

EARTHQUAKE TIPS

FOR PEOPLE WITH VISUAL DISABILITIES

Dealing with an earthquake can be especially challenging if you are a person with a visual impairment. Meeting the challenge becomes easier if you plan ahead. The important thing is to start preparing now. In addition to the usual earthquake preparedness activities, you may find the following information especially helpful.

Canes

If you use a cane, you want to make sure one will be available to you immediately following the earthquake to help you maneuver around obstacles and hazards. Keep extra canes in your home, job or school, and at any other places that you frequent. Store them consistently and securely where they can be easily located.

Making the Most of Your Vision

If you have some vision, there are things you can do to help yourself see as well as possible when “the lights go out.”

- Place security lights in each room in the wall outlets to light paths of travel. These special lights will light up automatically if there is loss of power. (Over)

Depending on type, they will continue to operate for 1 to 6 hours and can be turned off manually and used as a short-lasting flashlight.

- Store high-powered flashlights with wide beams and extra batteries.
- If you wear soft contact lenses, plan to have an alternative because, without power, you will not be able to operate the cleaning unit.
- You may want to mark your emergency supplies with large print, fluorescent tape or Braille.

Some Other Considerations

- Service animals can become frightened, confused and panicky during and after a disaster. Be prepared to calm your animal and to keep it confined or securely leashed or harnessed. The leash/harness is a very important item for managing a nervous animal.
- In the event that your service animal is unable to assist you, be prepared to use alternative ways to negotiate your environment.
- There may be major disruptions of all kinds following an earthquake, so be aware that you may not be able to rely on your usual auditory cues.
- Anchor special equipment such as computers, and create a back-up system for important data and store it off site.