

Emergency Preparedness at the Master Apartments

Introduction

During the last couple of years, New York City has experienced Hurricane Sandy which severely impacted Lower Manhattan and devastated significant portions of Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island; residents and police officers have died from smoke inhalation in what should have been survivable fires, while other residents died in a gas explosion in East Harlem. The Master Apartments endured a serious water main break which took our boilers, elevators and water pumps out of service and numerous shareholders sustained. All of these incidents contain lessons for future preparedness, even if our risk level is different than that of other neighborhoods in the city.

The Master Apartments is fortunate to be situated in a non-evacuation zone for hurricanes and coastal flooding, <http://maps.nyc.gov/hurricane/>. However, its location at the bottom of a grade makes it particularly vulnerable to flooding from water main breaks or heavy rainfall that can overwhelm storm drains. Both of these situations have occurred, causing significant damage to our building's infrastructure and residents' belongings in basement storage units. Additionally we have been plagued with internal floods caused by burst pipes. We have greater exposure to high winds because of our location on Riverside Drive.

Some general preparedness considerations include:

- Communication – the building needs to have current home and work numbers, cell numbers, email addresses for all residents living in the building. If landlines are impacted and cellular phone circuits overloaded, text to cell phones may be the most effective means of communication. In a power outage, and with the inability to charge cell phones, landlines (but not cordless phones which require power) may be the most reliable.
- Special needs – inform Management both ahead of time and during an emergency if you need assistance because of lack of electricity, elevator service, heat or hot water, or water in general.

It is essential that each resident complete the Resident Information form on a yearly basis so that we have your current contact information and can contact you in the event of an emergency. We need to be able to update you regarding the status of essential services.

Should there be a disaster in another part of town where you work, after contacting family and friends, we would appreciate your calling the building switchboard, at 212-864-1700, to confirm that you are OK.

Key preparedness considerations for the most common hazards as well as links to more detailed information is listed on the following pages.

General Preparedness:

Water:	One gallon of water per person for 3 days. Consider filling bath tub for flushing of toilet.
Food:	Non-perishable foods - 3 day supply.
Lighting:	Battery-operated lanterns, flashlights
Cash on hand:	In case of power outage – ATMs may not work.

http://www.nyc.gov/html/oem/html/get_prepared/prepared_plan.shtml

http://www.nyc.gov/html/oem/html/get_prepared/supplies.shtml

<http://www.ready.gov/water>

Groups with Particular Needs

Children: Caring for Children in a Disaster
<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/children/>

Older Adults: Emergency Preparedness for Older Adults
<http://www.cdc.gov/aging/emergency/preparedness.htm>

Pets: Preparedness for Pets
<http://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/disaster-preparedness>

Fire Safety

Master Apartments history: The Master is fortunate to have had only 2 serious fires over the last 20 years; one caused by candles left burning unattended and the other caused by faulty installation of electrical wiring.

Key preparedness steps:

- Make sure your smoke/carbon monoxide (CO) detector is working at all times.
Change the battery, if not hard-wired, when you hear a slow intermittent beep.
- Building maintained fire extinguisher(s) are located on each floor.
Review the steps for operating these periodically so that in an emergency when you are under stress you are familiar with how to operate it.

Fire Safety Notice regarding Evacuation

If you are not in immediate proximity to the fire, the most significant threat is smoke inhalation.

Fire Evacuation Tips:

http://www.nyc.gov/html/fdny/pdf/rcny/rcny_form_fire_safety_notice_non_combustible.pdf

Hurricane/Flooding Preparedness/High Winds/Tornadoes

Hurricane season runs from June to October each year.

The Master Apartments is not in a hurricane/flood evacuation zone but heavy rains could cause local flooding and adversely impact building systems. Here's a link to a list of safety tips on hurricane preparedness.

http://www.nyc.gov/html/oem/html/hazards/storms_safetytips.shtml

If the hurricane travels slowly, flooding can occur.

- Store items in storage units in the basement in airtight containers to protect them from flooding.

High Winds/Tornadoes

Within the past couple of years, small tornadoes have touched down in Upper Manhattan. The high winds of hurricanes and storms pose additional threats. Secure or remove items from terraces. Following the storm:

- Enter Riverside Park with extreme caution if at all, as heavy rainfall and winds can loosen tree root structures, and trees can fall very quickly. A couple of deaths and head injuries occurred during Hurricane Sandy.

Preparedness for Disruptions of Utilities including Power Outages, Water, Gas, and Phone Service
Disruptions:

http://www.nyc.gov/html/oem/html/hazards/utilities_power.shtml

Earthquakes

Although the risk of an earthquake occurring in New York City is much smaller than in California and other states, there is a fault that runs across 125th Street and could cause an earthquake.

<http://www.ideo.columbia.edu/news-events/earthquakes-may-endanger-new-york-more-than-thought-says-study>

Preparedness Guide for Earthquakes

http://www.nyc.gov/html/oem/downloads/pdf/rny_earthquake.pdf

Information on Additional Hazards:

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/oem/html/hazards/hazards.shtml>