

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS 2019

Michael Alexander
MLA Consulting

“This isn’t an event we wanted or planned”, the manager said.

It could never happen to us.











How does one prepare?

Sample Check List

- Regular emergency drills (for fire and other crises)
- Evacuation procedures
- Central location for all the residents to meet

- Method of accounting for all the residents' whereabouts
- Emergency contact information for all the residents
- Emergency contact numbers for the property
- Ask yourself: "What if I cannot get to my office?"

Regular Emergency Drills

- Check your House Rules
- Do they provide information about regular drills to insure the safety of your residents?
 - It is best to make sure the issue is addressed in the House Rules so residents know what is expected of them during these drills.

- Sometimes residents refuse to participate in these drills
 - Consider posting personnel on each floor or hallway to see if residents respond
 - Make a list of those who do not, especially if they are not at home at the time of the drill
 - In some states, residents are given the option of leaving their apartment during a drill or staying where they are

Regular Evacuation Procedures

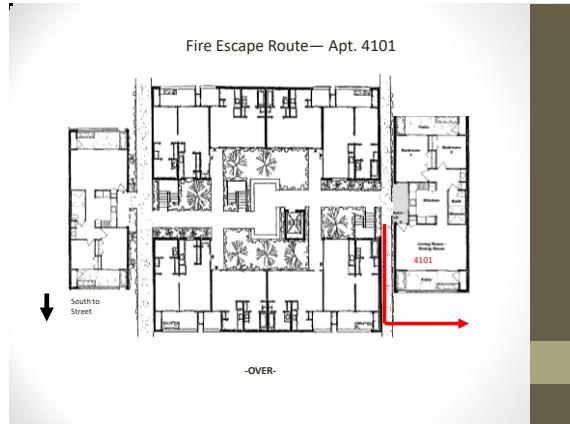
- These procedures need to be addressed in your House Rules
- Some people cannot leave their area because of disabilities. What options have you given them?
- Some residents have stickers that notify emergency personnel that they have a special challenge during the evacuation
 - This could be good or this could be bad

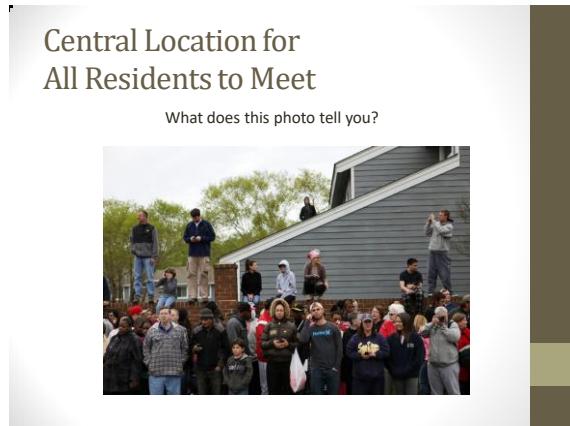
- Make sure the resident gives you permission to use this item to identify their need
- Be aware that stickers like this could alert predators that there is someone residing here that would be easy prey
- Keep a list of “at risk” people to give to emergency personnel
 - If you have residents who cannot leave their areas, have a consistent method for them to announce their presence, such as a towel in the window or hanging over a balcony.

- Do you have an evacuation route placed in every unit (similar to what one might find in a hotel)?
 - These can easily be placed on the back of the front door
- Try and cover all your bases when it comes to emergencies

Emergency Escape Instructions

- 1. Check to make sure there is no heat at your front door.
- 2. If clear, leave your apartment immediately. Close the door behind you.
- 3. Do not use the elevator. If you are on floor 2 or 3 and cannot use the stairs, go to your patio.
- 4. Proceed first to the outside fence.
- 5. Stay away from the area of danger.
- 6. Make your way to the (designated meeting place)





- You must be able to account for all the individuals who are living on your site
- It is best that you meet in a location away from the problem, if something happens on the site, such as a fire or an air crash.
- Make the meeting place easily accessible and away from the problem.

- Consider a parking lot or an adjacent site
- Have a map of your property that shows the emergency meeting place or places
- Post the meeting places to go to when an emergency arises and place these postings in high traffic areas

Method of Accounting for All Residents

- Develop a method of knowing where all residents are in case of an emergency.
- You may want to develop a form or check list
- Remember that you may not be able to get to your computer.
- Consider having a list that is kept off site with information that will aid you in making sure every resident is accounted for.

Sample: Emergency Notification List

1 st Name	Last Name	Apt. #	*Lang.	DOB	Phone	Emerg. Phone	Contact
Jane	Smith	010	Chinese	9/21/27	713-957-4400	713-923-7722	Son
Jim	Joseph	020	English	1/01/09	281-326-5555	281-444-9900	Sister

- Know the languages of your residents
 - Should you need a translator, it is best to have the information available for EMS and Red Cross Personnel

Emergency Contact Form

- Many properties have an Emergency Contact Form that is placed in the resident's file.
 - However, you may not be able to get to the tenant file during an emergency
 - Consider keeping a report off site
- The most important information you need is a contact person in case of an emergency

- Many of the residents will have already contacted someone, but do not trust that, if you cannot account for the resident
- Consider keeping a list of residents needing evacuation assistance on-site and off-site
- HUD Form 92006 can be used or create your own

Emergency Contact Numbers for the Property

- Make sure you have a list of emergency contact numbers.
 - Consider putting them in your cell phone so that you can easily contact the people you need to address the problems
 - Consider the following contacts (and who to contact first)
 - Fire Department/EMS 911

- Owner/Managing Agent/Supervisor
- Red Cross
- Insurance Agent
- Contractor
- HUD Asset Manager
- Contract Administrator

- Local Facilities who can help
 - Place of Worship
 - Community Center
 - Veterinarian
 - Nearby Apartment Communities that might assist in placement

Step by Step Priorities

- Priority Number One: Residents



- Priority Number Two: Residents



- Priority Number Three: Residents



Residents at the Scene

- At your designated meeting place, get a count of all the residents
- If anyone is missing from the group, notify Emergency Personnel immediately, providing apartment number
- It is vital that all residents' whereabouts are known

- Residents should not leave the scene without checking with the staff and letting them know how they can be contacted
 - Remind residents of this when you are at the designated meeting place
- The Red Cross may come to your site and attend to the immediate needs of disaster victims
 - If any residents are missing, it will greatly slow down the process

- Try to get all residents a place to stay, at least for the night, and if possible for the next few days, in order to help in the event of a relocation
- Some residents may choose to stay with friends or family until they can get back into their own unit.
- Make sure you get a contact number and encourage them to contact you the next day.

Residents: "The Next Day"

- Check with the Red Cross as to their availability to meet with your residents on site if at all possible.
- Transportation may be an issue if the resident has to travel to the central headquarters of the Red Cross.

- Notify your HUD office and ask for help in relocating your residents if needed.
- There may be other apartment communities in the area that can offer aid.
- Consider developing a list of potential communities and get to know the managers. They may have available units to rent.

- If there is a facility (such as a church or community center) close by, ask if their facility might be used to house donated items to aid victims of the emergency.
- If you have a community room, and space is available, you might want to utilize that area as well.

- Some people in the community may want to make monetary donations to the victims.
- Contact your owner/agent and ask how they would like to handle such an account and how to dispense the donation. Keep accurate records of how money is spent.
- Remember, the more information that you can give the resident and the help that you can provide, the more your entire community and company will benefit

Handling the Media



- In emergency situations, the media can be your friend and they can easily misrepresent you
 - Be careful what you say
 - Do not seek them out
 - Speak to them only if they speak to you

- “**No Comment**” is not appropriate
 - Should the media ask any question, let them know that your first concern is the residents and their safety
 - Finding housing is a major concern
 - Let the media know which agencies you are working with, to help relocate your residents

- Never discuss the origin of the emergency (for example, a fire)
- Never assume that you know – and never repeat what you hear from other residents
- The emergency response personnel (for example, the fire department) will issue a report determining the origin or cause of the crisis

- Residents will have their own stories and may say just about anything to a reporter
- You cannot prevent them from talking
- Keep you cool and do not respond to anything that a resident has said

- If asked, be ready to provide a fact sheet about your property
- That will keep you from spending time with media that you need in order to deal with the actual situation
- If your company has a media spokesperson, direct the media to that person – either in person or by phone

- Obtain a video of the emergency for your records
 - This may be available for free or for purchase from local media covering the situation
- Obtain the newscasts and news reports if possible
 - This will also help with your insurance claims

Property Staff

- The Property Manager is the key to the success of handling the stress of this situation
- Your advance preparation will have a calming effect on the residents and other staff members
- Keep a copy of your emergency response book somewhere other than your office and make sure that it is kept current

- Having information sheets available for EMS (Emergency Medical Services) and other agencies (such as the Fire Department) could help save a life
- Each resident deserves your attention and deserves to know that you are there to help them
 - Be aware of all residents, even those who are observing the scene. Some of them may need medical attention too.



- Your cell phone could be the most important tool you have
- Call your resources (church, friends, vendors) to ask for help
- Your very presence marks that you are a leader
- During emergencies, many people panic, and most people want to be led

FACT SHEET

- For media purposes, it is best to have a fact sheet about your property. This should include:
 - Type of property (Multi-Family, Elderly, Disabled, Assisted Living, etc.)
 - Number of units (and units affected)
 - Number of residents
 - General Description (Garden Style, High-Rise)

- This will enable the media to report proper information about your property
- Make sure that all of this information has been approved by your management company



Federally Declared Disaster

- If the President declares a disaster, please refer to Chapter 38 of the **Multifamily Asset Management and Project Servicing, HUD Handbook 4350.1**
- https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/administration/hudclips/handbooks/handbook/4350.1

FEMA

Emergency Financial First Aid Kit
(EFFAK)

This kit is available free from FEMA

Download at

www.ready.gov/financialpreparedness

and at

www.operationhope.org

Or call (800)480-2530 (publication # 1075)

Thank You!
Wishing you
Safe Travels
And Remember
BE PREPARED!
