

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

10-Jun-09

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Severe Weather Can Create Stressful Situations for People Affected by Alzheimer's disease

More than half-a-million Illinois citizens are impacted by Alzheimer's disease.

CHICAGO, IL---Recent severe weather conditions in Illinois have prompted the Alzheimer's Association – Greater Illinois Chapter to remind the public that loved ones with dementia will need extra help in the event of a weather related emergency.

Weather conditions during the summer months in Illinois can range from tornados, severe thunderstorms, flooding and many other extremes. All of these situations can significantly add to stress levels and cause confusion for people with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia. For people with moderate to severe Alzheimer's, stress and confusion can lead to risky and distressing behaviors, such as wandering off, agitation and surprising emotional outbursts.

"Currently in Illinois there are nearly 350,000 Alzheimer's/dementia Caregivers," Erna Colborn, president and ceo of the Greater Illinois Chapter. "It is imperative that your caregiving plan include what to do in the event of a weather related emergency. It is also important that you register your loved one with MedicAlert+Safe Return, a national database that will help reunite lost loved ones with their family and friends, available through our association."

If you know a disastrous situation is about to occur:

- Get yourself and the person with Alzheimer's to a safe place.
- Alert others (family, friends and medical team) you are relocating; give them contact information.
- Give the person's medical history, medications and physician information to someone other than the primary caregiver.
- Purchase extra medications.

Prepare an Alzheimer's-specific "emergency kit" that might include:

- Sturdy footwear with Velcro®
- Incontinence products
- Something familiar to hug (pillow, toy)
- Extra medications, eyeglasses
- A copy of the person's medical history, medications, insurance, Social Security card, power of attorney
- Contact information for physicians
- The Alzheimer's Association 24-hour Helpline number (800) 272-3900
- Favorite items or foods
- Recent photograph of the person

For more information call the Association's 24/7 Helpline at 1.800.272.3900 or visit www.alz.org/illinois.

About the Alzheimer's Association - The Alzheimer's Association, the world leader in Alzheimer research and support, is the largest voluntary health organization dedicated to finding prevention methods, treatments and cure for Alzheimer's. Since 1980, the donor supported, nonprofit Alzheimer's Association has provided reliable information and care consultation; created supportive services for families; increased funding for dementia research; and influenced public policy changes. **The Greater Illinois Chapter** serves 68 counties with offices in Bloomington, Carterville, Chicago, Joliet, Rockford and Springfield. For more information, call our Helpline at 800-272-3900 or visit www.alz.org/illinois.