

## ***Health and Safety Guidelines***

Your first concern after a disaster is everyone's health and safety. You need to consider possible safety issues and monitor individuals' health and well-being.

### **Aiding the Injured**

- Administer first aid and seek medical attention for any injured person following a disaster.
- Check for injuries. Do not attempt to move seriously injured persons unless they are in immediate danger of death or further injury. If you must move an unconscious person, first stabilize the neck and back, then call for help immediately.
- If the victim is not breathing, carefully position the victim for artificial respiration, clear the airway and commence mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.
- Maintain body temperature with blankets. Be sure the victim does not become overheated.
- Never try to feed liquids to an unconscious person

### **Health**

- Be aware of exhaustion. Don't try to do too much at once. Set priorities and pace yourself. Get enough rest.
- Drink plenty of clean water. Eat well.
- Wear sturdy work boots and gloves.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and clean water often when working in debris.

### **Safety Issues**

- Be aware of safety issues after a disaster.
- Be aware of new safety issues created by the disaster. Watch for washed out roads, contaminated buildings, contaminated water, gas leaks, broken glass, damaged electrical wiring and slippery floors.
- Inform local authorities about health and safety issues, including chemical spills, downed power lines, washed out roads, smoldering insulation and dead animals.

## ***Coping with Disaster***

Disasters are upsetting experiences for everyone involved. The emotional toll that disaster brings can sometimes be even more devastating than the financial strains of damage and loss of home, business or personal property.

Children, senior citizens, people with access or functional needs, and people for whom English is not their first language are especially at risk. Children may become afraid and some elderly people may seem disoriented at first. People with access or functional needs may require additional assistance.

Have a designated person or team to deal with these issues, and/or have access to a crisis center. Have a [Medical Emergency Plan \(pg6\)](#) in place.