



Emergency Preparedness Checklist for Congregations

All disasters start locally and end locally. It is important that congregations prepare for any type of emergency. The concept of this checklist is to provide the congregations with certain actions that should take place before, during and after an emergency.

ACTION

DONE

I. Executive Summary – This is where the vestry defines the role of the congregation in emergencies and disasters.

II. Policies – Does the clergy or vestry have policies for emergency /disaster operations? Who can make decisions when those with authority can not be reached? Is there a chain of command?

III. Hazard Analysis – What hazards are prevalent in the community? What are the historical disasters and emergencies in the community?

IV. Emergency Planning Committee * – Have you developed an Emergency Planning Committee? If so, has the chairperson contacted the Diocesan Emergency Coordinator** for assistance and support in developing the committee? Has the committee linked up with the county, local and other faith and voluntary organizations (VOAD***) resources within the community?

V. Emergency Response Team ****– Has an Emergency Response Team been identified? What functions does each member have? Do they have the authority to perform the functions? Does everyone have a substitute? Has everyone been trained to their role? What additional training might they need?

VI. Alert and Notification – How is the communication done with the staff and congregation? Is there a phone list *and* e-mail list? Is it updated and when was the last time it was tested? Does it include home, work and cellular numbers and even out of state contacts?

VII. Emergency Supplies – Are all the emergency supplies needed on hand? Is there an inventory? If so, when was it last checked? Do the staff and congregation know what supplies they need? What if the staff and congregation have to evacuate, do they have supplies to last three days?

VIII. Family and Individual Preparedness – Has it been ensured that all families in the congregation are prepared? List the shelters in the community that members could go.

IX. Time Phased Instructions – Depending on the hazard, there may be time to act, i.e., hurricane. Does the team have specific tasks to complete to prepare for the impending incident? Are there reporting requirements to ensure the work was completed?

Continuity Questions:

I. Vital Records – Are the vital records up to date? Are copies kept off site for protection and updated? Is help required in identifying your vital records?

II. Insurance – Is the insurance up to date? Is the required or suggested insurance (flood insurance, earthquake insurance, and wind insurance, etc.) purchased? Is there an inventory with photos or video?

IV. Alternate Work Site – Has an alternate work site been identified if the current work site has been compromised? Does everyone know how to get there? Do the computers work there? Can every one access their data? Is there an agreement in advance, that if the church is compromised that worship can be held?

V. Computers – Is there an off-site location that has back-up of the system? How would the organization run if the computers network was not operating? Who has the nightly back-up tape and is there a computer that can read it?

***Emergency Planning Committee** is a committee made up of church members to prepare the church and its grounds for disaster. This committee will be responsible for the development and maintenance of the church's disaster plan. This committee also identifies the ministry the church will be conducting when a disaster happens.

****Diocesan Emergency Coordinators** are those individuals who are responsible for working with the state, county and local governments, voluntary organizations, the surrounding dioceses and their local churches in the four phases of Emergency Management. The four phases of Emergency Management are: Mitigation, Preparedness, Response and Recovery.

*****VOAD** – Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters, these are organizations comprised of other faith based groups, Red Cross, community organizations, etc. VOAD's can be statewide and/or local wide. Please contact the State and/or Local Emergency Management Organization to find out when and how often they meet.

******Emergency Response Team** is a team that will support the church's response to an incident. This team should be pre-identified, trained and exercised. This team should identify the immediate and future needs of the incident and account for the entire congregation to ensure their needs are taken care of.

For additional support and assistance please contact you Diocesan Emergency Coordinator who can reach out to state and national (ERD) resources to support you.