



Shelter Living for Special Needs

Disasters can happen any time and any place. You may not have much time to respond. A hazardous materials spill could mean instant evacuation of your neighborhood. A winter storm, tornado, flood or even earthquake could force you from your home. You may be able to stay temporarily with friends or you may have to go to a shelter. If you must go to a shelter, the Red Cross recommends that you take along with you any special items for infant, elderly or disabled person care.

Please remember these important points:

1. When you arrive at the shelter, give your name and address to the registration desk so you can be located when necessary. If you leave the shelter, please sign out at the registration desk.
2. Shelters have a community environment that consists of a large number of people. It is important to be considerate and cooperative. Follow the instructions of the shelter management staff. Volunteer your services whenever possible. It will make the time go faster for you.
3. Do not bring pets to shelters. The only exceptions are dogs for the visually impaired. You may need to make other arrangements for your pets in advance to assure their proper care.
4. Be cheerful about the situation and your attitude will help the morale of the entire group. Rumors can spread quickly at a shelter and are usually very disruptive. Listen to official information only.
5. You may experience a shortage or rationing of food and other important items in the early stages of a shelter. Be patient. If this occurs it will be temporary.

A Checklist of what to bring to special needs shelter:

- Life-sustaining medications (i.e., seizure, blood pressure, heart medications, insulin, ostomy dressings, etc.) to last through the disaster and recovery period. There may be no phone service and pharmacies may close. Plan for emergency prescription refills.
- Bottled water and canned food.
- Rehabilitative aids (eyeglasses, cane, brace, splints, cushions, etc.).
- Extra clothes, batteries, medic-alert bracelet.
- Blanket or sleeping bag and warm clothing.
- A battery-operated radio and radio

For more information or presentations on a number of topics contact us at: 402-759-4932