



THE COUNTY OF CHESTER



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2 December 2011

Chester County Municipal Managers
Chester County Municipal Emergency Management Coordinators
Chester County Police Chiefs
Chester County Fire Chiefs
County County EMS Chiefs

RE: Special Needs Registry

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Since 2008, we have been pleased to offer our municipalities the Special Needs Registry. The Special Needs Registry is a web-based program that collects information on individuals that would need assistance during an emergency, as well as information on facilities that serve these individuals.

The Registry is designed to help those who would have difficulty during an evacuation, because of physical or cognitive limitations, language barriers, or lack of transportation. It is also designed to help emergency managers plan and make the best use of limited time and resources to help those with no options for evacuation during an emergency.

The Registry is free to citizens and free to you. The entire cost of the Registry is funded through the Southeastern Pennsylvania Regional Task Force from a grant from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Each local municipality has the opportunity to be trained on how to access their local data. Training will also include how to promote the Registry among your citizens, and how to produce useful reports before and during emergencies.

The Regional Vulnerable Populations Coordinator, Robyn Slater, is available to train you on using the Registry.

If you are interested in learning more about the Special Needs Registry, or training, please contact Robyn at 610-344-5022 or rslater@chesco.org. You can also visit www.specialneeds.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Robert J. Kagel".

Robert J. Kagel
Deputy Director for
Emergency Management

WILL ANYONE CONTACT ME AFTER I ENTER INFORMATION?

An automated e-mail will be generated by the system on an annual basis. This e-mail will go to the e-mail address you provide when you register. It will ask you to log in to the tool and update any information that might have changed since the prior year. If you complete a paper survey and mail it to our office, this annual contact will be by telephone or U.S. Mail. It is critical that these updates be completed to ensure the most current information is available.

All individuals are highly encouraged to better prepare themselves and their families for disasters. A good rule of thumb is that you should be able to survive in your home for 72 hours with no outside assistance.

Why should I register?

- To be notified by local officials when an evacuation has been ordered.
- IT MAY SAVE YOUR LIFE AND/OR A LOVED ONE!



Remember the first line of defense against the effects of a disaster is personal preparedness. During an emergency the government and other agencies may not be able to meet all your needs. It is important for all citizens to make individual emergency plans and prepare for their care and safety in an emergency.

**THE SPECIAL NEEDS SURVEY
TOOL IS A DISASTER
PREPAREDNESS SERVICE
PROVIDED BY YOUR COUNTY
GOVERNMENT**



**Chester County
Emergency Services**

601 Westtown Road
Suite 012
West Chester, PA 19380-0990

Phone: 610-344-5000
Emergencies: Dial 911
Fax: 610-344-5050

On the Web at: <http://www.chesco.org/des>

**Project Funded By:
Southeastern Pennsylvania
Regional Task Force**

**A Cooperative Effort of:
Bucks, Chester and Montgomery Counties**



Chester County

**SPECIAL
NEEDS
REGISTRY**



specialneedspa.org

**HELP YOUR
COMMUNITY'S
EMERGENCY
RESPONDERS
HELP YOU!**

WHAT IS THE SPECIAL NEEDS SURVEY TOOL?

The SNS Tool is an effort by county government to better identify those in our community who are most at risk during a disaster. In the emergency management field, these individuals are designated as part of the "special needs population". The tool is a web based data collection device for these individuals.

WHAT MAKES AN INDIVIDUAL PART OF THE SPECIAL NEEDS POPULATION?

Chester County Emergency Services defines the special needs population as,

"Someone who cannot receive, understand or act upon emergency protective orders."

This could include those who are deaf, blind, bedridden, mentally impaired, without radio or television.

WHAT ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE SHOULD INDIVIDUALS ENTERED IN THIS DATABASE EXPECT?

The answer to this question depends on the nature of the emergency at hand. The intention of this tool is to get our special needs population "on the radar" so that community officials can make decisions about how to best assist them.

HOW DO I USE THE SNS TOOL?

Follow the instructions to the right to enter information about yourself, your loved ones, your friends, or your neighbors into the online data collection tool. The process is very simple, and we believe you will be able to enter the requested information without additional assistance. Once you create an account you may enter as many persons as you like.

HOW WILL THE INFORMATION I ENTER BE USED?

The information is stored securely, and will NEVER be used for ANY purpose other than improving emergency responders' ability to assist you in emergencies. It will not be sold or given to private concerns for any reason.

WHAT IF I WANT MY INFORMATION INCLUDED, BUT I DON'T HAVE ACCESS TO A COMPUTER?

Direct computer entry is the most efficient way to get your information into the system. If you have friends or family who can help you, you should ask them first. Most public libraries provide computers with internet access at no cost. If you are unable to access a computer, you may call the Chester County Department of Emergency Services at 610-344-5000, and request that a paper copy of the survey be mailed to you. Be prepared to provide your complete mailing address. You will be responsible for returning the survey back to us by mail. Our staff will then enter your information.

Go To:

www.specialneedspa.org

and click on:

"New users click here to register."



I HAVE A FAMILY MEMBER WHO LIVES IN A NURSING HOME/GROUP HOME/ ASSISTED LIVING FACILITY/ETC. SHOULD I ENTER THEIR INFORMATION?

No. This tool is designed to collect information about persons living in private residences. Other initiatives are underway to ensure that individuals residing in these structured living arrangements are identified.

I STILL HAVE QUESTIONS. I AM NOT SURE IF I SHOULD PARTICIPATE.

Register on the site and look over the information being requested. If you are not interested in participating at that point you can delete your entry. If you want to speak with someone about your concerns, you can call Chester County Emergency Services at 610-344-5000 with your questions or comments.