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Kansas Seniors Should Prepare For Severe Weather

Severe weather season is right around the corner in Kansas, so be sure to prepare in advance for whatever this season may bring. Being prepared does not need to be complicated; there are three basic steps to help you be prepared in case of an emergency.

Know the basics, like what kinds of risks does your community face? Your community's emergency plan should be easy to find; stop by the library or city hall to find your community's emergency plan. Here are some good questions to ask and have answered before disaster strikes.

- If there were an evacuation order, what is the recommended route from where you live? If you don't drive, what are your transportation options? Where is the nearest emergency shelter?
- Neighbors helping neighbors can be critical in an emergency. Do you know your neighbors? Do they know you and any special needs you may have?
- If local phone service is down for an extended period of time, have you designated someone out-of-area as your emergency contact? Do your loved ones know who your emergency contact will be?

Have your emergency supplies ready. You should have two sets of supplies ready, supplies to stay at your home and supplies to evacuate. The supplies you should have ready at your house include enough water to last 3 - 6 days; enough food for 3 - 6 days that does not require cooking; flashlight; portable radio; spare batteries; first aid kit; hand operated can opener; waterproof matches; a 3 - 6 day supply of your medications (with an up-to-date list of all medications you take); cell phone; cash or travelers checks; and an emergency contact list.

In case an evacuation should become necessary, your evacuation bag should include basic personal hygiene items, an extra pair of glasses, change of clothing, compact rain slicker, walking shoes, blanket or sleeping bag, bottled water, disposable dust masks and a copy of your emergency contact list and your current medications list.

Make your own personal plan. If you have limited mobility, are you able to register with your local fire department or office of emergency services for special assistance? If you are receiving health care services at home, ask your home health provider about emergency procedures. If you live in a retirement community, assisted living facility or adult care home, learn about emergency planning and procedures.

For more information about emergency preparedness for seniors, please look at our website www.agingkansas.org

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The Kansas Department on Aging promotes the security, dignity and independence of Kansas seniors.