



GEORGIA DEPARTMENT
OF COMMUNITY HEALTH



July 31, 2014

The State of Georgia is susceptible to numerous threats and hazards which can disrupt the availability of power to your facility. For example, this past winter's snow and ice storms caused extensive power outages and the loss of heating capacity at some nursing homes for several days. Hurricane season (June – November) can bring similar conditions where power can be lost for days- leaving your facility without air conditioners and other essential services and placing your residents at a greater health risk. The state is urging you to take a few critically important actions now to better prepare your facility for the threat of prolonged power outages.

1. Review your current capabilities:

- Does your facility have an alternate power generator?
- Does your facility have the proper transfer switch to enable connection to an alternate power generator?
- Have you recently tested your generator or transfer switch?
- What size of generator does your facility require to operate heating, air conditioning and all essential services?

2. Review your current Disaster Preparedness Plans:

- Does your existing plan accurately reflect your current alternate power capabilities?
- Does your existing plan provide guidance and direction to staff in the event of a disaster or prolonged power outage?
- Has your facility conducted staff training and exercised your Disaster Plan?

3. Review your disaster contacts:

- Have you shared your existing Disaster Preparedness Plan with your county's Emergency Management Agency?

- Does your staff know the appropriate contacts with the Georgia Department of Community Health and the Georgia Department of Public Health?
- Does your facility have emergency contact information for your power utility and other essential services?

The three of us urge you to examine your emergency readiness now and to take a few steps to better prepare your facility and to familiarize your residents and staff with your Disaster Preparedness Plan. We also encourage you to secure immediately a NOAA Weather Radio for your facility so you can always be aware of threatening weather conditions. Taking these steps now will help prepare your facility and protect your residents and staff in case of emergency.

Sincerely,



Clyde L. Reese III, Esq.
DCH Commissioner



Charley English
GEMA Director



Brenda Fitzgerald, M.D.
DPH Commissioner