



Communication Impairments

Emergency Planning for Individuals with Communication Impairments

If you have a severe speech, language, or hearing disability:

- ❑ Create a support network of relatives, friends, or co-workers who can assist you in an emergency. Consider people who provide services to you and faith-based and community groups. Make sure those in your network know where you keep your Disaster Supply Kit, and consider giving at least one member of your support network a key to your home. When you dial 911 (or local emergency number), tap the space bar to indicate a TDD call.
- ❑ Keep a flashlight handy to signal your whereabouts to other people and for illumination to aid in communication.
- ❑ Purchase a "Special Needs NOAA Weather Radio," which has visual and vibrating alarms, and provides simple text readouts of warning information. Accessories include a pillow vibrator, strobe alarm, or bed shaker to wake you if you are sleeping when a warning is issued.
- ❑ Remind friends that you cannot completely hear warnings or emergency instructions. Ask them to be your source of emergency information as it comes over the radio.
- ❑ Determine how you will communicate with emergency personnel if you do not have your communication devices (augmentative communication device, word board, artificial larynx).
- ❑ Store paper, writing materials, copies of a word or letter board, and pre-printed phrases specific to anticipated emergencies in your Disaster Supply Kit, wallet, purse, etc.
- ❑ Make sure your emergency health information card explains the best method of communication for you (written notes, pointing to letters/words/pictures, finding a quiet place).
- ❑ Obtain an alternative power source (power converter, batteries) if you use a computer or laptop as a means of frequent communication.
- ❑ Wear medical alert tags or bracelets to identify any disabilities or medical conditions.