

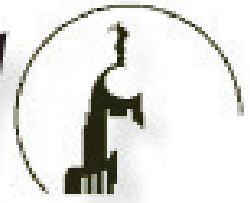
Pete Ricketts
Governor

Margie Propp
Chairperson

John C. Wyvill
Executive Director

The Communicator

Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing



Summer 2016

A newsletter surveying health, government and issues affecting Nebraskans.

3rd Annual Deaf and Hard of Hearing Awareness Night at the Ballpark



Channel 8 Eyewitness News interviews NCDHH Advocacy Specialist Kim Davis with Board Chairman Margie Propp providing interpreting services



Board Chairman Propp and Executive Director John Wyvill go live before the game

The 3rd Annual Deaf and Hard of Hearing Awareness Night was held on July 13th at the Lincoln Saltdogs game. Aside from a 10-1 Saltdogs victory, there were great events held to promote more awareness and knowledge on all things deaf and hard of hearing related. Jr. National Association for the Deaf (NAD) representative Rachel Hoyer threw out the first pitch prior to the game, nationally recognized Deaf Mime, Ricky Smith, performed the national anthem. The 'Silent Inning' was held during the 5th inning, to show all attendees that individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing enjoy baseball just like everyone else.

The turnout was great, including appearances from Camp Anderson, a summer camp for students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing grades 6-12th, as well as Kenny Walker, former University of Nebraska football player.

As always, we want to give a big shout out and thank you to the Lincoln Saltdogs for allowing us to put on such a great event for the community. Until next year!

2 The Communicator

Nebraska at NAD Conference

The 2016 NAD Biennial Convention in Phoenix, AZ held many great moments, especially for Nebraska representatives. The Senior Citizens Section of NAD selected our very own, Dr. Frank Turk for the Senior Citizen Award, noting Dr. Turk (pictured to the right accepting the award) was chosen because he "refuses to sit down and take it easy".

Jonathan Scherling, NeAD President, accepted the State Excellence award



from Richard McCowin, also a Nebraska representative and Jenny Buechner (pictured to the left), Region II Board Member. The NeAD was given this award for its work on the interpreter licensure bill, raising the standards for educational interpreters in Nebraska, and for public awareness programs.



Linsay Darnall Jr., representative of Jr. NAD Nebraska chapter, received the Spirit of NAD Award (seen below) for his work with youth who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing not only in Nebraska, but nationwide. Isabella



Graves, President of Jr. NAD Nebraska and Jr. NAD Ambassador was also present at the convention.

NCDHH Advocacy Specialist Kim Davis attended the conference, as well as NCDHH Board Member Dr. Peter Seiler, along with many other Nebraska representatives. It was a great time to celebrate Nebraska! Please join us in a big hand wave to all those who represent the Deaf and Hard of Hearing communities in Nebraska on a national scale.

"In Nebraska, we have been blessed with outstanding leaders in the Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of Hearing



communities," NCDHH Executive Director John Wyvill said. "It's great to see multi-generational leaders being recognized on the national stage. The people of Nebraska deserve nothing less than great leaders and representation." NCDHH Board Member Dr. Peter Seiler is photographed (right) with Gallaudet president, Dr. Bobbi Cordano.



A Message from Arizona

By: Sherri Collins, Arizona Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

On behalf of NCDHH Board Member, Dr. Frank Turk



When I was asked to write an article for The Communicator I jumped at the chance to share the successes of the Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing (ACDHH). I have been the executive director of this state agency since May 1998. As such my primary responsibilities are to advocate, strengthen and implement state policies that impact Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals, and their relationship to the public, industry, healthcare and educational opportunities. I work closely with our 14-member Governor-appointed Commissioners to develop strategic goals and policies, monitor our annual operating plan, administer day-to-day operations, develop programs to ensure constituents are informed, and act as the agency's spokesperson within the community and legislature.

ACDHH was established in 1977 to improve the quality of life for deaf and hard of hearing residents and we have spent these past many years on that mission.

Some of the major milestones include:

- In 1987, Senator Tony West places the first call through Arizona Relay Service.
- In 2000, SB1151 establishes a statewide standard for sign language interpreting in which we worked on for seven years until interpreter licensure which took effect on October 1, 2007.
- In 2005, Senate Bill 1250, the Newborn Hearing Screening Legislation passed, required hearing test results and any subsequent hearing test results be reported to the Department of Health Services as prescribed by department rules.

ACDHH maintains a very high profile across the state and is often the subject of proactive news stories and engaging social media content. Since 2009, we have engaged with a Phoenix-based public relations agency, HMA Public Relations, who works in partnership with our staff to positively and proactively position ACDHH as the go-to resource for information, advocacy and resources. Our communications efforts have focused on the development and implementation of statewide public relations and digital communications campaigns, including traditional media relations (news releases, story pitches/placements, thought-leadership pieces), face-to-face meetings with print and broadcast media statewide and an active presence in the digital space including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and a weekly e-newsletter.

ACDHH is also proactive in its efforts to reach citizens who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing in all communities. In 2011, we set out on a statewide tour with our Visioning Conferences. The community expressed a need to receive improved services in healthcare and public safety services. In response, we developed two curricula; healthcare and public safety. Both programs focus on best practices in each area. Healthcare providers learn the importance of effective communication for proper diagnosis and aftercare. Public safety professionals learn about effective methods for communicating in emergencies and disasters. Citizens also learn about their roles and responsibilities for their health and safety. To date more than 100 healthcare facilities have been trained and more than 40 public safety organizations have received training.

In addition, among the many resources we offer are:

- Deaf Services -- ACDHH deaf specialists strive to provide advocacy for deaf consumers ensuring communication accessibility, while working with other agencies and organizations to increase and expand opportunities and improve the quality of life for people with hearing loss.
- Hard of Hearing Services -- Our Hard of Hearing Specialist travels throughout the State of Arizona providing outreach and education to consumers and professionals. From cradle to grave, she assists the hard of hearing community and their families, educators, co-workers, and other professionals by sharing information and resources with and about the hard of hearing person.
- Family and Youth Services -- There are Family Support Services available for Arizona's families that have deaf and hard of hearing children. These services range from parent-led organizations specializing in deaf and hard of hearing children, parent-led organizations geared towards families with children with all kinds of special needs, to organizations that serve as an audiology resource for local families.
- AzTEDP -- Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Deaf-Blind, and Speech-Impaired residents of Arizona qualify for telecommunication equipment through AzTEDP.
- Interpreter Licensure -- ACDHH oversees the licensing process and procedures for the State of Arizona.

As we look to the future and the celebration of our 40th anniversary, we look forward to welcoming the the National Association of the Deaf conference to Arizona in July. ACDHH will celebrate its 40th anniversary in 2017 and a major focus will be the impact that ACDHH has made over the last 40 years.

The mission of the Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing is to improve the quality of life for deaf, hard of hearing and deaf-blind residents. And thanks to our tremendous staff and the many advocates throughout Arizona, ACDHH really works to improve quality of life.

NCDHH in O'Neill, Neb.

Each year, the Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Full Board selects an area of Nebraska (that is not Lincoln and Omaha) to host one of the quarterly board meetings. In addition to the Full Board meeting, we also host a Town Hall Meeting, inviting all area residents to come for a meet and greet, socialize, and ask questions about how the Commission can further assist their area needs.



NCDHH Advocacy Specialist Kim Davis giving a presentation to O'Neill area residents

O'Neill, Neb. was selected for the June 2016 Full Board meeting.



John Wyvill with Pat, at the O'Neill Senior Center

The Town Hall

Meeting was very productive, where residents in the O'Neill area came out to ask questions and share their stories. In addition, NCDHH Advocacy Specialist Kim Davis gave a presentation about NCDHH services and other information we can provide.

The Full Board Meeting included the election of new officers. Ms. Margie Propp will serve as Chairperson, Dr. Frank Turk as Vice Chairperson, and Dr. Peter Seiler as Secretary. There was also the oath of newest board member, Dr. Peter Seiler, as well as a special presentation of a NCDHH Resolution to Ms. Peggy Williams for

her dedication over the last 35 years. On behalf of the NCDHH staff and Full Board, we want to thank everyone who came out!



New Board Member, Dr. Peter Seiler taking oath, with Dr. Frank Turk



NCDHH Full Board Meeting on June 17, 2016

NCDHH Hires Behavioral Health Coordinator



The Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NCDHH) has hired Carly Weyers as the new Behavioral Health Coordinator. Ms. Weyers joins us as a recent graduate of Gallaudet University, with two bachelor's degrees in Communication and Sociology. A Nebraska native, Carly says she is eager to be back in her home state and to become more involved and helping the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community.

Ms. Weyers started in the NCDHH Lincoln office on August 8, 2016. Happy to have you on the team, Carly! Carly can be reached at carly.weyers@nebraska.gov and Video Phone 402-206-2971

QAST Testing Changes

NCDHH recently reviewed the QAST (Quality Assurance Screening Test) testing fees. Due to rising costs to proctor and evaluate the test, the NCDHH Full Board voted unanimously at the June meeting to increase the test fee from \$170.00 to \$220.00. Effective July 1, 2016 the QAST performance test fee is \$220.00.

If you have any questions in regards to these changes, please contact NCDHH at 402-471-3593 or traci.cooney@nebraska.gov.

Lincoln Fire and Rescue Fire Alarm Grant

Lincoln Fire and Rescue has received a grant to install free ionization smoke alarms as well as alarms designed to aid Deaf and Hard of Hearing residents living within the Lincoln city limits. NCDHH has been in contact with LFR firefighter Jamie Bray on how this will assist Nebraskans who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing and supports this project to better protect the residents of Lincoln against fire.

To receive the free alarms, Lincoln residents should submit a request on LFR's webpage at fire.lincoln.ne.gov and click on "Request a Smoke Alarm Here", email jbray@lincoln.ne.gov, or leave a message at 402-441-7779. Once submitted Jamie will contact you to setup an appointment for LFR to come to your home and install the alarms as well as provide education on how to make your home safer from fire.

SAVE THE DATE

Deaf & Hard of Hearing Awareness Day at Omaha Zoo



What: Deaf and Hard of Hearing Awareness Day

Where: Omaha Henry Doorly Zoo

When: September 25, 2016

9:00am-5:00pm

Join the Commission and the Nebraska Association for the Deaf as we host a fun-filled day at the Omaha zoo with activities for the whole family. More details to come! Interpreters will be available for numerous activities throughout the day. Stay tuned to the NCDHH Facebook page for tickets and more information.

Bike Ride Across Nebraska

BRAN stands for Bicycle Ride Across Nebraska. BRAN is set up as a charitable Nebraska non-profit corporation. Its intent is to provide a fun, safe way for participants to experience the great state of Nebraska. BRAN uses its revenues to provide scholarships to Nebraska high school graduates to Nebraska Trade Schools, Colleges and Universities.



This year, the ride started in Grant, Neb. and ended in Wahoo, Neb. The ride allows up to 600 bike riders. In the photos are NCDHH Board Member, Dr. Peter Seiler, as well as members of the Scherling family who also participated in the event!



NCDHH Advocacy Specialists

As of July 1, 2016, the NCDHH Field Representatives will now be recognized as Advocacy Specialists. Our Advocacy Specialists work across the state of Nebraska to advocate, assist and educate clients, businesses and organizations with all things Deaf and Hard of Hearing related. For a complete list of Advocacy Specialists and information on how to reach the closest to your area, please visit our website at www.ncdhh.nebraska.gov

Editorial note: For the Summer edition of this newsletter, each Advocacy Specialist wrote an article regarding tips and advice for Emergency Preparedness as well as traveling tips that can be helpful for Nebraskans who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing:

Emergency Supply Checklist by: April Emeigh, Advocacy Specialist



The warm Nebraska weather is accompanied by severe weather and storms. With that in mind, it's a great time to get out your emergency kit to replace/replenish things, and check to make sure you have all the necessary supplies. The list that I've compiled includes general supplies and also suggestions specific to individuals/families with hearing loss. Check your kit regularly to ensure that it is ready to go in case of an emergency. The following list has been adapted from the lists provided by CEPIN and FEMA.

- Cell phone and charger
- Hearing aids (extras, or make sure they are easy to grab in case of an emergency)
- Extra hearing aid batteries
- Extra contact lenses or eyeglasses
- Portable TTY with extra batteries (if required)
- Portable battery-operated television with extra batteries and charger to use in your automobile
- NOAA radios with text alerts and visual and/or tactile alerts, or AM/FM portable radio if you can hear it with a neckloop or headset
- Necessary medications and medical equipment
- Paper and pens to write down important information or to use as a communication method
- First aid kit
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- Food and water (for up to 72 hours)
- Non-electric can opener
- Pet supplies (if applicable)
- Whistle to signal for help
- Personal hygiene products such as moist towelettes, feminine products, etc.
- Cash, ID, and credit cards
- Important family documents such as insurance policies, bank info, Social Security cards, etc.
- Work or hiking shoes/boots to protect your feet when walking thru disaster areas
- A change of clothes
- Sleeping bags

72-Hour Emergency Preparation

by: Brenda Chappell, Advocacy Specialist



During a time of disaster it may take time for the rescue team to arrive for help. They need time to get through debris and restore power. In the meantime, victims may wait and suffer from hunger, thirst, and exposure. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) recommends citizens have a 72-hour emergency preparation kit. You can order this online or you can make your own. **Here is a basic recommended checklist for the 72-hour emergency kit.**

- 1) 3-day supply of non-perishable food not limited to canned food, dehydrated/freeze-dried food, nuts, crackers, and hard candy. Try to find food that doesn't require much cooking and less salty to prevent thirst.
- 2) 1 gallon of water per person a day for at least 3 days for drinking and cleaning.
- 3) Flashlight or lantern with extra batteries
- 4) First aid kit
- 5) Whistle to call for help
- 6) Dust mask
- 7) Toiletries – not limited to shampoo, soap, moist wipes, plastic bag for trash, feminine products, toothbrush, and toothpaste.
- 8) Can opener for food
- 9) Changes of clean clothes, rain poncho, jacket, blanket
- 10) Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- 11) Battery-powered or solar-powered radio. (I know it is not effective for deaf people, but they can ask hearing people to listen it.)
- 12) Local maps
- 13) Important documents – medical information, proof of address, birth certificates, insurance policies, deed/lease to home.
- 14) Entertainment items – coloring books, card games, small traveling board games, inflatable beach ball, jump rope.

It is necessary to have additional preparation for individuals with special needs like elderly or disabled. Don't forget to include baby/toddlers and pets in your plan. Their needs are different from adult humans. You can choose to put items in a duffel bag, backpack, or suitcase with wheels. Be sure to have a stroller or a wagon handy in case you need to carry out a young child. Or special equipment like wheelchair for elderly.

There are some situations that you might have to evacuate so it is best to have evacuation plan as well. The first step is to plan with family members, roommates, or friends; discuss with them about where to meet in case they get separated. Next, you need a list of all contacts. Importantly, contact your relatives or friends who live out of town to discuss an evacuation plan and ask their permission to go to and stay at their home. Also check with your community to find out where the evacuation routes and shelters are. Don't think to take any shortcuts. Some roads and bridges might be blocked. If time allows, unplug all electrical equipment like radios, television, computer, small appliances. Leave freezer and refrigerator plugged unless there is a risk of flooding. If there is damage to your home, turn off water, gas, and electricity before leaving.

Then prepare a method of communication. Keep notepads and pens handy. Be sure your smartphone or tablet is updated and upgraded in order to get apps from local community emergency management or FEMA apps. Be sure to have a portable charger in your purse or backpack. FEMA states texting might have a better chance of going through when phone lines and cell service are down. Next, save a minimum of \$200 cash or traveler's checks safe and easy to reach in case you need to go to a motel and keep your gas tank half full at all the time. It is also good to have camping gear – tent or shelter, sleeping bag, mess kit (bowl, cup, frying pan, and utensils) – as backup.

For more information, you can look into listed below.
Crockett, Barry; How to Assemble a 72-Hour Emergency Kit, 2000.
For FEMA and more information, <http://www.fema.gov/>

Be Alerted for Potential Weather Disasters

by: Kim Davis, Advocacy Specialist



Once again, it is the season for potential natural disasters, such as lightning, floods, tornadoes and fires. I like to check for any new or updated emergency alert technologies or programs for self-awareness and, even more importantly, to stay abreast on being prepared to take shelter or evacuate. The town's tornado siren alerts does no good when you can't hear it go off in the middle of the night or even during the day wherever you are. That's pretty scary, especially if the weather does take a turn for the worst. Having an effective visual, audible or vibrating Emergency Alert System is something to consider. Determining which emergency alert system is best would require doing some researches on which devices or programs are effective and available where you live. You may wish to contact the below appropriate emergency management programs of interest for further information. If you are uncertain, feel free to contact me at 402-261-2657 or Kim.Davis@nebraska.gov.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio

Seek one that has the capability to provide captions and the ability to operate on battery when there is an electricity power outage. Prior to purchasing one, you may wish to see if the county you reside in will have the ability to provide the broadcasting NOAA's National Weather Service (NWS) warnings, watches, forecasts and other emergency information. The NWR Station Listing for Nebraska can be found at www.nws.noaa.gov.

Portable Battery Operated TV

Seek one that has a captioned decoder built in the portable digital TV of interest that is under 13-inches or smaller. If you have the ability to see a demonstration of the TV, check to see if captions are available. If available, also check to see if it is readable since the font sizes may be smaller. Another alternative is to seek reviews from deaf and hard of hearing individuals who may have a portable battery operated TV. Again, depending on where you reside, you may also need to consider the effectiveness of the reception of the portable TV's antenna. If ineffective, upgrading the digital antenna may be needed, if reception will be made possible. Amazon is a good place to check on reviews, features and pricing comparisons, especially if you wish to purchase one at your local stores. Visit Amazon at www.amazon.com.

Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEAs)

If you have a mobile device, you may wish to check to see if it has the WEA program pre-installed. To confirm your device is capable of receiving the alerts and is available in your area, please check your wireless device's setting or contact your wireless provider. WEA messages may include extreme weather alerts, threatening emergencies, Amber Alerts and Presidential Alerts during national emergencies. This may also function effectively outside your residential area when you out traveling. For more information, visit www.ctia.org/your-wireless-life/consumer-tips/wireless-emergency-alerts.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) APP

FEMA created an app available through Apple's App Store and Android's Google Play. You can receive alerts from the National Weather Service on this app, as well as preparedness tips, resources on where one can find disaster recovery centers, and much more. Additional information can be found at www.youtube.com/watch?v=BxBdhLtNuxM&feature=youtu.be.

Be Alerted for Potential Weather Disasters cont.

National Weather Service Email and SMS Weather Alert Services

You may wish to subscribe for weather alert services through email or text messaging (SMS). There are several different available providers. Visit www.weather.gov/subscribe or check your local TV or radio station to see if they provide local emergency alerts through email and/or text messaging.

Social Network Sites Check-Ins

Having a communication plan in place for family members and friends to be aware of where you can be found or to update on your status and well-being is also critical. One of the several available options is that you can obtain notifications from specific persons or update your status in your profile on Facebook, Twitter or Google accounts. This feature provides a way for subscribers to quickly communicate their status in an emergency. Subscribers may also seek to receive emergency or public alerts from participating emergency alerting, public safety and other organizations involved in emergencies.

Twitter – visit Twitter Alerts at <http://ow.ly/f8slJ>

Facebook – visit Facebook Safety Check at www.facebook.com/about/safetycheck

Google – visit Google Public Alerts at <https://google.org/publicalerts>

Rechargeable Batteries

This is a must have back-up, unless you desire to have a large number of extra standard batteries for most of the above devices of your choosing. You could recharge your batteries, mobile phones or operate the portable TV in your car using a power inverter with USB ports and AC outlets that plugs into your car cigarette adapter.

Rural Transportation Services

by: Kim Davis

For those of you who aren't aware, the Lancaster County Public Rural Transit has been providing door-to-door public rural transportation for anyone who reside in Lancaster County and neighboring Adams, Ceresco, Cortland, Eagle and Greenwood areas for over three decades. This service is not available for Lincoln residents visiting within Lincoln, but may be available for visiting these rural destinations outside of Lincoln upon request. Their current transportation service cost, as of the date of this publication, during their normal operating hours on Monday – Friday from 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m., are as follows:

\$2.00: for a one-way trip \$4.00: for a round trip \$2.00 each: for each additional stops \$20.00: for a 10-punch Rider Card

It is important to also note that additional costs may apply if the trip occurs outside their normal operating hours. Another exciting thing about this transit service is that one of their drivers knows sign language! Special thanks go to the federal, state and county funds for continuing to make this service possible. And, if you're as excited as Kim and wish to consider this alternative transportation method option, give her a call at our Lincoln office to set up an appointment to obtain or learn about the fabulous services NCDHH has to offer! Additional information about the Lancaster County Public Rural Transit and their scheduling procedures can be inquired further by calling them at (402) 441-7031 during their office hours on Monday – Friday between 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Their brochure can be found at City of Lincoln's Aging Partner's website at <https://lincoln.ne.gov/city/mayor/aging/pdf/RuralTransitBro.pdf>.

Fire Safety at Home

by: Kathy Scusa, Advocacy Specialist



More than 3,500 Americans die each year in fires and approximately 18,300 are injured. An overwhelming number of fires occur in the home. There are time-tested ways to prevent and survive a fire. It's not a question of luck. It's a matter of planning ahead. In today's world, emergency preparedness is an important topic. Too often, individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing do not have access to emergency alerts. Visual emergency alerting systems provide equal access and allow people who are deaf or hard of hearing to evacuate safely during emergencies. Both the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act also mandate reasonable accommodations, which include visual fire alarms.

Every Home Should Have at Least One Working Smoke Alarm

Buy a smoke alarm at any hardware or discount store. It's inexpensive protection for you and your family. Install a smoke alarm on every level of your home. A working smoke alarm can double your chances of survival. Having a smoke alarm in each bedroom increases awareness and protection. Test it monthly, keep it free of dust and if battery powered, replace the battery at least once a year. Smoke alarms themselves should be replaced after ten years of service, or as recommended by the manufacturer.

Best Alarm System for Deaf or Hard of Hearing Residents

The Federal Emergency Management Agency, ADA Standards for Accessible Design, and Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards provide the following insights regarding standard practices:

- The ideal solution is to install the fire alarm so it is hard wired into the existing building system, with a battery backup. Note that hard wired alarms must be installed by a licensed electrician.
- There should be both audible and visual alerts with the audible alerts not to exceed 110 dB.
- If the alarm's sound pattern is of the T-3 variety, then a bed-shaker alert system can also be used in conjunction with the hard-wired system. T-3 alarms are the required alarm type in residential homes. The alarm sound is a three beep, pause, three beep pattern. The other sound pattern for some alarms is the continuous sound pattern. The "Listen and Alert" fire alarms will not respond to the continuous sound alarm. The intent of hard-wired alarms is to communicate the fact that there is smoke and/or fire to all of the alarms in a building. Multiple units are placed around the home and interconnected, so that when any one detector senses smoke, all alarms in the home go off simultaneously. An individual who is deaf or hard of hearing would be alerted no matter where the fire or individual is located. This significantly increases the chances that you will get out safely before a fire spreads. The more rooms and floors your home has, the more important it becomes to have a complete hard-wired system.

Other Alarms for Home Use

Stand-alone alarms can be powered by AC, battery, or AC with battery back-up. The stand-alone alarm remains silent until the fire/smoke conditions actually reach the physical location where the alarm is located. For example, if a stand-alone alarm is installed on the first floor and there is a fire on the third floor of a building, the stand-alone alarm would remain silent until the fire/smoke physically gets very close to the alarm. The resulting delay in becoming aware of the situation could be more dangerous for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, as there would be less time to react to the emergency.

Additionally, individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing are only alerted if they are in the same physical location as the stand-alone alarm, not if they are in other areas of the building.

Fire Safety at Home cont.

Signaling System Alarms work like stand-alone smoke alarms, but come with transmitters that, when activated send wireless signals to receivers placed around your home. This allows all the alarms to sound/flash when only one has been activated. This will provide additional time for evacuation. These systems are portable, versatile and expandable. Depending on the system you purchase, you can be alerted through a bed shaker, flashing strobe, or both. Additional smoke detectors, transmitters and receivers can be purchased for maximum flexibility, including accessories that will alert you to things like the doorbell or phone ringing or a weather alert radio notice.

"Listen and Alert" Fire Alarms are designed to "listen" to your home's existing T3 smoke alarms. If it hears one activate, it will then "alert" you by emitting a high decibel, low frequency audible alarm, flashing white light and by vibrating a bed shaker.

Tips for Fire Prevention at Home:

Prevent Electrical Fires

Never overload circuits or extension cords. Do not place cords and wires under rugs, over nails or in high traffic areas. Immediately shut off and unplug appliances that sputter, spark or emit an unusual smell. Have them professionally repaired or replaced.

Use Appliances Wisely

When using appliances follow the manufacturer's safety precautions. Overheating, unusual smells, shorts and sparks are all warning signs that appliances need to be shut off, then replaced or repaired. Unplug appliances when not in use. Use safety caps to cover all unused outlets, especially if there are small children in the home.

Alternate Heaters

- Portable heaters need their space. Keep anything combustible at least three feet away.
- Keep fire in the fireplace. Use fire screens and have your chimney cleaned annually. The creosote buildup can ignite a chimney fire that could easily spread.
- Kerosene heaters should be used only where approved by authorities. Never use gasoline or camp-stove fuel. Refuel outside and only after the heater has cooled.

Affordable Home Fire Safety Sprinklers

When home fire sprinklers are used with working smoke alarms, your chances of surviving a fire are greatly increased. Sprinklers are affordable - they can increase property value and lower insurance rates.

Plan Your Escape

Practice an escape plan from every room in the house. Caution everyone to stay low to the floor when escaping from fire and never to open doors that are hot. Select a location where everyone can meet after escaping the house. Get out then call for help.

Caring for Children

Children of all ages set over 35,000 fires annually. Every year over 400 children age nine years and younger die in home fires. Many play with matches and lighters. Keep matches and lighters locked up and away from children. Check under beds and in closets for burnt matches, evidence your child may be playing with matches. Fifty-two percent of all child fire deaths occur to those under age 5. Take the mystery out of fire play by teaching your children that fire is a tool, not a toy.

Sources: National Fire Prevention: <https://nationalfireinc.com/fire-prevention/for-your-home.html>; U.S. Fire Administration: <https://www.usfa.fema.gov>; Pepnet 2, Oct. 2014: www.pepnet.org; Harris Communications: www.harriscomm.com

Hard of Hearing Tips for Emergency

by: Beth Ellsworth, Advocacy Specialist



Preparing for an emergency is essential for everyone but those of us with a hearing loss need to also take steps to ensure communication access is attainable. Here are some guidelines to consider when faced with an emergency:

1. Store extra batteries for hearing aids and implants. If available, store an extra hearing aid with your emergency supplies. Also, keeping your hearing aids or cochlear implant next to your bed is helpful.

2. Consider getting a portable assisted listening device to take in an emergency. In many emergency situations there is a tremendous background noise. Below are some websites that carry equipment

www.teltex.com; www.harriscomm.com; www.lssproducts.com; www.hearmore.com

3. Determine how you will communicate with emergency personnel if you don't have your hearing aids. Store paper and pens for this purpose.

*Ask emergency providers to keep your special needs information on file (this is your choice to do so).

4. Carry a pre-printed copy of important messages with you, such as: I depend on lip-reading and other communication tips. "If you make announcements, I will need to have them written. Write down key phrases for emergency personnel.

5. Install both audible alarms and visual smoke alarms. At least one should be battery-operated. Maintain pressure on TV stations to broadcast all news and emergency information in open caption format.

6. Battery-powered radio (if someone in your home can hear well enough) or weather/hazard radio with text messaging (see http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/special_need.htm)

7. Be sure to plan carefully for contacting family members who are deaf or hard of hearing. Before an emergency happens, set up a place to meet if you are unable to make contact by phone. Amplified phones, TTY's, Video phones and computers may not work. In a public place, accessible communication may not be available. Think through different situations and consider how you will contact your family. Draw a floor plan of your home. Use a blank sheet of paper for each floor. Mark two escape routes from each room. Make sure children understand the drawings. Post a copy of the drawings at eye level in each child's room. Make sure everyone know who the main contact person (relative, friend, etc.) is in case you and your family are not together when an emergency occurs.

I travel to different counties for assistance: Douglas, Sarpy, Cass, Butler, Dodge, Saunders, Washington, Platte, Nance, Garfield, Greeley, Boone, Valley, Wheeler. If you are not in these counties, please contact NCDHH at 402-471-3593 and we can find the closest Advocacy Specialist nearest you.

Beth Ellsworth – Advocacy Specialist

Beth.ellsworth@nebraska.gov

402-682-7129 - This is a video phone and an interpreter with take a message and send this to my email so leave a message and I'll call you back!

Summertime Traveling

by: Beth Ellsworth, Advocacy Specialist



Summertime and the traveling is easy! Or is it? The publication 'Hearing Like Me' editorial staff wrote a terrific article on traveling www.hearinglikeme.com/traveling-with-hearing-loss/ in a variety of settings. Please check out the article. It is terrific!

Depending on your mode of travel there are communication glitches that can occur. Have you ever traveled by plane and had the announcement made that the flight gate was changed? Remedy; be sure and let the flight attendants (s) at the gate know that you have a hearing loss and cannot hear and understand any announcements made. Then I let them know that you will need them to come tell you if there are any changes. Also important; sit in front of the gate to make sure

they can see you.

Traveling on a bus or by train? The same rules apply but you will need to let the person sitting next to you know that you have a hearing loss and ask him/her to let you know when your stop is announced.

Once you get to where you will be staying there are more concerns. To check on what is included in the kit and compliance requirements go to one of the websites or google "ADA Kits".

<https://www.harriscomm.com/index.php/hotel-ada>

<http://www.adahospitality.com/roomkits.htm>

Emergency Preparation with Apps

by: Brittney Graham, Advocacy Specialist



Emergencies happen across the country in various forms: hurricanes, tornados, floods, fires, terrorist attacks, and other natural and manmade disasters. It is important to be prepared when something happens. Having up to date information could be life-saving, however, some of this information is not available to deaf and hard of hearing people. Communication systems must be put in place before an emergency happens, to make sure deaf and hard of hearing people know about what is going on and how to respond.

Since technology is evolving in today's society, they now make several applications you can download on your mobile device to alert you when there is bad weather approaching and other forms of disasters. Luckily it is very easy to do. For example, if I were needed to know when bad weather was coming my way so I could take the necessary precautions all I would have to do is go to the "App Store" located on my cell phone. I would type in "weather alerts" in the search engine and have my pick of FREE apps. Most all of the major news channels have some type of app that we can download for free.

Incorporating ASL into a Career

by: Crystal Pierce, Interpreter Program Assistant



With the recent activities in the media people have become more curiously aware of the Deaf World. Who wouldn't want to learn more about the Deaf World after Nyle DiMarco grabbed the nation's attention with his amazing dancing talent, modeling skills, and his all-around support of the Deaf Community? As that curiosity grows the desire to become involved with the Deaf Community and learn American Sign Language (ASL) grows. Often times their interest in the Deaf Community leans to contemplating how to incorporate ASL into their career or a future career. Flora Lewis, an American Journalist, once said, "Learning another language is not only learning different words for the same things, but learning another way to think about things." People becoming inspired to learn ASL may also find themselves looking into new career possibilities. These individuals may be looking into a future career or how their current employment could

incorporate ASL and working with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community. Listed below are a few examples. Please note this is not an all-inclusive list.

Interpreting/Transliterating

One career that works with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing every day is being an interpreter or transliterator. This includes extensive use of ASL. In Nebraska, there is a shortage of interpreters and transliterators. There are many different types of interpreters or avenues for an interpreting career. For example:

Freelance/Community Interpreter, Educational Interpreter K-12, Educational Interpreter Post-Secondary, Video Remote Interpreting, Video Relay Interpreting

Education

The education system affords many career opportunities to include ASL. A few careers options would be working at a Deaf residential school or a mainstream school; a K-12 setting or in a post-secondary setting. Ignacio Estrada once said, "If a child can't learn the way we teach, maybe we should teach the way they learn." This includes using their preferred language and/or mode of communication. A few positions in the educational environment that can have direct communication with Deaf or Hard of Hearing students are:

Teacher, Deaf Ed Teacher, Paraprofessional, Dorm or School Counselor, Childcare Provider

Another way to use the knowledge of Deaf culture and American Sign Language is to teach an ASL class, which may count for foreign language studies credit, depending the school district and state in which you work. Another option would be to establish or get involved with an ASL Club.

Health/Mental Health

A career in the health or mental health field could be combined with the use of ASL. Physicians and clinicians that are able to have direct communication with a patient in the patient's native language can be more effective and have a stronger bond with the patient than those who go through an interpreter. Here are a few examples:

Doctor, Nurse, Dentist, Audiologist, Counselor, Psychiatrist, Psychologist, Speech – Language Pathologist

Government

Additionally, under all levels of government there are career options that could integrate career specific skills and ASL. Many departments and commissions work directly with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Communities. For example: Deaf and Hard of Hearing Commission, Blind and Visually Impaired Commission, Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Health and Human Services

These are only a few options of careers that may work directly with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing communities. For those looking into incorporating ASL in their current position or in their search for a new career please use this as a stepping stone to guide you with your search.

"Knowledge of languages is the doorway to wisdom."



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