Emergency Preparedness for the Hurricane Season and Other Emergencies

Information posted July 15, 2016

Assisted living facilities, day activity health services facilities, home and community support service agencies, intermediate care facilities for individuals with an intellectual disability or related conditions, and Nursing Facilities should review their emergency preparedness and response plans for the Atlantic hurricane season, which runs from June 1, 2016, through November 30, 2016. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), “…one to four major hurricanes are possible (Category 3, 4, or 5)” during the Atlantic hurricane season. NOAA is also predicting that the climate condition, La Niña, which favors more hurricane activity, may be present during the peak months of hurricane season, August through November.

Facilities must also be prepared for the possibility of other potential emergencies such as tornadoes, floods, or fires. In consideration of a possible facility evacuation, plans must address:

- Evacuation procedures;
- Procedures for receiving evacuees from other providers, if applicable; and
- Resources available in the event of an emergency.

Facilities should contact their local Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) Regulatory Services regional office (RO) if they are impacted by an adverse event such as severe weather (e.g., water is in the building after a severe thunderstorm).

This communication is especially critical if a facility is projected to exceed its licensed capacity because it is accepting residents that have been evacuated from another facility. All requests to exceed licensed capacity due to an emergency situation must be requested through the RO and approved by the director of survey operations.

Please refer to Provider Letter 15-15 for additional important information regarding emergency preparedness.