

CATASTROPHE PLANNING GUIDE FOR SCHOOLS

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INTRODUCTION

This section has been developed to serve as a guide developing an Emergency Procedures Manual to deal with catastrophes that may strike with or without warning. Some of the pages can be used "as is", others require the insertion of your own specific information such as names and telephone numbers. Use it as a model to aid in establishing a specific and detailed Emergency Procedures Manual.

Included in this material are steps to be taken in response to certain types of catastrophes. These constitute a kind of pre-determined action plan for people to follow when an actual emergency makes clear thinking difficult. If there are particular emergencies to which your school is vulnerable, such as natural hazards which are more common to your particular geographic region, and these potential catastrophes are not included in our sample outlines, follow basic emergency management goals outlined in Part I to develop an action plan of your own for each potential emergency.

It is the responsibility of every school and each individual school administrator to prepare emergency action plans to deal with natural disasters and other catastrophes. Of primary importance to any school is the continued safe sheltering of students and teachers until all students can be reunited with their parents/guardians. To prevent tragic injury or accidental death, evacuation procedures, alternate shelter locations, public information - notification communication methodology by media (e.g., TV and radio) and communication with parents/guardians must be developed and practiced periodically.

Information regarding who to contact, where to go and what to do should be provided to each student, his/her guardians, teachers, aides and all school administration personnel at the beginning of each school term.

School Districts should coordinate with police, fire and emergency services departments specific emergency procedures. Communication guidelines with local TV and Radio stations and newspapers should be established.

Examples of emergencies that should be considered are included in the following sections.

DEVELOPING A CATASTROPHE PLAN

When you begin to develop procedures for responding to any type of emergency, there are certain goals which can help you focus your efforts. They are listed in priority order as follows:

Emergency Management Goals

1. Identify Potential Problems
 - Identify those natural and man-made hazards which may cause a catastrophe
 - Determine the appropriate emergency responses to identified potential catastrophes

2. Develop a Written Plan Of Action
 - Form a committee
 - Designate a coordinator using most appropriate personnel
 - Formulate a written plan

3. Test the Written Plan and Adjust As Necessary
 - Train the team
 - Conduct a drill
 - Critique the drill
 - Refine the plan

4. Implement the Plan When a Catastrophe Occurs
 - When a catastrophe occurs, activate the plan as developed and put the Emergency Team into action

5. Return to Normal Operations
 - Make temporary repairs, protect members of the school community from further hazards, and return the school to normal conditions

6. Review Annually
 - Make changes as necessary

Developing Your Emergency Response Team

Regardless of whether this guide is used "as is", or used as a model, any plan must be made truly ready by assigning various duties, and testing the program and procedures before catastrophic events occur. Our recommendation is that an Emergency Team be established and kept staffed with competent, trained personnel from administration, teaching and maintenance staffs. The training of the Team and the implementation of such a plan is the responsibility of the principal.

To begin development of your Emergency Team, choose a group of responsible and reliable individuals who will take action when it is necessary. They need to thoroughly understand their responsibilities at the time of acceptance.

The following is a list of basic responsibilities.

Each Team Member will need to:

1. Be thoroughly familiar with the details of the emergency procedure program.
2. Be prepared to carry out emergency measures should they become necessary.
3. Keep emergency numbers for police, fire, medical emergencies and other similar services readily accessible and up-to-date at all times. The numbers should be reviewed and verified periodically wherever they are posted in the school.
4. Alert new students/staff to the emergency procedure program and how it should be implemented.
5. Act in a calm manner in the event of any serious emergency and implement the emergency procedures as effectively as possible. Such action will include calming and directing those members of the school community within his/her area of responsibility.
6. Follow the procedure established to notify appropriate school officials and other emergency services after the first response phase.

Leadership Roles and Assigned Responsibilities

During an emergency or disaster at a school, various administrators, teachers and maintenance staff must function as a smoothly operating team to ensure the safety of the members of the school community.

Delegated Responsibilities

Emergency Coordinator (This role would customarily be taken by the School Principal)

- Duties:
1. Receives and acts upon reports of all emergency situations.
 2. Coordinates all plans.
 3. Delegates and assigns specific responsibilities to all staff and volunteers.
 4. Ensures compliance with authority having jurisdiction and with the developed disaster plans.

Assistant Emergency Coordinator

- Duties: Fulfills certain responsibilities designated to him/her by the Emergency Coordinator.

Alternate Emergency Coordinator

- Duties: Assumes the duties of Emergency Coordinator during that person's absence.

All Other Building Staff Employees

- Duties:
1. Notify the Emergency Coordinator of any potential emergency situations.
 2. Be thoroughly familiar with emergency procedures, exit routes and locations, location of fire protection equipment, gas shut-off valves and other utility shutoffs.

RESPONSIBILITIES ASSIGNED TO STAFF

Door Guards

Duties: Close off exits not to be used during an emergency, and prevent re-entry to the school before it is declared safe.

Name: _____ Location: _____

Name: _____ Location: _____

Name: _____ Location: _____

Name: _____ Location: _____

Name: _____ Location: _____

Name: _____ Location: _____

Name: _____ Location: _____

Name: _____ Location: _____

Name: _____ Location: _____

Name: _____ Location: _____

Date

Search and Rescue Team

Duties: If it becomes necessary to evacuate the school, make certain all areas of the building are vacated and that handicapped persons are assisted to safety.

Name: _____ Location: _____

Name: _____ Location: _____

Name: _____ Location: _____

Name: _____ Location: _____

Name: _____ Location: _____

Name: _____ Location: _____

Name: _____ Location: _____

Name: _____ Location: _____

Name: _____ Location: _____

Name: _____ Location: _____

Date

Traffic Controller

Duties: Control Traffic at assigned stations to ensure free access for emergency vehicles.

Name: _____ Location: _____

Name: _____ Location: _____

Name: _____ Location: _____

Name: _____ Location: _____

Name: _____ Location: _____

Date

First Aid Coordinator

Duties: Maintain the First Aid supplies and direct others trained in First Aid to respond to an emergency.

Coordinator's Name: _____

Assistant Coordinator's Name: _____

Currently Trained Staff

		Date Card Expires	Date Card Expires
Name: _____	First Aid: _____	_____	CPR _____
Name: _____	First Aid: _____	_____	CPR _____
Name: _____	First Aid: _____	_____	CPR _____
Name: _____	First Aid: _____	_____	CPR _____
Name: _____	First Aid: _____	_____	CPR _____
Name: _____	First Aid: _____	_____	CPR _____
Name: _____	First Aid: _____	_____	CPR _____
Name: _____	First Aid: _____	_____	CPR _____

Date

Utilities Control and Building Survey

Duties: Responsible for utility shutoff during specified emergency situations.

Survey building with fire or other appropriate officials to determine if it is safe for re-entry.

Name: _____ Item: _____

Name: _____ Item: _____

Name: _____ Item: _____

Name: _____ Item: _____

Name: _____ Item: _____

Name: _____ Item: _____

Name: _____ Item: _____

Name: _____ Item: _____

Name: _____ Item: _____

Name: _____ Item: _____

Date

SAMPLE OUTLINES OF SPECIFIC CATASTROPHE PROCEDURES

Aircraft

It is impossible to know if/when an aircraft will come in contact with the school. It may be a forced landing in the street, a crash into the school or falling aircraft parts from a crash above. The first minutes of this catastrophe are crucial. Public emergency assistance will take some time to arrive. Therefore, you need to follow a number of procedures before help arrives.

1. Determine the safest exit available and direct people away from the accident.
2. Take immediate appropriate action to ensure the safety of members of the school community. If the aircraft is outside, keep members of the school community at a safe distance from debris and do not allow anyone to remain downwind of a burning plane.
3. Follow telephone notification procedures for -- Fire, Police, Paramedic and School staff including the Emergency Team Leader.
4. Cooperate with evacuation, search and rescue, fire and other procedures as directed by the person(s) in charge of the disaster response team, e.g. Fire Chief.

Bomb Threat

Treat all bomb threats as a serious matter. The safety of the school occupants should be the primary consideration. In most cases, bomb threats are intended solely to disrupt **normal** activities. However, building evacuation is not a decision for anyone but the proper authorities to make. The procedures described below should be implemented regardless of whether the bomb threat appears to be real or not.

1. All staff should be trained in established procedures so that upon receiving a bomb threat and obtaining as much of the information as possible listed below, they immediately call the Emergency Coordinator, who in turn notifies all members of the emergency team and appropriate staff.
2. Every staff member should be trained to handle a bomb threat calls.

The following information should be obtained:

- a. Estimate the caller's age, sex and cultural background (accent).
 - b. Note the time of call.
 - c. Write down the exact words used by the caller.
 - d. Determine what time the bomb is set to explode.
 - e. Try to find out where the bomb is located.
 - f. Ask what kind of a bomb it is.
 - g. Ask for information on what the bomb looks like.
3. Call the police at _____ and give them all of the information obtained.
 4. The Emergency Coordinator is responsible for determining whether or not the school should be evacuated. This decision should be made following a discussion with the police department and evaluation of the call information.
 5. Explosives can be concealed in paper bags, small packages, shopping bags, attaché cases, or similar small containers. Everyone should be on the alert for objects such as these placed in unusual locations. If such an object is found, its location should be immediately reported to the Emergency Coordinator.
 6. If any suspicious looking containers are found, their location should be reported to the principal or the police. Under no circumstances should the object be handled or opened.
 7. All bomb threats must be considered real until proven otherwise, to ensure the safety of all members of the school community.

Civil Disturbances

Police or other authorities will advise protective actions to be taken during a local civil disturbance in and around the school.

Upon notification of a possible civil disturbance, administrative, teaching and maintenance staff should be alerted. A meeting should be held to determine what procedures and preventive measures will be taken.

Emergency procedures may include one or more of the following:

1. Partial school evacuation.
2. Secure entry to the school itself.
3. Secure walkways, access roads, etc.

Earthquake/Earth Subsidence

Unlike other emergencies, the procedures to deal with an earthquake/subsidence are much less specific. Since magnitude cannot be predetermined, administration must initiate emergency precautions within a few seconds after the initial tremor/situation is felt, assuming the worst possible case. Rules for safe behavior are as follows:

1. During an earthquake/subsidence:
 - a. Above all, when an earthquake/subsidence happens, keep calm. Don't run or panic; remain where you are and try to calm others.
 - b. If you are indoors, stay indoors. Everyone should be encouraged to take shelter under a desk, table, inside door frame or the stairwell. Stay away from windows, outside doors, bookshelves, and other things that can crack, fall or otherwise cause injury.
 - c. If you are outdoors, stay outdoors. Do not attempt to enter or leave buildings until it is safe to do so. Stay away from overhead electrical wires, poles or anything that could shake loose and fall. Remain in a sheltered area until advised by authorities to do otherwise. After the initial earthquake/subsidence shock is felt, be prepared for additional aftershocks, remain calm, and stay in place.
2. After the earthquake/subsidence:
 - a. Use caution entering or leaving the school.
 - b. Don't use lanterns, torches, lighted cigarettes or open flames, since gas leaks could be present.
 - c. Stay away from fallen or damaged electrical wires.
 - d. Open windows, etc. to ventilate the school.
 - e. If there is a fire caused by the earthquake/subsidence, implement Fire Procedures.
 - f. Determine whether or not anyone has been caught in the elevators or trapped by falling objects. If so, notify the principal so that rescue operations can be initiated

- g. Check the main water, gas and sprinkler valves for leaks. If there are any leaks, attempt to shut the systems off. If this is not possible, notify the fire department immediately.
- h. Try to prevent members of the school community from passing rumors and exaggerated reports of damage.
- i. Do not use the telephone unless it is absolutely necessary for emergencies. Heavy use of the telephone will tie up the lines and prevent emergency calls from going out.

Elevator Emergency

Being caught in a stuck elevator can be a very traumatic experience. It can be further complicated by a medical emergency.

Do the following when the elevator emergency bell goes off:

1. Call the fire department at: _____
2. Give them information as follows:
 - a. Name of the school:
 - b. Street address:
 - c. Street intersections:
 - d. Location of the malfunctioning elevator:
 - e. Telephone number of the school:
2. Notify the Emergency Coordinator.
3. Assure those people in the elevator via telephone or other safe means that help is on the way. Elevators have mechanical safety brakes and will operate in all situations, even a power failure.
4. Keep the occupants calm and await the arrival of the fire department.
5. Provide medical assistance should it be necessary.

Explosion

If someone becomes aware of an explosion by direct observation, the shouts of others, or the sound of the explosion, notify the Emergency Coordinator as soon as possible. Make sure the fire department is notified immediately. The fire department will need the information outlined below.

1. Telephone the fire department at:

Report the following information:

- a. The name of the school:
- b. The street address:
- c. The street intersections:
- d. The location of the explosion:
- e. Telephone number of the school:

BEFORE YOU HANG UP, MAKE SURE THE FIRE DEPARTMENT HAS ALL OF THE INFORMATION THEY NEED.

2. Once the fire department has been notified, follow Fire, Evacuation, or other Emergency Procedures as necessary.

Fire

Should a member of the school community become aware of a fire either by direct observation, shouts of others, the sounding of fire alarms or by smelling smoke, they should immediately notify the fire department and relay necessary important information:

1. Call the fire department at: _____
Report the following:
 - a. The name of the school: _____
 - b. The street address: _____
 - c. The street intersection: _____
 - d. The location of the fire: _____
 - e. A description of the fire: _____
 - f. The phone number of the school: _____

BEFORE YOU HANG UP, MAKE SURE THE FIRE DEPARTMENT HAS ALL THE INFORMATION THEY NEED.

2. Once the fire department has been notified, the Emergency team should be notified and informed of the extent of the fire.
3. Notify all other staff as necessary and evacuate all persons from the immediate fire area.
4. Trained staff should attempt to extinguish the fire using extinguishers or water from a hose as soon as possible *after or while* the fire department has been called. In any event, avoid possible injury and do not take any excessive risks.
5. Procedures should immediately begin to evacuate the area and/or school. Make sure there is access and parking space for emergency vehicles.
6. A member of the emergency team should be positioned at the main entrance to meet the fire department and direct them to the site of the fire.
7. While waiting for the fire department, it may be necessary to start search and rescue procedures and to provide medical assistance as necessary.
8. Once the fire department has arrived, the responding senior fire department officer will take charge of all activities.
9. Designate location to meet and verify attendance lists to confirm evacuation.

Flood

High water and water-borne debris may adversely affect a school, either by causing physical damage or temporarily inhibiting accessibility. Schools in coastal sites with elevators close to sea level, or inland locations along waterways where water depths three feet or more above grade are common, are particularly vulnerable. The following precautions should be taken:

1. Stockpile materials necessary to protect the school from the intrusion of water at a strategic location.
2. Give priority to the protection of the boiler and fire pump houses, keeping them in service if at all possible. In the event flood waters overwhelm defenses, arrangements should be made to remove vital fire pump motors or engines from service. This capability should also extend to include important motors, controls and emergency generation equipment.
3. Pre-plan with public fire department officials to coordinate efforts under conditions of limited access and other foreseeable contingencies.
4. Prepare to evacuate facilities, secure openings and provide protection as necessary to prevent flood waters from reaching inside the school.

Hurricanes and Tornadoes

Hurricanes and tornadoes sometimes strike without warning. Other times, ample notification is given by those in authority. The early warning time provided should be used to protect members of the school community. When a warning is issued, the following actions should be promptly initiated:

1. Anchor or remove all objects outside the school: garbage cans, awnings, toys, tools and other loose objects which can be deadly missiles.
2. Protect window and other glass by boarding up or closing shutters on large windows, taping exposed glass and drawing drapes. Keep all students and staff away from windows and exterior walls.
3. If tornado warning exists, seek inside shelter below ground level.
4. As soon as the tornado or hurricane passes, the Emergency Coordinator must initiate evacuation, search and rescue, and medical assistance operations.

Medical Emergencies

The most important thing to remember in dealing with a medical emergency is that quick and proper action is extremely important. Should a member of the school community become aware of a health emergency, they should alert the Emergency Team and begin implementing the following procedures:

1. Call the fire department or paramedics at: _____

State that medical aid is needed. Give the following information:

- a. The name of the school: _____
- b. The street address: _____
- c. The nearest intersection: _____
- d. Where the injured person is located: _____
- e. The type of problem or injury: _____
- f. The individual's present condition: _____
- g. The sequence of events leading to the emergency: _____
- h. Medical history and personal doctor's name, if known: _____
- i. The school's phone number: _____

The individual making the call should continue to stay on the phone with the dispatcher and answer as many questions as possible regarding the condition of the injured person so that information can be radioed to the responding aid unit.

2. Have an emergency team member or security guard go to the main entrance, wait for the responding aid unit, and direct the aid unit to the location of the medical emergency.
3. Provide first aid medical attention by trained staff as necessary while waiting for outside assistance. Members of the school community should be kept clear of the incident area. A clear path must be available for the responding emergency medical team and their equipment to reach the site of the incident. Determine if an ambulance will be necessary to move the victim to the hospital and contact one while awaiting the arrival of the emergency medical team.

Toxic Spill Or Chemical Release

Should someone become aware of an overturned truck, train or tanker, a broken fuel line, or an accident nearby area which involves dangerous chemicals potentially hazardous to the public, it may be necessary for emergency action. With or without notification from the public emergency response team or fire department, it may be necessary for the Emergency Team to initiate emergency procedures.

The following procedures should be followed while awaiting further word from the authority having jurisdiction:

1. Close all windows and doors downwind of the accident.
2. Do not allow members of the school community to exit downwind of the chemical accident.
3. Maintenance staffs should shut down any ventilating equipment downwind from the chemical accident.
4. Prepare to render medical assistance as necessary.
5. Contact the authority having jurisdiction to determine when it will be safe to:
 - a. Open the doors and windows downwind from the chemical release
 - b. Allow anyone to use exits and entrances downwind of the chemical spill
 - c. Use their autos in the parking areas, which are downwind from the chemical release.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Emergency Telephone Numbers

FIRE DEPARTMENT: _____

POLICE DEPARTMENT: _____

PARAMEDICS: _____

	Name	Telephone Numbers	
		Day	Evening
Superintendent:	_____	_____	_____
Emergency Coordinator:	_____	_____	_____
Assistant Emergency Coordinator:	_____	_____	_____
Alternate Emergency Coordinator:	_____	_____	_____
First Aid Coordinator:	_____	_____	_____
Assistant First Aid Coordinator:	_____	_____	_____
Maintenance:	_____	_____	_____
Salvation Army:	_____	_____	_____
Red Cross:	_____	_____	_____
Nearby Hospitals:	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____
Updated as of:	_____	_____	_____
	(date)		

Appendix 2

Emergency Telephone Numbers: Repair and Recovery

LOCAL REPAIR FIRMS

UTILITY COMPANIES

Roofer: _____

Gas Company: _____

Glass Repair: _____

Electric Company: _____

Plumber: _____

Water Company: _____

Sprinkler System: _____

Telephone Company: _____

Fire Alarm: _____

Burglar Alarm: _____

HVAC Repair Company _____

Others

Updated as of: _____

(date)

Appendix 3

Emergency Equipment and Supplies

- A. Have emergency equipment and supplies available.

For example:

- battery powered radios with extra batteries
- blankets
- cellular telephones
- dust masks
- duct tape
- first aid kits
- flashlights with extra batteries
- hard hats
- leather work shoes
- megaphone
- non-perishable foods
- 100' x 1/2" rope
- safety goggles
- safety vest
- Swiss Army knife
- utility shutoff tools and prybars
- water
- whistle
- windproof/waterproof matches

Other miscellaneous items:

- candles
- cleansing towelettes
- disposable toothbrushes
- drinking cups
- sanitation bags and ties
- toilet tissue

- B. Encourage employees to keep on hand or available an old sweater/jacket, walking shoes and comfortable clothes, along with prescription medication.

Appendix 4

Elements of Evacuation, Search and Rescue Operations

A good evacuation, search or rescue operation needs a pre-determined action plan for people to follow. The Emergency Coordinator should have posted floor plans showing location of safety devices, primary and secondary exits, and outside safe areas. This will require preparation and a review by the local authority having jurisdiction, such as the Fire Department. All members of the Emergency Response Team should have copies of these plans and should periodically review them so that at the time of a catastrophic event, he/she will know how the primary or secondary exits from the area they are responsible for.

Search and rescue operations require special skills. Trained professionals should be involved in these operations. Rescue and evacuation operations may overlap, but should be handled by separate emergency teams or members. The Emergency Coordinator should keep the Emergency Response team aware of search and rescue operations.

Complete preparation will involve consultation with local jurisdictions as to their methods and needs.

Appendix 4 (continued)

Evacuation Procedures

1. Building Section Evacuation
 - a. Building or Section evacuation will occur when the authority having jurisdiction or the Emergency Coordinator notifies the Emergency Response Team, security and maintenance staffs.
 - b. When evacuating an area, direct employees, students and visitors to the nearest (safe) marked exit. Keep everyone calm. Advise everyone to secure their valuables and evacuate their area to the nearest (safe) marked exit. If the evacuation is moving too slowly, use secondary (safe) marked exits. Make sure everyone walks.
 - c. Assist the handicapped in exiting. Remember not to use the elevators in cases of fire and earthquake/subsidence.
 - d. Once outside, direct students, visitors, and employees to a clear area that is at least 500 feet from the affected building. Keep streets, firelanes, fire hydrant areas, walkways clear for emergency vehicles and personnel. Take attendance to verify complete evacuation.
 - e. Do not allow members of the school community to return to the building unless notified that all is clear by the authority having jurisdiction or the Emergency Coordinator.
2. Building Evacuation
 - a. Evacuation of all or part of the school and its parking facilities will be announced by the authority having jurisdiction or the Emergency Coordinator.
 - b. All persons are to immediately evacuate the premises as directed by the authority having jurisdiction, or the Emergency Coordinator.

Appendix 4 (continued)

Search and Rescue

1. Restrooms, offices, storage rooms and hallways should be searched for those who may not be aware of the catastrophe.
2. Teachers should search their own areas and take their class lists before leaving their rooms.
3. Members of the Emergency Team should inform other staff members along their assigned route.
4. Teachers should account for their students and report to the Emergency Coordinator.
5. People should not go back inside unless it is safe. Don't attempt rescues unless you have the training and equipment.
6. Report to the Emergency Coordinator or authority having jurisdiction for the location, or the suspected location), of those who need to be rescued.
7. Report to the Emergency Coordinator or authority having jurisdiction that areas are evacuated or appear to be evacuated