



# MISSION PRESBYTERY

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BETTER TOGETHER

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## **Disaster Preparedness Guidelines & MISSION PRESBYTERY DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND ASSISTANCE PLAN**

Created by  
**MISSION PRESBYTERY DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND  
ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE (DPAC)**

**Definition of Disaster:**  
An event that exceeds the resources of the local community  
to address

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# Presbytery's Disaster Preparedness & Response Plan (including General Council and Sessions)

## Statement of Purpose

This Disaster Preparedness & Response Plan establishes guidelines and provides tools for Mission Presbytery in the preparation of and response to disasters that occur within its boundaries.

Disaster preparedness and timely response is essential for the protection of lives and property as well as mitigating the sense of loss and hopelessness in the aftermath of a disaster. Assisting affected individuals, groups, and churches through disasters witnesses to the love and healing of Jesus Christ and builds up the resiliency of the body of Christ.

In addition, the Plan supports partnerships and participation in long-term operational response for disasters within and beyond the Presbytery by using available resources.

Mission Presbytery Churches should use this plan as a guide when preparing their own individual disaster plans to guide emergency actions prior to, during and after any emergency. Pre-planning is the key to being ready for any disaster. The steps taken before and immediately after an event will have a positive effect on the members of your congregation. Many hazards do not lend themselves to prior notice. Therefore, this plan will address both prior-notice events and no-notice events. Realizing that each of our member churches is different, this document provides guidance to help you formalize your individual plans. Each of your plans should include the major components of this plan while adding any additional procedures that your individual church feels necessary. In addition, use of this plan as a guide will help standardize the Presbytery's approach. There are online forms within this document that will help with your compiling of data for your church and help Mission Presbytery in the compilation of data needed to serve the 66 counties in our geographic region. Simply stated, this plan defines the roles and procedures that will enable the Presbytery to:

- 1. Identify existing individual and corporate resources** within the Presbytery congregations that can be applied to disaster preparedness, mitigation and response.
- 2. Build individual and corporate resources** in the Presbytery congregations to assist in disaster preparedness, mitigation and response.
- 3. Link individual and corporate resources** in the Presbytery congregations to meet humanitarian needs of human-caused and natural disasters and reduce vulnerability of people to future potential disasters.

**4. Offer aid to those most vulnerable** by identifying individuals needing assistance and mapping their locations before a crisis occurs.

### **Situational Environment**

The offices of Mission Presbytery and its congregations are situated in areas that could sustain damage, irreversible changes, or destruction due to natural and human caused disasters such as: fires, floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, ice storms, drought, epidemics, hazardous material spills, technological failures, environmental contamination, major accidents, and acts of terrorism or war.

## **Cycle of Disaster Preparedness & Response**

The Plan provides a comprehensive (full spectrum), integrated (multi-faceted), and flexible(needs-based) set of guidelines for pastoral leadership and mission response before, during, and after a disaster.

### **PRE-DISASTER**

- Pre-Disaster Training
- Strategic Disaster Planning
- Assessment

### **DISASTER - Impact/Rescue/Recovery**

- Implement Strategic Disaster Plan
- Assessment
- Contact PDA
- Traditional Psychological Interventions
- Aid Emergency Responders
- Liaison and Advocacy Interventions
- Spiritual Interventions: Prayer, Ministry of Presence, Pastoral Crisis Intervention
- Religious Interventions: Worship, Rituals, Sacraments, Theological Interpretation/Education

### **POST DISASTER - Reconstruction**

- Assessment
- Traditional Psychological interventions
- Liaison and Advocacy Interventions
- Long Term Recovery, Reconstruction
- Spiritual Interventions: Prayer, Ministry of Presence, Pastoral Crisis Intervention
- Religious Interventions: Worship, Rituals, Sacraments, Theological Interpretation/Education
- Referral, as necessary

# Presbytery Disaster Response Protocol

## HURRICANE/DISASTER IMMEDIATE RESPONSE PROTOCOL

### Immediately prior to an event (2 days)

- Broadcast fax and e-mail to church offices a pastoral letter and the protocol.
- Presbytery office takes steps to prepare for alternate location if necessary.
- Presbytery staff and DPAC share proposed shelter location arrangements (where will they go if unable to stay at home or church).
- **During any event, take actions for yours and others safety.**

### During

### Be Safe

### Immediately following an event

- Presbytery staff, Disaster Recovery Coordinator, and the Disaster Preparedness & Assistance Committee (DPAC) are in touch with each other.
- Initial calls are made by unaffected members of DPAC leadership team.
- General Presbyter/Stated Clerk/Disaster Recovery Coordinator will make pastoral visits to pastors of affected churches as soon as safe and possible.
- The 1st or 2nd contact person from each affected church will call the Presbytery office to give initial assessment to DPAC of their church, staff, and congregation.
- **48 hours (the 2nd day) after a storm** at 3:00 p.m. (the first church listed is the primary location; if damage prohibits, the secondary location will serve as host), all pastors (if there is no pastor the clerk of session or 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> person should attend) and regional reps in the affected area will meet at one of the following:
  - ▶ Victoria Region
    - Grace Presbyterian Church, Victoria, Tx (Primary)
    - FPC Cuero, Tx (Secondary)
  - ▶ Corpus Christi Region
    - Parkway Presbyterian Church, Corpus Christi, Tx
    - FPC Beeville, Tx
  - ▶ Rio Grande Valley Region
    - FPC McAllen, Tx
    - FPC Brownsville, Tx
  - ▶ Hill Country Region
    - FPC Kerrville, Tx
    - St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, Marble Falls, Tx
  - ▶ Austin Region
    - Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Austin, Tx
    - FPC Georgetown, Tx
  - ▶ San Antonio Region
    - Presbytery Office, San Antonio, Tx
    - New Braunfels Presbyterian Church, New Braunfels, Tx

- To check-in with a coordinator from the Committee leadership team, talk about next steps, and pray.
- **72 hours (3 days) after an event**, members and others who are concerned, can join a conference/Zoom call with the Presbytery for debriefing, prayer, and beginning recovery work. A Zoom Call announcement will be sent out designating time and date.

**Be Pastoral** – you may be anxious, but many of the people you are working with have lost family members and their homes.

## General Presbyter:

1. Over sees establishment of Disaster Preparedness & Response Plan
2. Presents budget to General Council
3. Appoints Disaster Preparedness Coordinator
4. Reviews Disaster Preparedness & Response Plan annually
5. Staffs Disaster Control Center at the Presbytery office during normal office hours
6. Directs the Disaster Control Center to relocate from the Presbytery office to an alternate location in order to continue operations if the office is directly impacted by a disaster
7. Acts as spokesperson for the Presbytery with all media
8. Provides ministry of presence to pastors and congregations in affected areas as soon as possible
9. Requests Presbyterian Disaster Assistance support, as needed
10. Decides, in consultation with General Council, to transition from a Disaster Control Center to a Call Center operation for long-term recovery and reconstruction activities within the Presbytery and participating with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance as necessary
11. Requests, in consultation with General Council, chaplains and retired ministers to augment the Presbytery's disaster response as needed
12. Participates in opportunities for worship leadership with the impacted community(s)

## General Council:

1. Reviews after-action reports of disasters to determine the effectiveness of available resources and Plan implementation to meet the Presbytery's and congregations' needs
2. In times of crisis will function with the Presbytery's **Disaster Preparedness & Assistance Committee** to coordinate;
  - Supports development of disaster resources for churches' training and preparation



- Establishes criteria for designated offerings disbursements during and after disasters
- Establishes criteria for disbursement or classification of leftover designated funds
- Coordinates with the Pastoral Care Committee and Committee on Ministry to provide care and support to ministers during and immediately following a disaster
- Coordinates with the Pastoral Care Committee and the Committee on Ministry to activate chaplains and retired ministers to augment the Presbytery's disaster response efforts
- Requests the Pastoral Care Committee to recommend worship options for churches inaccessible and/or damaged beyond immediate use as well as churches without pastoral leadership due to the disaster
- Encourages participation in religious observances within the impacted community(s)
- Decides, in consultation with the General Presbyter, to transition from a Disaster Control Center to a Call Center operation for long-term recovery and reconstruction activities within the Presbytery and participating with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance as necessary

## **Disaster Preparedness & Assistance Committee (DPAC):**

1. Works with the General Presbyter to maintain awareness of disaster preparedness with the churches, members, and communities.
2. Creates a budget to maintain equipment, facilities, and training to support the Presbytery and Synod Network
3. Administer the Mission Presbytery Preparedness Guidelines and the data that comes from the Congregation Survey and Church Preparedness Checklist
4. Review Disaster Preparedness & Response Plan annually
5. Staffs Disaster Control Center as applicable
6. Work with and through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance
7. Reviews after-action reports of disasters to determine the effectiveness of available resources and plan implementation to meet the Presbytery's and congregations' needs
8. Maintain relationships with local Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), Long Term Recovery Groups (LTRG), and other faith-based organizations
9. Develop relationships with corporations, Non-Profit Organizations (NPO), and governmental agencies
10. Support development of disaster resources for churches' training and preparation
11. Work within your region to help promote the Guidelines in the church and community
12. In times of crisis act to help those in need;
  - Work with General Council to disburse designated offerings during and after disasters

- Help establishes criteria for disbursement or classification of leftover designated funds
- With the Disaster Recovery Coordinator organize volunteers to help in the disaster area
- Listen to Disaster Preparedness & Assistance Teams on the ground and other volunteers to assist in coordinating equipment, people, and facilities.

## **Disaster Preparedness & Assistance Teams (DPAT):**

*Are made up of at least four people and are divided into teams specializing in fire, flood, hurricane, tornado, and manmade disasters. Team members must be trained.*

1. Advise DPAC on best practices for preparation, response, and recovery
2. Help with training in congregations and communities
3. Know how to use equipment supplied by the Presbytery for response and recovery
4. Respond to crisis situations as deemed by General Presbyter and Disaster Recovery Coordinator
5. Promote disaster preparedness
6. Help set up facilities in coordination with local congregations to host first responders and emergency volunteers

## **Disaster Recovery Coordinator (DRC):**

1. Reports to the General Presbyter
2. Develops Disaster Preparedness & Response Plan and budget
3. Coordinates with churches and sessions developing local disaster preparedness plans
4. Staffs Disaster Control Center after Presbytery's normal office hours
5. Maintains resources needed for the Disaster Control Center's operation
6. Keeps informed of responses by and participates in forums with interfaith agencies
7. Keeps informed of responses by and participates in forums with disaster management agencies
8. Recruits and trains churches' Disaster Preparedness & Response Representatives
9. Provides communications and information for the webpage, newsletters, e-mails, Minutes for Missions, Cluster and Presbytery Meetings
10. Provides periodic assessments to General Presbyter
11. Assists preparing for opportunities of religious observances for the impacted community(s)
12. Staffs the Presbytery's Call Center, if activated, and participating with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance operations within the Presbytery
13. Advise churches on ways to harden facilities to best survive future disasters

## **Presbytery's Disaster Control Center:**

1. Maintains a control center log of events, contacts, maps, changes, and communications
2. Utilizes the appropriate checklists for specified disasters
3. Establishes and maintains regular communication updates with Presbytery staff, Disaster Preparedness Coordinator, and churches in path of disaster
4. Maintain roster of pastors and stay-in-place or evacuation status
5. Receives home, church, and community damage reports from pastors

## **Church Disaster Preparedness & Response Representatives:**

1. Appointed by their respective sessions
2. Assists their church in establishing a disaster preparedness & response plan
3. Coordinates with local/county emergency management operations and Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD)
4. Attends local disaster preparedness training
5. Provides pastoral care to individuals, families and churches
6. Physically checks on facility damage and reports back to the Disaster Control Center
7. Contacts Disaster Preparedness Coordinator to assist with plan development, training, or Minute for Mission opportunities
8. Participates in local religious observances in the impacted community(s)

## **Sessions or Church Disaster Preparedness & Response Teams:**

1. Appoints and works with their Church Disaster Preparedness & Response Representative
2. Develops local church disaster plan
3. Maintains emergency data form on individuals and pastor(s)
4. Monitors who is going to shelter in-place and who will evacuate
5. Assesses physical needs of congregational members
6. Informs the Disaster Control Center of church shelter capabilities
7. Supports pastor(s) responding to the needs of community survivors
8. Plans and responds according to local emergency management operations requirements
9. Enables the pastor(s) to spiritually support members and the community
10. Determines what programs and services may be reduce, relocated, or temporarily stopped
11. Backs-up church data on a remote server and/or portable storage located offsite
12. Safeguards titles, deeds, membership, minutes, and funds
13. Plans for disruptions in utility service and how to access financial resources

14. Knows what the church's insurance policy does and does not cover
15. Teams up with other church organizations to avoid duplication of efforts
16. Plans religious observances, worship, rituals for the needs of the impacted community(s)
17. Communicates to Presbytery structural, financial, emotional, and spiritual needs

## **Congregation/Pastor Responsibilities:**

1. Key people in the congregation should have a similar plan as Presbytery above.
  - Send out information to the congregation.
  - Alternate location for operation.
  - Where they will be if evacuated – contact information, etc.
2. Have a plan (such as a buddy system by deacons) for your most vulnerable members, i.e. who will contact them to make sure they are okay.
3. 24, 48, and 72 hours after a storm at 5:00 p.m., members who can will meet at the church for prayer, check in, communication, coordination, and need sharing.
4. ASAP, either the pastor or **Director of Disaster Preparation and Response** will call 210-826-3296 to let the Presbytery staff know how you are.
5. **Resources Coordinator** of a particular congregation will begin its triage (secure its building ASAP). Also, your records should be put in the “**Cloud**” or on a “**Jump Drive**” for access anywhere.
6. As soon as possible, hold a church staff meeting.
7. As soon as possible, the Moderator of Session will call a Session meeting.

# **PRESBYTERY ESSENTIAL CONTACT INFORMATION**

Mission Presbytery  
210-826-3296

Sallie Watson, General Presbyter  
(210) 974-9753(cell)  
presbyter@missionpby.org

Tricia Tedrow, Stated Clerk  
(505) 716-0096  
statedclerk@missionpby.org

Ed Sackett, Disaster Recovery Coordinator  
(407) 344-7477  
drc@missionpby.org

Melody Gonzalez, Office Manager  
(210) 483-0385  
[missionpby@missionpby.org](mailto:missionpby@missionpby.org)

# Situations, Assumptions and Types of Disasters

## **Fabricated Hazards we might expect to encounter:**

Individual plans need to address a wide range of human-caused and natural disasters – including incidents related to fires, coastal storms, floods, earthquakes, severe thunderstorms and tornadoes, security incidents, pandemics, public violence, terrorism, chemical explosions, transportation accidents, hazardous waste spills, as well as hurricanes.

Initially, it may seem that such a wide range of potential disasters makes prior planning an impossible task. However, many disasters have similar preparatory and post-hazard responses.

Identifying your actions and completing a local plan will considerably increase your congregation's quality of life during and after **any** disaster. It will reduce your burden by helping you to identify the necessary actions and complete the corresponding tasks with a minimum of problems. Creating, implementing and maintaining a disaster plan are the most important acts of stewardship you will ever work on. Positive pre-planning can help save your church assets. However, in the execution of your plan, remember that people are far more important than facilities. Your plan should cover both church assets and the safety of church members.

# Understanding Disasters - the Scope of the Problem

Disasters are considered to have three basic phases, (1) Before, (2) During, and (3) After the disaster. However, the following presents a more complete picture.

## Phases of Disaster and Response

Phase 1. Blue Skies/Anticipation/Warning

Phase 2. Impact/Emergency

Phase 3. Aftermath/Inventory

Phase 4. Relief/Remedy

Phase 5. Recovery/Reconstruction

Every planning model must consider two factors. The first is **people**; your plan must prepare your congregation for a disaster, as well as help them to survive and then recover. The second factor is **property**. Every disaster plan must help prepare your facilities to meet a disaster and help them to recover as quickly as possible after the disaster has ended. This planning model is based upon the above criteria and addresses the five phases of a disaster. In addition, at each phase, the model helps you to plan to meet the needs of your congregation and your facility.

## Applying This Plan to Your Church

Your first task as a congregation is to determine who will develop, implement and maintain your individual plan. One approach could be to develop a committee/task force. Whatever approach you take, the session should ensure an annual review of the plan and appropriate updates.

The checklists should be tailored to meet your needs and requirements. Members of the Presbytery Disaster Preparedness and Assistance Committee are available to advise your team.

# Disaster Preparedness & Response Plan

## INTRODUCTION

1. Purpose: To establish and manage disaster preparedness and response protocols that will effectively mitigate disasters affecting our church parishioners and campus.
2. This plan seeks to:
  - **Equip our staff**, congregation and presbytery with the necessary information, training and preparation to protect themselves and the church campus.
  - **Identify means of contact** in the immediate aftermath of a disaster and identify the immediate needs of the parishioners.
  - **Provide protocols for identification** and arrangements for appropriate individuals, parties, or agencies to address spiritual, emotional, and physical needs arising out of a disaster.
  - **Establish budgets** and mitigation efforts to secure the campus. Develop alternative communication systems.
  - **Identify human and physical resources** and prepare contingency plans to deploy these resources to assist staff and parishioners in a disaster event.
  - **Organize, select and train** preparation and response personnel, determine who is in charge (The Pastor should not be that person), and decide who will activate the protocols.
  - **Recognize that response and recovery do not take place in a vacuum.** Proactively contact and cooperate with your local response agencies. Do not attempt to perform the work of first responders such as police, firefighters, EMTs, etc. During an event coordinate with all local organizations that are involved in emergency response.

## ORGANIZATION

This section should define the organizational structure your church has established to manage the Disaster Preparation and Response Plan. **During emergencies, you will not have time to call a meeting of a committee to take this action.** A fundamental need in time of a disaster is to have in place a trained organization:

- That will react immediately to the situation.
- That is empowered to make critical decisions regarding actions to be taken.

It is important to establish in advance which persons are empowered to activate your plan and who will be the media spokesperson for your church. These individuals must have designated backups. That includes a Director of Disaster Preparation and Response who is charged with overall development, operation, and continuing maintenance of your plan. Also, appoint a team that helps develop and maintain a plan for your church. Many large churches have two trained individuals in each of the three assignments that follow,



medium sized congregations should have one in each position and smaller congregations might choose to split the responsibilities between two people:

### **1. Director of Disaster Preparation and Response**

This position:

- Serves as Chairperson of the overall team.
- Schedules and plans meetings.
- Schedules and plans trainings.
- Recruits coordinators.
- Ensures team readiness.
- Liaisons with established disaster relief groups.

### **2. Disaster Volunteer Coordinator**

This position:

- Conducts skills and talent survey.
- Develops a database of volunteers / skills.
- Identifies members needing special assistance and pairs them with members, or their backups, responsible for maintaining contact.
- Develops a communications chain and arranges for its activation.

### **3. Resources Coordinator** (should be a member of the property committee)

This position:

- Conducts inventory of facilities, supplies and equipment.
- Maintains supplies in good order and replenishes as necessary.
- Review insurance policy, making sure coverage is adequate, up to date, and comprehensive.
- Coordinates communications to the congregation regarding the use of facilities and equipment with the Director.
- Responsible for triage of facilities immediately after an event.

**(These three positions in the church are not only the administrators of the disaster plan for the congregation, they are the primary liaison with the community and presbytery during a crisis)**

# PREPAREDNESS ACTION PHASES

As members of the church fill out the **Congregation Information Survey**, and the session and Disaster Team complete the **Church Preparedness Checklist** (both are in Phase 1), the data and information needed to prepare for and respond to a disaster will start to come together. This is a very comprehensive document and at first glance can seem imposing, but if worked on one section at a time it will be manageable.

The better prepared the church and the individual members are for a crisis, the better the chance of survival and the easier it will be to aid in the rescue phase and ease your recovery. This process is only as good as the data that is entered. The more data that is entered by each member the easier it will be to help them during their time of need and allow the Presbytery to contact those with special skills and equipment to come together to help one another. **We are Better Together.**

# PHASE 1: Blue Skies Overview

This phase covers the period before a disaster is identified up to the point a disaster begins. During this phase, advanced planning and preparedness steps will be put into action. With advanced planning you will have built a database of information and made decisions on how you will handle each situation. Checklists should be developed to cover all known tasks so your plans can be accomplished more effectively.

## Congregational Tasks in Organizing a Disaster Preparation and Response Plan:

- **Determine** who will develop and implement your plan.
- **Review** this checklist and “tweak” it to meet the needs of your church.
- **Use** the “tweaked” checklist and other documents to meet your needs and requirements.
- **Contact** members of the Presbytery **Disaster Preparedness & Assistance Committee** through the Presbytery office.
- **Educate, train, and prepare** your congregation on how to prepare for a disaster; it’s a matter of life or death.
- **Identify** those in your congregation who will need assistance in escaping the perils of a disastrous situation and encourage them to develop their personal plan.
- **Network** with community authorities and organizations as you plan.

## Preparing Your People

1. **Determine and review the needs of each member.** The **Congregation Information Survey** below can be used to determine members’ individual needs, talents, and other special information necessary for complete planning. Use local/county resources to register parishioners with special needs programs so those members can receive assistance prior to a disaster whenever possible. Include the link to the needs assessment in the information completed by each new member as he/she joins the church. **See Congregation Information Survey Form below**
2. **Map each congregant’s home and develop small groups** based upon residential location (**Phase 1 Congregation Information Survey**). These small groups should know their make-up and establish a phone chain. This phone chain and alternate communications should be able to be activated from top down and/or bottom up. Some congregations might already have this through their Deacons, if so it needs to be made available to the Disaster Volunteer Coordinator. **See Member Grouping and Mapping below.**
3. **Each small group should have a designated leader** who will be tasked with(a)calling and/or visiting all members of the group after a disaster, and then(b)reporting their findings to the Volunteer Coordinator. Assign a second person as backup. If possible, have group leaders call their members prior to the disaster to

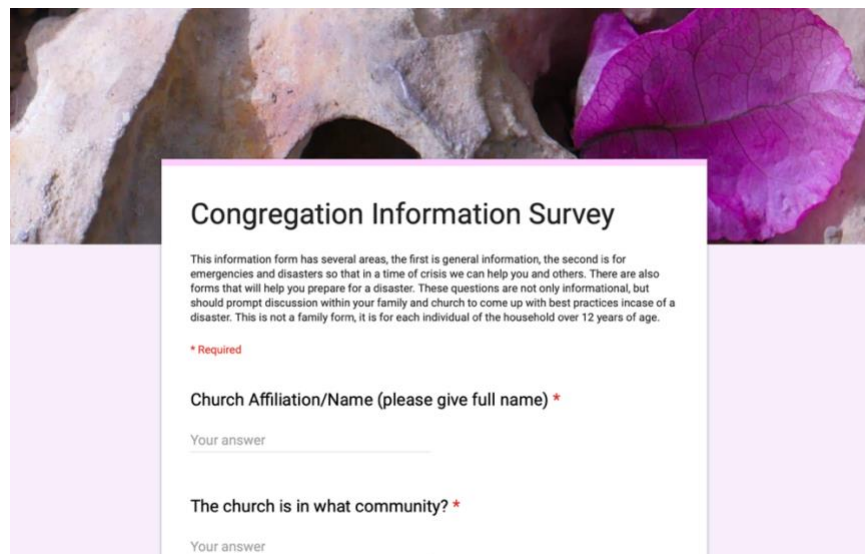
check on preparations and reassure them they have not been forgotten. Members of the group should keep their group leader informed of their situations. This could be a responsibility of the Deacons.

4. **Identify volunteers with special talents and equipment**, from the **Congregation Information Survey**, who can be called upon to respond after a disaster. Use this information to develop groups of volunteers ready to assist church members with specific short-term needs (i.e. debris cleanup, temporary repairs, etc.) (**Phase 1 Congregation Information Survey**)
5. **Offer disaster planning to church members and the community.** Distribute locally/nationally prepared materials helpful for each household to meet disaster needs. (Such preparation should include identification of a “saferoom” within the home and a specific meeting place outside the home where family members can gather.) Encourage parishioners with pets to **build their pets’ needs into their disaster planning.**
6. **Invite local and county agencies to present preparedness workshops,** Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) are available to help with this training. These should be geared to the needs of individual church members and those serving in an official capacity. A course in basic **First Aid, Stop the Bleed** and **CPR** should be provided annually (Check with your local CERT of Red Cross). **See TRAINING below for other organizations.**
7. **Provide specialized training and drills** to officers and members of the congregation to test and refine the plan. (**TRAINING**)
8. **Develop a list of members with self-contained travel trailers, motor homes, etc.** that could be moved to church grounds after a disaster to provide temporary comfort stations for volunteers. (**Phase 1 Congregation Information Survey**)
9. **When local authorities announce a pending emergency activate the checklist** developed during **Phase 1.** Alert staff and volunteers of the pending crisis and to make preparations. Communicate with the Presbytery in response to the **Disaster Response Protocol** below.

# MASTER CHECKLIST - PREPARING YOUR PEOPLE

## Congregation Information Survey

1. Develop/administer Congregation Information Survey in Google Forms
  - This form should only take 10 - 15 minutes to fill out.
  - The form is essential to being able to assist those who have needs in your congregation, community and Presbytery. Not only does it assess needs but identifies others who can help and have valuable resources. Share the link with each member, **this is not for the family to complete, but for each individual in the congregation.** It will probably be beneficial to have volunteers set up computers and help those who are intimidated or lack the technological skill to complete this form. Do not forget your shut-ins or those who are in assistance communities.

A screenshot of a Google Form titled "Congregation Information Survey". The form is overlaid on a background image of a stone archway and a purple flower. The form text includes: "This information form has several areas, the first is general information, the second is for emergencies and disasters so that in a time of crisis we can help you and others. There are also forms that will help you prepare for a disaster. These questions are not only informational, but should prompt discussion within your family and church to come up with best practices in case of a disaster. This is not a family form, it is for each individual of the household over 12 years of age." Below this is a red asterisk and the word "Required". The first question is "Church Affiliation/Name (please give full name) \*" with a text input field labeled "Your answer". The second question is "The church is in what community? \*" with a text input field labeled "Your answer".

**This is the link to share with church members and friends:**

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1jKP3Dr - WiNf9hETz6pYPcaQHAY1y be w80zGAvaBU/edit>

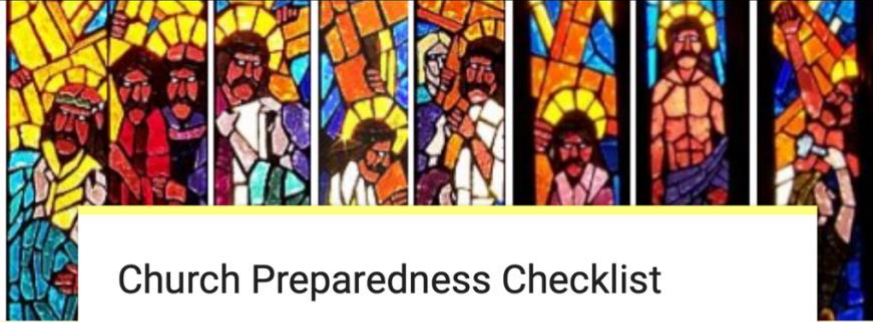
2. Analyze Congregation Information Survey
3. Create geographically-based small groups, from Congregation Information Survey
4. Develop phone chain for these groups; put someone in charge of each group, from Congregation Information Survey
5. Develop specialized lists, (i.e. skills, equipment, motor homes, etc.), from Congregation Information Survey
6. Use lists to create various volunteer groups, from Congregation Information Survey
7. Train congregation as a whole, from Congregation Information Survey
8. Train various volunteer groups, from Congregation Information Survey
9. Implement plan when disaster threatens

# MASTER CHECKLIST - PREPARING YOUR CHURCH

## MASTER CHURCH DISASTER PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST

As explained in the body of this planning document, the first task for any church will be to create a committee that will be responsible for the development and implementation of the local church's disaster preparation plan. This committee should be recognized by and report to the Session. As the plan is being developed, the following questions should be addressed. Developing clear answers to these questions ahead of time will make it much easier for the committee to operate smoothly in time of disaster, when additional meetings might be difficult if not impossible.

What now follows in **Phase I** is the **Congregation Information Survey**. After that will be checklists for the action plans for the next Phases. These checklists will help you know what to do and when. For each phase, separate checklists are provided to help the committee when(a)preparing your property and(b)preparing your people.



### Church Preparedness Checklist

There should be a minimum of three (3) copies of this Preparedness Plan. Copy one (1) should be kept on the cloud in a secure https: site with access being given to the pastor, clerk & session, the presbytery could also be given access. Copy two (2) with the congregations Disaster Preparedness Coordinator. Copy three (3) with the clerk of session. THIS DOCUMENT SHOULD BE UP DATED ANNUALLY!

\* Required

Church Name \*

Your answer

Here is the link to the Church Preparedness Checklist. This will help you see what can be done to protect the physical church, your members and your community.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Xx5Chwnu5gd2d6o8cL3rDQDZb4-BBLD0Y6ZkDjnyOs4/edit>

## Facilities and Personnel Checklist

- 1. Complete a Facilities Inventory (Church Preparedness Checklist)** Develop a complete inventory of church property, including equipment and furnishings. Make several hard copies and digital copies and store offsite. Video is a good way to verify your inventory. If you choose, you could provide a digital copy to the Presbytery for safe keeping. Update a month before hurricane season. **(Documentation and Protection of Church Property)**
  - Prepare a video or set of still images for the entire inventory.
  - Make several copies of the inventory and store the information and video off-site and in the cloud.
  - Store one copy of the inventory and tapes with the church's insurance company.
  - Review insurance coverage annually and adjust as necessary. Review your current flood zone classification.
- 2. Review/update Facilities Inventory annually (Church Preparedness Checklist)**
- 3. Review Insurance Policy(s) annually and adjust as necessary. It should be adequate and comprehensive.**
- 4. Develop Property Checklists** Keep the tasks manageable, as those completing the tasks will be preparing their own homes. Having church cleanup days in the spring and the fall are excellent ways to address issues for disaster preparedness. **(Documentation and Protection of Church Property)**
  - Develop checklists that identify what needs to be done.
  - Identify the person responsible for each task.
  - Obtain and maintain in an appropriate, accessible place, plastic, tarps, duct tape, and twine to cover equipment and special pieces of furniture.
  - Identify equipment that can be moved to an inner room or hallway away from windows.
  - For hurricane preparedness, obtain wind-tested window covers and have mounts for easy installation when needed.
  - Post instructions for turning off electrical equipment and water sources in prominent locations.
  - Consider how to protect items of importance for your worship services.
  - Consider purchasing a generator for emergency use.
- 5. Protect Church Records** The session should appoint a person to manage. **(Documentation and Protection of Church Property)**
  - Back up all records, computer files, etc. frequently. Scan old files into a computer
  - Back up files kept by volunteers as well as by office staff.
  - Arrange for multiple copies, and store such copies at an off-site location, preferably out of the immediate area. At least one copy should be stored to the cloud.
  - Appoint a person to maintain backups; include this in the person's job description.

6. **Review/update facility communications (General Communications)**
  - Supply backup and/or alternative means of communication should electricity and/or phone systems be compromised.
  - Identify ham radio operators who can facilitate communication if other means fail.
  - Plan communication among church staff, members, and presbytery.
  - Plan with your alarm system company (if applicable) for proper use of the system.
7. **Determine responsibilities of all church employees**, remembering they will have personal as well as professional needs. **(Organize the Church Staff)**
8. **Determine possible pre/post-disaster use(s) of church facilities** and/or distribution facility. This should be done with the coordination of your local Emergency Management Coordinator with the city or county and the Mission Presbytery DPAC.
  - A checklist is not provided for this item since the local emergency coordinator will want to organize your shelter to best meet community needs. The coordinator will determine what supplies are necessary and arrange for the purchase and storage of the supplies. Make sure items with limited shelf life are rotated periodically. Not all facilities can be used to host evacuees but may be used to host first responders and emergency volunteers. If your church is interested in hosting first responders and emergency volunteers, please contact DPAC.
  - If you decide your facility can host volunteers, designate a person to oversee shelter operations. We cannot overstate the importance of coordinating with other agencies in your area for the overall plan. If the disaster is going to be designated as a Long-Term Recovery think about becoming a PDA Host Site.
  - Evaluate your facility with your local Emergency Operations Center (EOC)and/or American Red Cross (ARC)chapter.
  - Work with the EOC and/or ARC to determine what supplies the use of your facility will require.
  - Purchase and store necessary supplies; rotate supplies that have limited shelf life.
  - Notify the presbytery office if your facility will be used as a disaster shelter.
9. **Develop facility evacuation plan(s)** that is relevant at any time. An unanticipated disaster might force an evacuation when:(a) only a few people are present, or (b) a major church function is taking place. **(Church Facilities Evacuation Plan)** If facility houses a childcare program, develop a plan specific to program needs.
  - Identify a “saferoom” or rooms within the church; have at least one for your childcare facility.
  - Identify a meeting place or places outside of the church where church employees/members can gather after exiting the building. Designate a secure



- one for your childcare facility. Meeting areas should be clear of emergency vehicles.
- Develop a floor plan for each level and/or building of your church.
  - Mark exit doors.
  - Mark location of fire extinguishers and fire alarms.
  - Place plan throughout facility, marking “You Are Here” at each location posted. Show how to get to two nearest exits.
  - Check annually for updates and quality of signs.
10. **Develop Facilities Checklist for use after an unanticipated disaster.** The checklists will include contacting appropriate authorities, and shutting off power, water, gas, etc., depending on the nature of the disasters. Church employees and officers need to be familiar and trained on the checklists and their implementation. **(Church Personnel and Documentation and Protection of Church Property)**
  11. **Train all employees in first aid, CPR,** and the use of defibrillators in case an unanticipated disaster strikes during working hours. If facility is used by outside organizations invite them to the trainings
  12. **Develop post-disaster Facilities inspection Team (Documentation and Protection of Church Property).** The team should inspect church facilities immediately after a disaster that causes physical damage. Committee members need to have the ability to identify damage and make emergency repairs to prevent further damage.
  13. **Develop Phone Tree** Have an updated phone list of disaster committee members, church employees and officers and/or others of significance available following a disaster. Develop an alternative method of notification should phone service be interrupted. **(General Communications and Phase 1 Congregation Information Survey)**
  14. **Identify possible off-site alternatives for church office, web site, worship. (Planning for Alternate Facilities)**
    - Develop an alternative method of notification should phone service be interrupted.
    - Identify an alternative church office site.
    - Develop off-site capabilities to keep the church website operational in case church computer systems are damaged or destroyed. Consider identifying an out-of-state person, e.g., winter or summer residents or out-of-town students, to be your phone contact/temporary web-person.
    - Identify possible off-site locations for church activities.
    - Identify possible off-site storage for church vehicles.
  15. **Identify/affiliate with other local and/or county disaster planning groups** and affiliates who can share preparation, training, and operational activities before, during and after a local disaster. **(TRAINING)**

16. **Develop/post emergency phone numbers at all phones with outside lines** (i.e. fire, police, water, gas and electric) and post prominently and provide to all staff and session members to carry with them.
  - Church employees.
  - Disaster committee members.
  - Presbytery staff.
  - Others of importance in an emergency, including insurance representatives, police, fire and other public authorities, EOC and ARC representatives, utility companies, and radio and TV stations.
  
17. **Develop personnel responsibilities. (Organize the Church Staff and Planning for Alternative Facilities)**
  
18. **Activate plan when disaster threatens** When local authorities announce a pending emergency, activate the checklist developed in **Phase 1** Master Checklists, and prepare to activate **Phase 2**.
  - Activate plans for contacting member groups/members.
  - Communicate with presbytery regarding activation of immediate response plans.

## Session Planning & Assessment Considerations

1. Identify type(s) of disaster(s) most likely based on history and forecasts.
2. Identify disaster preparedness response team availability and responsibilities.
3. Secure necessary equipment to manage disaster responses on or off site: i.e, cell phone, laptop, backup systems, architectural plans, phone numbers, etc.
4. Identify churches already doing specific duties i.e., feeding, chainsaws, spiritual care, etc.
5. Identify facility space for use as an evacuation site of resource distribution site of state responders' staging site, etc.
6. Build a sufficient staff of volunteers to do all actions.
7. Provide and/or fund training for disaster response volunteers.
8. Decide what services remain active and what services will stop during various phases and intensity of the disaster, i.e., office operations, worship services, program activities.
9. Practice Disaster Preparedness and response plans.
10. Notify local emergency management offices of capabilities.
11. Stockpile sufficient water.
12. Ensure sufficient personnel can shut off main electric power and water supply.
13. Pre-plan for designated emergency fund for facility & personnel expenses.
14. Review insurance policy for sufficient coverage.
15. Consider contracting in advance for: attorney, plumbing, roofing windows, general contractor, waste removal, etc.
16. Backup financial records weekly as a minimum
17. Backup financial and program records daily as disaster nears.
18. Consider forming grief response teams to help members.
19. Identify alternative locations for worship if church is unusable short term and long term.
20. Obtain a copy of city, county, and state disaster preparedness plans.
21. Prepare for follow-up support groups to function for several months.

# Tropical Storm/Hurricane Checklist

**Even if your congregation is not on the coastal area, you could be a passthrough area or an area for evacuee sheltering. Be prepared for what could happen.**

**Tropical Storm** winds 39-73 mph

**Category 1 Hurricane**- winds 74-95 mph(64-82kt)

**Very dangerous winds will produce some damage.** Well-constructed frame homes could have damage to roof, shingles, vinyl siding and gutters. Large branches of trees will snap and shallowly rooted trees may be toppled. Extensive damage to power lines and poles likely will result in power outages that could last a few to several days.

**Category 2 Hurricane**- winds 96-110 mph(83-95kt)

**Extremely dangerous winds will cause extensive damage.** Well-constructed frame homes could sustain major roof and siding damage. Many shallowly rooted trees will be snapped or uprooted and block numerous roads. Near-total power loss is expected with outages that could last from several days to weeks.

**Category 3 Hurricane**- MAJOR - winds 111-130 mph(96-113kt)

**Devastating damage will occur.** Well-built framed homes may incur major damage or removal of roof decking and gable ends. Many trees will be snapped or uprooted, blocking numerous roads. Electricity and water will be unavailable for several days to weeks after the storm passes.

**Category 4 Hurricane**- MAJOR - winds 131-155 mph(114-135kt)

**Catastrophic damage will occur.** Well-built framed homes can sustain severe damage with loss of most of the roof structure and/or some exterior walls. Most trees will be snapped or uprooted, and power poles downed. Fallen trees and power poles will isolate residential areas. Power outages will last weeks to possibly months. Most of the area will be uninhabitable for weeks or months.

**Category 5 Hurricane**- Major - winds 156- or higher (136+ kt)

**Catastrophic damage will occur.** A high percentage of framed homes will be destroyed, with total roof failure and wall collapse. Fallen trees and power poles will isolate residential areas. Power outages will last for weeks to possibly months. Most of the area will be uninhabitable for weeks or months.

TASK	Person Responsible	Done
Activate disaster control center, as required		
Activate Disaster Preparedness Plan and direct all activities		
Initiate protection of personnel, equipment, and facilities		

Contact local emergency management operations for mass evacuation routes and whether the local area is a shelter or pass through location.		
Review plans for an alternate disaster control center if the primary one becomes inoperable.		
Activate shelter management procedures as instructed, if applicable.		
Suspend all normal operations and release office staff. <b>BOARD UP WINDOWS and DOORS.</b>		
Determine evacuation location for handicapped and with special needs.		
Gather water, cots, linens for those staying on site.		
Determine need and assistance to provide for religious services, funerals, spiritual care.		
Implement procedures for the rapid acquisition, storage, and issue of emergency supplies.		
Obtain needed equipment and supplies.		
Shut off all utilities at master switch, if instructed to do so by local authorities.		
Move all valuable hard copy documents to a safe location, backup all computer data.		
Notify Presbytery of what actions have been taken.		
Implement mechanisms for distribution of emergency items of need.		
Provide emergency housing and subsistence, as coordinated with local agencies, if applicable.		
Provide alternate feeding site(s), coordinate with local agencies.		
Provide spiritual and emotional care as determined by local agencies.		

# PHASE 2: Impact/Emergency

## MASTER CHECKLIST - PREPARING YOUR PEOPLE

**Be Pastoral** – you may be anxious, but many of the people you are working with have lost family members and their homes.

This phase begins when the disaster actually strikes. In some cases, the disaster may follow a varying length of preparation and anticipation (i.e. hurricane), while at other times it can occur without warning. In either case **Phase 1** should already be complete. During and/or at the completion of **Phase 2** of a Disaster, be prepared to implement tasks identified and completed during **Phase 1** as necessary. For example, you might need to:

TASK	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DATE COMPLETED
Implement the pre-disaster planning efforts developed during Phase 1 training		
If necessary and/or feasible, parishioners need to be able to assist in immediate rescue/first aid activities for those injured as the disaster is happening. Otherwise, this becomes one of the first actions under <b>Phase 3</b> . <b>Do not interfere with first responders.</b>		
If necessary and/or feasible, assist the authorities as directed. Otherwise, this becomes one of the first actions under <b>Phase 3</b> .		

## MASTER CHECKLIST - PREPARING YOUR PROPERTY

TASK	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DATE COMPLETED
If the building is unoccupied, do nothing until the actual event is over. (Remember property can be replaced; people cannot.)		

<p>If the building is occupied, call 911 as soon as possible. Implement facility evacuation plan(s)</p>		
<p>Administer emergency first aid to victims on site.</p>		
<p>If possible, take emergency action as is immediately warranted (i.e. shut off power, gas, water, etc.) to minimize further damage.</p>		
<p>If necessary and feasible, church employees and officers need to assist in immediate rescue/first aid activities for those injured as the disaster is happening, if the church is occupied and they are present or can safely make their way to the facility.</p>		
<p>Employ the Facilities Checklist to survey the facility as soon as possible.</p>		

# PHASE 3: Aftermath/Inventory

## MASTER CHECKLIST - PREPARING YOUR PEOPLE

As soon as the actual disaster has ended, (i.e. hurricane, earthquake, fire, etc.), people come out, look around, and realize that they are not alone. With initial rescues under way, the first volunteers, some of whom are unsolicited, arrive and need to be managed. Initial damage assessments begin. Primary communications may be restored.

**In the case of a large scale disaster it may take up to 72 hours for the outside world to find you, be prepared to care for yourself and your neighbors during this time.**

Use the checklists developed in [Phase 1](#) above to ensure all items are covered. During [Phase 3](#) of a Disaster, be prepared to implement tasks identified and completed as necessary. Depending upon the scope and time of the disaster, some of these tasks might have already been completed as a response to [Phase 2](#). For example, you might need to:

TASK	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DATE
Call appropriate authorities as necessary		
Administer emergency first aid to victims on site if necessary		
Implement the phone/visitation chain ASAP to determine the immediate status of the congregation.		
Implement use of volunteer groups as needed, either to the congregation or the community as a whole.		
Based upon needs begin to help each other as needed. Be especially careful to identify and assist those (a)with special needs, or (b)having difficulty dealing with the immediate stress of events. Call upon those with special training in emotional and spiritual care to help those in need, i.e. Stephen Ministers.		
Assign volunteer groups as needed to assist parishioners. This activity might well extend into <a href="#">Phase 4</a> , depending on the extent of the damage and the needs of your people.		



Be sure that minister or other approved spokesperson contacts Presbytery office with initial assessment of local conditions.		
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**MASTER CHECKLIST - PREPARING YOUR PROPERTY**

<b>TASK</b>	<b>PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DATE COMPLETED</b>
If not already done, take emergency action necessary to prevent additional damage. (i.e. shut off power, gas, water, tarp roof, board up windows, etc.)		
Complete necessary repairs ASAP to prevent further damage.		
Survey property to complete an initial assessment of damage. Document with photos and videos.		
Contact the church insurance carrier ASAP		
If necessary and possible, implement plans to use the facility for community needs.		

# PHASE 4: Relief/Remedy

## MASTER CHECKLIST - PREPARING YOUR PEOPLE

This phase addresses medical and survival needs. Housing issues will arise while temporary repairs are made to homes and businesses. Public works crews swing into action; electricity, water and gas services are restored. More volunteers begin to arrive, along with various local, state and national agencies (i.e. Red Cross, Salvation Army, FEMA) This phase may last up to **10 times** the duration of [Phase 3](#).

During [Phase 4](#) of a Disaster, be prepared to continue tasks identified and begun during [Phase 3](#). Depending upon the scope of the disaster, some of these tasks might have already been completed, but others might take a long time to complete. For example, you might need to:

TASK	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DATE COMPLETED
Continue the use of volunteer groups as needed.(Such groups might now be needed by the congregation, the extended community, or both.)		
Use resources, expertise of congregation members to assist members in need as they work with various relief agencies (i.e. FEMA, SBA etc.)		
Continue the small group phone/visitation chain to monitor the status of the congregation. Use information gleaned here to provide additional assistance as needed.		
Engage person/committee to oversee collection and expenditure of disaster related donations.		

## MASTER CHECKLIST - PREPARING YOUR PROPERTY

TASK	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DATE
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<p>Have members of the Facilities Inspection Team accompany the insurance adjustor on all inspections of the facility</p>		
<p>Identify a general contractor who will either complete or oversee all repairs, contract for needed repairs and begin the repairs.</p>		
<p>If necessary, implement plans to move some if not all-important church activities off-site until repairs are complete.</p>		
<p>Contact Presbytery to coordinate with outside agencies for recovery assistance if necessary (i.e. Church World Service, Presbyterian Church USA).</p>		
<p>Or, if necessary and practical, continue to use the facility for community needs.</p>		
<p>If immediate church family members do not need help, determine how local volunteer groups can serve other members of the community or beyond. Your pre-disaster planning contacts with local/county agencies will be helpful in creating volunteer networks. Presbytery can be helpful in coordinating such efforts.</p>		
<p>If church facilities are intact and the need is present, offer use of your facilities to other groups, relief agencies, etc. The facility might be used as a temporary shelter, distribution center, community meeting place, or focal point for outside relief agencies. Use of members' trailers, motor homes, parked on site, can offer self-contained facilities and AC if your building is otherwise intact but lacking power.</p>		

# PHASE 5: Recovery/Reconstruction

## MASTER CHECKLIST - PREPARING YOUR PEOPLE

During the long-term rebuilding phase, local agencies begin to take over, along with continued help from agencies such as CWS or FEMA. The community begins to look ahead and plan carefully for reconstruction and rebirth. This phase often takes several months to several years depending upon the scope of the disaster. Since it is impossible to plan for every situation, your team will need to make an assessment to determine what remains to be done.

During **Phase 5** of a Disaster, be prepared to continue tasks identified and begun during **Phase 4**. Depending upon the scope of the disaster, some of these tasks might have already been completed, but other might take a long time to complete. For example, you might need to:

TASK	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DATE
Continue the use of volunteer groups if needed.		
If possible, use qualified members of congregation to serve as ombudsmen for other members of the congregation if they incur problems with outside relief agencies, (i.e. FEMA, SBA etc.)		
Continue the small group phone/visitation chain to monitor the status of the congregation. Be aware that some problems might take months to surface.		
Make sure group leaders are ready and able to pass along problems identified in small groups to the appropriate parties. They are not trained, nor should they attempt, to solve all problems themselves. Use members who are specially trained to address emotional and spiritual needs, such as Stephen Ministers.		
ASAP, review the entire Disaster Preparedness plan to identify strengths and weakness, and implement changes as deemed necessary.		
Work with other outside groups (i.e. community, faith-based, etc.) to coordinate		

recovery efforts. Presbytery assistance might be very helpful here in developing a multi-community approach to recovery efforts. Your local VOAD or a LTRG would be a good place to start.		
Finalize the awarding of disaster related contributions.		

## MASTER CHECKLIST - PREPARING YOUR PROPERTY

TASK	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DATE COMPLETED
Have members of the Facilities Inspection Team accompany the insurance adjustor on all additional inspections of the facility. This may well be necessary if additional damage is uncovered during repairs.		
Oversee the work of the general contractor as he works to complete or oversee all the completion of repairs.		
Review property damage to identify areas where modifications/ improvements, (as opposed to straight repairs) might mitigate possible damage from future disasters.		
ASAP, review the entire Disaster Preparedness plan to identify strengths and weakness, and implement changes as deemed necessary.		

# CHURCH SECURITY

We have to realize that times are changing and security for churches is a real need for all faith communities. Security breaches can result in a unique disaster that at one time was not even a consideration for a church. They can range from a simple break-in to a violent encounter within your place of worship. Pre-planning is critical to ensuring the safety and security of your church and your members.

A violent attack on your church is unlikely but being prepared for the worst-case scenario is critical. **Most violent encounters are by people known to the community.**

You do not need to run background checks on all of your members, however, both **employees and any members who work with children are required to be screened in accordance with PCUSA policies.** Contact Mission Presbytery for assistance in background checks. Anyone without a valid, up to date background check may not work in any capacity with children in the church.

## Preparing your People

The balance between keeping your congregation safe and security and being a welcoming and loving community of faith will be vigorously debated within your church. Each congregation will make decisions best suited for it. And, congregations should revisit their plans annually to determine if they need to be changed in response to local events.

- **Contact your local police, fire departments,** and insurance agent and ask them to meet with your team to evaluate security for your church and how it can be incorporated. They can help you evaluate your facility and programming and make recommendations on how your church can respond to a crisis. They will evaluate all the factors that may have a bearing on the situation in your area and help develop a training program to educate the congregation on proper responses. Do not try to make this evaluation without their input as it is important that your plan is developed in conjunction with the overall plan on how law enforcement will respond.
- **Develop a training program** based on the recommendations from the police evaluation. To ensure effectiveness, this training program should be repeated annually to maintain awareness and ensure that newly assigned staff, officers and members are well versed on procedures.
- **Conduct background checks** and follow up on references when hiring new employees.
- **Churches that have a day care program or preschool** must comply with the PCUSA policy and state laws which require background checks.

## Active Shooter

**Call 911 as soon as it is safe to do so.**

Provide as much of the following information as possible:

- Number of shooters
- Location of shooters

- Physical description of shooters
- Number of victims and potential victims
- Types of weapons held by shooters

### **Run – Hide – Fight**

1. Evacuate the Area – If you can safely leave the area, do so.
  - Have an escape route and plan in mind.
  - Leave your belongings behind.
  - Keep your hands visible.
2. Hide – If you are unable to leave the area safely, hide
  - Hide in an area out of the shooter’s view. Give critical priority to areas you can best secure.
  - Block entry to your hiding place.
  - Lock the doors, if possible.
  - Move objects in front of doors, if possible.
  - Silence cell phones.
  - Remain in place until released by law enforcement officer.
3. Take Action – If unable to leave the area or hide, take action only as a last resort.
  - Attempt to incapacitate the shooter.
  - Act with physical aggression.
  - Look for items to throw at the shooter or to use in an attack.

**As part of your Active Shooter response plan, it is recommended to first review Take Action – Fight Back measures with local law enforcement.**

When law enforcement arrives, their first priority will be containing the shooter, not helping victims. Do not stop officers to ask for help or direction when evacuating. Evacuate the premises as quickly as it is safe to do so.

- Remain calm and quiet.
- Follow instructions.
- Keep your hands visible at all times

### **Resources**

Armed Intruder Best Practices Video: Church Mutual Insurance partnered with Alice Training Institute, experts in active shooter civilian response, to create a Best Practices Video and Armed Intruder Resources Kit.

<https://www.churchmutual.com/6421/Armed-Intruder>

DHS Webpage: Active Shooter: How to Respond. Provides fact sheets for private citizens, HR professionals, Active Shooter Workshop participants and First Responders. Also provides links to videos on Active Shooter planning.

<https://www.dhs.gov/active-shooter-preparedness>

## Preparing your Property

- **Contact the local police department** and ask them to conduct a detailed security evaluation of the church property. This evaluation will have specific recommendations on what you should do to protect your church property.
- **Develop a plan** that incorporates the recommendations of the police department evaluation. The plan should address both normal hours and after-hours protection of property.



# PANDEMICS

The Pandemic Flu concerns raised during 2008-2009 made us realize that our local medical facilities will be unable to adequately respond to a crisis. Each Pandemic incident may be completely different and the effects of it will be different in each geographical location. In most cases there will probably be limited resources to combat the flu or other disease and you and your church may be asked to assist in many different ways. Since each epidemic can be unpredictable, we only suggest some broad guidelines and locations where you can get excellent information to use during the epidemic.

## Preparing your People

1. When the Federal government announces there is a concern with a Pandemic, you should follow closely the information that is released by the following organizations:
  - Center for Disease Control (CDC), [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
  - State and County Health Department
  - Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for your County
  - Presbyterian Church USA PC(USA), [www.pcusa.org](http://www.pcusa.org)These organizations will have the latest information and will advise you of actions that need to be taken.
2. Develop a step-by-step plan based on the information supplied by the organizations above. This will primarily be a requirement of keeping your congregations informed and educated on the best course of action.
3. PC(USA) has information specific to church gatherings and alternate methods to conduct church services based on the threat.

## Preparing your Property

1. If your church has a capability to serve as an emergency facility, you should register with the County Health Department. They will evaluate the facility and put you on a list as a possible emergency aid location. This could be a location to administer inoculations or a location to house patients. Let the Health Department do the evaluation and they will let you know how your facility can be used.
2. PC(USA) will provide specific ways to prepare your facility to limit the spreading of the disease, [www.pcusa.org](http://www.pcusa.org).

# Medical Emergency

## Steps of Action

- **Contact 911** emergency services, if needed.
- Contact a person who is trained and certified to administer first aid/CPR. (See side panel.)
- Disperse the crowd, if necessary.
- Designated individual \_\_\_\_\_ should contact those on the Emergency Contact List. (See side panel.)
- Designated individual \_\_\_\_\_ should notify the family as is appropriate.
- If **911** is called, send someone outside to direct the emergency team.

**Note any other special information that may be needed in case of a Medical Emergency here:**

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## First Aid

In the event that first aid is needed, refer to the list of trained individuals for first aid and CPR. (See side panel.)

Assess an injured person before providing first aid. Remain calm and try not to panic. **DO NOT** move injured person unless the situation is life threatening. Get professional medical help quickly.

**REMEMBER:** This information is to be used only as a guide. Always seek medical assistance when in doubt.

## Bleeding

If severe **Call 911**

First aid for bleeding is intended to stop the bleeding, prevent infection, and prevent shock.

1. Act quickly. Have victim lie down. Elevate injured limb higher than heart unless you suspect a broken bone.
2. Control bleeding by applying direct pressure on the wound with gauze pad or clean cloth. If bleeding is controlled by direct pressure, bandage firmly with rolled gauze to protect wound.

## Broken Bones

You may have a broken bone if: You hear a “snap” or a grinding noise during the injury; there is swelling, bruising, tenderness, or a feeling of “pins and needles”; it’s painful to bear weight on the injured area or to move it. What to do if you have a broken bone:

- Remove clothing from the injured part without affecting the injured area.

- Apply a cold compress or ice pack wrapped in cloth.
- Seek medical care immediately.

## Burns

The severity of a burn depends upon its size, depth, and location. Burns are most severe when located on the face, neck, hands, feet, and genitals. Burns can result in pain, infection, and shock. They are most serious when the victims are very young or old.

**1st DEGREE** burns are the least severe and are characterized by redness or discoloration, mild swelling, and pain of the 1st layer of skin (epidermis). Overexposure to the sun is a common cause of 1st degree burns. First aid for 1st degree burns:

- Flush with cool running water. **DO NOT** put ice directly on a burn because it can cause frostbite, further damaging skin.
- Apply moist dressing and bandages loosely.

**2nd DEGREE** burns are more serious and affect the Dermis, the 2nd layer of skin. They look red, splotchy, swollen, and blistered. 2nd degree burns are usually the most painful because nerve endings are usually intact.

- Apply dry dressings and bandage loosely. **DO NOT** use water as it may cause shock. Bandaging keeps air off the burned skin, reducing pain and protects blistered skin. **DO NOT** break blisters.
- If the burn is greater than 3-inches or in an area such as, hands, feet, face, groin, buttocks, or over a knee or elbow, seek medical attention immediately.

**3rd DEGREE** burns are the deepest, most serious, and may look white or charred, extend through all skin layers. Victims of 3rd degree burns may have severe pain or no pain at all depending if the nerve endings are destroyed.

- **DO NOT** remove burned/charred clothing.
- Check for signs of circulation. If there is no breathing or signs of circulation begin CPR.
- Cover burn victim and seek medical attention immediately.

## Heart Attack

A heart attack happens when the heart does not get enough blood supply for a period of time. Part or all of the heart muscle dies. A heart attack may have warning signs. It can occur without signs, too. This is called a “silent” heart attack.

If you believe a person is having a heart attack:

- **Call 911** right away. **DO NOT** wait to see if the pain goes away.
- If the person uses and has nitroglycerin, place one tablet under the tongue. Give as many as 3 tablets in 10 minutes.
- Loosen clothing around the neck, chest, and waist. Don’t let the person lie down, especially if he or she has breathing problems. A half-sitting position is better. Put the legs up. Bend them at the knees. Put a pillow or rolled towel under the knees. Support the back.

- Contact individual(s) on Emergency Contact List who can perform CPR and First Aid
- Reassure the person that you have called for medical help and will stay with him or her until it arrives.
- If you can't call 911, immediately drive the person to the hospital. If you are experiencing heart attack symptoms, don't drive yourself, unless you have no other choice.

### **Common Warning Signs**

- Feeling of pain (may spread to or be felt in the arm, neck, tooth, jaw, or back), tightness, burning, squeezing, or heaviness in the chest. This lasts more than a few minutes or goes away and comes back.
- Chest discomfort with: fainting, feeling lightheaded, nausea, shortness of breath, sweating.

### **Other Warning Signs**

- Unusual chest, abdominal, or stomach pain.
- Dizziness, nausea, trouble breathing, jaw or arm pain without chest pain.
- Fast or uneven heartbeat or pulse.
- Sweating for no reason, pale, gray or clammy skin.
- An uneasy feeling in the chest with: unexplained or extreme anxiety; unusual fatigue or weakness; fluttering heartbeats; or severe indigestion that doesn't go away with an antacid.

## **Strains and Sprains**

Strains involve a partial tear of muscle. Sprains involve a partial tear of ligaments (which connect two bones) or tendons (which connect muscle to bone). What to expect with strains and sprains: pain, difficulty moving the injured part, decreased strength, and swelling.

- Stop activity right away.
- Think **R.I.C.E (Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation)** for the first 48 hours after the injury.
- After 48 hours, apply a heating pad or moist heat three to four times a day.

## **Stroke**

A stroke occurs when there's bleeding into your brain, or normal blood flow to your brain is blocked. **THIS IS A TRUE EMERGENCY!** Contact 911 and the Church Emergency Contacts. (See side panel.)

Sudden signals of stroke (think **F.A.S.T**):

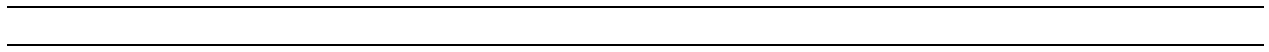
**Face-Weakness** on one side of the face. Ask the person to smile.

**Arm-Weakness** or numbness in one arm. Ask the person to raise both arms.

**Speech-Slurred** speech or trouble getting the words out. Ask the person to speak a simple sentence.

**Time-Note** time signals first observed.

*Note any other special information regarding First Aid here:*



# Emergency Situations

## Fire

### Signals: Fire Alarm

It is important that all church members, staff, volunteers and visitors evacuate the building any time the building's fire alarm sounds.

### Steps of Action if You Discover Fire or Smoke:

3. Pull the nearest fire alarm to initiate a building evacuation.
4. Evacuate immediately, assisting others, maintaining order, and moving quickly and quietly. Close doors and windows if possible.
5. Do not use elevators.
6. If smoke is present, stay low.
7. Before opening any door, feel the door with the back of your hand and do not open any door that feels hot.
8. If your clothing catches fire, stop, drop and roll on the ground until the flames are extinguished.
9. Once outside the building, **call 911** to report the fire if not already reported.
10. **DO NOT** go back into the building. Re-enter only when instructed by Police/Fire Department officials.

## Fire Extinguisher Use

Use fire extinguisher only if the fire is limited and there is no additional danger to yourself or others.

When using a fire extinguisher remember the acronym **P.A.S.S.**

**PULL** the pin from the extinguisher.

**AIM** the hose or nozzle horn at the base of the fire.

**SQUEEZE** the handle to discharge the entire contents of the extinguisher.

**SWEEP** (from side to side) the extinguisher agent across the base of the fire.

*Note any other special information that may be needed in case of a fire here:*

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## Gas Leaks

If a gas leak has occurred or a gaseous smell is observed:

- **Call 911.**
- Evacuate the building, using the fire alarm if necessary.

- Notify the designated individuals on the Emergency Contact List. (See side panel.)
  - Call the gas company.
11. **Do NOT** operate electrical devices or switches, telephones, or light matches during this time.
- **Do NOT** re-enter the building until advised that it is safe to do so.

*Note any other special information needed in case of a gas leak here:*

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## Severe Weather

### Floods/Flash Floods

#### Definitions

**Flood Watch** weather conditions are favorable for heavy rain and flash flooding.

**Flood Warning** is issued when flooding is imminent or occurring in a certain area.

#### Action Steps – Flood Watch

- Keep tuned to local radio or television station for further information.
- Inform staff and visitors of severe conditions and the potential to limit activities.
- Ensure that flashlights, weather band radios and extra batteries are available.
- Ensure that staff has cellular phones inside the facility.
- Prepare a waterproof bag or case to hold checkbook and other essential records.
- Continue indoor activities.
- Check all emergency food/water supplies and procure additional supplies if necessary.

#### Action Steps – Flood Warning

- Inform all staff and visitors of upgrade to flood warning.
  - If located in a floodplain, prepare to relocate to a safe area (upper floor or higher ground).
  - Transfer emergency supplies (bottled water, batteries, flashlights, weather band radios, cellular telephones and first aid kit) to safe area.
  - Unplug all unnecessary electrical equipment. Backup computers and make sure the backup copy is stored offsite.
  - Cover all computers with plastic sheeting and elevate computer towers off of the ground.
  - Prepare church records for immediate removal.
  - Continue to monitor telephones.
  - Cease all outdoor activities and store all outside moveable objects in designated areas.
  - If evacuation is ordered or necessary, unplug all electrical equipment.
  - Evacuate staff, volunteers, students and visitors to a pre-assigned area.
  - If evacuating, inform Disaster Recovery Coordinator or General Presbyter.
  - Perform head count to ensure that all personnel are accounted for.
  - Follow instructions issued by local authorities.

- If water is covering a roadway, TURN AROUND, DON'T DROWN.
- Report missing persons to Pastor or Parish Disaster Coordinator; do not return to search for missing persons.

## **Tornado**

### ***Definition***

**Tornado Watch:** Conditions are favorable for a tornado or severe weather. Make Emergency Contact Persons aware of the watch and when it will expire, but take no further action.

**Tornado Warning:** Tornado has been sighted; take shelter immediately.

Pre-planned Shelter Area:

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### **Steps of Action**

- When severe weather is forecast a designated person should monitor the situation on the weather radio, if available, or the radio.
- When a tornado warning is issued, everyone in the building should proceed to pre-planned shelter area.
- People should be discouraged from leaving the building during an emergency.
- Close windows and doors.

## **Power Outage/Utility Failure**

If a power outage or blackout occurs:

12. Notify the utility company.
13. If church activities are in progress, continue with services (if practical). If that is not practical there should be a controlled dismissal (if practical and safe), such as row-by-row, paying special attention to the elderly, disabled and small children.
14. Use only flashlights for additional lighting. Do not use candles or other open flames.
15. Disconnect equipment and electronics that were in use when the power went out. When the power comes back on, there may be a surge or spike in electricity that could damage equipment.
16. DO NOT operate a generator indoors. If a generator is used, keep it in a well-ventilated, outdoor location.

***Note any other special information needed in case of a utility outage here:***

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# Procedures for Ushers/Greeters

Listed below are instructions for assisting when un-expected circumstances arise. Your assistance helps the pastor/elders maintain a sense of order in the church, as well as maintaining the safety of those present.

## Medical Emergencies

Ushers should scan the congregation as people arrive – know who has medical training (physicians, nurses/CPR) and note their location. Should a medical emergency come to your attention, first assess the situation to see if the ill person is in danger to themselves or anyone else. If available, summon a Health Care Provider from the attending congregation to begin medical care. Know the location of the First Aid Kit and Automated External Defibrillator (if available).

If further assistance is necessary, call 911 using a cell phone. Station one usher outside the church to direct paramedics to the patient's location.

## Hidden Illness

- If a person has a seizure, do not attempt to restrain them or put anything in their mouth. Move objects away to prevent injury. Loosen clothing, especially around the neck. Make the person feel comfortable after the seizure, perhaps by helping them to a comfortable place to rest and by offering assurance. Immediately summon a Health Care Provider from the attending congregation (if available) and call 911 using a cell phone.
- In the event of a sudden attack (a seizure, a stroke, or a reaction to medication), immediately find a Health Care Provider from the attending congregation (if available) and call 911 using a cell phone.
- Check for any medical alert tag the person may be wearing (necklace, anklet, bracelet, etc.).

## Disturbances and Distraught Individuals

1. On occasion, an unknown/conspicuous person may enter the church seeking assistance. First, welcome them and offer to find them a seat. If not interested, usher them to the entryway (vestibule) of the church and inquire what assistance they might need. Should the person be in need of money, food, or clothing, assist as you have been instructed by the pastor or session.
2. People with mental illness or certain addictions, could be disruptive and/or present a risk of injury to themselves or others.
  - Behavioral clues include rocking, rolling eyes, irrational movements, constant mumbling, talking to one's self, staggering, pacing or wandering.

- Such people may be unstable, and ushers should intervene immediately.
  - Find one or two ushers, Health Care Providers, or members of the congregation who are willing to approach the person quietly and ask them to accompany you to a quiet area in the church. Do your best to be respectful and make the person feel comfortable.
  - Walk away from the person if there is any indication of violence and call 911.
3. In the event that someone becomes unruly and begins to cause a disturbance –
    - Again, ushers should immediately intervene in a reasonable manner.
    - If safely able, escort the person outside to discuss their intentions.
    - If the disturbance occurs in the sanctuary, ushers should assist the pastor.
    - If the unruly person becomes aggressive, call 911 immediately for police assistance.
  4. Once the person is ushered outside, unless concerned for safety and 911 has been called, do not lock the doors as this could restrict emergency exiting. If necessary, station ushers at every door to prevent the person from re-entering the church.
  5. Ushers should never act alone when dealing with disturbances or distraught individuals. Always ask other ushers to assist you.
  6. Ushers should take the initiative to step in when a disturbance occurs. Follow policies and procedures set by your session and pastor.,

## Weapons

Any usher who is aware of a weapon brought into the church should:

- **Call 911 immediately**, if reasonably suspected and follow their instructions.
- If able to still maintain calm with those attending, notify the pastor/elder, informing them of the suspected person who brought the weapon, where it is located, whether the suspect has threatened anyone, and give any other details that might prevent the suspect from hurting someone or themselves.

## Fires

Ushers need to be familiar with exit routes and their assigned area if evacuation is required.

- **Call 911 and notify the fire department of the emergency.**
- Fires in the church will require evacuation.
- The pastor/elder will give instructions from the microphone that evacuation is necessary.
- Evacuation will require strong direction with calmness and authority.
- All ushers shall stand by the exits.
- People should leave by their nearest exit.
- Assure disabled persons in your area are assisted, as needed.
- Once the church has been evacuated, ushers should clear people away from the building (until an “all clear” can be called).

- One or two assigned ushers should report to the presiding priest for further instructions after the church is cleared.
- Ushers should know the locations of the fire extinguishers in their worship site and how to use them. They are to be used for minor fires only.

## **Tornadoes/Severe Weather**

Tornadoes are usually seasonal and may give us warning. If a tornado siren is heard, the pastor/elder will direct people in an orderly and calm manner to the pre-planned shelter area. Assist disabled persons in your area, as needed.

Safer areas of refuge are:

- Interior hallways and stairways.
- Basements and areas away from windows and glass.

# Training

## Training Plan

Promote preparedness of church members, employees, and those who have volunteer to help execute this plan.

1. Obtain local Disaster Preparedness information and distribute it to your members. This information is available from local governments, radio/TV stations, Salvation Army etc.
2. Host a disaster preparedness workshop yearly at your church.
3. Provide your church members with a list of local workshops that they can attend. Your local Emergency Operations Center can provide you with a list of workshops and training courses.
4. Annually, provide training to group leaders. This training should provide all of the requirements that will make this group leader effective in their neighborhood during an emergency. This training should include:
  - How to organize your group.
  - How to communicate with your group.
  - What is expected from the group leader?
  - When and to whom do they report?
5. Host a course in basic First Aid and Stop the Bleed for the preparedness of church members.
6. Annually, provide training to church staff and any organization using your facility. This training should include:
  - First Aid and Stop the Bleed
  - Defibrillators
  - Evacuation and safe room procedures.
  - Notification procedures
  - Preparing church property for an emergency
  - Backing up and protection of church files
7. Annually, provide specialized training as necessary for those who will be in charge of various portions of this plan. (Such training should include periodic drills or other attempts to test the plan as realistically as possible, without causing undo stress.)

# Member Grouping & Mapping System

## CHECKLIST TO DEVELOP MEMBER GROUPING MAP

Map location of members.

1. Map the location of your members and divide them into small groups. These groups should not contain more than 20 families and should be of geographical location so after a disaster it will be easy to check on the individuals. This is easily accomplished using Google maps since all of the data is being gathered in Google Forms and Google Sheets (here is a tutorial on mapping <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R2X0oRiMtWE>). Once your members and friends have completed the Congregation Information Survey, the Presbytery will compile the data and send it to the church. This is important since emergency response fire/rescue use GPS when street signs are down. The computer mapping system will be helpful to do the following functions:
  - Determine the concentration of your church population.
  - Helpful in determining member groupings.
  - Displaying special needs members.
  - Displaying the location of equipment.
  - Displaying where the volunteers live.
  - Displaying and mapping by use of GPS coordinates.
  - Mapping and guiding you to a location.
  - Determining who lives in a location that was hardest effected by the disaster.
2. Appoint a primary and secondary group leader for each grouping.
3. Have each leader attend an organizational training session so they are properly organized and understand their job.
4. Reorganize and up-date groups annually with the change of session members.
5. Establish a communication chain that works for each group, such as phone, e-mail, physical contact. Make sure that each group has a backup system.
6. Identify the **Director of Disaster Preparation and Response**, to whom each group leader reports.
7. Provide Group Leaders with questions that should be asked of each member following a disaster. This should be in the form of a checklist.
  - How did you and your family survive the emergency?
  - Do you need any assistance?
  - How did your property survive the emergency?
  - Do you need any assistance cleaning up?
  - Provide them with information about the church and any general information you have been provided.
  - If you detect any problems, report to your **Disaster Volunteer Coordinator**.
  - Each pin represents a Church member family. By zooming in on an area, you can define each of your small groups. This will assist you in keeping your group members close to each other.
  - Once you decide the grouping, you can display information about the group members by clicking on the pin.

# Volunteers and Equipment List

1. Develop a list of members that have volunteered to house families displaced by an emergency. **(This is part of the Congregation Information Survey)**
2. Develop a list of members that have volunteered as a Disaster Preparedness Action Response Team. **(Congregation Information Survey)**
3. Develop a list of members with equipment such as: self-contained travel trailers/motor homes, trucks, chain saws etc. **(Congregation Information Survey)**
  - Contact those members who indicated that they have a travel trailer/motor home and confirm that it would be available for use after a disaster. **(Congregation Information Survey)**
  - Make plans on how facilities will be used at the church and include them in this plan. **(Congregation Information Survey)**
  - If use requires facilities to be prepared, make sure that the facilities committee makes plans and includes it in the budget. Possible requirements could include site preparation to park, water hook-up/electric hook-up.

# Documentation & Protection of Church Property

## Post Emergency Inspection of Church Property

Establish a Committee of experts that will accompany your Insurance agent on property inspections associated with property damage. This list is part of the data contained in **Church Preparedness Checklist** and update it annually when you review your Insurance requirements. We recommend that you use the same format your insurance company will use for the post inspection of the church property. You can obtain this format from your insurance company. In addition, similar forms are available on the internet. These forms are quite extensive but will be required to establish who is responsible for repairs.

**MAKE SURE THAT YOUR BUILDINGS ARE SAFE TO ENTER. IF THERE IS ANY QUESTION, GET A QUALIFIED ENGINEER TO DETERMINE WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE BEFORE ENTRY.**

While performing the post emergency inspection determine if immediate emergency repairs are required. Take the necessary action for these repairs, and document the damage with photos. We recommend the use of a Risk Management Document, this type of document provides good guidelines that may apply to your situation. Disregard those items that do not apply to your situation. Here is a link that has several downloadable templates for your risk management of the church facilities,  
<https://safetyculture.com/checklists/risk-management-plan-templates/>

## Documentation of Property

**Make sure that your church completes a Facilities inventory of church property.**

Document the inventory with a complete written description listing the item, cost and the date purchased. Also, take digital pictures or movies. Store this inventory in a safe place off campus.

**Update your inventory annually** about one month before hurricane season.

### Records:

Determine what records need to be protected and copied. Make a list those records and store the copied records in a secure location off campus.

- **Back-up Electronic Records** on a routine basis and store off campus. Use a secure cloud server like Dropbox to secure your data digitally.
- **If a storm is approaching back-up all records.**
- **Place hardcopy files in a waterproof container** and store off the floor above expected flooding.

# Protection of Church Property

## Upon Notification of an Emergency Event

### **EQUIPMENT:**

Purchase plastic bags, plastic sheeting, tarps, duct tape and twine to cover equipment and special pieces of furniture. These supplies should be purchased and stored ready for use. Each area/ rooms of all buildings should be secured if time allows. Items that will need protection should be listed in an inventory book. You should also have instructions on turning on and off all electrical equipment. Any other equipment that requires special procedures should also have instructions included with this checklist.

- Place plastic bags or sheet plastic over electronic equipment
- Make sure you disconnect electric to all electronic equipment.
- Cover all large furniture, pianos and organs with tarps.
- Position equipment in hallways if feasible or move away from windows.
- Observe each room after it is secured to insure all items are properly secured.

### **OUTSIDE FACILITY:**

- Make a list of items needing special attention, figure out the logistics while you have blue skies.
- Secure all special attention items.
- Do an outside walk around paying close attention to items that might become airborne during high winds.
- Install hurricane shutters as required.
- Secure lawn equipment.
- Secure pumps and electrical equipment. Turn off any electrical equipment affected by power surges and or floodwater.
- Have bi-annual workdays to clean up the property, make repairs that will harden the facility and trim trees and shrubs that might cause damage.



# General Communications

Communications are very important in the execution of your Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan. You will probably not know what type of communication will be available following an emergency. As a result, you must be ready for any situation. We are providing a list of communication options in order of their effectiveness and anticipated availability after a disaster. The Presbytery will provide limited communications that should be in place within 24 hours after the need is reported or it is determined that your church does not have the ability to communicate the need. A separate plan of operation will be developed to control the Presbytery assets.

1. Agree to a meeting time and location of all leaders.
2. Preferred mode of transportation is four-wheeled vehicles for contacts between leaders.
3. Satellite Phones.
4. Ham band(6meter) phones (Requires a 6-meter license).
5. FM Radios
6. Marine Radios
7. Cell phones
8. Land line telephone
9. High-speed web connection.

## Organize the Church Staff

1. Make a list of your church paid staff employees and assign duties that they would perform if adequate warning were provided. Also, make a list of duties if no warning is provided. Provide brief but clear descriptions of their assignment and responsibilities so they understand ahead of time what is expected of them.
2. Make sure your staff knows what your alternate plans are so they will be aware and knowledgeable.

### **Example:**

Secretary – Make back up of important computer files and see that they are stored off site.

Custodian - Assist in preparing church equipment and property for the emergency.

Parish Nurse - Make sure that the special needs members are taken to shelters.

# Planning Alternate Church Facilities

Determine if there is an accessible location for an alternate church office that can be used in an emergency. Develop an agreement with that site that you will offer your church to them for emergency use if they will reciprocate in case you need help. Decide what systems, procedures, and records should be available in an emergency, and make plans to provide those items.

Review church activities to decide which programs can and should be continued in an off-site location during an emergency. If possible, keep your activities and church schedule as close to the same as possible. Search for a suitable location and make reciprocal arrangements as necessary to be prepared for such an event.

The more complete your arrangements the less problems you will have making the change.

Develop off-site capabilities to keep church web site operational. (Probably from a church member's home, or another church.) Assure that several people are trained to manage the church web site.

## Sample Agreement for Alternate Facilities

1. This Memorandum of Agreement is between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ . The agreement takes effect as of the date that both church sessions agree to and sign this document.
2. This agreement is being entered into for the purpose of providing a formal written understanding on the support that each church will provide the other on a temporary basis during and after an emergency situation or disaster.
3. This agreement shall remain in force until such time as either party wants to terminate its provisions. At such time as one of the parties wants to terminate the agreement, it shall be accomplished by notification to the church session by the other church session. Any provisions of the agreement may be changed provided both parties agree to the changes. Changes will become an addendum to the primary agreement.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, agrees to support each other during a time of emergency or when a disaster has occurred that restricts the use of their facilities or their ability to cope with the situation. This help could be provided in a number of different ways such as: administrative assistance, facilities use, pastoral help and/or other requirements as requested. The nature of this agreement is entirely dependent on a situation that will be developing and impossible to define in advance. The purpose is to have an agreement that both parties understand will need an immediate response, be time sensitive and require concessions by both groups.
5. Each session shall assign the responsibility of a liaison from one of their standing committees and give that committee the authority to work directly with the other church and to respond in a timely manner without having to wait for a normal scheduled session meeting.

Signatures:

(Name of Church)

Clerk of the Session

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Church Facilities Evacuation Plan

The evacuation plan should be in a presentation format and placed on the walls in strategic locations so members and visitors will know where to go in an emergency. This Plan should also designate a safe room where a large group of people could weather a storm if necessary and a location to gather outside of the building that would be clear of emergency vehicles.

1. Make a floor plan of each level of your church and buildings. Mark the exit doors to the outside, location of any fire alarm pulls and any fire extinguishers. Post the plan throughout the building, marking "you are here" at the appropriate location. Show how to get to the nearest two exits. At services, twice a year talk about what everyone should do in case of an emergency. Discuss both evacuation and maintaining a safe area. If your church already has evacuation plans posted check them for updates.
2. Keep examples of your evacuation plan in hard copy and digital files.

# Business Continuation Plan

## Disaster Site Recovery Restoration Actions

A disaster has occurred. Emergency response goes without a hitch. Your emergency response plan is adequate. But, what do you do next? Emergency personnel are gone. It is up to your agency to begin the process of recovery. What actions do you take for disaster recovery? Disaster recovery is usually specific to each physical business location. The extent of recovery efforts will be dictated by your agency's ultimate business continuation goal(s).

Disaster recovery requires a team of people. The team members will likely be assembled from existing staff (ideally, staff who participated in the planning) and essential outside resources that have been lined up in advance of any disaster.

Disaster recovery also requires preplanning. Your recovery efforts will take their cue from your agency's business resumption goals. Consider these questions:

- What do you do at this location?
- Is this location essential?
- Does this location need to be back in business? If so, how soon?
- Can you abandon this location?
- How soon do you need to know if this location can be operational?
- Where can you relocate mission critical services and business functions?
- Do you have an alternative location(s) established to set up business?
- Can you re-deploy staff to other agency locations?
- Who are key staff members?
- Is there equipment, materials, tools, documents, files, etc., that are essential to business resumption that must be retrieved from the site? Or, do you have duplicates or backups in other locations?
- Who will be assigned disaster recovery duty? Who are their backups? From where will they operate?
- Who activates the disaster recovery plan?
- Who are the outside team members? Who will notify and activate them?

- How will you communicate with your staff after an event occurs?

**Keep in mind that:**

- Disaster recovery activities are designed to limit losses and preserve what you can from a disaster location after the event.
- Business resumption is separate but occurring simultaneously.
- Initially, both may overlap extensively.

**Your Disaster Recovery Plan must consider these steps:**

**Access to Facility**

- How fast do you need to get back in to this location?
- Who will have access?
- Who will allow access?

Can I *just walk into the building*? After a disaster has occurred, the Facilities Division has the lead role in physical security for DAS owned or managed buildings on the Capitol Mall. This includes admitting or keeping people out of a building and responding to police and fire requests after hours. They secure buildings until inspected for damage and safety. Any state facility has similar people or units, doing similar work. Agencies leasing private facilities should ask their landlord about and/or make arrangements for access and security services.

Obtain permission to enter the building(s). Only authorized personnel should be allowed access to the premises.

**Security of Facility**

- What is in this building that must be protected? Documents, equipment, materials?
- What if this becomes a crime scene? Who will communicate with police?
- Who handles the media?

It is essential that appropriate security methods be utilized for protection of on-site assets, including equipment, premises, information, documentation, etc. Safeguard your assets against fire, theft, vandalism or other perils. Contact your facilities personnel to determine their level of response for your agency. Identify special needs. Plan for any additional or contractual resources.

The Oregon State Police are responsible for all law enforcement in all state owned buildings. Local police provide normal services to all facilities leased, and not owned by the state. What is your working relationship with them? Insure that you include them in your plan considerations.

**Stabilization of Facility**

- What in this building will require rapid return of power (for example, food storage coolers)?
- Who will determine physical/structural safety?
- Where will you get the equipment or materials (tarps, boards, etc.) to stabilize the facility?

During emergency response operations, facilities personnel go into affected buildings and turn off manual, mechanical, and electrical systems.

When the emergency response ends, your agency enters the disaster recovery phase. At that point identify the functions or areas that may need further stabilization or any actions necessary for site safety. This may include gas or water leaks, collapse risks, and the like. Facilities personnel may have already checked electrical systems, breakers, and control centers for damage and/or tested utility, power, and alarm systems. Some of these systems may have already been reset.

Determine the appropriate emergency measures that your agency must take to protect the property from further loss. This can include actions such as:

- Cover damaged openings or property with plywood, tarps, or plastic to protect from the weather and moisture.
- Provide temporary bracing.
- Obtain repair services for utility issues.
- Provide ventilation for areas in which there may be a gas release.
- Remove or pump out water in flooded areas.
- Reduce or turn off air temperature, i.e., heat or air conditioning.
- Move perishable items to alternate locations when cooling devices fail, such as refrigerators or freezers containing food or vaccines.
- Other emergency actions for special equipment or situations.

Identify priorities, resources, materials, and the timeframe in which you need to accomplish these measures.

### **Safety, Health Environment Controls**

- Are your employees who may be entering the facility outfitted with appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)?
- Have they been fitted, trained, and are they familiar with PPE limitations?
- Are they aware of potential hazards they may encounter?
- Do you have an emergency plan to address any IDLH situations or response to unexpected serious situations?

It is possible that you will enter a building that has unanticipated hazards. Rely on the Emergency First Responders' advice and warnings. Consider delaying entry if you are not prepared or equipped to deal with possible hazards. Be aware of chemicals that may have been released as a result of structural damage. Floodwaters may be contaminated with sewage. Overhead risks may require hardhats. Be equipped with emergency lighting. Have a floor plan. Know several routes to get out of the building. Allow no one in alone. Carry emergency communication devices.

### **Damage Assessment**

- Who on your staff can coordinate inspectors, engineers, salvage specialists, or insurance adjusters?
- Be prepared for possible compliance inspections by OR-OSHA, DEQ, Fire Marshall, etc.

Inspect the affected areas to determine the nature and extent of damage. Facilities personnel often guide inspectors and engineers through buildings to help them with their evaluations. They know their buildings' features best. Consult with experts on issues such as assessment of structural damage or contamination issues. Take notes of damage and document damage with photographs. Begin to formulate your long-term plan, i.e., restoration strategy for on-site recovery actions.

### **Loss Documentation**

- How and where will you document damage assessment?
- What equipment will you need?
- Where is it located?
- Where will you obtain proof of ownership, value etc?

Make contact with the Risk Management Division at the earliest opportunity. We will require that you provide records of your ownership or your control and responsibility for damage. We



will help you to identify the necessary documentation required for your specific loss scenario for claims processing.

Commercial insurers, such as our excess carriers, will require proof of every cost on a major loss. This includes proof that the loss was caused by a covered peril. And, that all of the work that must be done is necessary and due to the loss event. Commercial insurers will always require that agencies provide a greater level of detail and documentation for a loss.

Agencies are required to complete and submit property claim forms to the Risk Management Division within 90 days of a loss.

### **Funds for Recovery Services**

- Are there ready funds to buy materials or services for your disaster recovery activities?

The self-insurance fund pays agencies for all direct physical loss or damage unless the loss is excluded or limited by the property policy manual. The purpose of self-insuring is to restore state property needed for the operation of the state. The self-insurance property policy also offers special self-insurance property coverages to agencies. There are even agencies that carry commercial coverage for unique loss exposures. The state has excess commercial property insurance as well. It is a good idea for your agency to understand their range and limits of insurance coverage.

Explore your agency's coverage issues for loss or damage in the event of likely disasters. Consider any unique situations that your agency might encounter. What perils are covered? Are there dollar limits on coverage? Are there gaps in coverage? Are some types of property or circumstances not covered? Are loss control plans a requirement for coverage? Are there any required approval processes? Are there any warranties that will provide coverage? Is there an exposure to your operating budget?

During the disaster recovery phase, your agency may need to hire specialized professional firms to analyze your loss. They could also be needed to plan building repairs or replacement, or the recovery of special materials and equipment. There may be costs for clean up, debris removal, contamination, or other damages caused by the loss event. Major projects need coordination. When your agency is depending on Risk Management or other insurers to pay for the mitigation, clean up, and restoration work, it is wise to collaborate even during a planning phase.

Take time to review your coverages, identify priority issues for your agency and be confident in your actions at the time of disaster recovery.

### **Mitigation and Clean up**

- Will you assign current staff to recovery efforts, i.e., clean up or moving? What about collective bargaining agreements? Employee physical condition and safety?
- Can you re-deploy staff from other locations to assist?

- Will you need specialized services?
- Have you trained your staff how to mitigate losses to equipment, materials, supplies, etc.?

It's time to proceed with your restoration strategy for on-site recovery. Your recovery actions may be based upon priorities that are specific to the damage assessment of the disaster and/or your specific agency activities. Mitigation actions for the State Library may be very different from actions taken at a state park. They can also be the same.

Call in the necessary specialists for mitigation and clean up. Make sure that you understand their capabilities, methods of analysis, methods of operation as well as all of your options. Some items may simply need to be washed, dried, cleaned, or painted. Some equipment may need to be disassembled and lubricated. Some equipment such as computers may need replacement parts, and other parts may need to be dried and cleaned.

Mitigation and clean up actions can include, but are not limited to (Note: emergency actions may have already started):

- Debris removal.
- Recovery from damage resulting from contamination:
  - Water damage - flood, storm, fire sprinklers, etc.
  - Dusts - earthquake, bomb blast, environmental, etc.
  - Chemicals and corrosives - accidental spillage, wrongful usage, unexpected disassociation of chemicals, etc.
  - Fire damage - smoke, soot, aggressive chemical compounds resulting from combustion, etc.
- Heating, ventilation, or air conditioning decontamination.
- Microbial and sewage remediation.
- Restoration of documents, books, and vital records.
- Data and media recovery.
- Restoration of telecommunications, electronics, and industrial equipment.
- Restoration of sprinkler, alarm, or other protection systems.
- Any other actions needed to recover utilities.

**Salvage, Segregate, Remove**

- Do you know in advance what you must salvage and what can be abandoned?

Salvage usually involves removing or protecting the contents of a building for reuse or sale at distressed prices. If damaged property can be sold for salvage, Risk Management will request your titles or evidence of ownership. Funds recovered will be credited against any loss payments.

Actions that assist in salvage efforts include:

- Segregate damaged from undamaged property.
  - Inventory damaged goods.
  - Keep damaged goods until claims adjuster has reviewed/discussed.
  - Move damaged property outside if it is in the way and environmental conditions are not adverse to the property.

### **Repair, Replace, Restore**

- Have you considered the decisions that must be made with respect to your business goals and financing?

This is one of the most important phases of disaster recovery. In a sense it is where the rubber meets the road. The agency is faced with many questions. Should you repair or replace your building? Should you do deferred maintenance, remodeling, or strengthening while you do damage repairs? Should you scrap the building and use your money for something else?

Although you have taken the time to analyze your agency's property coverages, you still may not understand just what your insurance pays for. Your relationship with Risk Management is of the utmost importance. We will help you to understand how the restoration process works.

Take a look at *The Morning After - A Guide to Major Losses*. It is intended to help you understand this process.

### **Counseling/Employee Assistance**

- Do you have an Employee Assistance Program? Do they offer critical incident debriefing services?
- Who activates the services?
- How are services accessed?

One of your most important assets is your employees. In a disaster recovery mode, there are many services that may be of assistance to them in a time of crisis. Consider these:

- Employee assistance program:
  - Counseling for depression.
  - Counseling for post-traumatic stress disorder.
  - Community-based service providers for long-term or extensive services.
- Emergency financial aid.
- Insurance claim filing assistance.
- Legal aid.

### **Emergency Procurement**

- Do you know what type of services you'll need for disaster recovery efforts?
- Should you establish these relationships in advance?
- Can a fee be paid in advance for priority services when a disaster occurs?
- Can you piggyback on statewide price agreements or contracts of other agencies?

When you are faced with disaster recovery, time is critical. When possible, establish vendor relationships in advance. Know what vendors you will work with and what to expect. How will the work be done, how soon can they respond, what are the estimated costs? It is helpful to contract for likely disaster recovery activities in a variety of loss scenarios. The destruction of property due to a variety of natural perils can result in similar disaster recovery responses.

### **Financing**

- Do you know that the self-insurance fund has limited coverage for clean up and mitigation costs that arise out of a covered loss?
- Do you know that the self-insurance fund has limited coverage for extra expense of a covered loss?
- Will your agency need to access operational funds to pay for any disaster recovery expenses?

In disaster recovery, funds should be available from Risk Management. There may also be a need to access agency operational funds. If so, plan for the operational constraints that may occur and make access difficult.

Do you know how or when funds will be released from Risk Management? Is there a priority methodology for distribution of funds in a widespread disaster? Can you get cash advances?

Does Risk Management have a method to pay for expedited repairs? Can you use funds for alternative purposes?

Plan ahead to help insure that your agency understands any financing limitations.

### **Additional Elements for a Helpful Plan**

It is helpful to obtain or prepare lists of resources for likely disaster recovery activities in advance. These may include detailed building plans, location and inventory lists of in-house supplies or equipment, outside vendors and/or special arrangements and existing price agreements. Consider these suggestions:

- Reporting disaster recovery hierarchy, including executive management.
- Identification of primary and alternate disaster recovery team members. Include description of responsibilities, scope of authority and contact information.
- Response and recovery instructions - include details for a range of possible disasters.
- Identification of disaster recovery priorities within the agency.
- Checklists for agency mitigation and clean-up strategies.
- Forms: multiple copies of any form that may be needed in the recovery operation.
- List of state resources, type of resource, and contact information.
- List of vendors, available agreements, and contact information. Provide details about services provided, cost and payment terms, or other particulars.
- Detailed building plans covering items such as entrances and exits, windows, fire extinguishers, fire alarms, sprinklers, smoke/fire detectors, shut-offs and master switches for power, water, gas, HVAC system, elevator controls, and the like.
- Financial information, to include, description of locations and/or sources of funds, access and authorization procedures, availability of funds.
- Self-insurance property claim form, explanation of coverage, and Risk Management contact information.
- Information on state/federal disaster relief procedures.

### **Conclusion**

During 1999 state agencies created contingency plans to address the impending Y2K problem. The disaster recovery and contingency plans developed at that time provide a firm foundation for ongoing agency activities. The events of 9-11 have significantly changed our perception of

the need to plan and prepare for disaster recovery. Today, a disaster recovery plan is one of the cheapest forms of insurance available. Learn the key to appreciating the full value of disaster recovery planning. It is, to understand what is at stake for your agency.

**CONGRATULATIONS, YOU NOW HAVE A DOCUMENT THAT MAY HELP SAVE THE LIVES OF YOUR CONGREGATION, HELP PROTECT YOUR CHURCH PROPERTY AND AID YOUR COMMUNITY**