



CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date:	February 17, 2009
To:	Honorable Mayor and City Council
From:	Pamela Mottice-Muller, Director of Emergency Management
Subject:	City of Beverly Hills Emergency Evacuation Assistance Registry
Attachments:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The City of Beverly Hills Emergency Evacuation Assistance Registry Commonly Asked Questions and Answers 2. The City of Beverly Hills Emergency Evacuation Assistance Registry Form 3. Guidelines Governing Implementation of the Emergency Evacuation Assistance Registry

INTRODUCTION:

Increased attention has been given by local, state, and federal governments to the development of programs aimed at serving special need and frail elderly community members during times of emergency. Upon review of the City of Beverly Hills Emergency Operations Plan, the recommendation of the Health and Safety Commission and to ensure National Incident Management System compliance regulations, staff deemed it necessary to make provisions for the special needs population as they are most vulnerable during an emergency. After careful research and legal consideration, staff created a voluntary registry program which will help the City assist community members with special needs during an emergency evacuation and sheltering event.

Following an extensive review of current registries nationwide, staff concluded that if people with special needs register with the City, staff will be better able to plan for evacuation, transportation and sheltering needs of community members during an emergency evacuation. The potential of saving lives and reducing suffering far outweigh the identified negatives.

DISCUSSION:

Many cities and counties around the country have implemented a special needs registry to help plan for community members with special needs during and after a disaster. Staff researched many cities and counties' registries and determined that there are no standard procedures for implementation; nor are there standard

forms, process for information collection, purpose, or even a way to maintain a registry. Most government entities designed their own registry to suit their own particular community needs. Due to the lack of standardizations, many available city and county registries were reviewed to assist in creating the program for the City of Beverly Hills.

Currently the Governor's Office of Emergency Service (OES) is reviewing protocol and making recommendations on how to appropriately plan for persons with special needs. At the recommendation of OES three key considerations were used to develop the City's disaster special needs program. Staff then consulted with the City Attorney to work through the legality and liability of these suggestions.

1. **Legality Issues:** According to the City attorneys, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) does not appear to apply to the proposed Registry. However, City personnel are privy to sensitive information which may be a concern to citizens. To calm these privacy concerns, the City has developed implementation guidelines designating the Office of Emergency Management as responsible for maintaining the Registry.
2. **Liability Issues:** There is a fear that the registry implies a guarantee that these individuals will receive special treatment and immediate assistance during an emergency. A purpose statement will appear on the registry form, which clarifies that the registry is only meant to identify individuals in the community who might require assistance. The City's registry form also includes a release, waiver of liability, and indemnity provision.
3. **Lack of Personal Preparedness Issues:** People who sign up on the Registry might assume that they need not take any other preparation measures such as developing a personal preparedness plan. To ensure this does not happen, the registry will include a statement encouraging special needs individuals to develop a plan for self-sufficiency during a disaster or emergency.

The following is a summary of the City of Beverly Hills Registry program:

- The goal of the Registry program is to understand community members' specific needs, allowing the City to better plan for the type and quantity of special transportation (i.e., wheelchair accessible), medical equipment (i.e., oxygen tanks), and shelters that may be needed during emergency evacuations. Thus, the City will be in a better position to assist those community members who require special assistance.
- The purpose of the Registry program is to assist and plan for those individuals who cannot evacuate themselves during an emergency and may have special sheltering needs.
- The program is for those who have no other way to evacuate or way to transport themselves to a shelter during an emergency because they are frail, elderly, disabled, or have other medical needs that require special

assistance during an emergency evacuation and have special sheltering needs.

- While definitions of a special needs person vary, after careful review staff considers a special needs person to be someone that is frail, elderly, handicapped and/or has medical needs requiring additional help during an emergency evacuation.
- In addition to registering citizens, it is important to educate the registrants about the importance of self-reliance during an emergency.
- A registry form, guidelines for implementation, a FAQ page, have been developed and reviewed by the City Attorney.
- The scope of the Registry program is rather narrow, since it only deals with emergency evacuations.

Staff also researched telephone reassurance programs often called "Are You OK?" These programs call seniors or disabled individuals daily or weekly who live alone to check and make sure they are okay. Should no one answer, a police officer or case worker is sent to the individual's home. According to the Community Services: Human Services Division staff, Jewish Family Service (JFS) of Los Angeles offers a telephone reassurance called Telecheck where volunteers contact between thirty to 40 elderly citizens every morning five days a week. Usually the individual is a disabled senior, a shut-in or somehow at risk. If the individual doesn't respond to the volunteer's call, the volunteer informs a JFS social worker. The social worker follows up with the emergency contact person. Usually, the emergency contact person has a key and can check on the individual. If not JFS may contact the police for a "safety check." The service is completely free and Beverly Hills residents can participate. The City provides Community Assistance Grant funding to Jewish Family Service. As part of that contract the City is provided this service which is described as a "supportive check-in calls five days per week to frail, homebound seniors to monitor their well being, provide socialization and to maintain their safety in their own homes. Calls are made by trained volunteers and supervised by professional social workers in the senior center." Therefore staff is not recommending this program be added to the Emergency Evacuation Assistance Registry.

IMPLEMENTATION

The City of Beverly Hills Emergency Management Office has developed guidelines for the implementation of the Registry. The Registry is under the Emergency Management Umbrella, allowing the Emergency Management Office to share this information with others, in order to assist with additional planning and the emergency evacuation of those with special needs who have signed up to participate in the Registry. Evacuations are the responsibility of the Police Department and will be carried out by the Police Department in coordination with and in support of the EOC.

The Registry will be housed in a spreadsheet under the discretion of the Office of Emergency Management. In addition to the spreadsheet, a "special populations" group will be created within the telephone notification system. This system allows the City to contact registrants to see if they are alright following a disaster or emergency event. If no one answers the phone, the City can send help to the individual but will not be mandated to do so.

The Registry program will be advertised with already established groups and programs which serve this population. The Health and Safety Commission and the Human Relations Commission will assist in the outreach efforts. Already established centers of community outreach, such as the Farmers Markets, Roxbury Park Community Center, and the Human Services Division will also provide information regarding the Registry program. The City of Beverly Hills will also post the registry forms online, developing a webpage explaining the Registry program and allowing for online registration.

The Registry must be updated periodically to reflect changes in the community. By mailing out postcards periodically (once a year) people on the Registry can update their information. If they fail to return the postcard, they will be contacted by the City to confirm their information. If the City cannot reach the person they will be removed from the Registry. A webpage providing online registry, will allow community members to update their information directly on the webpage.

The Registry program will be used to help the City identify those registrants who may need evacuation assistance. The decision whether evacuation assistance will be available for a particular emergency is a discretionary decision, which will be dependent on the judgment of City personnel and will be influenced by many factors, including the availability of resources to carry out the evacuation.

There is no baseline data on the number of people within the City that may require additional help during an emergency evacuation. If only a limited number of people sign up, the form itself as well as outreach methods might need to be re-examined. Otherwise, staff could conclude that there are not many people with special needs within the community.

FISCAL IMPACT:

No additional funds are required to implement the Registry. All expenses would fit within the budget of the Office of Emergency Management.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff feels that the City of Beverly Hills needs to prepare for special needs community members that may require additional assistance during an emergency. By developing a registry program the needs of these most vulnerable community members can be identified and planned for accordingly. The City Council is asked to refer anyone needed this service to the Office of Emergency Management.

Pamela Mottice-Muller 

The City of Beverly Hills Emergency Evacuation Assistance Registry Commonly Asked Questions and Answers



The City of Beverly Hills has implemented a registry program to identify residents with special needs who have no other evacuation plan and may need transportation assistance during an emergency. If you are eligible, you are urged to fill out the Emergency Evacuation Assistance Registry form, sign it, and return it to the address listed below.

Questions and Answers:

1. Who is eligible for the Registry?

Residents of Beverly Hills who are frail, elderly, disabled, or have other medical needs that require special assistance during an emergency evacuation AND who have no other way to evacuate or get to a shelter during an emergency. To be placed on the Registry, you must sign a liability waiver that includes a medical information release. Participation in the program is strictly voluntary.

2. What is the purpose of the Registry?

The Emergency Evacuation Assistance Registry (the "Registry") enables the City's emergency managers to better plan for evacuation, transportation and sheltering needs of community members during an emergency evacuation, by identifying those who have no other way to evacuate and are frail, elderly, disabled, or have other medical needs that require special assistance.

3. Do Registry participants receive guaranteed assistance?

No. The Registry is not a promise or a guarantee that the City will have the resources and the ability to assist you during an emergency. If you have an opportunity to leave when an evacuation is ordered or recommended, you are strongly advised to take that opportunity and evacuate. Do not wait for City assistance. Depending upon the nature of the emergency and other factors, the City may or may not have the resources available and the ability to assist with your evacuation. The Registry is simply a list of persons who may need help. It does not mean that the City or any one else will be able to actually assist you.

4. Do I still need my own personal emergency plan if I sign up for the Registry?

Yes. Every registry member must plan for his or her own care during an emergency. IT IS CRUCIAL THAT EVERY REGISTRY MEMBER PLAN TO BE SELF-SUFFICIENT FOR AT LEAST 72 HOURS FOLLOWING A DISASTER. This includes maintaining at least a three-day supply of food, water, medications and other vital necessities. Your personal preparedness plan should also include backup power, extra medication and medical equipment. For example, if you are dependent on oxygen tanks, keep a spare tank on hand or make arrangements with a vendor for delivery. Attached is information regarding personal preparation for an emergency, including an evacuation checklist. Please read the information carefully and discuss your plan with family, friends, and neighbors.

If you are evacuated and brought to a shelter, you must bring extra medication and any medical equipment you require. The shelter will not be able to provide them.

5. How do I register?

Fill out the Emergency Evacuation Assistance Registry form and return by mail or in person to:

City of Beverly Hills Registry
455 North Rexford Drive
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

6. Can my pet evacuate with me?

Yes. The City prefers that you make special arrangements with friends, family, or neighbors for your pet during an emergency. All service animals may be transported and allowed at shelters. Arrangements will be made for other legal animals once they arrive at the shelter.

7. Once I register, do I have to keep the City updated on my personal information, including address and phone number?

Yes, if you register and then move or change your phone number, you should notify the City at:

City of Beverly Hills Registry
455 North Rexford Drive
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

Once you register, the City of Beverly Hills may contact you by mail to periodically update your information and renew your participation in the Registry. When you receive the City's request to update your information, please complete the form and mail it back to the address listed on the card. Failure to update your information when requested will result in your removal from the Registry.

8. Can the Registry help me at other times?

No. The Registry is only used during emergencies when an evacuation has been ordered.

The City of Beverly Hills Emergency Evacuation Assistance Registry



The City of Beverly Hills is offering a voluntary registry program for its residents who are frail, elderly, disabled, or have other medical needs that require special assistance during an emergency evacuation and who have no other way to evacuate or get to a shelter during an emergency. It is called the "Emergency Evacuation Assistance Registry" (the "Registry"). By voluntarily registering with the City of Beverly Hills, you help emergency managers better plan for your special needs in the event an emergency evacuation is ordered by the appropriate authorities.

If you sign up for the Registry, please keep in mind that you must still plan for your own care during an emergency. **IT IS CRUCIAL THAT EVERY REGISTRY MEMBER PLAN TO BE SELF-SUFFICIENT FOR AT LEAST 72 HOURS FOLLOWING A DISASTER.** This includes maintaining at least a three-day supply of food, water, and other vital necessities. Your personal preparedness plan should also include backup power, extra medication and medical equipment. For example, if you are dependent on oxygen tanks, keep a spare tank on hand or make arrangements with a vendor for delivery.

The Registry is not a promise or a guarantee that the City will have the resources and the ability to assist you during an emergency. If you have an opportunity to leave when an evacuation is ordered or recommended, you are strongly advised to take that opportunity and evacuate. Do not wait for City assistance. Depending upon the nature of the emergency and other factors, the City may or may not have the resources available and the ability to assist with your evacuation. The Registry is simply a list of persons who may need help. It does not mean that the City or anyone else will be able to actually assist you.

Once you register, the City of Beverly Hills will contact you by mail to periodically update your information and renew your participation in the Registry. When you receive the City's request to update your information, please complete the form and mail it back to the address listed on the card. Failure to update your information when requested will result in your removal from the Registry. It is also your responsibility to notify the City as soon as possible if your condition, address or phone number change.

If you are interested in being placed on the Registry, please complete and sign this form.

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

Last _____ First _____ M.I. _____
 Home Address: _____

 Telephone #: (_____) _____ Date of Birth: _____
 Do you live alone? _____ yes _____ no Sex: _____ male _____ female
 Primary Language: _____

CONTACT INFORMATION:

LOCAL CONTACT:
 Emergency Contact Name: _____
 Relationship: _____
 Emergency Contact telephone number: (_____) _____
OUT OF TOWN CONTACT:
 Emergency Contact Name: _____
 Relationship: _____
 Emergency Contact telephone number: (_____) _____
 Do you have a caretaker? If so, name and contact information: _____

 Will your caretaker accompany you to a shelter? _____

EVACUATION INFORMATION:

What type of transportation do you require for an evacuation?
 _____ None _____ Standard vehicle _____ Wheelchair capable _____ Ambulance
 Do you own a car and drive? _____
 If you evacuate, where do you plan to go?
 _____ Family _____ Friend _____ Shelter _____ Hospital

SPECIAL NEEDS:

Please explain the type of medical equipment that you require in the space provided (e.g., wheelchair, oxygen tank, refrigeration of medicine, dialysis, etc.).

Please read the following and sign (other side):

THE CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS ("CITY") REQUIRES THAT ALL PARTICIPANTS IN THE CITY'S EMERGENCY EVACUATION ASSISTANCE REGISTRY ASSUME ALL RISK BY SIGNING THIS AGREEMENT, WHICH INCLUDES PROVISIONS FOR GENERAL RELEASE, WAIVER OF LIABILITY AND INDEMNITY.

I certify that the information contained in this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that this registration is voluntary and hereby request registration in the City's Emergency Evacuation Assistance Registry (the "Registry").

I have read the information at the beginning of this form describing the Registry, which information is a part of this Agreement, and understand the Registry's purpose is to provide the City with a list of persons who may need assistance during an emergency evacuation, but it is not a promise or guarantee of assistance.

I understand that I will be responsible for any charges and costs associated with hospital or other medical facility care or medical transportation. I understand that if I am evacuated to a shelter, I must bring extra medication and any medical equipment I require, as the shelter will not be able to provide them.

I understand that the California Emergency Services Act provides the City and its officers, employees, and volunteers, including disaster service workers, with immunity from liability for certain actions taken or not taken during specific kinds of emergencies (Title 2, Division 1, Chapter 7 of the Government Code). In addition to that immunity from liability, and in consideration of being permitted to participate in the Registry, I, for myself, my heirs, executors and assigns ("I" or "me"), waive, release and discharge the City and its officers, agents, employees and volunteers (including disaster service workers) from for any claims, demands, damages, debts, liabilities, causes, and causes of action of whatever kind, known or unknown, which in any way relate to or arise out my participation in the Registry. I also agree to indemnify and hold harmless the City and its officers, agents and employees from for any claims, demands, damages, debts, liabilities, causes, and causes of action of whatever kind, known or unknown, which in any way relate to or arise out my participation in the Registry, even though that liability may arise out of negligence or carelessness on the part of the City or its officers, agents, employees or volunteers.

I UNDERSTAND THAT EVACUATION DURING AN EMERGENCY INVOLVES RISKS OF PERSONAL INJURY AND PROPERTY DAMAGE, INCLUDING, WITHOUT LIMITATION, THE RISK THAT THE CITY WILL BE UNABLE TO ASSIST ME IN EVACUATING DURING AN EMERGENCY AND THAT APPROPRIATE SHELTER MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE. KNOWING THE RISKS OF SUCH ACTIVITY, I AGREE TO ASSUME THOSE RISKS AND TO RELEASE AND HOLD HARMLESS THE CITY AND ITS OFFICERS, AGENTS, EMPLOYEES, VOLUNTEERS, AND DISASTER SERVICE WORKERS FROM ANY LIABILITY TO ME FOR DAMAGES ARISING OUT OF OR RELATED TO MY PARTICIPATION IN THE REGISTRY.

I grant permission to medical providers, transportation providers, City personnel, volunteers, disaster service workers and others, as appropriate, to provide me with emergency evacuation assistance, including medical care and transportation.

I ALSO GRANT PERMISSION TO MEDICAL PROVIDERS, TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS, CITY PERSONNEL, VOLUNTEERS AND DISASTER SERVICE WORKERS TO ENTER MY HOME DURING A DECLARED EMERGENCY IN ORDER TO CHECK ON MY STATUS OR TO PROVIDE ME WITH EMERGENCY EVACUATION ASSISTANCE.

I further understand the City will endeavor to keep private all non-public information I provided to the City in confidence, but State law may require disclosure of this information. In addition to disclosures required by State law, I grant permission to the City to disclose any information about me to medical providers, transportation providers, City personnel, volunteers, disaster service workers, public agencies and others in order to implement the Registry program or otherwise provide me with emergency evacuation assistance. I understand I may receive a copy of this authorization at my request.

I also understand that it is my responsibility to keep my information current with the Registry by completing renewals and providing updates as my condition, address or phone number changes.

I have read, understand and agree to the above terms and conditions of participation in the Registry, including the general release, waiver of liability and indemnity agreement.

Signature

Date



GUIDELINES GOVERNING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EMERGENCY EVACUATION ASSISTANCE REGISTRY

I. Purpose

- A. The purpose of these Guidelines is to provide guidance for the implementation of the City of Beverly Hills Emergency Evacuation Assistance Registry (the "Registry"). These Guidelines are not mandatory.
- B. The Registry is a source of information that City emergency managers can use to better plan for evacuation, transportation and sheltering needs of community members during an emergency evacuation, by identifying the needs of those who have no other way to evacuate and are frail, elderly, disabled, or have other medical needs that require special assistance.
- C. The Registry identifies those community members who require special assistance during an emergency evacuation, in the event the City decides it is appropriate to assist with those evacuations. The decision whether evacuation assistance will be available for a particular emergency is a discretionary decision, which will be dependent on the judgment of City personnel and will be influenced by many factors, including the availability of resources to carry out the evacuation.
- D. The Registry helps with registrant pre-planning by encouraging registrants to be prepared to meet their own needs rather than rely upon community resources during an emergency. For example, there is no hospital in the City. If basic medical needs of the registrants have been identified and planned for, registrants will be less likely to visit local area hospitals for basic needs. This helps conserve resources during an emergency.
- E. Although the City of Beverly Hills Office of Emergency Management ("OEM") is not a "covered entity" under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 ("HIPAA"), and is not a "provider of health care," "health care service plan," or "contractor" under the California Confidentiality of Medical Information Act (Cal. Civ. Code § 56 et seq.), the City recognizes that non-public information provided by Registry participants may include personal information. These Guidelines are designed to help protect those participants' privacy.

II. Registering Participants

- A. The OEM will be responsible for registering participants into the Registry.
- B. Other City departments, community groups, and other volunteers may assist with registering participants, so long as steps are taken to ensure that completed forms are collected in such a manner so that staff and volunteers who do not have a "need to know" are not privy to the contents of the completed forms.
- C. Members of the Fire Department shall not assist in the registering of participants.

- D. Completed registry forms are valid for a two-year period from the date the form is signed.
- E. The OEM may contact participants by mail to periodically update their information in the Registry prior to the form's expiration date. Failure of a participant to update their registry information when requested will result in their removal from the Registry.

III. Use of Information Provided

- A. Completed Registry forms received by the OEM shall be stored in a manner that limits access to the completed forms.
- B. The information provided by participants on Registry forms may be collated and analyzed to assist City emergency managers to better plan for evacuation, transportation and sheltering needs of the community. If the information provided by participants is collated and analyzed, no participant names will be associated with the data analysis except as appropriate to assist with the task.
- C. The information contained in the completed Registry forms may be entered into a City computer database or spreadsheet in order to facilitate the City's use of the data during an evacuation emergency. If this is done, access to the information in the computer database or spreadsheet shall be limited as appropriate.
- D. Information gathered for the Registry shall not be shared with other community or public agencies for inclusion in a non-City special needs registry except as otherwise authorized by the subject of the record or that person's authorized representative or as appropriate to accomplish the purposes of the Registry.
- E. During an emergency, participant specific information contained in the Registry may be disclosed to City personnel, volunteers, disaster service workers, medical providers, transportation agencies, public agencies, and others, in order to assist with the emergency evacuation of those with special needs who have signed up to participate in the Registry.

IV. Educating Registry Participants

- A. As part of the City's effort to encourage self-reliance during at least the first 72 hours of an emergency, the Office of Emergency Management may mail appropriate informational materials to Registry participants.

V. Confidentiality Acknowledgement by Staff and Volunteers

- A. All non-public information gathered from Registry participants, that is identifiable by name, shall be treated as confidential to the extent appropriate. This information shall not be released or disclosed (to someone other than the Registrant) by any staff member or volunteer who has access to that information except: (1) to carry out the purposes of the Registry, or (2) as authorized in these

Guidelines, or (3) if required to do so pursuant to state or federal law, or other legal process.

- B. Each staff member or volunteer who has access to completed Registry information identifiable by a participant's name shall sign a form acknowledging these Guidelines and agreeing to abide by this policy.