

## **EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS PLAN**

### **RESIDENT / RESPONSIBLE PARTY GUIDE**

This guide briefly explains the Emergency Preparedness Program in place at Covenant Living of Cromwell.

The Emergency Preparedness Program, which includes an Emergency Operations Plan, is a comprehensive approach to meeting the health and safety needs of our resident population and provides our staff with guidance on how to respond to emergency situations that could impact the operation of the facility, such as natural or man-made disasters.

This guide details expectations of residents and their families during an emergency event at the facility or a community disaster.

The guide also provides families or responsible parties with alternate methods to contact the facility during a disaster when normal means of communications (telephones) may be inoperable.

#### **Communications during a disaster or emergency event**

Staff members will communicate in person with residents when there is an emergency or disaster.

Typically, normal telephone communications will occur between the facility and resident family members or responsible parties when there is an emergency that impacts the operations of the facility.

In the event of a disaster or other event that causes the loss of normal telephone communications, the facility may make alternate arrangements to contact resident families or responsible parties through the use of cell phones or other means.

The facility may designate a specific phone number for pre-recorded messages to provide updated facility status information, specific instructions to staff who may not be able to call the facility, or provide information to resident family members.

If telephone communications (normal and cell) are inoperable the facility may share information relative to the status of the facility or disaster on its webpage at [covlivingcromwell.org](http://covlivingcromwell.org).

The facility may contact the news media (radio & TV) and issue a press release relative to the facility status or other relevant information.

## **ABOUT OUR EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN**

- A detailed plan containing emergency procedures (reviewed and revised on an annual basis) that the staff follow for various emergencies.
- Staff are trained each year on the Emergency Operations Plan and on Fire Procedures.
- Fire Drills are conducted on a regular basis at varying times to ensure the fire alarm system is operational and to evaluate staff response upon alarm activation.
- Disaster Drills are conducted twice per year to evaluate staff knowledge, response and competence.

## **HOW WE ADDRESS DISASTERS**

### **Establishing Incident Command**

- The Leadership team will establish a Command Center for more serious incidents to provide guidance to staff and to communicate with emergency responders and agencies.
- Information and direction will be provided to residents and families as soon as possible – please be patient.
- The safety of the residents and staff will be a priority.

### **Sheltering in Place**

- In many incidents it may be safer to shelter in place, remaining in the building following the direction of staff.
- The facility maintains emergency supplies consisting of food, water and other supplies in the building.
- When power is lost there is an emergency generator that will provide limited power to critical areas.

### **If Forced to Evacuate the Building**

- Evacuation of a healthcare facility is rare; however, the facility is prepared to do so if necessary for the safety of the residents.
- The decision to evacuate all or part of the building comes from the Command Center depending on the disaster.
- Residents and families will be notified of the evacuation as soon as practical. Often times families may be able to take a resident home for a few days, or until the emergency is over.
- Staff are trained on how to evacuate residents using the elevators, or if necessary, just the stairwells.
- If the facility is forced to relocate or evacuate residents the release or sharing of resident information with other healthcare facilities and emergency agencies may be done as permitted by law.

### **How we will Evacuate**

- Residents will be prepared for evacuation by assigned staff. This may include collection of certain personal belongings, medications and other articles deemed necessary by staff. Typically, these items are placed in a labeled bag and accompany the resident to the evacuation destination.
- Residents will be moved in small groups to an internal staging area prior to be transported to other receiving facilities.
- It may be necessary to place a band containing certain personal information on the resident's wrist during an evacuation.
- A Resident Evacuation Form will be completed by staff and accompany the resident along with the Medical File/Chart.

### **OUR FIRE PROCEDURES**

- Staff receive annual Fire Safety Training. This "hands on" training includes:
  - What to do if they discover a fire
  - How to rescue an individual from the fire room or area
  - How to use a fire extinguisher
  - Evacuation of the fire area
- The fire procedures are reviewed and revised on a regular basis.
- Fire drills are conducted on a regular basis.