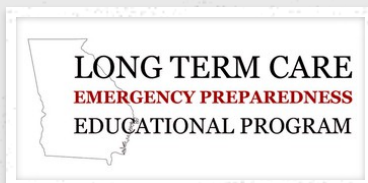


# LTC EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS DIGEST

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

*This quarterly e-newsletter is designed to provide Long Term Care facilities with information about recent events, conference opportunities, and upcoming classes around Georgia, in addition to emergency preparedness tips and focus areas to consider. We hope you will find this useful, and we always encourage and welcome feedback to help us improve.*



## LTC EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS - BASIC COURSE

We have now completed 14 Long Term Care Emergency Preparedness - Basic courses. We are proud to announce we had a total of **511 attendees representing 195 certified nursing homes!** Thank you all for your commitment to emergency preparedness!


In Program Year 2 (March 1st, 2019 - February 28th, 2020), UGA IDM and partners will be offering additional Basic Courses as well as a new Advanced Course. Additional information regarding course dates and locations will be announced in the coming weeks. We hope you are able to attend!

## SPRING FOCUS AREAS

### HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS

**Hurricane Season starts June 1st. Are you ready?**

The National Weather Service's Hurricane Preparedness Week is May 5-11, 2019.



**The time to prepare is now.** Hurricane Preparedness is of the utmost importance for certified long-term care facilities in Georgia. Preparedness measures are not limited to facilities geographically located on Georgia's coast but for other regions of Georgia as well. A major hurricane can have widespread, catastrophic consequences including severe winds, storm surge, flooding, severe thunderstorms, tornadoes, supply line disruption, isolation, resident surge due to evacuations, power outages, infrastructure loss, and many other issues. To better prepare for the upcoming hurricane season, consider the following tips:

### **Make a Plan**

- All certified long-term care facilities in Georgia should have evacuation and shelter-in-place emergency operations plans. These plans should be integrated with community partners, other healthcare facilities, and local healthcare coalition partners. Plans should have pre-determined triggers that identify when it is time to activate the plan. Triggers for impending hurricanes could include hours to landfall of tropical-storm-force winds, recommendations by the County Emergency Management Agency or State Level Officials, reports from weather authorities, etc.
- Additionally, plans must have provisions for how to acquire appropriate transportation resources to accommodate the needs of each facility's residents. It is important that staff are educated on the plans and that plans are tested in drills and exercises with community partners to identify potential operational gaps.


### **Stockpile Essential Resources**

- Certified long-term care facilities are required to address resources including food, water, and medications in their emergency preparedness plan. It is suggested to be prepared with essential medical and non-medical resources to remain self-sufficient for 96-hours after the storm has passed. Supplies to consider are: non-perishable foods, potable water, flashlights/headlamps, weather radios, pharmaceuticals, batteries, emergency power options, heating/cooling measures, sanitation/hygienic considerations, trauma kits, etc.
- It is also important to note that when considering the volume of essential resources needed, additional personnel (e.g. staff, families, visitors, and sheltering community members) should be included.

### **Hurricane Watch v. Hurricane Warning**

- A hurricane watch means there is a possibility of hurricane conditions (sustained winds of 74 mph or greater). Hurricane watches are usually issued within 48 hours of the onset of tropical-storm-force winds.
- A hurricane warning means hurricane conditions (sustained winds of 74 mph or greater) are expected within 36 hours.

### **Beware the "Eye of the Storm"**

- While in the eye of the storm, weather conditions may briefly subside, but this does not mean the danger is over. If a facility is located in the eye of the storm it is only a matter of time before the backside winds/weather conditions inundate the area. It is essential that facilities continue to monitor weather radios and/or local authority transmissions to ensure the danger is over prior to beginning any recovery operations.
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- Hurricanes can have major impacts on coastal and non-coastal facilities across Georgia. There are many potential hazards that accompany hurricanes and long-term care facilities should prepare for these impacts:

### Storm Surge

- Storm surge is an abnormal rise of water generated by a strong storm which can push water several miles inland and contribute to flooding. This surge of water is a huge threat to life and property during a hurricane, and should be mitigated against if possible. Facilities can view their estimated storm surge threat by visiting the National Hurricane Center's National Storm Surge Hazard Maps website - <https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/nationalsurge/>.

### Heavy Rain and Flooding

- Heavy rain and the possibility of a storm surge can lead to massive flooding. Facilities should understand if their facility is at high risk of flooding and can view their location's floodplain map at <http://www.georgiadfirm.com/>. Regardless of flooding risk, it is best practice to not store emergency supplies and backup power in basements due to flooding risk. It should be noted that significantly more people die as a result of water issues than wind as a result of hurricanes.

### High Winds and Tornadoes

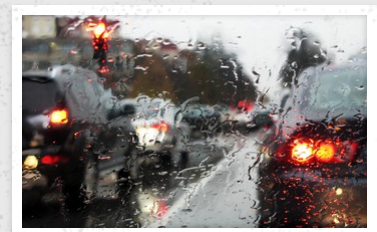
- Hurricanes are determined by wind speed according to the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale:

Category 1: 74-95 mph  
Category 2: 96-110 mph  
Category 3: 111-129 mph  
Category 4: 130-156 mph  
Category 5: 157+ mph

- Hurricanes are also known to cause tornadoes. Both of these wind hazards can cause physical damage and may disrupt an area's primary power source. Facilities should be sure to shelter away from windows and plan to provide backup power if possible.

## SPRING SHOWERS BRING FLOWERS... AND FLOODING HAZARDS

Spring showers may wash away the pollen, but they also bring the potential for flooding.



**Flooding is the most common natural disaster and the leading cause of weather-related deaths.** Many of these deaths can be prevented with better preparedness. Some seasonal flooding hazards you might experience include:

- **Flash Flooding**

Heavy rain or multiple storms can contribute to flash flooding. Urban areas are prone to flash flooding because the asphalt cannot absorb the excess water. This is especially true in areas that are low-lying or close to a body of water.

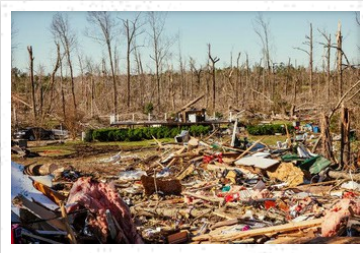
- **Disruption of Services**

Flooding can disrupt vital services such as electricity which may take an extended period of time to repair. Severe flooding is also known to block roads, disrupting any scheduled deliveries of supplies such as food, pharmaceuticals, and oxygen tanks or other medical equipment. For these reasons, it is critical to evaluate the hazards for your facility then establish a plan for flooding hazards and mitigate for flooding risks as needed.

**Remember - Turn Around, Don't Drown**

If one encounters a flooded road or area, turn around. Six inches of fast-moving water can knock over an adult and twelve to eighteen inches of water can carry away most vehicles.

## HEALTHCARE PREPAREDNESS IN THE NEWS



### TORNADO WREAKS HAVOC ON ALABAMA-GEORGIA LINE

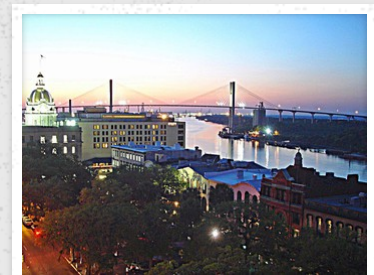
The first weekend of March brought an onslaught of tornadoes across the southeast region, including tornadoes in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina. The most powerful twister occurred on March 3rd, as an EF-4 tornado with winds around 170 mph struck Lee County near the border between Alabama and Georgia. This disaster resulted in the deaths of 23 people and countless damage to homes, businesses, and local infrastructure. In response to these tornadoes, many victims were treated at the East Alabama Medical Center (EAMC) in Opelika.

[To read about this hospital's emergency preparedness and response, click here](#)

## RECENT EVENTS

### EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION OF GEORGIA CONFERENCE

The Emergency Management Association of Georgia was hosted in Savannah, GA on April 17-19, 2019. This conference welcomed professionals from emergency management, public



health, healthcare coalitions, and others from eight states across the Southeast United States.

As part of the Georgia Long Term Care Emergency Preparedness Exercise Program, 75 maintenance directors of certified long term care facilities attended the conference. These maintenance directors were able to attend various sessions focusing on emergency management activities and network with their coalition members and regional counterparts also in attendance.

We will be offering this sponsorship opportunity for the 2020 EMAG Summit. Additional information regarding sponsorship eligibility will be made available in the coming months.

## RESOURCES

For additional information and resources on how to prepare, see the following links:

- Family/Home Preparedness: <http://ready.ga.gov/>
- Contact your local EMA: <https://gema.georgia.gov/locations>
- Find your coalition contacts and view the calendar for upcoming meetings and training in your area: <https://www.gha911.org/>



## CONTACT US



If you have questions about this newsletter or upcoming events, please contact us via email:

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