



News Release

Jewish Community Housing Corporation Promotes Senior Safety During Emergencies and Natural Disasters with “Storm Chaser” Program

All Four Senior Living Communities in Essex and Morris Counties Hosted Emergency Preparedness Seminars Residents and the Public

Approximately 250 residents plus family members and guests from local towns will be more prepared for natural disasters after attending the “Storm Chaser” programs sponsored by The Jewish Community Housing Corporation of Metropolitan New Jersey (JCHC). All four of the JCHC communities, located in West Orange, South Orange, and Whippany, N.J. held the events on October 29, 2013, in commemoration of the anniversary of Superstorm Sandy. The focus of the presentations was to help older adults prepare in advance for emergencies.

The events included free informational seminars to help older adults prepare for severe storms and extended power outages. An extensive selection of emergency supplies were available for purchase, including flashlights, portable LED lanterns, first aid and hygiene kits, hand-held can openers, battery-operated radios, and more. All attendees received information packets and small flashlights, and a Red Cross emergency backpack designed specifically for seniors was given away as a door prize.

As part of the program, members of the JCHC emergency management committee provided an overview of the committee’s initiatives and goals.

“The JCHC’s emergency management committee meets every month, and has added many initiatives and programs to assure our residents and the buildings remain safe,” said Laurie Loughney, COO of the JCHC. The committee is chaired by Terrence Roselle, Regional Facilities Director, who represents Jewish Federation Plaza in West Orange. Other members are Loughney, Superintendent Christopher Bailey of South Orange B’nai B’rith Federation House, Site Manager Cheryl Kasye of Village Apartments of the Jewish Federation, also in South Orange; and Mitchell Goldberg, Regional Director of Dining Services, who represents The Lester Senior Housing Community in Whippany.

Harold Colton-Max, CEO of the JCHC, said that, “Our site managers have comprehensive emergency plans and services in place so everyone remains ‘JCHC strong’ in the case of weather-related power outages and related situations. We were happy to be able to share our accumulated knowledge and experience with the seniors living in the wider community.”

Presenters were Sergeant Al DiEsso of the South Orange Police Department, Fire Chief Joe Cortright of the Whippany Fire Department, and Fire Official Matt Longo of the West Orange Fire Department. Key tips they shared were:

- The importance of stocking enough food and water for seven days as part of the emergency preparations
- Keep all medical history and medical lists clearly posted and visible for emergency personnel
- Who to contact in a life-threatening or other emergency outside of building management – police and fire departments, health departments, community centers, departments of public works
- Police departments are an integral part of emergency services and residents can call in the event of a non-police matter
- How to register a wheelchair-bound or other disabled person with the local police department or Office of Emergency Management

Site Manager Kasye of Village Apartments noted that many residents took the presenters’ advice to heart. In addition to purchasing emergency supplies, they are filling out medical forms to post on their refrigerators where first responders can easily find them. She also said there was a high level of interaction between attendees and presenters at the programs. This was echoed by Alex Gross, Administrator of The Lester Senior Housing Community.

“The presentations were well received by residents and the event created a great partnership between officials and the community. Feedback from the residents was that this was one of the most helpful educational programs we’ve had,” he said.

Village Apartments resident Sandy Lublin said, “This has made me aware of how little steps can help during a crisis. It is good that we can work together with management as a joint venture to keep us all safe.”

