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*This video discusses being sensitive to various special needs populations and mention that the local fire department can help with this issue. The Americans with Disabilities Act may also provide guidance.*

**Transcript**

*Severe weather, fires, power outages and any and all forms of disasters can strike your facility with little or no warning, day or night.*

*It is often impossible to predict who will be at your facility when it is necessary to evacuate or move to a sheltered area. If members of your staff or regular visitors include special needs populations, your emergency response plan must take their unique requirements into consideration when developing evacuation or shelter-in-place procedures.*

*For example, will your notification systems be effective if some people onsite are hearing- or sight-impaired? Do you have a way of conveying instructions to these individuals in a manner that is effective and timely? If you use Safety Wardens to assist in crowd movement, have they been trained on how to assist individuals in wheelchairs or people with other types of physical challenges? Are your assembly areas and shelters suitably equipped to support the needs of people with various types of disabilities?*

*If you have questions on how to address some of these issues, a good place to look for help is your local fire department. Depending on the type of disability, consider contacting one of the national advocacy groups such as the Lighthouse International or the National Association of the Deaf.*

*As with any other aspect of preparedness, investing time in planning for the needs of people with disabilities will significantly improve your ability to help in a disaster.*