

Martha Rust: Good afternoon. I'm glad and excited you could be with us today. You are in for a treat. We have Danny Housley presenting today. If this is your first time, welcome to Wired Wednesday: AT bits and bytes with TFL and WATAP. WATAP is the assistive technology program in Washington state. We joined forces at the beginning of this pandemic to conduct live AT demonstrations to assist individuals learning more about assistive technology. I know we are working remotely. So we want to do live demonstrations for individuals so that you know there's things that are out there.

As with anything, if there's something that you would like more information on or want a more one on one demonstration, we are here to help you. So you can contact us at our TFL number... [Reading from PowerPoint].

If you are in a different state -- we have had several people from out of state and other countries as well. You can get ahold of us and we can put you in contact with your state assistive technology program. If you're international we'll try to help you the best we can.

I'm going to pass this over to Danny. Before, if you have any questions, feel free to put them in the chat box below. I'll be monitoring that. There will be time for questions at the end and a brief survey we would love for you to fill out. Take it away, Danny.

>> Danny Housley: Good afternoon, everyone. Thank

you for joining us today. We're going to be talking about assistive technology for emergencies from preparation to planning and execution. So we're going to try to cover a wide range of things. Feel free to ask questions throughout in the chat box. I'm happy to answer as we go along. We will jump into it. I'm Danny Housley, I'm the assistive technology acquisition manager here at Tools for Life in Atlanta. This is an area that I've worked in in a few different capacities throughout the years. Preparing and getting ready and making sure people have the right supports they need during an evacuation or riding out a storm.

>> Martha Rust: Danny, I think we lost your audio.

>> Danny Housley: It just randomly muted itself. That is odd. All right. As I was saying, we often say begin with the end in mind. So know what you're planning for. This is important when it comes to assistive technology because you want to find something that's going to work well for you. It is the same when talking about emergency preparedness. You want to have the right tools when you need them.

So there's an image here of a stick figure getting ready to walk across the bridge and he's holding the missing piece to get to the platform that says goal on it. So getting AT is important to keep yourself safe.

So we look at planning for blue skies and beyond.

We have the clear good days where everything is, you know -- the sun is shining. This is when we do our planning. So we want to be prepared before something happens. So check things like your assistive technology, checking your supplies. Making sure you have enough water, medications, battery power. We want to make sure you have a good stock pile for when you need it. And then having a plan and contact strategy. So perhaps if you have a communication related disability. Plan for that. What if your device breaks or you're with someone who is a nonnative speaker of English. It's important to explore your options and experiment ahead of time. Knowing your local support agencies and services is important. Contacting -- every statement has emergency agency. They have apps with good resources on it. Getting to know the individuals that work for them so that you have a personal connection and one that you can have a say in the strategies that are being developed and also so you can plan for yourself or loved ones as well. Sometimes we just may not know what to do. What if a flood happens or if you're caught without power. What are those contingencies.

And then keeping important documents safe and ready to grab. Sometimes we talk about having a go folder with your insurance information, a laminated medication schedule, an inventory of your home for insurance claims. Lots of different things. So having that if you have to evacuate you can grab that document and you have your important papers with you and

important things for maintaining your safety going forward.

So some assistive technology considerations that you may want to keep in mind. There's an image to the right that's a portable battery pack. So power. What do you do if you lose power? Do you have a generator? Do you have a battery pack for your phones, communication needs? When it comes to generators, knowing how to use the generators safely. What happens too frequently is people will get a generator, but they don't have it in an area that's properly ventilated and that can lead to all kinds of problems. So we want to make sure that we have safe effective power solutions for our devices.

And then looking at are there low-tech solutions to use as a backup? I go to communication a lot because people that use those devices if it goes out, do you have a board or laser pointer or some way of communicating with individuals? When it comes to visual access, having a backup magnifier. And having laminated inventories and schedules and medications and equipment. It's important for insurance purposes if you're getting those items replaced and it's important if you have to maintain a medication schedule and you have trouble communicating the dosage and medications you need that that is all laid out in print for people providing that support. And then your equipment. Any assistive technology that you will need is important to advocate for even in evacuation system they need to bring your oxygen concentrator or your power

chair. Those are not things that a person should have to do without because as we stated in a lot of different presentations and as our friends for inclusive disaster strategies have stated civil rights do not get suspended because of an emergency.

So we're going to go into some apps for safety and independence. These are good solutions, most of which are free, that a person can have on their phone or tablet for both preparation and going through a situation.

So, when we look at weather apps, it's good to know what the conditions are in your area and how to plan for any unforeseen -- you can't plan for unforeseen things but any circumstances that may arise. When looking at weather apps, look at hyperlocal is best. Hyperlocal says looking at the weather in your city and even neighborhood to see what is going on. To track the progression of storms. It will give you things like the barometric pressure which is good for people with eye conditions and joint conditions. Some of those options -- we do have four icons here. The first is weather Underground. So that is crowd sourced. So people are updating that with information on their location. So you can search by your ZIP code and you can add to it and see what other people are saying is going on. In the upper-right hand corner is Dark Sky. That is an app Apple just acquired and it's the platform that their weather app is based on. It's another one of those apps that has a

crowd sourcing component to it because you can go in and say it says it's raining in my area but it's actually clear. So you can submit that. You can also choose to send data conditions that are around you that your phone is collecting via sensors. The lower left-hand corner is Hurricane Hound. That's to track the progression and strength and the trajectory of hurricanes. And finally is Carrot Weather. That's in the right-hand corner. It uses the dark sky platform as far as the data it pulls but it has a fun assistant that comes with it that you can set to varying degrees of ridiculousness based on your comedic preferences. It's a fun thing. All of these are free. The carrot weather app has paid features, but you can use it perfectly fine without any money. You can look at the built-in apps on your phone. Whether Android, iPhone, Black Berry. They do come with weather apps that are pretty good. Some of them use the same platforms like Dark Sky get that information. So that's important. You don't have to download a third-party app if you don't want to. You have built in solutions in your devices.

Next is the first aid American red cross app. I found this to be very good. There's an icon on the right that is the app icon for that app. They do have a COVID-19 highlight right now. So they have specific things for pandemic response. The focus is on preparedness. It's also on if you're encountering an emergency, you can look up information for your

local urgent cares, poison control, it has tips and advice videos on how to respond to situations. There's a good quiz section for testing your knowledge on wound treatment and if there's a minor accident that would require emergency services. So for little things around the house it's very good. This is a free app. You can also find your local hospitals as well. This is important for folks that may be in unfamiliar or rural locations so that you are being able to map an efficient route to respond to something.

Ice medical shield. This is for iOS and Android. You can put your health information and emergency contact in it. It will display on your lock screen. So if somebody taps that screen, it will have that available to them. You also have an option to order a physical card. So maybe if having it on your phone isn't the best choice, you can order a card that has that information as well as any drug allergies or anything that's pertinent to your disability for a first responder. There's also an auto insurance feature. So you can have your information there on your auto insurance as well. This is good. One feedback I have heard is some people don't like the aesthetic of having that. If you are getting ready for an evacuation, aesthetics go by the wayside.

The CDC app, the centers for disease control has an app full of good information. They do updates to that regularly. There is a news room with alerts and headlines. You

can look at travel notices. This goes into preparation. If you're getting ready to go to a place, let's see if there's advisories ahead of time. Any viral or bacterial outbreaks going on. For academics in the room, there's also a place for articles, academic and non-academic articles, as well as data on lots of different diseases, outbreaks and anything related to disease control and prevention.

Definitely check that out. Again, it's a free app and a great way of keeping informed and doing those planning.

Now, planning is very important when we look at urban versus rural locations. There are a lot of different barriers to those two environments. They can be great but very daunting. When you look at cell phone access, those are not always givens in rural communities. If you live in the mountains or out in the South Georgia, you may not have a cell phone. Your primary contact may be a land line. Broadband access is not a given either. Somebody may be relying on -- some people are still using dial up internet. Some people are using things that rely on home phone access or something that's satellite based. So keeping those things that people in urban locations sometimes take for granted -- knowing you're able to use a cell phone, knowing you're able to e-mail or Facebook to contact friends or whatever service. Access to food can be difficult. Again, in some urban settings you don't really see as many food deserts but when you look at rural communities it

may take 30 minutes to get to a grocery store or some place to get provisions.

You may not have delivery services in those kind of locations. So your proximity to neighbors may be vast depending on where you are in the country. You know, not everybody's neighbor is a few feet away. Sometimes you may have to drive a few miles up the road. When you look at service outages as well -- maybe a tree or several trees have fallen across a power line it could take weeks to get power restored. That will impact your ability to go to the grocery store, to maintain food provisions. So that's when you need to look at things like the generator. Looking at things whether you require attendant care to do some of those activities for daily living. There's a lot of things that have to be taken into account and that urban versus rural divide is vast. Especially for people with disabilities. So transportation. Just being able to get out of your area is something to keep in mind. So having backup plans for contacting individuals. Some people I know in rural communities use CV radios; they use walkie-talkies with a longer range to keep in touch. That may be for people you're supporting or even for yourself. I'm sure we have people from all over on this call.

Some of those considerations that we may take for granted who live in an urban setting but have friends and family who have looked at a lot of different barriers. Even

waste management. Taking your garbage out is not something that people have to take their own trash out to a collection site. So keep that in mind.

Next I want to transition into looking at hardware for safety. First, I'll talk about the Apple watch. This is an item I use every day. Something new is the hand washing timer. It will count down from 20 seconds and give you a tap on the wrist to let you know when you reach your 20 second mark. This is something good for somebody who may need extra reinforcement who need multimodal inputs. It will give you an alert when you get home to wash your hands. It also has a hard fall detection on it as well. From the series 5 and up they have a hard fall. So if you fall, you have 60 seconds to respond to your watch. It will tap you on the wrist and play a sound and start counting down from 60. If you don't respond within 60 seconds it will call emergency services and call a contact you designate saying you have experienced an emergency. I had a fall coming out of my polling place. The hard fall detection was seconds away from texting my friend and calling emergency services. It has an SOS feature. So if you are feeling uncomfortable. If you're in an environment where you may need services you can press a button on the side of your watch, and it will contact emergency services. It has hands free usability. You can control it with your voice. You can get alerts from different devices. If you have a smart home and

your carbon monoxide detector it will alert you. So there's a picture here of a person washing their hands with the hand washing timer counting down.

Next is the epic ID. It's a USB device you wear around your wrist. It comes with emergency forms. You can put in allergies, supports you may need, emergency contacts. It's both Mac and PC compatible. It's a silicone band. Most people don't have skin reactions by using it. You can adjust it to be smaller if you have small wrists. This is a neat device. You just plug it into your computer, load the forms and you're good to go. It has the red cross on it so emergency services will be able to identify that that's a medical device.

Some low-tech solutions. I have four things here. The upper-left hand corner is a communication board. Upper-right hand corner is from the CDC. It's a graphic that you can put in the bath room for those who need the extra reinforcement of the steps of washing their hands. It has images and words and it's colorful -- left hand is medication management. Then the lower right-hand corner has a magnifier. This can help people see if people are around and acclimate to their environment.

A portable ramp is something to consider investing in. Some of the portable ramps are pretty affordable and adjustable. Most go 2 to 3 steps. You can get them longer. There's a variety of styles. The one pictured here has a good

traction on it. It has asphalt sand paper grit to it so if a person is walking or rolling up the ramp that they will have friction to be able to get the traction that they need.

They're easy to store. You can keep these in your closet, basement, in the car. It's very useful for evacuations because sometimes you may be evacuated to a place that is not accessible. Although the burden is on them to provide accessibility it's always good to have a backup plan. These are also light weight.

The last thing I want to touch on because we're approaching time is where to find assistance and information. First I want to give a shout out to the partnership for inclusive disaster strategies. They have a good resource online. They also have a resource line that is manned 24/7. So if you're experiencing an emergency or if you're in a disaster, they can direct you to the proper resources in your area and provide support. You can visit their website disasterstrategies.org to learn more about them. Also FEMA and your state emergency management agencies are important. If you go to FEMA.gov you can get in touch with them. Then we have the CDC.gov website. They have lots of useful information. All kinds of information that are centered around preparedness for diseases and bacterial outbreaks. With that we're at 2:56 and I'm happy to answer any questions or comments. We covered a lot in a short amount of time. I will give you a moment to digest

and ask any questions.

>> Martha Rust: Thank you, Danny. That was so helpful to note. I love to know that things are updating. Like your Apple watch to count to 20. I noticed on my iPhone I have an exposure notification that is updated within one of the new things within Apple. And it gives you alerts if you want them on. Specifically for the time of COVID. I don't see any questions yet. Tori, do you mind throwing up -- before we leave, we ask you if you would take a few seconds to click on the survey. Tori has posted the survey link. We will see you in 2 weeks for our next Wired Wednesday. Thank you so much, Danny.

>> Danny Housley: Thank you.