

Disaster Planning Faith-based Organizations

2007



Shasta County Public Health

2650 Breslauer Way, Redding CA 96001

www.shastapublichealth.net

225-5591 or 1-800-971-1999



Faith Community Disaster Planning Guide

- Planning Assumptions About Disasters and Disease Outbreak..... 2
- Designate An Emergency Coordinator and Team 2
- Define the Faith Community’s Disaster Mission..... 3
- Building Description..... 3
- Facility Safety Measures and Emergency Supplies 3
- Evacuation Planning 5
- Communications Planning 5
- Encourage Personal Disaster and Disease Outbreak Preparedness 6
- Recovery and Service Continuity Planning 7
- Neighborhood and Community Planning 8
- Appendix 1 – Updates to the Plan..... 10
- Appendix 2 – Emergency Telephone Numbers List..... 11
- Appendix 3 - Immediate Response in Emergencies and Disease Outbreak 12

FAITH COMMUNITY DISASTER PLAN

A GUIDE TO HELP FAITH COMMUNITIES PREPARE FOR DISASTERS

Organization Name: _____
Address: _____
City/Zip: _____
Telephone: _____

Person responsible for emergency planning:

Name: _____
Title: _____
Telephone: Home: _____ Work: _____ Cell: _____ Other: _____

Additional Emergency Planning Committee Members:

Name: _____	Phone: _____

Planning Assumptions About Disasters and Disease Outbreak

1. Utility services may be unavailable for extended periods (i.e., electricity, water, and gas).
2. Telephone service may be interrupted.
3. Police, fire, paramedics, and 911 response will be overrun the first 3-5 days after a major disaster. Do not expect their help, initially.
4. There will be serious problems with transportation. Road closures will occur.
5. People will largely be “on their own” in the initial days following a major disaster.
6. Your faith community may be limited to working only with the resources within your immediate neighborhood.
7. If a pandemic influenza were to occur, 15-35% of the population could be ill over a several month period.
8. Large percentages of the population may be unable to work for days to weeks during a disease outbreak.

Designate An Emergency Coordinator and Team

The Emergency Services Coordinator may put together a planning team or disaster preparedness committee. The following are areas of possible responsibility for the planning team:

1. Prepare the facility to survive a disaster.
2. Ensure the continuity of leadership services or care.

3. Assist faith community members in their preparation for and recovery from disasters.
4. Decide what roles faith community leadership will play in response to disasters and disease outbreak.
5. Consider how the congregation might help meet needs in the community after a disaster.

Define the Faith Community’s Disaster Mission

Examples include:

1. To ensure the continuation or quick resumption of regular worship services
2. To provide pastoral care and support to disaster victims (from congregants to community members)
3. To provide services/resources to help in the community’s recovery from disaster (consider what services/resources you plan to provide)

Write a short statement below that summarizes the disaster mission:

Building Description

Provide some basic building data (information that may be helpful to emergency services personnel)

1. Occupancy type: (i.e., office building, school, church, temple, gymnasium, etc.) _____
2. Total square footage of your facility: _____
3. Year built: _____ Date of most recent renovation: _____
4. Number of stories: _____ Is there a basement? Yes _____ No _____
5. Type of construction (i.e., wood frame, metal, concrete, etc.) _____
6. Describe any unique features about the building or surrounding grounds that may be pertinent to emergency service personnel: _____

7. Attach a floor plan(s) of the facility to the appendix of the Disaster Plan.

Facility Safety Measures and Emergency Supplies

A. Basic Safety Improvement

1. Do a hazard hunt and improve any obvious problems (i.e., move heavy items from top to lower shelves and secure items that might topple.)
2. Check cabinet doors to ensure secure closure.
3. Properly store chemical and flammable materials.
4. Trim any large overhanging trees that could fall and damage property.
5. Clearly mark gas and water shut-off valves with instructions for shut off. (Turn off utilities only if there is a leak or if you suspect damage to the lines.)
6. Ensure working status of fire extinguishers and smoke detectors.

7. Take photographs documenting the interior and exterior of your facility to help later in recovering costs due to facility damage or equipment loss.
8. Post a facility evacuation plan (with exit and assembly information). Plan to account for staff and on-site participants in evacuation and conduct evacuation drills.

B. The following emergency supplies and equipment are located as follows:

1. Portable radios and extra batteries _____
2. Emergency first aid supplies _____
3. Flashlights and extra batteries _____
4. Stored drinking water (more is better) _____
5. Emergency (3-day) food supply _____
6. Basic tool kit _____
7. Fire Alarm System (include the following):
 - Location of fire alarm (and fire panel/room if applicable) _____
 - Location of fire extinguishers _____
 - If the system is monitored by an outside agency, name and phone _____
 - Location of smoke detectors _____
 - Location of fire alarm pull stations _____
 - Sprinkler system – location of sprinkler water flow valves and standpipes, including tamper alarms _____
8. Exits (include the following):
 - Provide information on fire escapes (i.e., type and location) _____
 - Provide information on fire doors if applicable _____

C. The following utility shut-offs and tools are located as follows (if applicable):

1. Main gas valve _____
(only shut off the gas if you smell gas or hear a hissing sound; then open doors and windows)
2. Crescent wrench or gas shut-off tools _____
3. Main water valve _____
4. Electrical fuse box / circuit breaker _____
(Shut off electricity if electrical wires are shorting or sparking)
5. Emergency or portable generator (if applicable) _____

D. Take an inventory of neighborhood resources that can assist with your emergency response (identify where to go for emergency help, especially if telephone service is unavailable immediately after a disaster):

1. Where can you rent or borrow a generator if necessary? _____
2. Where is the nearest medical treatment? _____
3. Where is the nearest fire station? _____
4. Where is the nearest police station? _____
5. Where can you go for additional water? _____
6. Where can you go for additional food supplies? _____
7. Where can you get additional medical supplies, medicines, and special equipment? _____

E. Other Safety Measures:

1. First Aid/CPR Training – Arrange for a First Aid/ CPR class to be held at your facility. (Contact the American Red Cross Shasta Area Chapter, 530-244-8000, or www.redcross.org. Encourage ushers, lay leadership, youth leaders, and teachers to attend.)

2. Register and train staff for CAHAN (California Health Alert Network)
 - The web-based CAHAN system is designed to broadcast warnings of impending or current disasters affecting the ability of health officials to provide disaster response services to the public, and to provide a collaborative work environment where sensitive disaster planning and response information may be securely shared. CAHAN serves as a secure venue for exchanging information and best practices.

 - When a health alert is issued, CAHAN is capable of sending alerts to email addresses, telephones, faxes, alphanumeric pagers, and cell phones with short message service capability.

 - Interested parties may contact your local CAHAN Administrator, Jackie Mae at Shasta County Public Health: phone 225-3762 or email jmae@co.shasta.ca.us

Evacuation Planning

Some Evacuation Planning Tips:

1. Designate where people should go or stand, once they are outside the facility _____

2. Post clear directions on how to evacuate the facility (post in central facility locations).

3. If it is possible and safe to do so upon exiting, staff should shut off any electrical equipment that may be running in their area and close all doors behind them.

4. After evacuating, take a head count to ensure all staff and clients have exited.

5. Consider people with disabilities (cognitive, hearing, visual, or mobility) who may need assistance.

6. Ensure that ushers are trained in the evacuation plan.

7. Practice evacuation/fire drills (use Appendix 1 to indicate most recent drills).

Communications Planning

It is suggested that the congregation have a post-disaster plan for disseminating information to staff, lay leadership, constituents, affiliates, members and parents.

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| | Date Done |
| 1. Develop a list of emergency contact numbers (see Appendix 2 – Phone List). | _____ |
| 2. Set up a telephone tree for notifying staff and leadership. | _____ |

3. Set up a telephone tree or system to check on the condition/needs of congregation members when disaster or disease outbreak strikes (especially for older or disabled members). _____
4. Designate one remote phone number where an emergency message can be recorded and be sure that all congregation members know that number and understand its use. _____
5. Identify who shall be notified in an emergency in order of priority. _____
6. Plan for connecting with key denomination or community leadership to report status information for emergency response coordination/assistance. _____
7. Plan for interacting with the media during and after a disaster or disease outbreak. (identify media contact information and develop scripts for possible scenarios.) _____
8. Develop a plan for alternate communications (see tips below). _____
9. Develop a plan to access and communicate reliable, up-to-date information during a disaster or disease outbreak and to address rumors and misinformation _____
10. Establish a communication link with Public Health and other emergency response agencies to coordinate public messages. _____

Given a disruption to telephone service following a major disaster, consider:

- a. Have access to a standard telephone, as cordless telephones do not operate without power.
- b. Use cell phones from different communication providers or in different area codes.
- c. Use walkie-talkies (or Nextel system) for communications within facility grounds.
- d. Know the location of nearest pay phones. (A pay phone may operate sooner than a normal business phone; hence, keep a roll of quarters with your emergency supplies.)
- e. Identify local amateur radio operators; each fire station will have ham radio capacity.
- f. Prepare to use runners (messengers on foot or bicycle.)

Encourage Personal Disaster and Disease Outbreak Preparedness

Date Done _____

1. Encourage staff and congregants to develop family/home emergency plans. _____
 - a. Have on hand enough emergency supplies for a minimum of 3 days, but up to 2 weeks (need to be prepared to function without normal utility, supply and transportation infrastructure).
 - b. Identify an Out-of-Area Contact Person
 Note: A response following any emergency is concern for the welfare of family and home. Staff persons who are worried about their families will not be effective until they have reassurance. Therefore, staff emergency plans should include the identification of an out-of-state telephone contact (relative) for family check-in. Connecting out of area calls is quicker as local circuits are initially overwhelmed after disaster.

- c. Have an Evacuation Plan (i.e., identify a reunification spot and determine what you will need to take if evacuating your home; include a plan for pets).

- 2. Contact the American Red Cross for an on-site presentation. _____
- 3. Review your disaster plan with all staff. _____
- 4. Train staff in how and when to shut off utilities. _____
- 5. Train staff in how to use fire extinguishers (call fire extinguisher company). _____
- 6. Pre-assign immediate response tasks (see Appendix 3 – Immediate Response). _____
- 7. Train staff about their emergency responsibilities to congregants/community. _____
- 8. Make a realistic plan for staff coverage during emergencies or disease outbreak. _____
- 9. Promote infection control and other health protective plans and education, including seasonal flu vaccine. (Consider incorporating into congregational routine, e.g., hand washing and hand sanitizers to reduce the spread of seasonal flu and infection.) _____

Recovery and Service Continuity Planning

It is suggested that the faith community have a plan to ensure it can continue providing services after a disaster.

- 1. List the supplies/resources needed to keep your faith community operating. (Then think about alternative vendors or sources for obtaining those items.)

Supply or Resource Need	Alternative Source for Obtaining Resource
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

- 2. Identify the faith community’s plan of succession (i.e., the list – by position name or title – that determines which staff or lay person is next in line to assume overall authority).
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 - d. _____
- 3. List of signatories on bank accounts (in the event that the primary signatory is unavailable).
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____

4. Identify how you might back up key staff positions (assume some key staff will be unavailable).

Staff Position	Possible Backup Source
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

5. Identify on offsite location for the backup of vital records and duplicate copies of important documents

6. Include as an appendix to this plan, or at the location above, an inventory of facility assets so losses can be documented for insurance (insurance policies should be reviewed annually).

7. What neighboring faith communities/congregations or other community agencies can you join with to share resources in emergencies? (Create mutual aid agreements as appropriate.)

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

8. What are some of the areas in which you can work cooperatively to support each other's recovery following a disaster or disease outbreak?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

Neighborhood and Community Planning

Consider additional roles for community involvement following a disaster – areas in which the faith community might provide services to congregants or community members affected by the disaster. It is suggested this planning be done with other neighborhood faith communities and organizations for a more coordinated disaster response. Contact Shasta County Public Health for assistance with community coordination of services at 530-229-8486. Summarize this plan in the space below.

Possible areas for involvement:

1. To provide pastoral/clergy care and support to disaster victims (especially outreach and support to more vulnerable congregation members).
2. To use facility space to provide emergency shelter for neighborhood residents.
3. To use facility space (i.e. meeting rooms and offices) for organizations forced to relocate.
4. To use facility resources for the preparation of food for mass feeding.
5. To use the facility as a storage/distribution center (for disaster relief supplies).
6. To use any owned vehicles for transporting people to recovery service sites.
7. In addition, teams of volunteers may be organized to provide the following services:

<input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy	<input type="checkbox"/> Health Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Outreach & Support to vulnerable populations
<input type="checkbox"/> Animal Care	<input type="checkbox"/> Home Visits/ Care	<input type="checkbox"/> Organizing/Lead volunteer groups
<input type="checkbox"/> Assisting at Disaster Help Centers	<input type="checkbox"/> Housing	<input type="checkbox"/> Pastoral Services (Spiritual Care)
<input type="checkbox"/> Casework	<input type="checkbox"/> Language Translation	<input type="checkbox"/> Rebuilding/ Repair/ Restoration
<input type="checkbox"/> Child Care Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal Assistance	<input type="checkbox"/> Relocation or Moving assistance
<input type="checkbox"/> Cleanup (homes/neighborhoods)	<input type="checkbox"/> Listening	<input type="checkbox"/> Resource Development
<input type="checkbox"/> Counseling	<input type="checkbox"/> Office Support/ Telephoning	<input type="checkbox"/> Shelter Services
<input type="checkbox"/> Driving/Providing Transport	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Worship Services
<input type="checkbox"/> Food Services (cooking, feeding, distribution/ home delivery)	<input type="checkbox"/> Managing Volunteers and Donations	<input type="checkbox"/> Warehousing & Distribution of relief supplies

8. If your congregation has a national denominational disaster response program (i.e., Episcopal Relief and Development, United Jewish Communities, United Methodist Committee on Relief, etc.), consider partnering or working with that entity to provide disaster relief.

Go to the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters website (www.nvoad.org/members.php) and click on “National Members” for a list of the various denominational and community-based programs.

Appendix 1 – Updates to the plan

1. Date most recent earthquake drill was held:

2. Date most recent fire drill was held:

3. Date of most recent staff training in basic emergency preparedness:

4. Date your most recent staff home phone list was compiled/updated:

Appendix 2 – Emergency Telephone Numbers List

Call 9-1-1 for most emergencies. If 9-1-1 is overloaded, then refer to the following:

Police Department:	_____
Fire Department:	_____
Ambulance:	_____
Water Department:	_____
PG&E:	_____
Hazardous Material Spill:	_____
California Highway Patrol:	_____
Sheriff Department:	_____
Local Hospital:	_____
Insurance Agent:	_____
American Red Cross:	_____
Salvation Army:	_____
Office of Emergency Services:	_____
Public Health:	_____
Congregation District/Regional Disaster Contact:	_____
Interfaith Coalition:	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Appendix 3 - Immediate Response in Emergencies and Disease Outbreak

The following response functions follow the government's Incident Command System (ICS). Given a small organization, the same staff person or volunteers may assume these functions.

1. **Incident Command** – *the person who will lead and make decisions.* This function manages the overall response and recovery to an emergency and directs the other functions below.

Person assigned: _____ Date: _____

2. **Operations** – *the person who will do the work.* Has the responsibility for whatever the agency does to respond to client or disaster needs. Initial response operations include the following:

Person assigned: _____ Date: _____

- a. **Site Security:** Responsible for utilities in an emergency (gas, electric, and water)

Person assigned: _____ Date: _____

- b. **Fire Suppression:** Checks for and suppresses small fires; notifies the fire department.

Person assigned: _____ Date: _____

- c. **Search and Rescue:** If evacuation is required, ensures everyone has evacuated safely.

Person assigned: _____ Date: _____

- d. **First Aid:** Administers first aid to injured persons

Person assigned: _____ Date: _____

3. **Planning** – *keeps everyone in the know.* Monitors the news; comes up with short (next 24 hours) and long term plans for the congregation's recovery.

Person assigned: _____ Date: _____

4. **Logistics** – *the person to get the resources.* Responsible for getting everything operations (above) needs to function to ensure the health and safety of staff, congregants and other persons.

Person assigned: _____ Date: _____

5. **Finance** – *the person who will track all activities and costs.* This person must also ensure that there are safe backup copies for the following agency documents: (1) Articles of Incorporation (i.e., verification of tax exempt status.); (2) recent photographs documenting the interior and exterior of your facility; (3) insurance documentation; (4) licensing documentation, if appropriate.

Person assigned: _____ Date: _____