

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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http://www.co.washington.co.us/Emergency_Services/wcoem.htm

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN TO BE CREATED THAT ENSURES THE SAFETY OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

*Input sought from coalition of service providers and disabled
citizens*

(FORT MORGAN) -- If there is a lesson to be learned from the tragedies that have befallen America in recent years – the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Hurricane Katrina come immediately to mind – it is that preparation and communication are critical in responding to such emergencies. The nation has re-evaluated its approach to responding and while significant strides have been made over the last decade, much work remains to be done.

Research indicates that planning, preparedness, response and recovery efforts often overlook the needs and perspectives of people with disabilities. A Presidential Executive Order, *Individuals with Disabilities in Emergency Preparedness*, directs all levels of government to work with private organizations and communities to appropriately address the safety and security needs of people with disabilities.

To that end, area service providers, emergency management teams and people with disabilities are invited to a meeting on January 13. The meeting, scheduled for 10 AM at the Courthouse Annex at 181 Birch Avenue in Akron, begins an important dialogue in the development of an emergency plan for Washington County that includes the needs of people with disabilities.

The meeting has been organized by Lyn Frank, a Disability Program Navigator with the Eastern Region Colorado Workforce Centers, and Michael McCaleb, Washington County Director of Emergency Management. “Americans enjoy relative security in their everyday lives,” Frank says, “but the threat of emergencies, such as natural disasters, technological accidents and acts of terrorism, remains and we need to continue to improve emergency preparedness plans that consider the needs of everyone. Simple planning ahead of time will ensure the safety of individuals with disabilities during emergencies.”

Individuals interested in attending, should RSVP to either Ms. Frank (at 970-867-9401 or at Lynell.frank@cwfc.net) or to Michael McCaleb (at 970-554-2008 or mmccaleb@co.washington.co.us). Frank adds that the meeting is not restricted to residents or service providers in Washington County. “We hope to create a committee that will develop a plan that can be replicated in all ten counties of the Eastern Region – Logan, Sedgwick, Phillips, Morgan, Yuma, Elbert, Lincoln, Kit Carson, Cheyenne and Washington.”

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ATTENTION
Area Service Providers,
Emergency Management Teams,
and individuals with disabilities:

We need your input!
 You are invited to join us in creating a committee
 to assist in the development of an
Emergency Management Plan
 in Washington County that will incorporate the
 needs of individuals with disabilities.

For those who do not live in Washington County, you are
 encouraged to attend as we hope to replicate this plan in the
 remaining nine counties in the Eastern Workforce Region.

Please join us:
Wednesday, January 13, 2010
10:00 a.m.
Courthouse Annex, 181 Birch Avenue
Akron, CO 80720
To R.S.V.P. or for more information
please contact:



Where Colorado Comes to Work

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AT YOUR SERVICE

Auxiliary aids and services are available
 upon request to individuals with disabilities.

