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Charlotte A. Randolph, *Parish President*

Office of Emergency Preparedness

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 9:00 A.M.
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Residents Asked to Register Now for Special Needs during Storms

The Lafourche Parish Government Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP) is asking all residents with “special needs” to contact the office now to register for assistance during hurricane evacuations.

During any given storm event, the State of Louisiana’s Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH), in conjunction with the Office of Public Health (OPH), may open a “Special Needs Shelter” for those residents who cannot care for themselves at a standard evacuation shelter. Depending on the severity of the storm event, the State may choose to open a Special Needs Shelter locally, or in a nearby parish if it is unsafe to open a local shelter.

Special needs registration is critical at this time due to the fact that some patients may not qualify for a special needs shelter and may need to make plans to evacuate on their own or to a parish shelter or pick-up point, depending on the severity of the storm. Every patient that does qualify must be accompanied by a “caregiver” and must bring with them all medications and any treatment devices used on a regular basis.

OEP Director Chris Boudreaux says the registration process will assist both the patients and the State so that everyone is more informed and prepared.

“Every special needs patient must be triaged, and by registering now, it will ensure proper and timely care in the event of a disaster,” said Boudreaux. “It also helps DHH/OPH prepare their facilities and gives us a reference point to check in on patients, especially in the event of a parish-wide mandatory evacuation.”

Residents who wish to register as a “special needs” patient should contact the Office of Emergency Preparedness directly at (985) 532-8174. Each patient will need to provide their name, address, two (2) contact phone numbers, their caregiver’s name, their medical condition, and the type of transportation needed to the shelter.

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Note: The (985) 532-8174 phone number is a direct line to the OEP office. During an emergency, all residents will be directed to call (985) 537-7603 which will be a 24-hour line for all emergency needs.