

PREVAILING UNDER UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES

A severe disease outbreak could change the patterns of daily life for some time. While unpleasant to think about, it's important to know what to do if such an outbreak occurs. One of the most important things to do is to listen to the authorities. The local Health Director will put in place community measures, such as isolation and quarantine, which are meant to slow or stop the spread of disease.

Isolation and Quarantine:

In the event of certain disease outbreaks, such as pandemic influenza, the local Health Director has the authority to ask or order individuals or families showing symptoms, or thought to be exposed to the disease, to stay inside their homes or be cared for in a location which will be set up for that purpose. Isolation and quarantine were used successfully in 2003 during the SARS outbreak in Toronto, Canada. Locally, residents ordered to stay in their homes will be supported by area and state health officials with medicines, if necessary, as well as food and household items.

WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY?

Everyone has their own ways of dealing with stressful situations. Resilience—the ability to adapt well to life's ups and downs—can help manage stress and feelings of anxiety. Everyone can develop resilience.

Here are some other things that individuals and families can do to help themselves during a public health emergency.

- Listen to the radio and follow directions from the authorities.
- Get your supplies kit and use your plan.
- Take care of your immediate and ongoing physical needs.
- Get exercise, rest, drink plenty of water and eat healthy meals whenever you can.
- Return to your daily routines whenever and wherever possible.
- Recognize people's strengths, including your own, as well as their suffering.
- Calm children's fears.
- Keep to your usual routine as much as possible.
- Recognize that you cannot control everything.
- Reflect on how you have dealt with problems in the past.
- Ask for help when you need it.
- Find opportunities to unwind.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Southington Health Department has recruited and trained over 90 community volunteers to help out in the event of a public health emergency. But if a large-scale public health emergency were to occur, we may need well over 200 volunteers to respond.

Our community has a real need for volunteers in the event of a public health emergency; and the service you can provide will be of great value. If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a public health emergency volunteer, please contact the Southington Health Department at 860-276-6275. We need both medical and non-medical volunteers. All types of new volunteers are welcome and no prior experience is necessary.



What is expected of public health emergency volunteers?

Volunteers are asked to do the following at a minimum:

- Participate in at least one local training event annually, typically held on a weekday evening in Southington.
- Sign-up for on-line training provided by TRAINConnecticut at <http://www.ct.train.org> using instructions provided to them.
- Annually reconfirm your commitment to be a Public Health Emergency volunteer and provide the Southington Health Department with your updated contact information (we do not share your contact information with anyone else).
- In the event of a public health emergency, report to a designated location for volunteer duty, if you are available.



Almost volunteering never helped anyone.

Your volunteer service is valuable and appreciated.

Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

This guide is available in the Southington Health Department office at 93 Main Street. Additional copies are located at the Southington Town Hall and local library. Please keep this guide in your home in a secure and easy-to-reach place. This guide is also available at: www.southington.org. Click on Health Department and then "Disaster and Public Health Emergency Information".

LIFE AS USUAL

Under Unusual Circumstances

Third Annual Community Emergency Preparedness Guide

Dear Neighbor:

This is the third annual community emergency preparedness guide. Working with the Southington Health Department, your Town Council recognizes the importance of ensuring that your government does everything possible to help you and your family remain safe and healthy during an emergency. Previous guides highlighted the common sense actions you can take to prepare for a public health emergency and emphasized the need to prepare for emerging, rapidly spreading diseases. This year's theme is "Life As Usual Under Unusual Circumstances" highlights the importance of being prepared for long-term conditions that do not go away overnight.

We all should be prepared for the unexpected. Some public health threats and emergencies, like pandemic influenza are long-term conditions. Having a plan to be safe is important for you and your family. Each of us must be ready to continue our daily business of caring for our families, friends and neighbors in the event of an emergency. Being prepared could minimize the disruption caused by a public health emergency.

On behalf of your Town Council, I invite you to read this guide. Your Town Council has made your safety and health a priority, and we are asking you to do the same.

Sincerely,

JOHN N. BARRY,
Chairman, Southington Town Council



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PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE



In the event of an emergency that affects the whole community such as pandemic flu, anthrax exposure, or a smallpox outbreak, police, health, fire, and other staff will be called to duty to help ensure public health and safety. Local medical, hospital, transportation, school, and volunteer organizations will also be called upon to help.

Area radio and TV stations, WTIC-AM/FM and the TV stations NBC-30 and WFSB-3, will broadcast up-to-date information and instructions to residents. The town will post information on its website, www.southington.org. If you are asked to evacuate, these stations and the website will have instructions on where to go and what to bring. In some cases, you may be told to go to an emergency shelter or to stay in your home or at your job site to limit exposure. Town leaders will give you information so you can make the right decisions.



PLAN TO BE SAFE

Events like those in New Orleans in 2005 showed how vital it is that individuals and families have an emergency plan. This is very important if you or someone you care for is sick, elderly, or requires special care due to a physical or mental disability.

Given the uncontrollable nature of some emergencies, some people question whether they can take steps to plan for these events. Actually, we know that the more people prepare for the unexpected, the better they manage these situations.

It's important that each family or individual have a plan ready before an emergency arises, especially since you may not have electricity, water, heat, phone service, or public transportation. Follow these steps:

The more people prepare for the unexpected, the better they manage these situations.

1. Start a conversation.
2. Make a plan.
3. Make a kit.



1

Start a conversation – now is the perfect time.

Talking things through with family, friends, and neighbors can help create a sense of control and reduce stress.

- Consider possible events and your possible response (examples include severe weather, disease, flood, mass transit accident, and others).
- Designate out-of-state contact.
- Consider where to meet outside of home and outside of neighborhood.
- Consider where to stay for both sheltering-in-place and evacuating.
- Consider childcare with contact information.
- Consider elder care with contact information.
- Consider pet care with contact information.
- Consider special needs.

2

Make a plan – gather critical information into one place and share it with your family. It will save precious time for when you need it most. Collect the following contact information:

- Personal information for all family/household members.
- Local contact information.
- Out of state contact information.
- Nearest relative
- Pet caretaker
- Meeting places

3

Make a kit – start simply! Collect these nine essential items to help you shelter-in-place in the event of an emergency:

1. Bottled water. One gallon per person per day; you may need more if you are caring for pets.
2. Food. Non-perishable foods that don't require refrigeration or cooking. Examples include dried or canned fruit, bottled or boxed juices, peanut butter, crackers, protein bars, infant formula and bottles if needed, trail mix, ready-to-eat soups, powdered milk, for three days or more for each person and pet.
3. Clothes. One change of clothes and footwear per person.
4. Medications. At least a three days' worth of prescription medications.
5. Flashlight. A bright flashlight and extra batteries.
6. Can opener. Manual can opener in case there's no electric power.
7. Radio. Battery-powered radio and extra batteries.
8. Hygiene items. Basics like soap, toilet paper, hand sanitizer, a toothbrush, trash bags with ties, bleach, diapers if needed.
9. First aid. Basics like antiseptic, bandages, non-prescription medications.



Being prepared can help when the unexpected happens. In the event of an emergency, call 9-1-1.

YOU CAN DO THIS!

