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MR. DICKENS: Okay, we're going to start in about five minutes.

[NO AUDIO]

MR. DICKENS: If you have a question, I can go ahead and answer your question in the question and answer section. If anyone has a question, we have Rebecca who's going to be answering some of the questions for you.

Okay, well, let's go on the clock.

MR. ANDERSON: But we're still waiting on that second interpreter.

So, we'll have just a few more minutes and then we'll get going. So, thank you so much, everyone, for being here on time.

INTERPRETER: Unmute my microphone?

INTERPRETER: Yes, I'm going to pin Matt and you pin Trevor. So, you voice for Trevor. I'll voice for Matt, okay?

INTERPRETER: Okay.

INTERPRETER: Okay.

MR. DICKENS: Okay, we're ready to get started. We're going to start that recording now.

>>: Recording in progress.

MR. DICKENS: Hello. This is Matt with the Governor's Office Commission on People with Disabilities. Thank you so much for joining us for our Accessibility Disability Policy Webinar. This has been going on. We're having a presentation. This topic is regarding hurricane preparedness for deaf and hard of hearing, DeafBlind and hard of hearing individuals and now we'll introduce the other speaker.

INTERPRETER: Sherri.

Sherri?

It seems like the interpreter got disconnected. I'll go ahead.

MR. ANDERSON: So, my name is Trevor Anderson and this is my sign name and I'm using -- I have a blue shirt and I have brown hair and glasses and a beard and my background is grayed

out. And I'm a white male. So, my name is Trevor. I work here at deaf and hard of hearing services under the Texas Health and Human Services. And I'm here from Austin, Texas, from the office and my role is to be able -- is a communication access observer and specialist. I'm also responsible as a team lead for our practice education group and -- and we're here to provide training, education, and -- for various deaf and hard of hearing consumers as well as interpreter services, state agency employment trainings, and various topics and my -- I have my background in deaf education advocacy, international relations and I'm very excited to work with Matt today for the presentation about hurricane preparedness. I'm very excited.

MR. DICKENS: Thanks for sharing your intro, Trevor. Well, thank you for joining us, Trevor. I'm happy to have you here.

So, I'm going to introduce myself again, give a little bit more information. I'm a white male. I am deaf and I'm -- have a dark blue shirt with a background of white. And my role is Accessibility Disability Rights Coordinator for the Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities called TCHD and I work with this office to make sure that the public services, the resources are accessible for people with disabilities and we follow state and regular -- regular guidelines. And my experience is working in business management. I work in employment services and advocacy.

MR. DICKENS: So, for this commission we -- we as a program, we provide services. We focus on making sure that we encourage people who are deaf, deaf and blind to get full access to have equality and their everyday lives and have -- we have different areas that we serve and -- within the commission. We have 12 members of that commission and their focus is on those particular areas to make suggestions to the legislature, the State Legislature, as well as the Federal Government and how they can improve accessibility for people with disabilities. We also support those particular local areas, commissions, and encourage them to increase awareness for the people with disabilities through a webinar such as this.

Trevor?

MR. ANDERSON: So, about DHHS. Let me expand on what that may be. Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services. Previously we were under the housing of the Texas and Human Health Services. However, DHS, the -- the education, the deaf and hard of hearing communities here in Texas are who we serve. There are three separate goals of what we -- of places we want to -- programs that we follow. The first one would be connecting with individuals, individuals, bridging the gap between them and the hearing communities and -- and making them aware of things. Communication access definitely improves. The goal for the three entities would be some programs that we have, some examples that we have are state practices that we are involved in which are under the DHHS there. We have the Board of Evaluation of Interpreters, where high-level qualified certified interpreters have -- that we have and then we also have the STAP, S-T-A-P, which is the special communication assisted program devices that give people equipment that they need to connect with people who have hearing loss. The fourth one we have is DHHS, which is access technology specialists who actually provide support in connecting people in different areas all over the Texas area.

We do have our Internet, you know, we have capabilities of connecting with people who -- to provide support if necessary for different programs, services, answer any questions they may have, and, so, be sure and contact us if there's anything they need.

MR. DICKENS: Okay. So, now we're going to talk about with the webinar, which the purpose is why we are trying to increase awareness about hurricane safety, what happens during a hurricane, during the June 1st and November 30th time frame and often people with disabilities are impacted by hurricanes compared with the general population. That's the reason we have these protections for people with disabilities within the system -- who don't have accessibilities. So, we just provide general awareness, though, to make sure people are aware they can have more accessibility for deaf, DeafBlind, hard of hearing, and it could be barriers for communication. So, understand that if you are a stakeholder and you're not deaf or DeafBlind or hard of hearing, you would still benefit from this information because it's not only people who are deaf people who need this or DeafBlind people who need this really it's everyone who needs to be involved in hurricane preparedness, depending on their individual needs or location may be different, their situation may be different or make sure that they have something in the tools of the tool belt to be able to accommodate them with anyone with special needs and not just people who have -- or with disabilities but the general public at-large.

MR. ANDERSON: Now, remember, there are various needs, like there are people -- like, it's important to be aware that we can't cover everything from A to Z as far as hurricane preparedness. Now, you know, it's pretty common practice to, you know, keep in mind all the different things that we can do. We can discuss different options, any kind of webinars if we need to, one-time thing. You know, hopefully we can continue to be aware and have all the services that we can provide to individuals, if necessary.

And thank you -- and then being able to set up the stage for this webinar, you know, I had envisioned, you know, like, a hurricane, like, you know, what that may look like and then also... just to let you know, in the United States I notice that there's an increase and, you know, in average of all the different impacts that the hurricanes and tropical storms and, and all have had and that's increasing and -- and being able to see that and -- the -- the, you know, it's increasing. And it's -- they last for days and long -- you know, it's a long time. It's not like it used to be, the impact that it had before. Right now it seems to be increasing but as far as the risks, there are two risks that we notice: The tropical storms is one and then water storm surge. Those both are -- unexpectedly will happen and -- and the impact that it has on the buildings and the livelihood and typically the flooding of water, the surge and all that stuff, the tropical -- you know, the hurricanes, the storms, everything, all of that impacts the lakes and all the surrounding areas and explaining that and the inland and that people are like, "oh, it's a hurricane. It's nothing," but I'm telling you: In Austin, hurricane -- you're going to say, "oh, it doesn't impact me"; but, yes, it does. Now, if you're in the inlands -- we'll explain in the next slide a little more details on that. Matt?

MR. ANDERSON: This is actually a map. Actually, let me just show you here. It's a category two hurricane that was actually hit in the gulf area. Once it was hit, the storm was, you know, continued and then the water surged, of course, on the inland and it impacted all -- the whole state and, so, it just shows you right there on the map how that -- a category five would be even much worse than that and affect the inlands even more. So, keep that in mind. When you have a hurricane, it can impact you no matter where you live in Texas. You could be in the inland. You could be near the gulf. What's important to know is that you need to be prepared for a hurricane.

MR. DICKENS: Okay. So, it's important to be aware of a hurricane's anatomy, what it looks like, whether -- what the hurricane at the middle, which is considered the eye and all those surrounding things could be dangerous area. It could have wind, water, storm surges and with

the dirty side, which typically is the right side, that means it will develop more stronger winds, more high water surge and, so, if you decide that you want to maybe, to see a map, that's why you are aware of the dirty side because it's important to be able to stay inside or be able to evacuate ahead of time because that could be the more dangerous area. And the clean side is still dangerous, but maybe it's a little more minimal as compared to the dirty side, but the main -- the goal is to maintain safety.

And we do have a picture that shows the different various months. We talked about June 1st to November and we notice that the map shows the color variation with, whether you stay blue, it's, you know, typical and other colors represent a higher level. The orange means it's more of a higher alert, a higher possible -- high possibility from the time. But if you just look at Texas, we have some that happen during the June and July but, really, it increases by the time we hit August and September and let up -- and then usually it changes the path and towards -- end of November maybe it heads towards the East Coast. But, really, it doesn't always follow the map because a hurricane has a mind of its own but regardless of wind and water and path. So, it's -- it's important to pay attention between the months of June and November to make sure you have your safety measures in place.

MR. ANDERSON: Okay, Hurricane Harvey was something, you know, that we'll never forget, right? Remember August to September is when that all happened. In that impact you saw the severity of how that affected, with the storm surge and all that stuff and, hey, you know, what's important? You hear them say, okay, it's June. Oh, I'm just going to ignore what's going to happen but, you know -- it's not important to me -- but it can happen. So, every year you've got different things, different variables, you know, strange things may happen, you know, may not -- just keep an eye out and alert within that six-month gap, if you will for future reference.

MR. DICKENS: Yeah, he's right because this year we have Elena and we really -- it's really high -- El Niño and, so, we have a high temperature. So, it's possible to stay -- compared to the last couple years. So, we have to keep an eye on that.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, and you're like, whoa, a hurricane, you know, wow, it's increasing, the risks are increasing and, yet, this is what everybody's seeing. So, you want to be prepared for that. You know, being prepared, you know, kind of improving your chances of lessening the impact of hurricanes.

So, you know, there's variable -- different things you can do to prepare. First thing you can do is to stay home, be informed, be -- know what's going on. Second thing is: Make a plan now. You want to know right now what's going on because, you know, you're never -- you never know and then building a disaster kit. You want to make sure that you're prepared for disaster and having that kit and all the things necessary for that. Know your rights. You want to know that as a deaf and hard of hearing specialist, DeafBlind individual, whatever it may be. It's important for you to have the stakeholders that are necessary in order -- you know, deaf and hard of hearing, DeafBlind, and all that so they're prepared to be involved with, with whatever it may be. So, please, you know, get involved, make sure that you and your community are prepared for these hurricanes in the future if that may happen.

Next.

Stay informed and you're like, okay, why is it important to stay informed? Well, it gives you more time to prepare, really. You know, hurricanes are not like a overnight thing. You kind of

know ahead of time, at least a week ahead of time, if you will, that something's starting to brew and happen. That way you're prepared and then kind of, you know, it's going north. Well, it's going east or whatever. You can kind of look out and know where it's headed so that way you're planning ahead. Other than that, you know, waiting, you know, two days before the hurricane to evacuate, well, you didn't realize, oh, no, I -- you know, I've got to -- you know, you kind of know ahead of time that it's coming. So, it's really best to be prepared and stay informed and then it's interesting, you know, to be -- you know, it can be a challenge for those deaf and hard of hearing and DeafBlind individuals that have accessibility and it's like, where do they get all their information from and, you know, knowing where and that can be a challenge.

Being fully aware and informed definitely will keep you safer and less the risks of anything -- a disaster happening and what -- what is one to do if -- when the hurricane's done? You know, then they got accessibility, they've got, you know, whatever they may need. They've got resources. They've got emergency management. They've got disaster, you know... you know, all these different areas of places to get resources to help those individuals, say, before it happens and all that.

So, you know, there's going to be a flood. They're going to know what to do. Okay, if I go to FEMA, you know, for assistance there, you know, what that -- you know, they're ready -- they're ready and prepared for whatever disaster may happen.

Now, Matt's going to explain exactly where you get the information from. Matt.

MR. DICKENS: Thank you, Trevor. Just to make sure to your news sources are established and where you get your news from. There's four that we're going to mention that are common. Obviously, television. You watch the television. What's going on? Or you go online to have your preference, your preferential news. You watch some announcements and information that's being displayed. Social media, Facebook, Instagram, and other types of social media, oftentimes there's a blast or alerts to -- to make people aware. And then text alerts. Sometimes you have to sign up for those special alerts to make sure that you're informed of what's coming, to make sure you're prepared to be able to get that through your phone.

And, so, those four that we've mentioned are accessibility -- maybe that's not -- that's why we want to get those set up ahead of time to have your preferences accessible so that you're ready and that you're set up even though the law requires oftentimes for emergency situations there have been people who are kind of -- maybe they're not available or things are happening so fast. So, it's important to have those aware -- and those trusted news sources set up ahead of time that way that you'll know that you'll have accessibility when the time comes.

MR. ANDERSON: And, hey, for example, like, here I live in Austin as I said and I know the four different things as far as the news stations. I know the ones that I have, which ones have better captioning, which ones have better coverage and accessibility. So, those are the ones I'm going to pick. You know, I know exactly what station, what channel I'm going to watch on the news to give me all the stuff I need to know. Internet also has captioning as well and, you know, some of them have better captioning than others. So, kind of knowing that, doing your homework, if you will, beforehand always helps and it's always best practices to make sure all the news that you have, all the information it's a good, good -- make sure you have good quality of captioning, like I said. That's always under the best practices and that's the goal for us as we work with our entities that be.

MR. DICKENS: We do have some things for me to touch on where you get access to your information. There's FEMA. There's a resource. There's a Web site, there's many resources that you can access. There's a checklist of how to fix things, how to protect yourself. FEMA's a good resources, that Texas Ready. Some may have captioning or some have sign language interpreting services with videos to be able to help you get prepared or fix anything that you might need related with any emergency -- not just hurricane but, really, any emergency. And the last one I like, there's a lot with the -- there's everyone -- I like the National Hurricane Center which is a Federal Government agency that actually watches hurricanes and reports to the general public and oftentimes there the news will have awareness about hurricanes but not always informed right away. So, you have to wait till sometimes when -- when the situation's at hand but the National Hurricane Center always has information 7 days in advance of something that's dangerous that may be heading our way and there's a map that shows where the hurricane's going to, the path or the increased awareness of -- of the category that is listed and it shows what its path that it may take and then that's -- and that -- where the hurricane may be going because before the general public may not know. So, that's something they can take advantage of; but, again, it -- it's not -- it's not for everyone, but it's just some -- it's important for everyone to check out. [PHONE CHIME]

MR. ANDERSON: Right. So, yeah, and also I do want to thank -- you know, there's more, you know, legislation. You know, there's text alerts, FEMA alerts that happen for emergency situations. They set those alerts up for texting and those are some of the entities that they use. It's called I-P-A-W-S, Integrated Public Alert and Warning Systems and that is an area locally that will impact, you know, when they're getting hurricanes they can impact -- they can send messages to the local communities there in the area for housing and shelter if necessary and also with the, you know, alert systems, you know, sometimes they don't have access. Sometimes it's in English only and then we're able to show up in some places and AHAS has accessibility, letting people know, alerting the system -- which is wonderful. You know, we have that -- Austin has it. Harris County in Houston has it. Fort Worth has it. San Antonio has it. With those -- they all have that system, that alert, that elects -- lets the agencies know. So they're aware. They have a sign language interpreter ready to provide ASL for those deaf and hard of hearing individuals. They got a sign something -- it's not an automatic thing we have to really encourage -- like, if you live in Austin, if you live in Harris County in certain areas, Fort Worth, San Antonio, make sure you get to your Accessibility Hazard Alert System and let them know so they can get access for those who are needing it. So, if you don't have it -- you know, just make sure -- we do partner with the different entities around the area to provide that access. Now, those areas, all in the surrounding areas have access as well. So -- and you being at home, you know, have -- say your electricity goes out and, you know, what are you going to -- you're like, is it going to come back on? Well, you know, they have an alarm system that you got to sign up for. It's on your phone. It kind of lets you know. So, if the lights do go out, you've got some form of communication to let you know what's going on that way you're prepared. You know, should I stay, should I go? You know, you're ready and that's a wonderful thing.

MR. DICKENS: And one thing with the power outage alerts was that -- this information how many people are impacted by it, for example, if it's 15,000 people, you know it's more serious and it could be a little bit longer to fix more than just three people with maybe just one -- a couple houses only, it may take them a little bit longer and then they also prioritize things. The ones that have more people impacted by, they try to take on those, prioritize them maybe than smaller groups. So, when the time reaches you and you have that staff to be able to support you

and they'll let you know when and when it will come on and check. So, I like that, that alert system. It helps us become aware of our environments.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah, and it actually gives us a feeling of self-control in situations, like, being aware, you know, you're not -- you're calm. You're not like, you know, you know, not prepared for a disaster. I mean, it's really -- gives you a lot of -- you know, the energy's a big thing. So, you know, being able to go whoo, okay, no matter whatever disaster may happen, you're prepared. So, you know -- another thing is it helps us to feel, you know, in any situation is having a plan, you know, as we were saying earlier. Like, if you don't have a plan now, you might want to get something set up ahead of time that way you're better prepared. Make a plan, you know, so you're prepared for hurricanes. Hurricanes will happen. You know, it's not never going to happen. You know it's going to happen. It's inevitable, right? So, just know this. Your plan could vary. You know, maybe you live in Houston. You know, your plans may differ than mine here in Austin. So, maybe you move to, say, Padre Island or Brownsville or whatever, you know, everybody's got their different plans but depending on where you live make sure you're prepared to make a plan and with your needs -- I mean, just like we said, our needs may be different but knowing what you need to better prepare for an event like this if it were to happen and providing that -- you know, accommodations, like -- like some of the examples, like here. Maybe in Austin. That means, you know, I'm an inland. So, the hurricanes I know will probably be less because I'm inland; however, a hurricane could happen. So, hurricanes can actually -- or tornadoes could happen, you know. You know, the energy, you know, the -- you can -- I got to be better prepared for anything that happens, you know, just to be -- just to be safe.

MR. DICKENS: Okay. So, now we have some tips being able to secure your home.

And it's not -- it's not a full in-depth, exhaustive list, but it's just some other things. You can look at other Web sites for that information to be able to accommodate your needs. Remember, each individual home is different. Maybe some people live in a house that's really high up or live in an apartment or they have a mobile home and, so, you have to know which house and what needs to -- in various situations. And some tips we can be aware of to make sure that your windows are boarded up with wood or, you know, maybe a cardboard box, you know, some heavy thing to be able to protect your windows from being broken and/or piercing the windows and can cause a lot more damage within your home like rain and wind and whatnot and, also, you want to make sure to check the drainage system. So, maybe the sink or the bathtub as long as -- and as well as outside. Maybe on the streets the drainage system is -- with the heavy rain you want to make sure that there's no blockage or, no -- that water is able to be able to drain effectively. In that situation you may want to, if you ever experienced a flood, if you haven't done that, go ahead and clear that area. So, what happens is oftentimes with deaf or hard of hearing or DeafBlind individuals, they rely on people's -- on hearing and it said, well, it looks fine but maybe in reality it's not. So, maybe ask a friend or a neighbor. Say, hey, do you mind checking that for me so that I can make sure that all the drainage system is clear for safe drainage? And, also, the same with the fire equipment. Many times you have fire equipment that's auditory and it has, like -- there are some visual alarms. If you could find it, that would be perfect and set that up. And if you don't have that, that means you -- if you have to depend on ability to hear to be able to know that things are working in proper order like it's battery operated, make sure the battery's not dead because the law requires that the alarm system that are set up in your home and there's a way of doing that and, again, you have to ask a friend or neighbor just to check in, make sure it's warning and functioning properly or ask the firefighters to come out and do a check and maybe if

you're lucky they have a visual light or aids that they could bring along to set that up for you.

And, also, I encourage everyone to bring things inside, anything that's related with things that could be easily swayed by the wind because most things that are damaged or, like, for example are lawn chairs or tables or a basketball or tools or things that are put into a secure garage and that way there's less damage to your home by those loose items. And, also, you want to make sure that you're aware of where the power is and know what it looks like. It's usually some type of breaker box. Know where that's located because oftentimes internally in an apartment or small location it tends to be inside but typically for a bigger home, they typically are in the backyard or on to the side where you have -- like, it has a door that's so you can check those breakers and you have -- some -- you have to know when to power them off and when, if there's a water damage that are close to the plugs or the electric system, you want to make sure those are powered off so -- so, if you were to decide to leave, make sure those are turned off because you don't want to -- to, you know, get electrocuted. So, you know, maintain that safety aspect. And we want to make sure that your refrigerator, your appliances, make sure the temperatures are -- in normal circumstances the temperature is up but if the power goes out, you want to make sure that they're at the lowest temperature so it increases your electricity and your -- and efficiency to make sure that food lasts longer because maybe you're lucky, maybe the power will only be out for just a day and you can still preserve the food that you have

So, it might be a good idea to make sure you lower those temperatures to maintain -- because you never know when the next time you'll be able to get food again or water as well.

And, speaking of water, fill up bottled waters and canisters in the sink as well as bathtubs and the reason why you want to fill up the sink and bathtub is because if you need to be able to clean yourself or maybe you're -- go seven days without a shower and, you know, or your hurt or you're bleeding and you have to clean that area, it's good to have the sink and the bathtub filled so that you could use that or even drinking water if you were to run out of water. So, that's used as a substitute in those types of situations. Also, you want to make sure that you have your -- your paperworks, your house, your ownership, all your important documents and ID, Social Security card, passport, all those kinds of documents related to identify, make sure those are secure and they don't really get tossed away in a flood or any type of damage because you might need those when everything's all said and done and the justice says, well, you have to prove who you are and what you need and you'll need those doctors -- you'll need those documents to cover yourself and prove your identity.

And there's a lot of times those documents are also -- they have, like, a phone number or an e-mail where you start that process. And, if you don't have that, then you're going to kind of be at a loss and it will take a long time to -- for your recovery plan to happen.

MR. ANDERSON: So, now as far as making an evacuation plan, sometimes you might want to stay there and sometimes you can't. You know, you're not able to stay. You got to evacuate. So, what are you -- you know, you want to make sure you have a plan and you're ready.

You know, whether you're going to plan to stay or you're going to plan to leave, if you make that decision, make sure you're prepared on where you're going to go. Don't be like, oh no, you know, I've got all these five things I've got to do and to get prepared. Make sure you have a plan before you do -- you evacuate or you stay and, so, making a plan may be, like, putting gas in the car, full -- make sure you got a full tank of gas. You know, that's an important thing and the reason why is because during hurricanes, you know, when you've got a storm or whatnot, you



think there's gas stations? I mean, oftentimes, the lights are out, you know, the electricity's down and you can't get gas and you're like, oh, I didn't think about that or, you know, you know, I've got to make sure I've got -- you know, there's -- just one thing to think about is make sure you fill your tank up and say you're deaf, DeafBlind or hard of hearing and you can't drive, being aware. Maybe I need to contact family or friends and be prepared to contact them ahead of time to have that support and necessary to keep you ready and prepared and make sure that you're knowing how -- you know, turning everything -- the water's off. The appliances, electricity, making sure everything in the home is, you know, turned off, if you will, that way, you know, when you're like, oh, my home, I can make sure my home and my apartment is safe, you know, making sure everything's off like it's supposed to be. You know, contact the local agencies or the handyman or the people around that can explain to you where everything is if you need to know where it is so you're ready prepared -- ready and prepared for this. And when you're ready to, you know, head out and have a plan, you know, make sure you, you know, for the lights to come on, you don't want it to be like, have this energy surge and be like everything coming on at once. You want it to just be a gradual, you know, turning on. And, of course, animals you know, think about your animals, your cherished animals. Often you might want to keep that in your -- in the back of your mind is, you know, what about, you know, bringing the animals? How are we going to cart them? Where are we going to keep them? We got to make sure they're safe as well. You know, having a plan for them as well is so important. And then also -- we'll explain more about that later but having services -- maybe a service animal or whatever -- those are required -- you know, they accept those everywhere for hurricane preparedness and also, some people just have pets. You know, it's -- They're not a service animal. You know, some people don't accept that, you know. It really varies but most importantly is -- is to have a plan.

And the next thing we're going to talk about is, you know, having your evacuation plan, learning the evacuation routes and following them. You know, maybe you have a friend that lives on the east side of town and the hurricane's going to be over there but -- and I'm on that side of town, too, and, you know, okay, and we're going to go west. Are we going to go north? I mean, having that plan of where you're going to evacuate and go. Identifying those different shelters if you need that as well in the community and keeping that in the back of your head. You know, just to make sure you're prepared for shelters if needed -- needed.

So, and then also having that plan times, you know, the freeways, you see the -- they've got those little symbols of the hurricane, knowing that, you know, they have those up there. You're like, there's an evacuation route. Knowing your areas and where you can evacuate, where you can't. And maybe there's lanes that are closed and you can't because it's flooded and where's the other route? Where's an alternate route? You know, knowing kind of where you at -- maybe you've got to practice, like, okay if I go this way, maybe if I go this way...

You're just kind of knowing ahead of time where you need to go if that were to happen. But actually having that exact, you know, evacuation plan, you know, you know, packing everything you need, you know, putting it all in the moving van, you don't need to go to that extreme, but it's important for you just to think about the necessities, the -- the things that you'll need to carry with you, the one or two items, you know, that are, you know, valuable to bring with you, that you'll need to keep you going and functioning. Maybe you need your doc -- you know, protected documents, your hearing aids, your medications. You know, all those things are examples of things that you'll need to carry with you if you do decide to make that evacuation plan.

MR. DICKENS: Another -- another bit about knowing the evacuation route is that if you don't --

if you're not involved with an emergency but you know the emergency's going to happen in another place, you can -- it can be impacted. You're driving, for example, in the Houston area, there's the City of Beaumont. They have a hurricane that happens and then everyone flockes to Houston. So, that will impact traffic as well. So, you're making sure you're available for those and respect -- respect those people so they can get to a safe place as well.

So, other helpful tips: Make a checklist of things that would help you be prepared for your plans because you have to prepare -- you know, you can do that without a checklist, but it will benefit you if you have that checklist and have several places where you can go and have a list of, you know, you can contact people, maybe FEMA or Texas Ready, they may have those lists that -- places that you can go. So, it's good to have that list or you can see if you can [INAUDIBLE] those out and have those ready that way you don't have to write in your own handwriting. You have those ready and printed out. I like to write it because I will remember when we have individual needs. Oftentimes people print things and those are just general instructions and maybe those are things that aren't important to you, but it feels like if you just have a checklist, it kind of goes along with what you need and, so, and it -- and kind of coincides with what your specific needs are, enough so you want to be able to communication with other people. That's one thing that oftentimes deaf and hard of hearing individuals, blind people don't have that, they don't have a network. So, maybe they don't have a family that can be able to communicate with or support system and I understand there's a deaf community that still has -- they have to search and find where their communities are and where -- what their areas of support are. Maybe they have to go -- go that route or they have to do this or that. So, when that happens, people don't worry about having to text seven, eight -- seven, eight, or nine times if they don't have a plan. So, if you have a plan in place, they're going to know: oh, they're going to come to my house that way there's other -- you can set up other routes. So, that kind of reduces your stress or your worries because I remember during hurricane I got almost a hundred texts from different people saying, "are you okay, okay, okay?" I'm like -- I was like I was so already overwhelmed I couldn't even answer all those and it made them even more worried about me. So, I had to learn those lessons to be able to communicate my plans. So...

That way reduces my worries and stress of having to answer those people individually. Also, maybe have a plan B. Like I said, maybe you have a plan -- if you had a plan B, maybe plan A doesn't work out, going to a friend's house, what is that -- maybe their area's flooded already. So, it's better to have all these backup plans or plan B or C or even D to make sure you can have a place -- safe place to go no matter what the situation arises that everything happens at different times.

So, just flexibility is key.

Also, you want to make sure you have a recovery plan as well because oftentimes you prepared for the hurricane but you don't really have a recovery plan and it can be a little bit more complex trying to be able to fix your home or find a new home or -- or get insurance or -- or FEMA support. Those are a lot of things that you have to do after the fact and FEMA and other places have good videos that show you where you can get those things fixed or just have those resources so if you have to look and you're aware of those things before -- and they may help you as well and make a kit -- and we'll go a little bit more into that of what that should look like and what should belong in that kit.

MR. ANDERSON: So, kit? You may go, well, what does that look like? Well, looking at this

picture, these are all the different things necessary to have in a kit. Like, some of the examples might be, like, say you got an all emergency -- emergency kit. So, we're going to explain that next; but I want to give you just some information that we may have. You know, depending on your individual needs, whether you're -- you know, with your disabilities or what not, just to make sure you have all the things that you may need in that kit.

Now, there's a link here in the slide that we're going to post for people -- I know your video -- if you're on video, you're looking. You can click on those. FEMA does provide some list of things as well for you to think about, you know. That maybe you weren't thinking about just FYI. Next.

Now, you might say, okay, basic items in your kit? Like, what does that mean? Give me some examples: Water, of course. Now, you may look at the gallons, like per person per day. That mostly -- those may be things to think about. Suppose, you know, I have a family of three, okay. There's three of us and you're like, okay, if the hurricane hits and typically in that area I know it lasts -- you know, it's about 5 days for recovery. So, there's three of us times five. That's 3 gallons per person per day becomes, you know, 15 gallons of water.

Ready, minimum.

Now, some communities might say they need 7 days' of recovery which means it would increase it to 21 gallons of water. You need to have that ready. You know, those are things to think about, though -- so, you're ready prepared. So, make -- you know, making sure your friend, your families and the communities... organizations, they're, like, actually able to help with that, you know, the needs that people may have, to -- to have that kit for your prepared -- preparedness for these hurricanes.

You want to have at least a 3-day minimum of stuff. You know, when I say, you know, some of the stuff could be ruined, I mean, you want to make sure that, you know, your milk, your cheese, you know, all those things that keep cold, they won't last long but you might want to have, say, cans or maybe something -- something in rice like the dry stuff that you can eat instead because, you know, the milk and all that stuff goes bad but having the other things like cereals, you know, those that can -- you know, depending on, you know, what your needs are, what your likes are, but as far as canned foods, a lot of people, a lot of us, you know have can opener. We're used to the electric can openers. Oh, how wonderful it is, but when the hurricane comes and there's no power, how am I going to open up my cans? Well, you've got to have something to open it up, you know, the old-fashioned way where you open one of those up, you know. So, that's something to think about. Also, especially us deaf and hard of hearing or DeafBlind individuals we need to have light. Light is an important resource for us. We can't communicate without light, right? We've got to make sure we've got plenty of light. You know, matches... you know, you know, if the battery goes down, you know, you need to have something to back up, maybe something you can light, you know, a lighter or something to -- that you can light stuff to get -- bring the light that you need.

Another example may be the moist towelettes or -- and stuff, you know, to wash your hands to keep them clean or whatever. Garbage bags. Those are important to keep around there -- for dry stuff, you know. If you're evacuating your stuff and you can't get anywhere, it's like, how am I going to get through the water? You know, just so you know, going through the water is not always safe when you're walking through. It might be a good idea to get a garbage bag, you know, sit inside that -- that and kind of walk around and kind of protect yourself. So, plastic ties,

of course, to keep the water from going into the stuff, too, as well, you know, and also, you know, our cell phones. How can we live without cell phones, right? So, keeping that information. You know, we don't have you know anything to hear, or a microphone or anything like that. We've got to have cell phone service. So, you know, we have a gamut of different places that we can charge and make sure all your stuff, your devices have, you know, stuff to charge. I've got four already, you know, ready for everybody in our family. So, we're ready prepared. I can't even imagine. Like, if I didn't have my cell phone, it's like, how am I going to communicate? How am I going to know information? How? You know, can I ask the neighbor? It's kind of hard to talk with my neighbor who is hearing and I'm, like, you know, just we're all on texting only. For deaf and hard of hearing and DeafBlind individuals it's a challenge and they really depend on their devices for their communication.

MR. DICKENS: Yeah, true. Absolutely.

So, maybe you have individual specific needs for -- related with your disability. Some examples might be, you know, put things -- you might want to put in your kit. If you have, like, a purple -- what is that little purple thing? It's kind of a -- it's a waterproof storage for your hearing aid. So, if you were to have to evacuate, you want to make sure -- you want to have that ready because if it were to rain or anything, it could damage or fall in. During many hurricanes people lose their hearing aids not because they -- because of the flood but because they actually drop it or because it fell off in the water. So, you want to make sure that you have that secured and it doesn't fall off and it -- you put it -- you're able to put it in a safe place. And, you know, you see in the bottom there there's this black square looking thing. It's -- so, it's a Braille reader for people who are deaf and blind if you need to be able to communicate and have that with you and packed and ready to go.

At the top, next -- next to that little chemistry thing is hearing aid battery charger. I believe you see it on there. It has different color -- different colored batteries so it's easier to know your size and your battery type because not all batteries fit the same. You have to have a specific battery for any specific hearing aid and then, you know, the -- have the color matches and have those various labels, too, so you'll know that you have the -- the correct size that will be able to charge your batteries. So...

And also we have a written list of things like a dry board or a boogie board, thing likes a boogie board might be best because in some situations oftentimes you have to write something down or maybe the ink's dry or it runs out, you need to have a low vision person maybe to have something written bigger so they're -- you're able to write it so they can see more clearly and, of course, dry food, of course, if you have your dog food, your service animal, you need to make sure because that's one thing I forgot. When I was -- I forgot to bring food and I needed -- I had to get my food -- I had to give my food -- I had to give my dog some other kind of food. So, those important -- it's important to keep those things in mind about your dogs and providing those -- that food for them.

MR. ANDERSON: So, now we're going to talk about some of the needs for electricity. I know that's important, of course, but it's also a good idea to have a generator, you know, to run just in case you -- you know, for backup. You know, that you can -- maybe it's the kind that you -- that's electric. Maybe it's the gas type of generator to keep it going when the electricity goes -- when the power goes out. So, there's various ways of having that backup. It's important to know depending on your individual needs what you need. Let me give you some examples of a

generator that have -- you know, there's a gas, you know, like I said, generator that you can pour gas into and start it up. They have propane tanks that you can use. You can actually -- some have a dual fuel which means you got to have both. So, I mean, there's various ways -- things that people may need to have their generator running. Now, I notice that some of the new generators are solar, solar powered, which is cool but then you got to think, okay, during a hurricane are we going to have enough sun to, you know, kick that solar in and all that? So, you know, maybe recoverywards, afterwards maybe, you know. So, just preparing the different options for the generators. Now, you might go, oh, generators are dangerous. You know, that's cool but, ooh, they can be dangerous. Now, it -- can it cause a fire? I mean, you could get hurt. I mean, you know, gas causes -- you know, it can cause fires. You know, the red big old tanks that you have or where you're pouring the gas in, you know the gas tank, when it's sitting there for two or three years without being touched and then you use it to pour it in there, you don't want to use that old gas if it's over 12 years -- 12 -- 12 months old. It's important to find, like, an additive of some sort that you can put in there to make your gas last longer and more fuel efficient that way it doesn't cause any issues.

Now, adding that additive to that -- you know, you don't want to get a big one and, like, fill it up and have to carry all that. You want something small. You know, little small containers if you will so it's easily poured in there and everything.

Now, propane might be a better option because it lasts longer. You know, it can sit there -- and that's probably your best option. Now, make sure that your propane's ready and that it's full before the hurricane actually hits. That's always a nice thing to remember.

MR. DICKENS: You want to make sure you read all the -- all the descriptions and all the instructions before you -- so you understand them. And some equipment may run by just -- maybe you notice it has a visual warning. Maybe that might be better for deaf and hard of hearing individuals that way you have -- allows you to get sort of an alert or an alarm or it it's a note that something's wrong that there's a hazard. Those are something to look for. So, shop wisely to make sure you pick a right one to fit your needs and all -- most of the time you'll have an electrical top -- a kind of square tag that shows kind of the lightning symbol that knows that you -- for shock hazards and has -- so, you -- things you can do to -- if you have AC sources. Maybe, for example, you have a house and that you want to be able to just with -- connect to the generator but maybe, for example, the refrigerator and so you want to be able to plug that into the -- but I would not do that. I would not encourage that because you want to unplug that from the actual house because you want to make sure you're safe and leave that -- so you don't want that to -- more damage to occur. And you want to make sure that you have equipment that's plugged in with the correct type of cord. Oftentimes you see an old, outside cord that maybe should -- you can -- you know, that's kind of waterproof and you -- usually they are orange or the other colors but you want to make sure that you read the labels, that it is an outside cord because that would be better and you make sure that the generator or... it's grounded, make sure that it's grounded and it has a good connection. But the reason it's important to have a ground is because the electricity goes from the top to the bottom for gravity. So, if it's at the top and it doesn't have a place to go, you want to make sure that's a short -- it's a shorter distance so if you were to touch it, make sure that it is -- it's important that it's grounded because you want to avoid a dangerous situation. So, if -- so, you can see where the instructions to make sure everything is grounded and set up properly and follow the manual instructions. Read it carefully.

MR. ANDERSON: So, I think we've got about ten minutes left and I've already seen some

questions that people have asked and we're going to touch on some of these things about -- just briefly about fire hazards and, so, we'll discuss the safety features and all that stuff with -- with gas and any type of propane that we talked about, how those could cause fire and all that stuff and you might have a lighter or a candle or something lit. You don't want to have any cords near that or anything like that or any of those tanks next to that because that could cause a fire. Now, maybe your neighbor could help. Maybe they could -- you know, talk to your neighbor. you know, just be familiar of your environments where you're putting everything and -- and such.

Now, there's various difference -- differences when it comes to, you know, like I said, making sure you don't have -- you have regular, you know, gas in there. You don't want to put it in plastic. You know, make sure you keep everything safe, as necessary.

MR. DICKENS: Yeah, [TALKING OVER EACH OTHER INAUDIBLY]

Yeah, make sure it has that tag on it or anywhere that -- you can't bring it anywhere. So, you have to make sure it's away from the structures.

So, there's some safety issues. Maybe you want to make sure that it's running outside in a dry area, location at least 15 feet -- yeah, 15 feet away from any structures. So -- that way you're -- there's -- you have less risk of a house or electricity issue or things catching fire if there's a wind. Make sure it's not inside because you could have possible carbon monoxide poisoning which means -- because you can't really smell it and you're not aware of it and it can kill you. So, it's very important to have good ventilation so that you're not affected by that and want to make sure it's in a safe area, that it's -- no one can steal it. Oftentimes people see that. Oh, it's a -- you know, they sell it.

And, so, you want to make sure that it's in a safe place where people cannot swipe it and you do not plug it in -- into -- in the house. Do not do that because it's not meant for full house services. It's just meant for, like, something like a refrigerator or cell phone or things like that but not -- not to run the entire household.

I'm sorry.

You want to make sure that storage is important, be able to watch where it's stored. You don't leave it out running all day out in the sun. You have to put it in a particular safe storage, watch it, maintain it, make sure there's not other flammable materials close by. You make sure it's stored in a secure stop location -- location. You don't want to fill it -- because if you run out of gas -- and you can't just leave things in it. It could be damaged and some apartments or HOA's won't allow you to use or they have -- require you to use a specific kind. So, I wouldn't store it in your home because it's too -- it's flammable and it's against the law but there are some rules with particular local areas where you live. Check those out and make sure that -- with people with disability make sure you bring that because you have fuel, you can add oil and you're not -- if not, maybe -- it could be dangerous. So, it's a good idea that maybe to have a flashing light as a warning symbol because you're not able to either hear those alerts or warnings.

MR. ANDERSON: I've seen some questions here on how to lessen the generator sounds and stuff. Maybe your neighbor can hear the generators. How do you lessen that -- that loudness of them? I mean, I'd -- it's not something that makes you -- may be on the top of our list, if you will, when it comes to disaster because we're really focusing on ourselves and our safety and all that kind of stuff. We don't, you know -- you don't want to have it inside. It must be outside that way, you know, the noise -- I mean, the noise is going to be a loud thing but looking at the

various different generators, some are quiet. Some may not so much but you can, you know, research that and find out what works for you. It's important, though that when -- in a storm happens that you think of self first. You know, what am I -- what about me? Miss -- are my needs being met? And then I can expand to your surroundings and your loved ones and such but, you know, you got to take care of yourself before you take care of everybody else.

Then at the same time you know your rights as well. However, you know, I know there's various different, you know, lawyers who can protect you, you know, laws that can protect you, I'm sorry, that, you know, give you the rights, you know, make it clear, you know, the verbiage, if you will, on the acts that -- that they have to providing communication access for those individuals with disabilities, providing accommodations.

And now with disasters that could be, you know, maybe -- you just -- you think, oh, my rights are gone. Well, no, your rights are not gone. You -- you are covered, you know, with accommodations and help if necessary.

MR. DICKENS: Yeah, we need to make sure you have reasonable accommodations. Maybe ASL interpreter, like, if it's -- there's a flood or there's a hurricane, an interpreter can't get there because they're also blocked. So, that's not reasonable. You have to find other ways. Maybe a re -- there's a relay service to the phone or emergency situation you can use relay services. Means that the same -- you're in the same room or if you can't get another type of support and you have to be able to maintain and they'll -- until someone else can come and that's only in those various situations. You can have written communication or you want to be able to get a quiet location because you need to be able to hear because a lot of loud noises in the background and you don't understand. So, ask to maybe be moved to more -- a private, quiet... so you can collect information for the things that you may need, shelter or FEMA services and you can ask for a plug or a charge. So, to be able to charge your phone because that's important. Maybe your -- to be a little bit more important because you actually use that for communication and a secure place to be able to sleep because a lot of people in those shelters they're so large and they have a little -- maybe have a different room for people with disabilities that they're aware of so they can provide a safe place for you to sleep because maybe you're deaf and hard of hearing and you're DeafBlind and maybe you can't hear and they may try to take your things and -- and, so, it's important that you have a safe place so you'll be able to watch your things and, so...

And you can ask -- ask for those reasonable accommodations and ask to be able to use effective lipreading, understand, have a face-to-face conversation, things like that. Say, hey, I need to be able to read your lips or you could ask to slow down. So, those -- those are reasonable accommodations and, also, you want to be able to announce -- you want to make sure your -- those announcements that are going on and you're maybe unaware. Maybe it's a loud surrounding and you miss all those important information. So, where do you go next to be able -- to the bus or you just say, I need to be able to get that information provided to me and also they have -- you have service animals. They have to be able to permit those in those particular shelters in those living areas and you want to ask -- if you need to have stuff repeated to you, ask for repeated information. Don't say -- just don't say, "say it again." Say, hey, could you tell me that in a different way?"

Because sometimes one way is not clear. If someone were to repeat it in a different manner and then it might be more -- word understood based on their word choice or their explanation, you might be able to understand that better and as maybe understanding the feeling of overwhelmed

because hurricanes aren't easy to go through and you can't just assume everything's accommodation -- everyone has -- everything's -- our needs met. So, there's an ADA coordinator. You ask: "Who's responsible for this -- for the accommodations because I need help."

Many people you meet are volunteers and they're not aware of: I need an interpreter. I need an interpreter. They're not sure. Say: Who's responsible for accommodation and maybe they can locate that need for you to provide that accommodation.

MR. ANDERSON: And another thing that people can get is -- is support. You know, having the accommodations for that. You know, or rescue, you know, people. You know, the DHS has contracts with various different local specialists that can actually provide access for support and technology and all and maybe, you know, you're -- you're finished with your -- your webinar. It's like, what am I going to do next? Like, who am I going to contact? you know, I need an access specialist. Well, you need to make sure you find your access specialist. They're like, is it -- is it free, is it not free? Kind of having someone help you navigate through that and also during hurricanes, you know, we -- the access specialists, the technology specialists, they're actually there on the scene, you know, ready to do whatever they need to do during a hurricane. Even if you, you know -- we'll be there if y'all can't be there. We're there to support you, whatever your needs may be. You know, if you've lost your hearing, we can provide, you know, temporary hearing aids if you -- if you had one and you don't have one anymore. I mean, we can -- we have so many different specialists all over Texas that, you know, we're here to support, you know, during disasters and preparing for that and your local -- with your access -- your specialists would be great. There's links that we've shared before -- before that you can click onto and find out who they may be or you can contact us at DHHS.com and e-mail us at HHS.com as well, you can contact as well but I will -- you know, we're running out of time here but you can contact us anytime about anything you may have, any questions, okay?

MR. DICKENS: And one thing you want to do is get involved and make sure that the deaf and hard of hearing and DeafBlind, their perspectives and their local agencies and committees, they're involved with various disabilities, emergency management plan or if they don't have that in your local area, then to be able to contact a friend or family member or neighbor or set up your own committee that are testable to be able to support each other when you have a plan.

Well, we are out of time. So, what we're going to do now is we're going to go ahead and continue to stay for a few minutes, answer any questions you may have after we -- after we stop the recording and we want to thank you so much for your time and attention.

>>: Recording stopped.

MR. ANDERSON: Okay.

Let me look at the questions here.

Okay. All right. Awesome.

Okay.

MR. DICKENS: We do have one good question about how to protect your documents. One thing you could do is you could put -- get a metal box and put them in or some waterproof container or plastic covering. There's many different ways that you can Google online or



Amazon or other types of Web sites that are available that you can purchase those type of means to protect your documents.

MR. ANDERSON: And I saw someone comment, let's see, make a comment here. There was something -- someone about Deck Lin, I believe. That's a person in contact? I'll give you -- let me see. The person's name is YenterT@DeafLink.com. The important -- you can contact that person because they're there for accessibility and the alert systems and all and you can -- they can actually -- he can help you with that information in your local communities as well and you can contact him. He's an amazing resource and thanks for sharing that.

Well, I guess I've answered all the questions that we have here.

MR. DICKENS: Well, thank you so much for your time. Thanks for joining us for this presentation. I hope you've learned some useful information and be thinking about what happens so you know what to do and so you could put this into practice. Thank you all. Have a good day.

All right. Take care. Bye-bye.

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