

# Emergency Preparedness at our Worcester-Salisbury Campus

**Weather-related disasters and emergencies** are unavoidable—snowstorms, earthquakes, tornadoes, flooding and other inclement weather incidents. These types of situations tend to cause power outages and, even in communities as large and well-staffed as ours, Residents may feel the uneasiness that can come along with flickering lights.

With the weather-related storms of the past few years, our Residents have been able to remain calm and comfortable, not only because of the preparedness at SALMON Health and Retirement, but also because of their own knowledge of how things are handled on our campus.



Dear Residents,

It is in difficult situations when we realize just how important it is to be a strong and cohesive team. During the storms and weather emergencies of years past, we have proudly witnessed the high level of preparedness and dedication of Willows at Worcester staff. Our participation with The Massachusetts Long Term Care Mutual Aid Plan (MassMAP), The Joint Commission, The Massachusetts Department of Public Health and Homeland Security all contribute to our confidence in offering a more secure environment in problematic times.

Our team is trained to react quickly and efficiently in response to any adverse weather circumstance. In response to past power outages, our team has tended to emergency calls and clinical visits to our Health Center, assisted in food preparation, answered all Resident questions, and helped bring our Residents to and from their apartment homes and cottages.

The main building on our campus is equipped with two generators. The first generator services The Willows, providing full power for the larger part of the campus including the Great Room and our two restaurants. Our well-equipped kitchen can run at full capacity, offering uninterrupted dining services. We also provide additional, complimentary meals for all Residents, including those living in our cottages, making sure three meals daily are available and fostering an opportunity for socialization during a difficult time. This generator also powers all of our interior hallways and the emergency lights installed in each individual apartment home, allowing Residents to experience greater comfort and feelings of security.

Our second generator is dedicated to The Health Center, for the continuation of services to Residents there, ensuring all meals, snacks and medications are

delivered on time and without compromise in a comfortable setting that feels secure.

All Willows cottages are equipped with their own generators, bringing full power during a power outage with the exception of stoves and clothes dryers.

Our campus is set to run as smoothly as possible during these times, making it possible for social programming to take place with some minor modifications if needed. Exercise programs and movie showings can proceed without interruption. In addition, we provide a charging station in The Loft, being powered by the generator, so Residents may charge their essential devices such as cell phones.

Protocols are in place in case of a tornado or similar adverse weather condition; Residents would be directed to our underground parking garage which can act as a protective shelter.

**Residents should remember a few key points during any emergency:**

- We encourage you to keep an emergency kit stocked with a few necessities such as a flashlight, batteries, battery-operated radio, bottled water, non-perishable snacks, a few days of your medications, along with a list of your current medications, your physician's name and phone number, your health care proxy's name and phone number.
- We recommend you have both a hard-wired (not cordless) and cell phone, and that you keep your cell phone charger with you so you can easily transport it to the central charging station in our main building. Hard-wired telephone lines can often function even when the power source has been interrupted.

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- If you lose power, please bring any medications in need of refrigeration to The Health Center so they can be properly stored.

Oftentimes during a "crisis," there may be humorous moments as well; these times help create a calmer atmosphere and provide an emotional release for coping with stressful situations. Our staff is committed and dedicated to the well-being of each and every Resident should an emergency of any nature occur on our campus. It is our unwavering goal to always provide an atmosphere of trust and security for all of them before, during and after any emergency. This is accomplished in part with the use of our two-way radios and cell phones, helping staff remain in constant

contact with one another and relaying information to Residents in a concise, informative and supportive way.

Having these many safety measures in place along with a well-trained staff is what creates a safer, comfortable and well-lit environment consistent with our goal of providing the least stressful, maintenance-free environment—no matter the circumstance.

*Andrew Freilich*

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**To make communication during a potential emergency situation as efficient as possible, we ask that you or your family:**

- Inform all family members who the point-person is for the entire family.
- Confirm that all contact information is up-to-date and correct.
- Share communicated updates with the rest of your family.
- Complete a "phone tree" of names, phone numbers and addresses to be used by the point-person.



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