



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND EVACUATION OF OLDER ADULTS AND PERSONS WITH ACCESS AND FUNCTIONAL NEEDS

**Recommendations to the
Yolo County Board of Supervisors
January 28, 2020**

**Yolo County Commission on
Aging and Adult Services**

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Members of the Disaster Preparedness Subcommittee

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- Kate Laddish
- Margot Loschke
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- Cindi Unger
- Siv Winberg



Introduction

The Yolo County Commission on Aging and Adult Services (YCCAAS) identified the necessity to address the special needs of older adults and persons with disabilities in regards to emergency preparation and evacuation. Recent fires, floods, and electrical outages have highlighted the urgency for Yolo County to be prepared in the event of the eventual next emergency. In addition, persons who have died in the recent disasters have primarily been seniors and persons with disabilities. In response, the commission appointed a subcommittee to investigate what disaster preparedness policies and procedures were being instituted in Yolo County for those individuals with access and functional needs, and create recommendations to improve the county's future responses. The subcommittee consulted regularly with Yolo County Office of Emergency Services (OES) and the Yolo County Health & Human Services Agency (DHHS) in formulating recommendations, to ensure consistency and accuracy.



Since the institution of the Disaster Preparedness Subcommittee of the Yolo County Commission on Aging & Adult Services, the Auditor of the State of CA issued a report on an audit conducted in three counties - Butte, Sonoma and Ventura - to determine how well prepared each county is to protect vulnerable populations, before, during and after a natural disaster. Each of these counties recently experienced a deadly and destructive wildfire. The results of the audit are disappointing:

“Although everyone is vulnerable during a natural disaster, people with access and functional needs are even more vulnerable. This report concludes that, despite guidance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), these three counties have not adequately implemented best practices for protecting vulnerable populations, which may place their residents at greater risk of harm during future natural disasters.

Before some of California’s most recent and significant wildfires, none of the three counties we reviewed had complete, up-to-date plans for alerting and warning their residents about danger from natural disasters, conducting evacuations, or sheltering evacuees. Further, none of the counties had conducted assessments of their respective populations to determine what access and functional needs existed in their communities, prearranged for evacuation assistance to meet those needs, or fully prepared to send critical warning messages. Inadequate preparation likely hindered the counties’ responses to the 2018 Camp Fire, the 2017 Sonoma Complex fires, and the 2017 Thomas Fire. For example, despite the critical nature of evacuation messages, none of the counties sent evacuation notices in languages other than English during these events. In the time since these wildfires, each county has taken some steps to follow best practices for meeting access and functional needs, but none have fully implemented these practices.

Despite the importance of planning for people with access and functional needs, Cal OES has not provided adequate support to local jurisdictions in developing emergency plans to meet those needs. It has neither complied with key state laws requiring it to provide guidance to local jurisdictions, nor has it published lessons learned from natural disasters so that local jurisdictions can learn from others’ successes and challenges in responding to emergencies. These failures leave local jurisdictions without key resources that could help them develop plans to protect people with access and functional needs during future natural disasters.”

A recent surprise inspection of nineteen California nursing homes by federal health officials to assess whether they were prepared to protect their residents in a natural disaster or other emergency was equally disturbing:

“California did not ensure that selected nursing homes in the State that participated in the Medicare or Medicaid programs complied with CMS requirements for life safety and emergency preparedness. During our site visits, we identified deficiencies in areas related to life safety and emergency preparedness at all 19 nursing homes that we reviewed. Specifically, we found 137 instances of noncompliance with life safety requirements related to building exits, smoke barriers, and smoke partitions; fire detection and suppression systems; hazardous storage areas; smoking policies and fire drills; and electrical equipment testing and maintenance. We also found 188 instances of noncompliance with emergency preparedness requirements related to written emergency plans; emergency power; plans for evacuation, sheltering in place, and tracking residents and staff during and after an emergency; emergency communications plans; and emergency plan training and testing. As a result, nursing home residents at the 19 nursing homes were at increased risk of injury or death during a fire or other emergency.”

In addition, two nursing homes involved in the Santa Rosa fires had their licenses permanently revoked for abandoning their residents during a wildfire:

“In a bold action that sent a badly needed message to assisted living operators throughout California, the Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD) of the California Department of Social Services initiated legal action to revoke the licenses of two assisted living facilities operated by Oakmont Senior Living and ban their administrators from managing, operating, owning or working in California assisted living facilities for the rest of their lives.

The CCLD actions are the culmination of a nearly year-long investigation involving Oakmont of Varenna and Villa Capri, neighboring assisted living facilities where the lives of hundreds of residents were endangered by deadly wildfires that erupted on the night of October 8-9, 2017. CCLD issued its findings and enforcement actions in an Accusation dated September 4, 2018.

The findings portray a shocking disregard for the lives of many residents.”

The state audit of the three counties in California, the federal inspection of the 19 nursing homes in California and the revocation of the licenses of two assisted living facilities make it very clear not only how critical disaster preparedness is, but highlights the fact that much more work needs to be done.

The Yolo County Commission on Aging & Adult Services recommendations on disaster preparedness have been divided into 3 sections:



Photo Credit: Heather Kemp/Daily Democrat

A flooded road in Yolo County

- [1. Recommendations to the Yolo County Board of Supervisors](#)
- [2. Recommendations for Future Actions by the Yolo County Comm. on Aging & Adult Services](#)
- [3. Suggested Plan of Action for Local Aging Commissions](#)

We have included all three sections for your information. The draft of these recommendations was reviewed and accepted by the full Yolo County Commission on Aging and Adult Services on November 20, 2019, with the final recommendations reviewed and approved December 18, 2019.



Recommendations to the Yolo County Board of Supervisors

RECOMMENDATION 1: It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors direct staff to **implement a county voluntary Special Needs Alert Program (SNAP)**, to identify those individuals living in the unincorporated areas of the county with access and functional needs who will need assistance in an emergency. This program should include education and outreach to ensure citizens are aware of the program’s existence.

RECOMMENDATION 2: It is recommended that the Yolo County Board of Supervisors **require an annual report indicating which licensed continuing care facilities are participating or not participating in Healthcare Preparedness Coalition regular meetings and tabletop exercises.** To incentivize attendance, the Board of Supervisors should direct county staff to: investigate the possibility of instituting a business license requirement to attend meetings/tabletop exercises; and/or establish a gold star program to reward those who attend; and/or explore other alternatives. The Yolo County Board of Supervisors should also direct staff to develop a plan to assist the state in implementation of AB 3098 in Yolo County (see background below for reference).

RECOMMENDATION 3: It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors direct county staff to **ensure all educational efforts from the county include instruction to residents with special needs on what to do in a power outage**, including: information about personal power generators; the locations of emergency shelters with electricity; ready.gov and CalOES.ca.gov information placed on city and county websites; and instruction on how to make an individual personal plan. The county should also assure this information is available through Yolo 211 and OES. In the event of a planned or unplanned power outage: emergency alert notifications must explicitly include where people with medical needs can go to obtain power locally; and such facilities must be accessible to persons with access and functional needs.

RECOMMENDATION 4: It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors direct county staff to **develop and make mandatory Alzheimer’s Disease/dementia training for law enforcement/fire/EMS departments** in the unincorporated areas of the county, and encourage the incorporated cities to do the same.

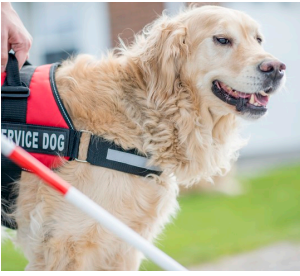
RECOMMENDATION 5: It is recommended the Board of Supervisors direct staff to **improve the accessibility and navigability of the county website** so that it gives information about emergency preparedness, and ensures it also displays current emergency situation updates, including information on where persons with special medical needs for power can go during a power outage.

RECOMMENDATION 6: It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors direct staff to **work with local jurisdictions to coordinate and expand volunteers numbers**, in particular expanding Community Response Emergency Teams (CERTs).

RECOMMENDATION 7: If funds are identified, it is recommended that the Board of Supervisors **ensure IHSS consumers are prioritized as recipients for free “go kits.”**

RECOMMENDATION 8: Due to current budget constraints, it is recommended that the Board of Supervisors, in consultation with Yolo County OES, **provide the support for appropriate legislation to increase county OES budgets.**

RECOMMENDATION 9: It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors **use county manager/CAO and county/city 2x2 meetings to coordinate and share information** about emergency preparedness.



Background and Supporting Information for Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 1: It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors direct staff to **implement a county voluntary Special Needs Alert Program (SNAP)**, to identify those individuals living in the unincorporated areas of the county with access and functional needs who will need assistance in an emergency. This program should include education and outreach to ensure citizens are aware of the program’s existence.

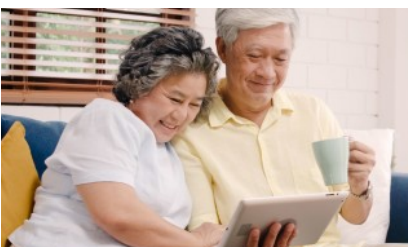


A special needs individual

[Special Needs Alert Program \(SNAP\)](#): During an emergency, it is critical to rapidly identify people who may need assistance evacuating. Yolo County OES, in partnership with other agencies, is creating a system to identify households receiving services that may indicate they would need assistance during an evacuation. The county should continue supporting collaboration between OES and other agencies to provide the data necessary to keep the identification system current and accurate. However, there are still individuals with access and functional needs who do not receive services but still may require assistance to evacuate. To

reduce the risk of those with access and functional needs being overlooked during an emergency, cities and the county should be encouraged to have voluntary Special Needs Alert Program (SNAP) lists or some other documentation to identify these vulnerable individuals.

RECOMMENDATION 2: The Yolo County Board of Supervisors should **require an annual report indicating which licensed continuing care facilities are participating, or not, in Healthcare Preparedness Coalition regular meetings and tabletop exercises**. To incentivize attendance, the Board of Supervisors should direct county staff to: investigate the possibility of instituting a business license requirement to attend meetings/tabletop exercises; and/or establish a gold star program to reward those who attend; and/or explore other alternatives. Direct staff to develop a plan to assist the state in implementation of AB3098 in Yolo County.



Seniors using a tablet

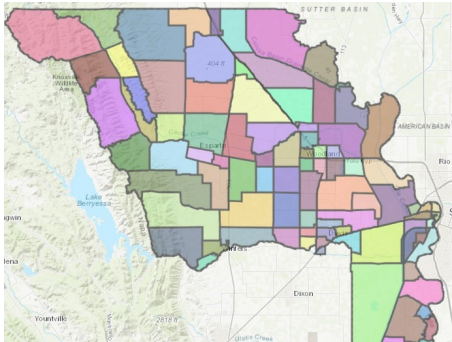
[HPC meetings/tabletop exercises](#): Many community care licensed facilities (e.g. skilled nursing facilities, residential care facilities for the elderly, board and care facilities, residential mental health facilities, adult day program) are not attending Healthcare Preparedness Coalition (HPC) meetings/ tabletop exercises facilitated by the Yolo County Health and Human Services Agency (DHHS). During these meetings/tabletop exercises, participants bring their facility’s disaster preparedness plan with them to determine its effectiveness in an emergency situation. Any

deficiencies are quickly discovered and rectified when taken through an emergency scenario. HPC also makes regular site visits to skilled nursing facilities, and will begin site visits to assisted living facilities in the near future at the behest of the Yolo County Commission on Aging & Adult Services (YCCAAS) subcommittee.

A new state law in effect as of July 1, 2019, AB 3098, requires assisted living facilities to have: updated emergency plans; arrangements to get residents downstairs during a power shutoff if the elevators are not operating; and emergency training and drills. HPC meetings/tabletop exercises provide an opportunity to effectively fulfill those requirements. Therefore, the subcommittee believes the county should strongly encourage community care licensed facility attendance at HPC meetings/ tabletop exercises. To incentivize attendance, the Board of Supervisors should investigate the possibility of a business license requirement to attend HPC meetings/tabletop exercises, and/or establish a gold start

program of rewarding those who attend with some positive publicity, and/or explore other alternatives. The Yolo County Board of Supervisors should also direct staff to develop a plan to assist the state in implementing AB3098 in Yolo County.

RECOMMENDATION 3: It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors direct county staff to **ensure all educational efforts from the county include instruction to residents with special needs on what to do in a power outage**, including: information about personal power generators; the locations of emergency shelters with electricity; ready.gov and CalOES.ca.gov information placed on city and county websites; and instruction on how to make an individual personal plan. The county should also assure this information is available through Yolo 211 and OES. In the event of a planned or unplanned power outage: emergency alert notifications must explicitly include where people with medical needs can go to obtain power locally; and such facilities must be accessible to persons with access and functional needs.



Yolo County's 'Know Your Zone' Map

[Plan of Action/dissemination of emergency preparedness information:](#) OES is minimally staffed, yet there is an ongoing obligation to ensure emergency preparedness information is disseminated to the entire county population of persons with access and functional needs. Disbursement of emergency preparedness information can be achieved by means of local aging commissions (or whatever local government mechanism might be available) to encourage them to follow the suggested Plan of Action developed by the YCCAAS subcommittee (see accompanying report). In this way local aging commissions can play a vital role in assisting with planning, intervention and education of the entire county community.

The suggested Plan of Action consists of: a) suggested questions for local commissions to ask of local fire, law enforcement, and gov't officials; b) administration of the OES Train the Trainer Program; c) ensuring the city maintains an active Community Emergency Response Team (CERT); d) discovering what assisted living facilities are within the city and whether they are attending HPC meetings/tabletop exercises; e) determining what the city can do for those who have access and functional needs in a power outage.

Additionally, there are residents who have critical medical needs for electricity to: power wheelchairs, provide oxygen, refrigerate insulin and other medications, etc. This population will be (and have been) especially impacted by PG&E unplanned power outages or planned public safety power shut-offs. The county and cities should disseminate the following information on emergency resources in the event of a power outage: a) the safety and effectiveness of purchasing a personal-use power generator; b) where people may go to access electricity during a power shut-off for medical needs, for example the local hospital, fire station or designated shelter that is accessible; c) special-needs preparation strategies from ready.gov and CalOES.ca.gov posted on the county and city websites; d) how to make an individual back-up plan with a family friend or neighbor who can assist if necessary, to either provide transportation to a shelter with power or to assist with setup, use and maintenance of a personal use generator.

RECOMMENDATION 4: It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors direct county staff to **develop and make mandatory Alzheimer's Disease/dementia training for law enforcement/fire/EMS departments** in the unincorporated areas of the county, and encourage the incorporated cities to do the same.



Photo Credit: Cutter Hicks/Daily Democrat

Woodland Police during 'Coffee with a Cop'

[Alzheimer's Disease/dementia training for police/fire/EMS:](#) Those persons with Alzheimer's Disease/dementia can be particularly challenging to assist in an emergency. Mandatory Alzheimer's Disease/dementia training should be provided to county and city law enforcement and fire departments as well as Emergency Medical Services (EMS). An expert who specializes in the care of those with Alzheimer's Disease/dementia should be identified to provide this training.

RECOMMENDATION 5:

It is recommended the Board of Supervisors direct staff to **improve the accessibility and navigability of the county website** so that it gives information about emergency preparedness, and ensures it also displays current emergency situation updates, including information on where persons with special medical needs for power can go during a power outage.

Improving city and county websites: The county and cities should have information about emergency preparedness and current emergency situation updates on websites that are easily accessed and navigable. Note: The City of Davis website is a good example of an informative and user friendly site. The Yolo County website, on the other hand, is difficult to navigate and does not necessarily provide information about current emergency situations.

RECOMMENDATION 6:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors direct staff to **work with local jurisdictions to coordinate and expand the number of volunteers**, in particular expanding Community Response Emergency Teams (CERTs).

Volunteers during an emergency: During an emergency it is important to have adequate volunteers (“boots on the ground”) to dispatch them to wherever they are needed in the county. Fortunately, Yolo County is rich with volunteers of many varieties at the local level, and can also tap into volunteers at the state level when necessary. All these volunteers offer invaluable assistance for all sorts of situations in a time of need. Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) are an important component of emergency preparedness and response.

“The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program educates volunteers about disaster preparedness for the hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. CERT offers a consistent, nationwide approach to volunteer training and organization that professional responders can rely on during disaster situations, which allows them to focus on more complex tasks. Through CERT, the capabilities to prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters is built and enhanced.” ready.gov/cert



Photo Credit: Grant Nejadlo/UC Davis

UC Davis volunteers during a CERT training

At this time, it is unclear what the level of training is for the existing CERTs in West Sacramento, Davis and UC Davis. Local law enforcement or fire departments will provide the CERT training. Through the local city aging commissions (or whatever mechanism is available) and the suggested Plan of Action developed by the YCCAAS subcommittee, it will be critical for every incorporated city in Yolo County (Davis, West Sacramento, Winters, Woodland) to maintain active and trained CERTs. The reason is because CERTs are trained and dispatched to work throughout the county and beyond, not just in the city of origin. CERTs will be called on in larger disasters to go where they are needed, even outside the county.



A Red Cross Disaster Relief van

The Red Cross is another organization that OES depends on for some things in an emergency situation. The county is the lead facilitator for shelter operations, recognizing the limitations and restrictions of the Red Cross for such endeavors. An MOU between OES and the Gold Country Region of the Red Cross is currently being formulated, which will indicate that the Red Cross will provide assistance for individual home fires and fire alarm installment. During a large-scale emergency, Red Cross may lend support to the county upon request by OES, provided the Red Cross is given sufficient notice and has available resources.

[Other volunteer organizations:](#) ARES/RACES (radio operations); Veterinary Emergency Response Team (VERT); Levee Flood Fighters; Disaster Healthcare Volunteers; Medical Reserve Corps (MRC); OES Sacramento; Aerosquadron; Posse (large animal rescue); Search & Rescue (Sheriff’s Office); STARS (law enforcement volunteers); Animal Shelter; VIP (Volunteers in Policing); World’s Kitchen (food for first responders); Billy Graham Foundation (counseling); Salvation Army (donations mgt, food prep); Cowboy 911 (equine capture); Northern CA Equine Practitioners; CA Veterinary Medical Reserve Corps; city volunteers; CalVols (overseen by state to gather volunteers, e.g. ordering AmeriCorps).



Yolo County staff in an emergency exercise

It also needs to be pointed out that county and city employees are required by state law to provide their services during an emergency. In consequence, they are provided disaster preparedness training at least once. Many are given ongoing disaster preparedness training on a regular basis. However, depending on their particular job description, some county employees may never receive any further training beyond the first training that was given. County and city employee emergency preparedness training refresher courses should be made mandatory for those employees who have only taken a required training course once, but never had an updated course since that time.

RECOMMENDATION 7: If funds are identified, it is recommended that the Board of Supervisors **ensure IHSS consumers are prioritized as recipients for free “go kits.”**

Financial barriers to disaster preparedness can be reduced for those with access and functional needs by distribution of free emergency “go kits” purchased by either cash/in-kind donations or grants. Because IHSS consumers cannot receive assistance from their caregivers to build these kits since it is not a permitted activity, they should be given top priority for any free emergency “go kits” that are to be distributed.

RECOMMENDATION 8: Due to current budget constraints, it is recommended that the Board of Supervisors, in consultation with Yolo County OES, **provide the necessary support for appropriate legislation to increase county OES budgets.**

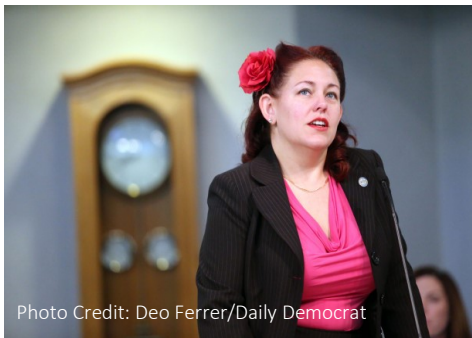


Photo Credit: Deo Ferrer/Daily Democrat

OES Manager Dana Carey presenting at a Board meeting

[Support for state legislation to increase OES budgets:](#) Yolo County OES is underfunded, with only three employees to take on the task of emergency planning for the entire county. State legislation is currently being contemplated to increase the budget of county OESs, but with differing mechanisms in play for discussion. It is crucial that rural jurisdictions be given commensurate budget consideration as city jurisdictions, rather than the state legislature developing a grant program where cities all too frequently take the lion’s share of any appropriations. So it is recommended that due to the current budget constraints, the necessary support should be provided for appropriate state legislation, in consultation with Yolo County OES, to increase county OES budgets.

RECOMMENDATION 9: It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors **use county manager/CAO and county/city 2x2 meetings to coordinate and share information** about emergency preparedness.

[Fostering inter-jurisdictional cooperation:](#) To increase inter-jurisdictional cooperation, the county can use county manager/CAO and county/city 2x2 meetings to encourage coordination and sharing of information in disaster preparedness planning.



Recommendations to the Yolo County Commission on Aging and Adult Services

RECOMMENDATION 1: To incentivize attendance at HPC meetings/tabletop exercises, the YCCAAS should: investigate the possibility of instituting a business license requirement to attend meetings/tabletop exercises; and/or develop a gold star program to praise those who attend; and/or explore other alternatives.

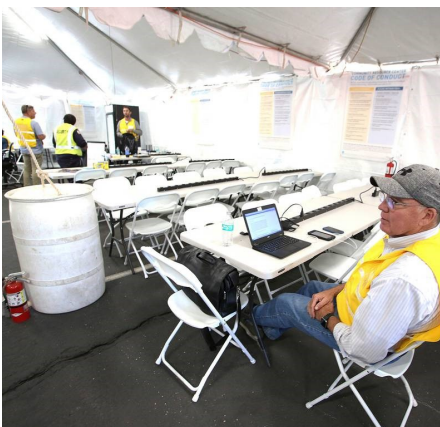
RECOMMENDATION 2: It is recommended that the YCCAAS approve the suggested Plan of Action, and disseminate it to local aging commissions, in order to assist them in: asking the appropriate questions to law enforcement, fire and local government; implement the OES Train the Trainer Program in their jurisdiction; ensure an active CERT team is maintained in their community; encourage local assisted living facilities to attend HPC meetings/tabletop exercises, and track their attendance; determine what each city and the unincorporated areas can do for those individuals with special medical needs and/or those with access and functional needs during a power outage. In the event of a planned or unplanned power outage: emergency alert notifications must explicitly include where people with medical needs can go to obtain power locally during a power outage; and such facilities must be accessible to persons with access and functional needs.

RECOMMENDATION 3: It is recommended that in the next 12-24 months the YCCAAS and Yolo Healthy Aging Alliance form a subcommittee, to plan a countywide public awareness event (pilot) in regard to disaster preparedness.

RECOMMENDATION 4: If funds are identified, it is recommended that the YCCAAS ensure IHSS consumers are prioritized as recipients for free “go kits.”

RECOMMENDATION 5: Due to current budget constraints, it is recommended that the YCCAAS, in consultation with the Yolo County OES, provide the necessary support for appropriate legislation to increase county OES budgets.

RECOMMENDATION 6: It is recommended the YCCAAS reconvene the Disaster Preparedness Subcommittee quarterly, at a minimum, to follow up on the progress of the county’s disaster preparedness planning.



PG&E staff set up a community resource center



At the Woodland ‘Know Your Zone’ community meeting in 2019



County staff at an outreach event in the town of Yolo



Background and Supporting Information for Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 1: To incentivize attendance at HPC meetings/tabletop exercises, the YCCAAS should: investigate the possibility of instituting a business license requirement to attend meetings/ tabletop exercises; and/or develop a gold star program to praise those who attend; and/or explore other alternatives.



In home support staff

HPC meetings/tabletop exercises: Many community care licensed facilities (e.g. skilled nursing facilities, residential care facilities for the elderly, board and care facilities, residential mental health facilities, adult day programs) are not attending Healthcare Preparedness Coalition (HPC) meetings/ tabletop exercises facilitated by DHHS. During these meetings/tabletop exercises, participants bring their facility’s disaster preparedness plan with them to determine its effectiveness in an emergency situation. Any deficiencies are quickly discovered and rectified when taken through an emergency scenario. HPC also makes regular site visits to skilled nursing facilities, and will begin site visits to assisted living facilities in the near future at the behest of the YCCAAS subcommittee.

A new state law in effect as of July 1, 2019, AB 3098, requires assisted living facilities to have: updated emergency plans; arrangements to get residents downstairs during a power shutoff if the elevators are not operating; and emergency training and drills. HPC meetings/tabletop exercises provide an opportunity to effectively fulfill those requirements. Therefore, the subcommittee believes the county should strongly encourage community care licensed facility attendance at HPC meetings/ tabletop exercises. To incentivize attendance, the YCCAAS should investigate the possibility of a business license requirement to attend HPC meetings/tabletop exercises, and/or develop a gold star program of rewarding those who attend with some positive publicity, and/or explore other alternatives.

RECOMMENDATION 2: It is recommended that the YCCAAS **approve the suggested Plan of Action**, and disseminate it to local aging commissions, in order to assist them in: asking the appropriate questions to law enforcement, fire and



A group of volunteers

local government; implement the OES Train the Trainer Program in their jurisdiction; ensure an active CERT team is maintained in their community; encourage local assisted living facilities to attend HPC meetings/tabletop exercises, and track their attendance; determine what each city and the unincorporated areas can do for those individuals with special medical needs and/or those with access and functional needs during a power outage. In the event of a planned or unplanned power outage: emergency alert notifications must explicitly include where people with medical needs can go to obtain power locally during a power outage; and such facilities must be accessible to persons with access and functional needs.

Plan of Action: OES is minimally staffed, yet there is an ongoing obligation to ensure emergency preparedness information is disseminated to the entire county population of persons with access and functional needs. Disbursement of emergency preparedness information can be achieved by means of local aging commissions (or whatever local gov’t mechanism might be available) to encourage them to follow the suggested Plan of Action developed by the YCCAAS subcommittee (see accompanying report). In this way local aging commissions can play a vital role in assisting with planning, intervention and education of the entire county community.

The suggested Plan of Action consists of: a) suggested questions for local commissions to ask of local fire, police, and gov't officials; b) administration of the OES Train the Trainer Program; c) ensuring the city maintains an active Community Emergency Response Team (CERT); d) discovering what assisted living facilities are within the city and whether they are attending HPC meetings/tabletop exercises; e) determining what the city can do for those who have access and functional needs in a power outage.

RECOMMENDATION 3: It is recommended that in the next 12-24 months the YCCAAS and Yolo Healthy Aging Alliance form a subcommittee, **to plan a countywide public awareness event** (pilot) in regard to disaster preparedness.

Countywide disaster preparedness event: As a means of disseminating important information, it is recommended that the YCCAAS form a subcommittee to work on preparing a pilot countywide disaster preparedness public awareness event within 12 to 24 months.

RECOMMENDATION 4: If funds are identified, it is recommended that the YCCAAS ensure **IHSS consumers are prioritized as recipients for free “go kits.”**

Prioritize free “go kits” to IHSS consumers: It is important that those with both financial limitations as well as access and functional needs be prepared in case of an emergency. Financial barriers to disaster preparedness can be reduced for those with access and functional needs by distribution of free emergency “go kits” purchased by either cash/in-kind donations or grants. Because IHSS consumers cannot receive assistance from their caregivers to build these kits since it is not a permitted activity, they should be given top priority for any free emergency “go kits” that are to be distributed.



A sample “go kit”

RECOMMENDATION 5: Due to current budget constraints, it is recommended that the YCCAAS, in consultation with Yolo County OES, provide the necessary **support for appropriate legislation to increase county OES budgets.**

Support for state legislation to increase OES budgets: Yolo County OES is underfunded, with only three employees to take on the task of emergency planning for the entire county. State legislation is currently being contemplated to increase the budget of county OESs, but with differing mechanisms in play for discussion. It is crucial that rural jurisdictions be given commensurate budget consideration as city jurisdictions, rather than the state legislature developing a grant program where cities all too frequently take the lion’s share of any appropriations. So it is recommended that due to the current budget constraints, the necessary support should be provided for appropriate state legislation, in consultation with Yolo County OES, to increase county OES budgets.



The California State Capitol building

RECOMMENDATION 6: It is recommended the YCCAAS **reconvene the Disaster Preparedness Subcommittee quarterly**, at a minimum, to follow up on the progress of the county’s disaster preparedness planning.

Regular check-ins by YCCAAS on disaster preparedness progress: It will be essential for the YCCAAS to reconvene the Disaster Preparedness Subcommittee at regular intervals to follow up on the progress of the county’s disaster preparedness planning.



Suggested Plan of Action for Local Aging Commissions



INTRODUCTION

The Yolo County Commission on Aging and Adult Services (YCCAAS) identified the necessity to address the special needs of older adults and persons with disabilities in regards to emergency preparation and evacuation. Recent fires, floods, and electrical outages have highlighted the urgency for all of Yolo County to be prepared in the event of the eventual next emergency, which includes the cities of Davis, West Sacramento, Winters, Woodland and the unincorporated areas. In addition, persons who have died in the recent disasters have primarily been seniors and persons with disabilities. In response, the commission appointed a subcommittee to investigate what disaster preparedness policies and procedures were being instituted in Yolo County for those individuals with access and functional needs, and create recommendations to improve the entire county's future responses. The subcommittee consulted regularly with Yolo County Office of Emergency Services (OES) and the Yolo County Health & Human Services Agency (DHHS) in formulating recommendations, to ensure consistency and accuracy.



The reality is that OES is minimally staffed, yet there is an ongoing obligation to ensure emergency preparedness information is disseminated to the entire county population of persons with access and functional needs. Disbursement of emergency preparedness information can be achieved by means of local aging commissions (or whatever local government mechanism might be available) to encourage the commissions to follow the suggested Plan of Action developed by the YCCAAS subcommittee. In this way local aging commissions can play a vital role in assisting with planning, intervention and education of the entire county community.



The suggested Plan of Action consists of: a) inquiring whether your city has a Special Needs Alert Program (SNAP) as well as an active Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program; b) suggested questions for local commissions to ask of local fire, law enforcement, and gov't officials; c) administration of the OES Train the Trainer Program; d) discovering what assisted living facilities are within the city and whether they are attending HPC meetings/tabletop exercises; e) determining what the city can do for those who have access and functional needs during a power outage.



I. VOLUNTARY SPECIAL NEEDS ALERT PROGRAM (SNAP) LIST:

Inquire whether your city has some sort of voluntary list for those with access and functional needs, who may require assistance and/or transportation in an emergency.



- A. If the city does have such a voluntary list, plan how to disseminate information about this list. Include information about the list in the OES Train the Trainer Program (see below).
- B. If there is no citywide SNAP list, encourage the city to develop one.
- C. Make sure OES is aware of any list your city may have and that the list is in a format that OES can utilize in an emergency.

II. CERTs

“The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program educates volunteers about disaster preparedness for the hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. CERT offers a consistent, nationwide approach to volunteer training and organization that professional responders can rely on during disaster situations, which allows them to focus on more complex tasks. Through CERT, the capabilities to prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters is built and enhanced.” ready.gov/cert

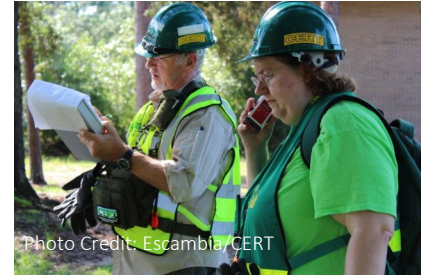


Photo Credit: Escambia/CERT

CERT volunteers

Find out if your city has a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).

- A. How active is the CERT? How can it be reactivated if it has been dormant?
- B. If there is no CERT, find out why not, and if feasible, encourage your city to develop a CERT.
CERTs are trained to work throughout the county and beyond, not just in the city where they originated. CERTs will be called on in larger disasters to go where they are needed within and outside the county.

III. SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR LOCAL COMMISSIONS TO ASK OF LOCAL FIRE/LAW ENFORCEMENT AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS:

It is expected that city aging commissions will want to ask appropriate questions in regard to their city government’s approach to disaster preparedness, such as:

- A. How often do city employees receive disaster preparedness training? Are they given refresher courses? If not, why not?
- B. How many employees within the city are currently (or have recently) trained in emergency management procedures (Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS)/Incident Command System (ICS))?
- C. When was the city’s last Emergency Operations Center (EOC) drill?
- D. How does the city design/decide on drill scenarios and tabletop practices?
 - What are the functions of each department, especially fire and law enforcement?
 - What is the city’s continuity of operations (how is the city able to continue functioning) during an emergency?
- E. What is the procedure for coordinating with other agencies during an emergency?
- F. Have there been any emergencies in the city, and what lessons were learned?
- G. How does your city disseminate information during an emergency?
- H. Does the city have emergency preparedness information on its website that is easily accessible and navigable, and includes current emergency situation updates?
- I. What existing city outreach and communications can be utilized to educate the public about any and all programs related to supporting emergency preparedness efforts, e.g. city utility bills?
- J. Does your community know about 211 Yolo?
“211 Yolo is the information hub for Yolo County, linking residents to vital health and human services, information and resources in the community...Dial 2-1-1 or text your zip code to 898211 for text response. This service is free, multilingual, confidential and available 24 hours per day, every day of the year. “ <https://www.211yolocounty.com/>
- K. If there is an evacuation order, what services are available for those with access and functional needs?
- L. Where can people with emergency power needs go, in particular those with special medical needs and how will your city communicate such information to this population?
- M. Can the city use Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds or local funds for the purchase of power generators?
- N. Other questions?



Yolo County law enforcement

IV. OES TRAIN THE TRAINER PROGRAM

- A. Training the trainer on what disaster preparedness information to present to the public
 - 1. Request from the city a plan to determine who and under what authority a designated leader will gather names of volunteers to administer the county OES Train the Trainer Program, e.g. law enforcement or fire department, commission itself, city staff.
 - 2. Volunteer trainers must be trained by OES.
- B. Public presentations by the presenters
 - 1. Once OES trained and in coordination with the city, plan how trainers will disseminate information to citizens.
 - 2. Recommend to the city that, in coordination with OES, it research grants, cash or in kind donations to provide free emergency supplies, e.g. “go kits”, to disseminate at public presentations.
 - 3. It will be important to educate older adults, and/or those with access and functional needs at senior centers, community centers, assisted living facilities, seniors-only housing developments, etc., where they live or congregate.

V. ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES AND OTHER LICENSED RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES

- A. What assisted living facilities and/or other licensed residential care facilities are located within the city?
- B. Do they regularly attend HPC meetings/tabletop exercises? If not, why not?
- C. Do they have a recently updated disaster preparedness plan?
 - 1. A new state law in effect as of July 1, 2019, AB 3098, requires assisted living facilities to have: updated emergency plans; arrangements to get residents downstairs during a power shutoff if the elevators are not operating; and emergency training and drills. County Healthcare Preparedness Coalition (HPC) meetings/tabletop exercises provide an opportunity to effectively fulfill those requirements. Therefore the county and cities should strongly encourage community care licensed facility attendance at HPC meetings/tabletop exercises. Direct city staff to develop a plan to assist the state in implementation of AB 3098 in the city.
 - 2. Investigate the possibility of instituting a city business license requirement to make sure assisted living facilities attend meetings/tabletop exercises; and/or establish a gold star program to reward those who attend; and/or explore other alternatives.

VI. POWER GENERATORS

- A. When there are planned or unplanned power outages and other emergencies, what services are provided by the city to those who are homebound with special medical and/or access and functional needs? If there are no such services, what is the plan for creating such services?
- B. Does the city have emergency generators for those who are low income with access and functional needs? If not, what services are available to them, e.g. can they go to the nearest hospital or fire station for power requirements?



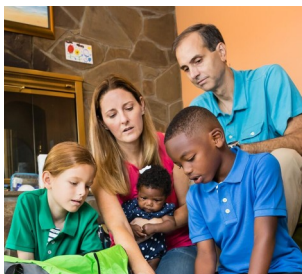
A public presentation by Yolo County OES staff in Winters



A firetruck from Fire Station 43 in West Sacramento



Flooding in Yolo County



Emergency Supply Kits from Ready.Gov

BUILD A KIT

Make sure your emergency kit is stocked with the items on the checklist below. Most of the items are inexpensive and easy to find, and any one of them could save your life. Once you take a look at the basic items, consider what unique needs your family might have, such as supplies for pets, or seniors.

After an emergency, you may need to survive on your own for several days. Being prepared means having your own food, water and other supplies to last for at least 72 hours. A disaster supplies kit is a collection of basic items your household may need in the event of an emergency.

BASIC DISASTER SUPPLIES KIT

To assemble your kit, store items in airtight plastic bags and put your entire disaster supplies kit in one or two easy-to-carry containers such as plastic bins or a duffel bag. A basic emergency supply kit could include the following recommended items:

- Water - one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
- Food - at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert
- Flashlight
- First aid kit
- Extra batteries
- Whistle to signal for help
- Dust mask to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in- place
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Manual can opener for food
- Local maps
- Cell phone with chargers and a backup battery
- Recommended Supplies List (see below)

ADDITIONAL EMERGENCY SUPPLIES

Consider adding the following items to your emergency supply kit based on your individual needs:

- Prescription medications
- Non-prescription medications such as pain relievers, anti-diarrhea medication, antacids or laxatives
- Glasses and contact lens solution
- Infant formula, bottles, diapers, wipes, diaper rash cream
- Pet food and extra water for your pet
- Cash or traveler's checks
- Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records saved electronically or in a waterproof, portable container
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person
- Complete change of clothing appropriate for your climate and sturdy shoes

- Household chlorine bleach and medicine dropper to disinfect water
- Fire extinguisher
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items
- Mess kits, paper cups, plates, paper towels and plastic utensils
- Paper and pencil
- Books, games, puzzles or other activities for children

MAINTAINING YOUR KIT

After assembling your kit remember to maintain it so it's ready when needed:

- Keep canned food in a cool, dry place
- Store boxed food in tightly closed plastic or metal containers
- Replace expired items as needed
- Re-think your needs every year and update your kit as your family's needs change.

KIT STORAGE LOCATIONS

Since you do not know where you will be when an emergency occurs, prepare supplies for home, work and vehicles.

- Home: Keep this kit in a designated place and have it ready in case you have to leave your home quickly. Make sure all family members know where the kit is kept.
- Work: Be prepared to shelter at work for at least 24 hours. Your work kit should include food, water and other necessities like medicines, as well as comfortable walking shoes, stored in a "grab and go" case.
- Vehicle: In case you are stranded, keep a kit of emergency supplies in your car.

RECOMMENDED SUPPLIES LIST—ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO CONSIDER ADDING

- Prescription medications and glasses
- Infant formula and diapers
- Pet food and extra water for your pet
- Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records in a waterproof, portable container
- Cash or traveler's checks and change
- Emergency reference material such as a first aid book or information from www.ready.gov
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person. Consider additional bedding if you live in a cold-weather climate.
- Complete change of clothing including a long sleeved shirt, long pants and sturdy shoes. Consider additional clothing if you live in a cold-weather climate.
- Household chlorine bleach and medicine dropper – When diluted nine parts water to one part bleach, bleach can be used as a disinfectant. Or in an emergency, you can use it to treat water by using 16 drops of regular household liquid bleach per gallon of water. Do not use scented, color safe or bleaches with added cleaners.



Emergency items to consider putting in your Go Kit, including: canned food, a can opener, water, extra clothes, and a sleeping bag.

(List continues from previous page)

- Fire Extinguisher
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items
- Mess kits, paper cups, plates and plastic utensils, and paper towels
- Paper and pencil
- Books, games, puzzles or other activities for children
- Water, one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
- Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Whistle to signal for help
- Dust mask, to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter- in-place
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Can opener for food (if kit contains canned food)
- Local maps

