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- > Companions
- > Home Health Aides
- > Live-ins



Company News

June is Employee Benefits Month!

June is Open Enrollment month at Alternative Home Health Care. Employees with one or more years of service **may be** eligible to enroll in our Health Insurance or 401(k) savings plan. Remember, when you save in our 401(k) the company matches 100% of the first 4% you save.

For further information please contact the office.



ALTERNATIVE
HOME HEALTH CARE

In this issue...

Editors Note	Page 1
Disaster Planning	Page 1
Lessons Learned	Page 2
Disaster Preparedness Checklist	Page 3
Company News	Page 4

Disaster Planning – we must look at it differently now

By Carla Albano, Administrator



*M*ost of the time we all feel that the world is a secure place. However hurricanes are just one form of disaster, and we all know that other things can happen which can interrupt our lives. Just look at California; several mud slides in a short period of time. While many people lost their homes many more people lost water, electricity, and even roads upon which they could travel to their homes. Similar things could happen here. For this reason **we must all be prepared year round**, and I've added a few more items to our list. Useful tips include:

- ◆ Maintain an adequate supply of prescriptions. Consider re-filling prescriptions before you are on the last dose. Refill prescriptions earlier.
- ◆ If you have a cell phone or beeper, be sure they have adequate power. If you depend upon a car charger, consider charging your batteries more often. Also, you may want to purchase a second phone battery.
- ◆ Let someone out-of-state know your plans. It is always helpful for loved ones to know you are safe and well. Update your phone numbers with your employer, family and friends. Be sure that your emergency contacts are current. Develop an evacuation plan with your family, so that everyone knows where the others will go in the event of an emergency. Keep cash in your house. Be sure children know where to go, and what to do. Simple confusion over whether they should ride the bus home from school can waste hours of time in the event of a disaster.
- ◆ Know where the closest shelter is – even if you don't plan on going there, you should know where it is, and how to get there. Broward County now has a shelter that accepts pets. However, you must pre-register with the Humane Society.
- ◆ Back up your computer.

Editors Note:

Time flies. I can't believe it is time to again plan for Hurricane season. While we hate to contradict our newscasters, I know we all secretly hope that their predictions for 2005 are blatantly wrong. However, as we all learned last year, we can never be too prepared. This issue also highlights some of the lessons we learned in 2004, especially in the Ft. Myers area where our clients and employees suffered for months afterwards. I am encouraged by the fact that as this newsletter goes to press, we have a tax holiday in Florida for hurricane supplies.

George Cann
Editor

Newsletter

We hope you never need to use this information, but we are providing it to you out of courtesy. For further information you can contact Broward County at (954) 537-2888, and Lee County at (239) 477-3600.

Lessons Learned from three Hurricanes

Below are eight lessons our company learned from Hurricane's Charley, Frances and Jeanne.

1) Always Implement your Plan

Planning is key, and dry runs are important. Do not deviate from your original plans. No plan is silly or impractical. Plan and execute dry runs each Spring.

2) Have Local Police Department phone numbers

In Ft. Myers there was a period of time in which the County Emergency personnel could not be reached. The web-site was down too. While we ordinarily would call the County Emergency management, to obtain EMS, we had to call the business number of the local Police departments. Police too are inundated with "activity checks", so try to keep interaction to a minimum.

3) Have Out-of-State Contacts

Ability to call family out-of-state is invaluable. It alleviates pressure upon Police Departments, and it allows the business to get up and running quickly.

4) People are not prepared

Most people did not have adequate supplies, period. Where some believed they had adequate food, many did not have the right food. Stock up on food that tastes good when not refrigerated or heated. We suggest peanut butter, canned and dried fruit, nuts, pudding, etc. Also, the high sodium level in many canned foods can be dangerous to many of our elderly.

5) Floridians are addicted to Air Conditioning

Plan how you are going to live without electricity. Dehydration is a major concern, as well as lack of appropriate food. Canned soup may taste good cold the first day, but several days later not having comfort food is very demoralizing. Those who have chronic medical conditions often are less tolerant when living in a humid and warm home.

6) Adult Protective Services (DCF) can only go out if safe.

Clients at extreme risk may not be able to be reached, if it is unsafe for APS to travel.

7) Supplies of Prescription Drugs may be inadequate

It was common for refrigerated medications to spoil in homes which had no electricity. Many clients had very short supplies of medications (1-2 days) which did not allow them to get through the weekend. The key is have a plan to keep certain drugs refrigerated, and for other drugs, keep at least a 2-week supply on hand during hurricane season.

8) Cut Back Trees

They become weapons during a hurricane. Make a plan to drastically cut back your trees each May or June.

Alternative Home Health Care Disaster Preparedness Checklist

The following list is being provided to employees, family members, and clients of Alternative Home Health Care. Our clients and family members have been advised that it is their responsibility to make plans in the event of a disaster. This information is being provided for your reference only.



Survival Materials	Personal Supplies
<input type="checkbox"/> Water – 1 gallon per day per person – enough for 14 days <input type="checkbox"/> Non-perishable foods – canned meat, fish, fruit and vegetables, soup <input type="checkbox"/> Bread in moisture proof packaging, candy and cookies <input type="checkbox"/> Powdered milk, drink mix, single serve drinks, coffee, tea <input type="checkbox"/> Cereal bars, peanut butter, jelly <input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight, battery powered lantern <input type="checkbox"/> Battery powered radio/ alarm clock <input type="checkbox"/> Extra batteries <input type="checkbox"/> Glass enclosed candles <input type="checkbox"/> Portable cooler, extra ice <input type="checkbox"/> First aid kit including: aspirin, antibiotic cream, antacids, anti-diarrheal <input type="checkbox"/> Insect repellent, sunscreen <input type="checkbox"/> Waterproof matches, butane lighter <input type="checkbox"/> Extra cash <input type="checkbox"/> Bleach or water purification tablets	<input type="checkbox"/> Prescriptions – 1 month supply <input type="checkbox"/> Photo copies of prescriptions <input type="checkbox"/> Cell Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Books, magazines, entertainment materials <input type="checkbox"/> Fill up car with gas <input type="checkbox"/> Toiletries: soap, detergent, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Changes of clothing <input type="checkbox"/> Bedding, pillows, blankets, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Rain ponchos <input type="checkbox"/> Extra glasses or contact lenses <input type="checkbox"/> Extra set of keys <input type="checkbox"/> Incontinent Supplies
Cooking Equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Portable camp stove or grill <input type="checkbox"/> Stove fuel, charcoal, lighter fluid or sterno <input type="checkbox"/> Manual can opener <input type="checkbox"/> Napkins, paper towels, paper plates & cups, plastic utensils <input type="checkbox"/> Aluminum foil	Documents (water proof box if possible) <input type="checkbox"/> Photo identification <input type="checkbox"/> Proof of residence – utility bill <input type="checkbox"/> Medical history and information <input type="checkbox"/> Disks of computer files <input type="checkbox"/> Waterproof camera and film <input type="checkbox"/> Pet's picture and license <input type="checkbox"/> Family disaster plan including cell-phones and map (if applicable)
	Other Necessities <input type="checkbox"/> Tools: hammer, nails, wrench, screwdriver, saw, etc <input type="checkbox"/> Trash bags (lots) <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaning supplies <input type="checkbox"/> Plastic drop cloth <input type="checkbox"/> Mosquito netting <input type="checkbox"/> ABC rated fire extinguisher <input type="checkbox"/> Masking or duct tape <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor extension cord <input type="checkbox"/> Spray paint <input type="checkbox"/> A phone from your home