

Introduction

This guide will assist you in preparing a disaster plan for your local church. When a church knows in advance how they will protect church property and care for their people in the event of a disaster, they are better prepared to minister to their community.

Depending on the size and needs of your church and community, you may want to expand the scope of your plan to include details not covered by this guide. To assist you in that process, more resources are available on the Be Ready Sunday website www.bereadysunday.org.

Additional information can also be found at www.ReadyAlabama.gov for suggestions on how to respond to current and future disasters.

Please share your completed disaster plan so all the churches in your district and conference are connected in the event of a disaster.

Purpose

To Establish a Disaster Planning, Preparation and Response Team

Local Churches are encouraged to identify a team of individuals who will create a disaster plan for your local church. All the members of this team may or may not be part of the team that implements the plan in the event of a disaster.

- The team will design a plan specific to the needs and requirements of the local church, including suggestions for:
 - What should be done to prepare church property prior to a disaster and who should be involved in the preparation?
 - How will the church care for the congregation during and after a disaster?
 - How can the church use existing resources before, during and after, a disaster?
 - How will the church serve the community before, during, and after a disaster?
- The disaster response ministry should support the mission and vision of the church.

Caring for Church Facilities

Planning Questions

- What does the church currently do to prepare the physical church buildings and contents (including the parsonage) for a disaster?
- When disaster is approaching, who is responsible to initiate and coordinate disaster preparedness activities?
- How will the church protect electronic equipment (musical instruments, sound equipment, projectors, computers, copiers, etc.) in the event of a disaster? Don't forget to consider rising flood and storm surge waters, as well as roof leaks or damage.
- What is the plan for protecting church documents and data?
- What routine maintenance should be performed to mitigate damage from a disaster?
- In the event of damages from a disaster, who is responsible for assessing the damage, contacting the appropriate personnel at the district and/or conference and initiating an insurance claim?
- Where will the Local Church Disaster Team meet and set up as a central area of decision making, if the church is inaccessible after a disaster?
- In the event the church sustains significant damage and must be relocated, where will the church go and how will that be communicated to the congregation, the district and the conference?
- What are the plans if a church needs to evacuate during a worship service or other event? How would this be communicated, and who would communicate it to those present?

PLEASE NOTE:

For the safety of those seeking shelter, as well as those offering shelter, churches are advised **NOT** to shelter people at the church unless the church is trained and certified as an official **RED CROSS SHELTER**.

Caring for People

Planning Questions

- How does the church currently care for its people through existing ministries and services such as: home repair programs for senior citizens, care teams, senior ministries, ministries for the disabled, etc.?
- Which of these ministries/services might be useful in disaster response and how?
- What are the ways your church can help people prepare for disaster? Be specific.
- How will the church communicate with people before and after a disaster?
- If you have a day care, pre-school or other ministry responsible for others, does the church have procedures in place to communicate information regarding closings and/or evacuations in the event of a disaster?
- How will the disaster team distribute general disaster preparation information and the church's disaster plan to the congregation?
- Who are the vulnerable people in your church who might need additional assistance (seniors, disabled, shut-ins, single mothers, people with inadequate financial resources, people with no insurance or not enough insurance, etc.) and who would coordinate their assistance?
- After a disaster, how will you manage the good intentions of your church?
- How will you track volunteer hours and who will be responsible for reporting them to other agencies as directed?
- How will you respond to those outside your church and/or community who offer to donate material goods or send in volunteer teams?

Caring for the Community

Planning Questions

- How does the church currently care for the community?
- Will the church distribute general disaster preparation information to the community?
- List existing programs in your church or community that may be useful in disaster response (home repair programs for senior citizens, care teams, food pantries, etc.)
- Could the church be a collection/distribution site for canned goods, baby needs, clean up buckets, health kits?
- What type(s) of community outreach can the church provide after a disaster?
- How will the church partner with other churches or faith-based groups in the community before, during and after a disaster?
- How will the church partner with government and social service agencies in the community?
- How will your church coordinate their response with these and other responding agencies and organizations in the community, so resources are not duplicated, and more help is available?

Preparing and Planning for Individuals with Special Needs

Tips to help those in need

(Additional information may be found at www.fema.gov)

Disability/Special Needs	Additional Steps
Visually impaired	May be extremely reluctant to leave familiar surroundings when the request for evacuation comes from a stranger. A guide dog could become confused or disoriented in a disaster. People who are blind or visually impaired may have to depend on others to lead them, as well as their dog, to safety during a disaster.
Hearing impaired	May need to make special arrangements to receive warnings.
Mobility impaired	May need special assistance to get to a shelter.
Single working parent	May need help planning for disasters and emergencies.
Non-English speaking individual	May need assistance planning for and responding to emergencies. Community and cultural groups may be able to help keep people informed.
Individuals without vehicles	May need to make arrangements for transportation.
Individuals with special dietary needs	Should take special precautions to have an adequate emergency food supply.
Individuals with medical conditions	Should know the location and availability of more than one facility if dependent on a dialysis machine or other life-sustaining equipment/treatment.
Individuals with mental retardation	May need help responding to emergencies and getting to a shelter.
Individuals with dementia	Should be registered in the <i>Alzheimer's Association Safe Return Program</i>

Church Plan Information

This plan is prepared for (insert name of church)_____

Location of church (please include the physical address, as well as nearby landmarks):

Church Phone Number(s): _____

Church Fax Number: _____

Church Web site: _____

Church Email: _____

Parsonage Location – if applicable (please list physical address and nearby landmarks):

Parsonage Phone Number: _____

Location of other church property – if applicable (please list physical address and nearby landmarks):

Members of the Disaster Planning Team

Team Leader	Finance Representative
Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
Phone number(s)	Phone number(s)
Email:	Email:
Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
Phone number(s)	Phone number(s)
Email:	Email:
Trustee Representative	Pastor
Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
Phone number(s)	Phone number(s)
Email:	Email:
Administrative Staff Representative	Additional Team Members:
Role:	Role:
Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
Phone number(s)	Phone number(s)
Email:	Email:
Role:	Role:
Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
Phone number(s)	Phone number(s)

Important Contact Information

211	An easy to remember telephone number that connects callers to information about critical health and human services (available in many communities)	
Pastor	Home	
	Cell	
Church Disaster Coordinator	Home	
	Office	
	Cell	
Conference		
District Office/Superintendent		
Office of Ministry Protection		
Fire Department		
Police Department		
Sheriff Department		
Nearby Shelters		
Other		

Local Church Emergency Supplies List

Suggested Equipment for Facility Preparation and Clean-up

- Copy of disaster plan
- Plastic garbage bags
- Sealable plastic bags- Waterproof containers
- Flashlight/extra flashlight batteries
- Plastic sheeting/tarps
- 2-way radios/extra batteries
- Plywood (for boarding windows)
- Ladders – Hammer – Nails – Duck tape
- Mops-Buckets-Brooms
- Disinfectant/cleaning compounds
- Bleach (at least 3 gallons)
- Rubber boots & rubber gloves
- Sturdy work gloves & masks
- Small dehumidifiers/portable fans
- Wet Vac
- Extension cords/50', 3 wire grounded
- Portable incandescent lamps/extra bulbs
- Power saws/hand saws
- Shovels-Crowbar-Wheelbarrow
- Jumper cables
- Cameras (standard, digital, or video)
- Battery operated radio/weather radio
- Portable gas/electric stove
- Ice chests
- Generator(s)

Suggested Disaster Supplies for Persons Onsite

- Blankets/sleeping bags
- Sun screen – insect repellent
- Nonperishable food supplies
- Manual can opener
- Water (minimum of one gallon per day, per person)
- First aid kits – CPR kits
- Paper goods: plates, cups, paper towels, plastic utensils

Facilities

Routine Maintenance Checklist

- _____ Check roof and foundation of building **annually**. If roof is leaking or foundation has problems, schedule for repair.
- _____ Monitor use of candles and open flames. Assign someone to be in charge of knowing when these items will be used.
- _____ Test smoke detectors **annually**. If the alarms are battery operated, routinely replace batteries.
- _____ Inspect HVAC equipment **annually**. If HVAC needs maintenance, schedule for repair.
- _____ Have an electrician inspect the wiring, power connections, and circuit boxes **annually**.
- _____ Inspect water heaters **annually**.
- _____ Provide backups and surge protection for all power sources.
- _____ Clean out gutters and drains **annually**, or as needed.
- _____ Maintain grounds and fences.
- _____ Trim trees away from the rooflines **annually**.
- _____ Check the security of canopies and covered walks on a **regular basis**.
- _____ Check emergency supplies. Replace food and water supplies **every 6 months**.
- _____ Ensure vehicles have updated preventive maintenance.
- _____ Ensure jumper cables are on hand.

Individual Needs Survey

Name: _____ Spouse: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Alternate Contact (person or phone) _____

List names and ages of additional members in household:

Do you only speak a foreign language? No Yes Language _____

Residence Type: Single Family Mobile Home Apt. _____ Floor and Apt. Number _____

Name of Residential Complex: _____

Are You? Legally Blind Deaf Mute Aphasic Are you homebound? Yes No

Do you use a wheelchair? Always Most of the Time Sometimes

Do you use a walker/cane? Always Most of the Time Sometimes

Do you require a special diet? No Yes Type: _____

List Special Medical Needs (Ex: homeless, severe cardiac, diabetic on insulin)

Do you rely on electricity for home medical treatments? Yes No

Have you registered with the County Emergency Management Dept. for help in an evacuation? Yes No

Family Physician: _____ Phone Number: _____

Emergency Contact: _____ Phone Number: _____

Do you have any dog(s)? Yes How many? _____ Cats? Yes How many? _____

(Note: Pets are NOT allowed in all shelters. Make evacuation-shelter arrangements for them BEFORE a disaster.)

Do you have transportation in an emergency? Yes No Maybe

Would you need transportation in an emergency? Yes No Maybe

If yes, what type? Standard vehicle Wheelchair access Ambulance

