

## Essential Questions and Sample Scenarios:

### A Companion to the Shelter in Place Tabletop Exercise Guide

Though many situations could trigger the need to shelter in place, each has a baseline of considerations. For each exercise, staff and residents should engage to ensure everyone knows the answers to these basic questions:

- What perishable items do we have in the home? Encourage consumption of these first during an emergency.
- Where are the emergency food and water stores located?
- Who can shut off gas and water mains if necessary? Where are they located? How is it done?
- Where is the circuit breaker or electrical panel? Explain how to turn off electricity.
- Where are fire extinguishers located? Review their use and the PASS acronym (Pull, Aim, Squeeze and Sweep)
- What family members and/or friends might you need to contact in an emergency? Do they include any out of state contacts? Are they programmed into phones? Are they printed out or written down in case of outage? If so, where are they kept?
- Do you have power banks or solar chargers for phones and other electronic devices?
- Do you have at least a three day supply of prescription medications on hand?
- Do you have any durable medical equipment (power chairs, oxygen concentrators, CPAP machine, etc.)? If so, is there a backup battery or generator to keep them running in case of outage?

Each time an exercise is held, rotate through different disaster scenarios to give everyone a chance to practice how they might respond in different situations. Below are some examples of probable shelter in place scenarios in our area and some considerations for discussion with staff and residents:

- **Wildfires:** When wildfires threaten the area, residents and staff should stay indoors, close all windows and doors, and seal gaps to prevent smoke entry. They should also have emergency supplies on hand.
- **Earthquakes:** After a strong earthquake, residents should remain indoors to avoid falling debris or aftershocks. Secure heavy furniture and stay away from windows.
- **Chemical Spills or Hazmat Incidents:** In case of hazardous material releases, sheltering indoors prevents exposure. Seal doors and windows, turn off ventilation systems, and follow official instructions.
- **Extreme Weather (Heatwaves or Cold Snaps):** During extreme temperatures, staying indoors with proper insulation or cooling/heating systems is crucial.
- **Active Shooters or Armed Intruders:** Residents and staff should lock doors, turn off lights, and hide in safe locations until authorities arrive.
- **Pandemics or Disease Outbreaks:** Sheltering in place minimizes the spread of contagious diseases. Follow health guidelines and stock essential supplies.
- **Power Outages or Utility Failures:** Residents should stay indoors, conserve resources, and use backup power if available.

- **Radiological/Nuclear Events:** Sheltering indoors protects against radiation exposure. Seal windows and doors, stay away from exterior walls, and listen to official updates.

Discuss how you would respond to the scenario chosen. Feel free to explore other questions, but be sure to include:

- What would each staff person and resident do in the scenario chosen?
- What is the safest place in your house for the scenario chosen?
- Who would be responsible for doing what in the scenario chosen? Do they know how to do it or would they need training? Would they need help doing it?
- What concerns were raised?
- How might these concerns be addressed?
- Who will address these concerns and by when?