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MEMBER

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- In Case of an
Emergency
- Announcement
- Disbribution of this
Newsletter

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IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY

Oast & Hook recently experienced a situation that brought home the importance of carrying emergency contact information in your wallet or purse. Last weekend an elderly woman fell in the public courtyard near Oast & Hook's Portsmouth office. She was bleeding from a cut to the head, and she needed stitches. Although the firm called the paramedics, the woman refused to go with them to the hospital. At first she said she had no one to contact, but then she found in her purse a list that had outdated telephone numbers. Oast & Hook's administrator, Sandra Buhr, drove the woman to the emergency room and waited with the woman until she could contact someone from her church.

If a person has a cell phone, then it's easy to list people one would like to have contacted in the event of an emergency. Many people indicate their emergency contact information under the entry "ICE" (an acronym for "In Case of Emergency") and then list the person's name and telephone number. This is an excellent idea, and every cell phone user should identify the user's emergency contacts. This is important because an individual could, for example, have an elderly parent's phone number in the contact list for convenience, but the individual would not want the parent to be the first one contacted in the event of an emergency. An e-mail circulated a few years ago reported that that using the ICE entry could result in viruses being passed to cell phones or premium charges being billed to the phone; this was proven to be a hoax.

Many people, however, do not have cell phones, particularly the elderly. Further, cell phones can be lost, damaged, or emergency medical personnel may not have the time or the ability to access the contact list. As a result, everyone should have an up-to-date listing of the emergency contact numbers in their wallet or purse. This is why Oast & Hook provides every client who executes an Advance Medical Directive (AMD) with a wallet card that includes the telephone numbers of the agents under the AMD. This also serves as an emergency notification card.

The Department of Homeland Security website (www.ready.gov) has many downloadable publications for emergency preparedness. The publications include preparation for older Americans, persons with disabilities, and pets. One publication includes a family emergency plan and a page with wallet cards at www.ready.gov/america/_downloads/familyemergencyplan.pdf. Because Oast & Hook believes this is a critical resource, the *Elder Law News* has attached the wallet card page to this edition. Families should ensure that each member of their family, from children to seniors, has a current wallet card available.

Oast & Hook's attorneys are available to assist clients and their families with integrated planning services, including estate, financial, insurance and long-term care planning.

Announcement

The elder law firm of Oast & Hook is holding a Social Workers' and Administrators' breakfast. This breakfast is designed for professionals who work closely with elderly individuals and their families. It will be held on November 13, 2007, and is entitled: "The Importance of General Durable Powers of Attorneys and Advance Medical Directives." You will find this to be an informative breakfast that will address issues facing your patients or clients, and will provide an opportunity to network with other professionals. For more information, please contact Linda Gerber at 757-967-9704.

Distribution of This Newsletter

Oast & Hook encourages you to share this newsletter with anyone who is interested in issues pertaining to the elderly, the disabled and their advocates. The information in this newsletter may be copied and distributed, without charge and without permission, but with appropriate citation to Oast & Hook, P.C. If you are interested in a free subscription to the *Elder Law News*, then please e-mail us at eln@oasthook.com, telephone us at 757-399-7506, or fax us at 757-397-1267.

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Ready

Family Emergency Plan



Prepare. Plan. Stay Informed.

Make sure your family has a plan in case of an emergency. Fill out these cards and give one to each member of your family to make sure they know who to call and where to meet in case of an emergency.

ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS & INFORMATION:

Family Emergency Plan 

EMERGENCY CONTACT NAME: _____
TELEPHONE: _____

OUT-OF-TOWN CONTACT NAME: _____
TELEPHONE: _____

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING PLACE: _____
TELEPHONE: _____

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION: _____

DIAL 911 FOR EMERGENCIES 

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