



Neighbors Helping Neighbors: ‘What Could Be More Easton-like’?

The Easton First Selectman’s Office and the Easton Courier are teaming up to maintain and distribute a list of volunteers, goods and services to make it easier for Eastonites to help each other during storms or in other times of need.

The list would include everything from people who own chainsaws or heavy equipment, have generators and are able to help others charge their devices or store food, or people who are willing to help in countless other ways.

“One of the suggestions that came from a number of folks in town after the last storm was to set up a volunteer listing of people with certain skills or pieces of equipment who would be willing to help their neighbors,” First Selectman David Bindelglass said.

The First Selectman’s Office will compile the list and the Courier will publish it as a reminder before and during storms. **Please send an email with Easton Helping Hands in the subject to Janet Haller in the First Selectman’s Office at**

JHaller@eastonct.gov and copy **eastoncourierct@gmail.com**. The document will be continually updated.

“What could be more ‘Easton-like,’ where we look out for others in our community?” Bindelglass said. “If you have services to offer, please contact us.”

Easton’s Emergency Management Team met after Tropical Storm Isaias to assess the storm handling and plan for future weather events. The team’s approach took four prongs:

- First, better educate the public about storm preparedness.
- Second, improve communications both from Town Hall and with local cell phone carriers, and landline/internet providers. Restoring and maintaining cell service is a necessity.
- Third, repeat helpful information from town departments and the United Illuminating Company about preparation prior to each impending storm.
- Finally, provide a list of services provided by the town following the storm.

Most preparedness is common sense. Other areas of pre-storm preparation that should be considered include:

- Filling your bathtub and filling water bottles.
- Ensuring you have a sufficient supply of medications.
- Flashlights, lanterns and batteries should be accessible as well as a basic medical kit with supplies.
- Stock up on non-perishable food items.
- In the hours prior to a storm you may want to turn your refrigerator to its highest setting and fill any empty spaces with water bottles.
- Frozen water bottles will help maintain the temperature in your refrigerator or freezer. While logistically it is impossible for the town to provide dry ice as some have suggested, it can be purchased prior to an impending storm and works well to preserve frozen food.

- You can also use a gas grill to cook your food. An extra tank of propane will ensure you do not run out of gas.
- Don't forget to fill your car with fuel prior to a storm.
- Have portable power supplies for your electronic devices so you can easily recharge these devices.
- Never go near ANY downed utility lines (communication and power). Although they may appear dead, they can potentially be energized by a "back feed" from a generator or a circuit breaker may not have tripped. Preparation will help you and reduce the strain on emergency workers during these events.
- You should expect reverse 911 calls and information posted on the town website prior to and during storm conditions and recovery.
- The Easton Police Department Facebook page will provide information about road closures and updates to the extent possible.
- Town officials are working with cell phone carriers to minimize any disruption to

services in the future and continue to have intervenor status with the Public Utilities Regulatory Agency (PURA) proceeding with UI.

- UI and contractors have been removing trees that threaten power lines.
- When there are large power outages, the town will provide water via a hose at Town Hall as well as charging stations in the lobby of the Police Department.
- Stockpiling bottled water by the town, due to the rarity of storms is impractical, however, residents may wish to do so in their own home.
- The Easton Senior Center will be available as a warming or cooling center during storms. Showers will be available at Joel Barlow High School and limited capacity at Helen Keller School as well.