

Summary of Best practices
Aging Services Council
Emergency Preparedness Program
Stay Kits Project
January 26, 2007

Hurricanes' Katrina and Rita put the issue of emergency preparedness in the forefront of our community planning. Many older adults often lack the financial and transportation resources necessary to obtain preparedness supplies. The purpose of the Emergency Preparedness Program was to target older adults, 60 or older who are most vulnerable and at risk, living on a fixed income, and basically homebound. Kits were provided to 769 individuals to help them prepare for a man-made or natural disaster. 62 phone/radios were distributed to those clients who did not have a radio or adequately working phone or both. Providing the clients with necessary basic items to survive until emergency personnel arrive is the goal of this project.

Description of the kits:

769 clients received a basic kit containing 5 shelf-stable meals, one gallon of water, toilet paper, a flashlight/battery and towelettes.

62 identified clients received a radio/phone in addition to the basic kit items.

Success Measures

- ▶ Collaboration with ASC & new partner(s) with the Capital Area Food Bank, LCRA
- ▶ Overall feedback was positive that products included in the kit were useful
- ▶ Delivery of products to distribution center (Capital Area Food Bank) went smoothly by focusing on fewer vendors
- ▶ Survey developed to determine consumer value
- ▶ Diverse group of older adults received the kits
- ▶ Developed and distributed approximately 10,000 emergency preparedness fliers that focused on available resources in our community (no cost to the community; in-kind portion of project) through the combined efforts of the members of ASC, in particular, RSVP, AAA, APS and local senior centers
- ▶ Engaged volunteers in the packing and distribution process

▶ The Council established a relationship with the City of Austin and completed a successful event that helped the community

▶ A postcard will be mailed to each recipient reminding them to use the products before the expiration date.

Lessons learned

- Distribution of kits from the distribution center at Capital Area Food Bank to the individual agencies was challenging – needed 2 more additional available trucks for 800 kits
- Had problem with water bottles leaking and salvaging products in a small percentage of kits due to transportation problems from the distribution center
- Needed to develop an ASC cohesive volunteer plan for distribution of the kits; for example through Day of Caring; so that all of the kits go out at the same time
- Needed a coordinator to help with the project coordination in the final months of the project
- Underestimated the cost of the materials; believed more items would be donated
- Did not factor in shipping costs in the overall budget so fewer radio/phones were purchased