



STATE OF MARYLAND

DHMH

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

201 W. Preston Street • Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Martin O'Malley, Governor – Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor – Joshua M. Sharfstein, M.D., Secretary

June 12, 2013

**To:** Home Oxygen Providers

**From:** Sherry Adams, Director of the Office of Preparedness and Response

**Power Loss and Home Oxygen**

During recent emergencies, individuals on home oxygen have had issues acquiring additional supplies after extended power outages. Their usual mechanism for acquiring more oxygen is not available. To combat this issue, DHMH has taken several steps to ensure that Maryland residents aren't without aid. During an emergency, if an individual reports that their power-dependant compressor or oxygen is running low and their usual supplier isn't available, we want to provide them with a nearby vendor they can contact to get resupplied. This way, they will not need a transport to a hospital or shelter.

If there is a statewide emergency declaration, DHMH will request that the insurance commissioner issue a waiver so that these individuals can restock their oxygen supply even if they aren't eligible for a refill yet. If there is an insurance waiver issued, we will notify you with the details so that your customers can resupply as soon as possible. In order to meet this challenge, we will compile a list of home oxygen suppliers. The list will contain the locations of your facilities and emergency contact information that we can provide home oxygen patients.

We request that home oxygen companies assist with our efforts to ensure these residents are prepared. Please provide emergency preparedness messaging to your customers. For general storm preparedness, DHMH provides a wealth of information that can be taken directly from our website: <http://dhmh.maryland.gov/SitePages/storm1.aspx>.

We will be contacting you all in the near future to join us on a conference call to discuss these issues.