map](#)
- [South Carolina Health Care Association Website](#)
- [CDC Use Safe Water After A Natural Disaster or Emergency Webpage](#)

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