

Section 1: Introduction

Definition of an Emergency

An emergency is defined as an unforeseen combination of circumstances, resulting in a state that calls for immediate action or an urgent need for assistance or relief. Larger-scale emergencies are usually considered disasters. An emergency can be a temporary disruption of services due to a short power outage, a longer-term situation causing an organization to relocate due to substantial building damage or even a larger scale, city-wide or regional emergency. Depending on the magnitude of the event, services may be provided as usual, services may need to be altered temporarily, or in extreme situations, services may be re-located or even discontinued.

Why Develop an Emergency Plan?

In any type of event, a plan is a guide for your organization to:

1. Protect property
2. Continue services
3. Care for members
4. Allow for self-sufficiency for at least 72 hours
5. Communicate information

A plan is relevant and useful if it is:

1. Developed by people who are concerned
2. Tailored to the geographical situation and needs of its members
3. Implemented and tested, to the extent possible, before emergency strikes
4. Developed to include training for persons responsible during an emergency
5. Reviewed and updated regularly

The planning process is more important than a document on a shelf. During the group planning process, individual concerns are expressed, priorities are set, and values assigned to peoples' needs and capabilities. As part of this process, planners will learn about each others' gifts and capabilities, and how to plan appropriately for their organization's response.

Before getting started, it is important to be aware of basic emergency management. Emergency management is made up of four basic activities:

1. Mitigation – any activity that is undertaken before an emergency strikes to eliminate or reduce the possibility of an emergency or the impact an emergency may have on a community or facility. Example: if subject to frequent power outages, installing a generator.
2. Preparedness – planning and getting ready to handle an emergency when it strikes. Example: stockpiling resources for evacuation and sheltering-in-place.
3. Response – all activities undertaken at the time of an emergency to save lives and property and reduce injuries. Example: evacuation.
4. Recovery – activities undertaken to return things back to normal after response activities have subsided. Example: repairing a damaged building.

Symbols Used



This symbol represents a **TOOL** to modify and use in your Emergency Planning.



This symbol represents an **ACTIVITY** to use to engage your organization and its members in Emergency Planning.

Section 2: How to Start

Emergency preparedness is a group process. Organizations have unique individuals with a variety of knowledge and skills. Support for your emergency planning needs to start at the top of the organization. Bring the leaders of your organization into the planning process from the very beginning to identify and agree upon the best course of action for your facility, staff, and members. It is also important to discuss the financial implications of the various proposed response strategies.



Tools in this section:

- *Letter to Increase Interest from Your Organization's Leadership*
- *PowerPoint Presentation, "Ready, Set, Go: Preparing is Caring"*
- *Risk Assessment Form*
- *Organizational Facility Safety Checklist and Maintenance Calendar*
- *Display Board Ideas*



Activities in this section:

- *Demonstrating the Effects of a Severe Pandemic Influenza*
- *Demonstrating the Importance of Planning and Stockpiling*



The Emergency Planning Cycle

Organize an Emergency Preparedness Committee

Take the first steps in emergency preparedness:

- 1. Establish an Emergency Preparedness Committee:** An Emergency Preparedness Committee should be established by the organization leadership or board of directors (see *Letter to Increase Interest from Your Organization's Leadership on pg. 6*). The committee or group can be new to the organization or its functions can be attached to an existing group or committee. The leadership of the Committee should be selected from within its membership. If applicable to your organization, a Volunteer Coordinator should be established as soon as possible because of the importance of volunteers in an emergency.

- 2. Membership of the Emergency Preparedness Committee may include but should not be limited to the:**
 - Board of Directors
 - Managers/leadership
 - Maintenance staff
 - Receptionist
 - Other staff members
 - Youth leaders
 - Members or clients with experience in engineering, plumbing, construction, informational technologies, education, finance, and health professionals

- 3. Help your organization and members recognize the importance of the Emergency Preparedness Committee, emergency preparedness and the benefit to the individual, family, and organization by:**
 - Conducting a commissioning service for the Emergency Preparedness Committee
 - Publishing the Emergency Preparedness Committee meeting minutes
 - Providing education on emergency preparedness and posting materials in your facility (see *Display Board Ideas on pg. 14*)
 - Publishing articles in a bulletin or newsletter on emergency preparedness
 - Conducting an informational session using the *Ready, Set, Go: Preparing is Caring* presentation on pg. 7
 - Using interactive demonstrations (see *Activities on pgs. 15-17*)

- 4. Get organized by:**
 - Checking your faith's websites or talking to staff at the national, state, and local level to see if emergency plans or guidance is provided
 - Getting acquainted with the emergency preparedness process
 - Assessing types of emergencies that may be experienced by your organization (see *Risk Assessment Form on pg.10*)
 - Reviewing difficult events previously experienced by the organization and their response
 - Identifying existing plans, activities and/or committees that may be in place and can be incorporated into the emergency plan
 - Identifying programs and outreach activities that could assist the surrounding community during emergencies

Identification of Potential Hazards

Once your Emergency Preparedness Committee is established, it is time to think ahead and determine what could go wrong. While it is impossible to plan for every possible event, it is important to look at what the probability is of a specific event happening, and the hazards that it would cause. In thinking about potential events, consider the following:

- Historical information: Has it happened before? How often does it happen?
- Geographic location: Is your area prone to a certain type of emergency?
- Human error: What emergencies could be caused by employees or members?
- Physical facility: What needs to be maintained regularly?

Upon completion of identifying your potential hazards (see the *Risk Assessment Form* on pg. 10 and the *Organizational Facility Safety Checklist and Maintenance Calendar* on pg. 12), you may find there are things you can do now to reduce the risk of an emergency or minimize the damage.



Tool: Letter to Increase Interest from Your Organization's Leadership

Dear Faith Leader (XXX),

I believe that we need to develop an organizational emergency preparedness plan and engage our members in preparedness to help in the event of a major emergency. In the wake of September 11 and Hurricane Katrina, emergency preparedness has become a significant issue nationwide. Minnesota is not exempt from these situations, as we remember local tragedies with the I-35W bridge collapse, Hugo tornado, and flooding.

Comprehensive preparedness is possible with the collaboration of a team, other faith-based organizations, and local government to work toward a common goal of enhancing communication, response, and recovery efforts in the event of an emergency. By having a plan, we can minimize damage to our facility, care for our members and the community, and remain self-sufficient when others may not be able. Below are *Ten Reasons Faith-based Groups Partner in Community Emergency Response*:

1. Our faith leaders have experience, training and influence for ethical decision-making – during times when ethical decisions are critical to the public interest.
2. By definition, faith-based groups offer hope during all times, especially in overwhelming circumstances.
3. A mission of our faith is to care for vulnerable people.
4. Our building(s) and meeting groups are highly visible and integral to the social infrastructure of the community. When people are fearful and overwhelmed, they will turn to us with expectations of help.
5. Our congregation is a cross-section of the community. There is no other place where a variety of generations, mixture of backgrounds, interests, professions, work, educational experiences and economics congregate regularly.
6. Our faith community has relationships and resources to connect with others outside of the community.
7. Faith-based groups have organizational and decision-making structures in place for effective community leadership. We have experience to deliver services and manage business decisions to help the community get through crises.
8. We provide spiritual support in a variety of ways – through words, actions, arts, and relationships.
9. We are adept at offering ways for many people to serve others.
10. Historically, faith-based groups have given the community a legacy of effective emergency response. The 21st century threats call for renewed collaboration and solutions.

Emergency planning is an inherent part of our mission. Good emergency planning involves getting informed, being prepared, and helping at local and community levels to get others prepared. I would like to see our congregation take greater steps towards planning and preparing for emergencies and I have been equipped with the tools to do so. The faith-based community as a whole needs to be prepared and ready to respond to such events when they impact our community.

Together, we can prepare to serve our congregation and the community.

Sincerely,

Name

Title

Contact Method



Tool: PowerPoint Presentation, "Ready, Set, Go: Preparing is Caring"

**ready, set,
go!**

Preparing is Caring!

Questions to answer...

- What is an emergency or disaster?
- Why do people need to prepare?
- What does "preparing" mean for individuals?
- Why bother to prepare now?
- Why develop an emergency plan?
- What are we asking you, as a faith leader, to do?

Every year, MN experiences disasters and community emergencies

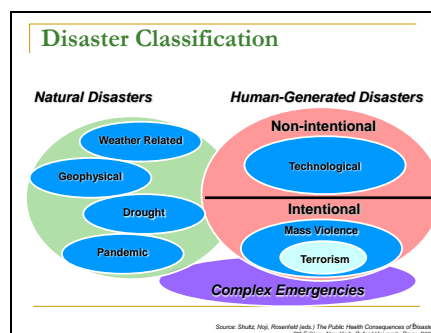
What is an emergency or disaster?

- Emergency = unforeseen circumstances that result in immediate action or an urgent need for assistance/relief
- Disaster = larger-scale emergency
- Range from local (one building), city-wide, county-wide, state-wide, national, or global
- May be temporary disruption or long-term situation
- Services may be unaltered, temporarily altered, re-located, or discontinued

Questions to Think About...

Is Your Organization Prepared for Disaster?

- If a major disaster struck today, could your organization survive?
 - Would your staff be willing and able to return to work after checking on loved ones?
 - How would your building or facility perform during and after a disaster?
 - Do you have a plan outlining how to continue your operations?
 - Do you have arrangements with partners to collaborate with to continue services?



Natural Disasters in Our Area



- Tornadoes
- Winter Storms
- Power Outage
- Floods
- Fires
- Infectious Disease Outbreaks

7

“Any community that fails to prepare – with the expectation that the federal government can offer a life line – will be tragically wrong.”

Comments regarding a potential pandemic flu outbreak from Michael Leavitt, former U.S. Secretary of the Department of Health & Human Services



10

Man Made Disasters

- Chemical
- Biological
- Radiological
- Nuclear
- Explosive



8

What does “preparing” mean for individuals?

- Stocking up on food, medicines, and supplies makes it easier to stay at home for extended periods of time
- Planning for situations when:
 - schools close
 - you can not go to work
 - you or a family member becomes sick/injured

11

Why do people need to prepare?

- Disasters are relatively unexpected
- Emergency personnel may be overwhelmed
- Lives, health, and environment are endangered
- Preparing now can reduce negative impact on individuals, society and economy

9

Why bother to prepare now?

- To increase your organization’s chance of surviving a large disaster
- As people begin to prepare, they feel increasingly empowered and decreases their anxiety about an event
- We must be prepared first in order to help others!
 - Experience shows that unprepared people are less likely to help others during a disaster
 - Unless we are prepared and feel that our loved ones are safe, we will not be **willing or able** to help others

12

Why develop an emergency plan?

- A plan is a guide for your organization to:
 - Protect property
 - Continue services
 - Care for members
 - Allow for self-sufficiency for at least 72 hours
 - Communicate information

13

Emergency Preparedness

- Preparedness involves activities:
 - **Preventing** public health emergencies
 - **Planning** to ensure an adequate response



15

What are we asking you, as a faith leader, to do?

- Make a plan
- Share info about how to prepare for an emergency
- Ask your team, staff, and members to prepare
- Work with local public health to get ready and prepare
- Look specifically at your 'vulnerable populations' and help plan for their safety in an emergency

14



Tool: Risk Assessment Form

Risk Assessment

Evaluate the potential for each event and its potential severity among the following possible emergency events using the scale below. Assume each event occurs at the worst possible time (i.e. during peak gathering times). You will need to consider these factors:

PROBABILITY	HUMAN IMPACT	PROPERTY IMPACT	WORK-FLOW IMPACT
<i>Likelihood this event will occur</i>	<i>Possibility of death or injury to your staff or your members</i>	<i>Physical losses and damages to your facility and/or vehicles</i>	<i>Interruption of services</i>

Rank the following events accordingly for each category and then add them together to determine your risk for each specific event: High=3 Moderate=2 Low=1 None=0

Possible Emergency Events	PROBABILITY	HUMAN IMPACT	PROPERTY IMPACT	WORK-FLOW IMPACT	Total Risk
Extreme Temps – cold					
Extreme Temps – heat					
Thunderstorm					
Tornado/Straight line winds					
Severe winter storm					
Flood – internal					
Flood – external					
Fire – internal					
Fire – external					
Medical – Infectious disease (e.g. Pandemic Influenza)					
Mass casualty – trauma					
Electrical failure/ Power outage					
Criminal disorder					
Civil disorder					

Possible Emergency Events	PROBABILITY	HUMAN IMPACT	PROPERTY IMPACT	WORK-FLOW IMPACT	Risk
Bomb threat					
Labor action/strike					
Supply shortage (e.g. food/water)					
HAZMAT (chemical spill) – internal					
HAZMAT (chemical spill) – external					
Radiological – internal					
Radiological – external					
Terrorism – biological					
Terrorism – chemical					
Terrorism – nuclear					
Terrorism – radiological					
Water contamination or shortage					
Transportation problems					
Motor vehicle accident					
Train derailment					
Other:					
Other:					

Score Ranges:

High Risk=9-12 Moderate Risk=5-8 Low Risk=1-4 No Risk=0

Based on this assessment, the following events are most likely to be of concern in our organization:



Tool: Organizational Facility Safety Checklist and Maintenance Calendar

Facility Safety Checklist

- Exits
 - Marked and lighted?
 - Free from obstructions?
 - Any doors or passages locked?
 - Any obstructions that may impede evacuation?
 - Plans existing for upper floor evacuation?
 - Contingency plans for handicapped persons?
 - Maps in strategic locations showing exits?

- Electrical and Gas Equipment
 - Where are the breaker switches or fuse boxes? Are all breakers marked?
 - Are there clear, legible instructions on how to shut-off water and gas valves?
 - Are switches and outlet boxes covered?
 - Are electrical units grounded?
 - Any circuits overloaded?
 - Any equipment in use after hours? Where?
 - Where is gas main or meter shut-off valve?
 - Where is gas wrench located?

- Miscellaneous
 - Location of keys for all doors and buildings?
 - Location of first-aid kit? Is it fully stocked? Who is responsible for maintaining it?
 - Location of wheelchair and/or stretcher? Who is responsible for maintaining it?
 - Location of battery operated radio? Who is responsible for maintaining it?
 - Location of emergency water and food supply? Who is responsible for maintaining it?

- Firefighting Equipment
 - Extinguishers fully charged, inspected, and tagged?
 - Extinguishers appropriate for type of use?
 - Members and/or staff trained on using extinguishers?
 - Are fire alarms maintained and checked regularly?
 - Are smoke detectors maintained and checked regularly?

- Chemicals
 - Are there any combustible, toxic, or corrosive materials stored in the facility? (i.e. paint, solvents, cleaning fluids, toner, propane)
 - Where? Are they stored correctly?

- Emergency Phone Numbers
 - Is the list current and posted visibly from outside?
 - Does the EMS and Fire Department know the different areas of your facility to enable them quick access?

Maintenance Calendar

Create a maintenance calendar to assist you with keeping your facility safe and prepared for emergencies. You may consider scheduling some of your larger maintenance items (i.e. All-Hazard Plan review) when you have major changes in leadership if this happens on a regular basis. The following are some sample items which should be reviewed regularly. You can modify this list to meet the needs of your organization.

Month	Item	Responsible Party	Date Completed
January	<i>Sample: Review All-Hazard Plan and hold a communications exercise drill.</i>	<i>Emergency Preparedness Committee</i>	
February	<i>Sample: Review list of members trained in using AEDs and CPR.</i>	<i>Parish Nurse/Health Committee</i>	
March	<i>Sample: Check smoke detectors</i>	<i>Facilities staff</i>	
April	<i>Sample: Review plans for tornados during Severe Weather Week and hold a tornado drill</i>	<i>Emergency Preparedness Committee</i>	
May	<i>Sample: Ensure that members are aware of appropriate mosquito repellent to prevent West Nile Virus</i>	<i>Parish Nurse/Health Committee</i>	
June	<i>Sample: Inventory your Emergency Kit and replace outdated items.</i>	<i>Emergency Preparedness Committee</i>	
July	<i>Sample: Ensure that members are aware of hot weather precautions and have adequate sun protection during outdoor events.</i>	<i>Parish Nurse/Health Committee</i>	
August	<i>Sample: Hold child safety training for new volunteers.</i>	<i>Education Committee</i>	
September	<i>Sample: Contact your Local Public Health Department for information on upcoming flu shot clinics in your community</i>	<i>Parish Nurse/Health Committee</i>	
October	<i>Sample: Check smoke detectors</i>	<i>Facilities staff</i>	
November	<i>Sample: Ensure that snow and ice removal methods and materials are in place</i>	<i>Facilities staff</i>	
December	<i>Sample: Ensure that members are aware of cold weather precautions and have adequate frost bite protection during outdoor events.</i>	<i>Parish Nurse/Health Committee</i>	



Tool: Display Board Ideas

Sample Messages for Display Boards

- Cover your cough – not with your hands but in your sleeve.
- Sneeze and cough droplets remain suspended around you for up to 30 seconds.
- Dispose of all used tissues and wash your hands.
- Let your children know about your plans to take care of them during an emergency.
- Being prepared means peace of mind in confusing situations.
- September is National Preparedness Month. Take simple steps to prepare for emergencies in your homes, businesses and schools.
- Do you know what your children's school emergency plans are?
- Hands are the most exposed part of the body – to germs. Wash them regularly.
- Give us all a helping hand – keep your hands clean and fresh.
- Do you have a family plan to stay in touch during an emergency?
- Are your important documents and up-to-date medical information easily and quickly accessible?
- Create a family emergency plan and discuss it with all family members.
- Build a family emergency kit of food and medicines to be self-sufficient for at least 72 hours.
- Get prepared. Be informed, organized and connected during emergencies.

Posters to Hang

Cover your Cough Poster

www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/pdf/covercough_school8-5x11.pdf



Germ Stopper Poster

www.cdc.gov/germstopper/materials.htm



Code Ready Information Poster

www.codeready.org/cresources.cfm





Activity: Demonstrating the Effects of a Severe Pandemic Influenza

Items needed

- 1 bag of M&M's (The size will depend on the number of people participating)
- Small bags for the candy
- The approximate population you are demonstrating (Organization population, city population, county population, or state population)
- The transcript (see below)

Preparation work

1. Determine which population group you are going to use and divide that number by the number of participants. That is the number that each individual person will represent.
2. Now, divide the M&M's out by color and make baggies for each person but do not mix any of the colors. Each person should get a couple of M&M's of the same color.
3. Hand the bags of M&M's at the beginning of the activity and ask people not to eat them.

Transcript

Imagine that we represent the population of XXX (congregation, city, county, state). Each of us represents approximately XXX number of people. This scenario is based on the Spanish Flu of 1918, where 28% of the United States population was infected with the flu and 2.5% died as a result of their infection. This translates to approximately XXX number of infected folks in our XXX (congregation, city, county, state), and XXX number dead.

Everyone with a BLUE M&M stand up:

- You are all infected with the pandemic flu and will be placed in isolation for treatment to prevent further transmission of the virus.
- Remember, each one of you represents XXX number of our population.
- You must stay home and can not go to your workplace.
- If you are severely ill, you will be hospitalized. 2% of you may die.

How are you feeling? (*Lonely, scared, confused.*)

How could the faith community help you?

(Drop off food and supplies at your doorstep, call and keep in touch. Maybe have a Parish Nurse check in on you and your family. Let you know that someone is praying for you.)

Everyone with an ORANGE & GREEN M&M stand up:

- You have been exposed to the pandemic flu but you have no symptoms. You are possibly a friend or relative of the first group or caring for the first group.
- You will be placed in quarantine for monitoring and to prevent further transmission so you can not go to work.

How are you feeling? (*Lonely, scared, confused, angry.*)

How can the faith community help you?

(Drop off food and supplies at your doorstep, call periodically, have a Parish Nurse check in on you and your family, let you know that someone is praying for you, educate on how to care for those with flu and infection control measures, and provide hope and encouragement.)

Everyone with a BROWN M&M stand up:

- This is the rebellious group.
- You violate quarantine restrictions by going to work, shopping, etc. Maybe you are short on food and supplies and have no one else to get them for you. Or maybe you do not understand why you have to stay home when you do not have any symptoms.

How are you feeling? (*Confused, alone, angry.*)

How can the faith community help you?

(You need someone you trust to help you understand the danger you are posing to others. Someone to bring you the supplies and food that you need. Education.)

Everyone with a RED M&M stand up:

- You are the people who are going to the clinics, urgent care centers, and emergency rooms despite the fact that you have no symptoms or maybe just one symptom but you are not sure if you have the disease.

How are you feeling? (*Scared, confused.*)

How can the faith community help you?

(Education from a trusted source like the Parish Nurse or faith-based organization.)

Everyone with a YELLOW M&M stand up:

- You are the media personnel and politicians who spin and sensationalize this event and whom public health relies on to inform the public. The public starts to panic.

How are you feeling? (*Lonely, scared, confused.*)

How can the faith community help when it comes to media?

(Give out education from a reliable source like your local public health department, the Minnesota Department of Health, or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.)

Remember that each of you represents XXX number of people in our population. Local public health, clinics, and emergency rooms will not be able to meet the needs of all of these people. The role of the congregation is very important in a Pandemic Flu response, as well as in any emergency response.



Activity: Demonstrating the Importance of Planning and Stockpiling

Items Needed

- An audience
- Chalkboard, whiteboard, or flipchart (optional)

Preparation Work: None

Transcript

Imagine that we have suddenly become stuck in this room for three days. We have no way out and no one has a way in. We have to survive on what we collectively have with us at this moment. I am going to give you a couple of minutes to look through your belongings to see what you have.

Wait 3-5 minutes. Look through your own belongings as well.

Ok, does anyone want to go first and talk about the items that they have? *(If not, the presenter should go first.) Discuss what everyone has (if they want to) and write the items on your board so everyone can see.*

Ok, so let's look at what we have to meet our basic needs.
Review list.

What are we missing? Food? Water? Bathroom supplies? Entertainment? Anything else?

Now, let's think about our chronic conditions or medications that we need. What are people going to do who need medication daily and don't have it with them, such as asthmatics or diabetics? What if we had a pregnant woman? Children? Others?

This exercise is designed to show you the impact of being confined in your home for days at a time due to severe illness (like the Pandemic Flu) or due to a weather-related disaster. In the event of an emergency, it may take at least three days for the government and other organizations to be able to help us. We have to prepare and be ready to respond and live on our own.

What are some of the items that we can have available to be ready to respond to an emergency?

Do you see your faith-based organization as a 'life-line' during an emergency? Is your faith-based organization prepared to help families and individuals who did not prepare?

These are things to think about. Get yourself prepared and help to prepare your community through your faith-based organization.

