



FEMA

Technology To The Rescue

Tarrant County, TX – Disaster strikes without warning. While first responders do all within their power to handle emergencies efficiently, having additional information regarding the rescue mission can expedite the process. Fort Worth’s Emergency Management Department is currently equipped to rapidly supply accurate information about residents with disabilities.

The Special Needs Assistance Program (SNAP), which encourages online enrollment, provides Fort Worth’s emergency responders with vital information about residents with permanent disabilities, both adults and children. The elderly population is also targeted. Residents are encouraged to register annually with the Office of Emergency Management.

The program began in the mid 80s, which allowed residents to fill-out a paper form that was distributed by the city’s community partners, and the data was entered into a history file in our computer-aided dispatch system.

Through the years, the program was restructured several times with marginal success because, after a period of time, the data became unreliable and difficult to update in the computer-aided dispatch system. Due to advances in technology and a series of lessons learned from the 2004 power outage, flooding, and Katrina, the office decided to revamp the program again.

The database includes the resident’s name, gender, age, weight, address, primary language, emergency contact, and handicapping condition. Other information includes use of aids such as a walker/cane, crutches, a wheelchair, a guide dog, oxygen, or a life support system. Whether equipment requires an intermittent or continuous electrical supply is also noted. Space is provided for additional comments.

“It’s important that registrants know that their information is being obtained on a secured site and to know that our office is the only office with administrative rights to the data,” Moss said.

The website is in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which protects the rights of people with disabilities.

Online registration is preferred, and the program is user friendly; however, the Office of Emergency Management will continue to accept mail-ins from registrants.



Tarrant County,
Texas



Quick Facts

Sector:

Public

Cost:

Amount Not Available

Primary Activity/Project:

Education/Outreach/Public Awareness

Primary Funding:

Local Sources