



Diocese of Southwestern Virginia
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www.dioswva.org

Parish Disaster Response Plan



Revised May 2011

Diocese of Southwestern Virginia Parish Disaster Response Plan

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I. Introduction

a. The Purpose of This Plan

According to the Episcopal News Service, the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church said during its fall meeting October 10, 2005 that hurricanes Katrina and Rita demonstrated the need for dioceses and congregations to have disaster plans. The Council's resolution (CIM – 039) recommends that dioceses and congregations:

“take steps to provide instructions to clergy and other leaders concerning what to do in the event of a natural disaster or a terrorist event”

On January 26, 2007, the Annual Council of the Diocese passed Resolution #3, which reads in part:

“It is the policy of the Diocese of Southwestern Virginia that the diocesan staff, all parishes, missions, and diocesan institutions take the necessary measures to have current disaster preparedness plans in place at all times, based upon ERD criteria and guidance from the Bishop.”

In January 2011, Episcopal Relief and Development's US Disaster Program launched an initiative to better equip diocese to prepare for and respond to disasters. The pilot phase began with a targeted group of dioceses, which includes the Diocese of Southwestern Virginia.

The goal of this ERD initiative is to insure that dioceses of the Episcopal Church are prepared to respond to all hazards that might effect their communities, to mitigate the impact of those disasters, and are equipped to help the vulnerable make a full and sustained recovery. For a full description of the ERD Disaster Preparedness Initiative see Appendix A.

With all of this in mind, Bishop Neff Powell wants this diocese to be as well prepared as possible for any emergency and this manual is an important step.

b. What is a disaster? Can it happen here?

The American Red Cross defines a disaster as an emergency that causes the loss of life and property, and a disruption in which survivors cannot manage without spiritual, monetary, or physical assistance. Disasters can bring loss of life and injuries, the destruction of property including housing, critical facilities, transportation capabilities

and businesses, and civic disorder.

Disasters may be human-made such as acts of terrorism or industrial accidents. Natural disasters include hurricanes, tornadoes, wildfires, earthquakes and blizzards.

The life cycle of a disaster has four phases: rescue, relief, short-term recovery and long-term recovery.

1. **Rescue.** The primary task in this phase is to save lives and property. Essential personnel include emergency medical, firefighting and law enforcement professionals. Non-professionals may be able to give first aid and call for help.
2. **Relief.** The major task in the relief phase is to create safe and sanitary conditions for survivors and emergency personnel attending to them. Faith communities may provide clothing, food, shelter, health care, and pastoral response.
3. **Short-term Recovery.** The major tasks include damage assessment, restoration of utilities, temporary repairs, re-establishment of communications, and maintenance of civic order.
4. **Long-term Recovery.** In this phase, the principal tasks are rebuilding lives and communities, conducting grief counseling and dealing with the physical, emotional and spiritual unmet needs.

We are fortunate to live in an area of the country where major disasters are rare. The problem with that is that we may not be as well prepared as are people in dangerous places. Here are some of the things we should consider:

1. In 1969, **Hurricane Camille** dumped over 20 inches of rain on Nelson County in a short period of time. The results were over 100 deaths and wide spread property damage.
2. **Earthquakes** are rare here and are usually only minor tremors. However, the largest ever recorded in Virginia occurred in Giles County just west of Blacksburg on May 31, 1897. It was a magnitude 5.9 and intensity VIII and was felt from Georgia to Pennsylvania
3. In April of this year, Virginia was struck by a series of **tornadoes**, including an F3 in Washington County and an F2 in Pulaski County. There were a dozen deaths and hundreds of homes were destroyed or seriously damaged.
4. In 2004, there were two **accidents** when Norfolk Southern trains were wrecked in South Carolina and Pennsylvania just a few weeks apart. Toxic chlorine fumes blanketed a large area, causing deaths and injuries. Those areas had to be evacuated and St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Statesville, SC was contaminated and will not be ready for occupancy for a long time to come.
5. This area does not seem to be a likely target for **terrorists**, but neither was Lockerbie, Scotland. A Pan Am flight was blown up over that small town, resulting in deaths and injuries as it crashed there. In any case, we don't need to

be targeted by foreign terrorists, because we have our own homegrown variety, such as Timothy McVeigh and Eric Rudolph. On April 16, 2007, the worst school shooting in US history occurred at Virginia Tech when a deranged student killed 32 fellow students and faculty.

This list is just a few examples of things that can happen here with severe consequences. It seems logical to invest some time and effort in a disaster planning for the Diocese and for individual parishes.

c. Organization of this plan

Section II concerns the clergy and vestry who must take leadership of all disaster response planning.

Section III is about how the parish staff would be organized to manage the emergency at the church office or an alternate site.

Section IV describes the role of the Diocese in coordinating a widespread disaster response.

Section V consists of the appendices with additional useful material.

II. The Clergy and the Vestry

The leaders of the parish should take responsibility for disaster response planning. It would be helpful to appoint an individual or a committee to prepare a plan for the parish. When the plan has been completed, it should be approved by the rector and the vestry and made available to all parishioners. Also, please provide a copy to the Diocese. Each plan should address the specific needs of the parish.

During the emergency, the clergy will be occupied in pastoring to

victims and their families. The plan should emphasize the role of staff and volunteers from the parish.

Some elements of the parish plan might be:

- a. List the types of disaster that the community might suffer.
- b. Develop an operational plan for response to a disaster (Appendix G is a graphic summary of the steps of such a plan.)
- c. Develop an emergency organizational structure for the staff and volunteers that matches skill and experience with necessary functions.
- d. Establish communications as the situation allows with local emergency authorities, the Red Cross, other Episcopal parishes, other faith communities and the Diocese. Appendix B is a description of Virginia Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VAVOAD) of which this Diocese is a member.
- e. Prepare a plan for how the church would be evacuated in an emergency during a worship service. This would involve the clergy, ushers, and volunteers to insure a calm, save evacuation. Evacuation may require sheltering on the parish property or leaving the area.

III. The Parish Staff

a. First, Take Care of Yourself and Your Family

If a major emergency occurs while staff members are at home, their first responsibility is to themselves and to their families. Once their situation is stabilized, they can contact the parish office to determine if they are needed there.

The best information is contained in a Red Cross brochure entitled **5 Actions for Emergency Preparedness**. In summary, these are:

1. Make a Plan. Meet with family members to discuss possible threats to your house and the neighborhood. Designate a place to meet if evacuation is necessary and designate an out-of-town contact to call if the family is separated. Learn how to shut off utilities and use a fire extinguisher (see Appendices C&D). Consider how pets will be cared for (most shelters cannot accept animals.) Practice emergency drills periodically.
2. Build a Kit. There should be enough supplies in the house to last everyone for at least three days (See Appendix E) Some of these are: non-perishable food, bottled water, first aid kit, medications, and pet supplies. Especially important are flashlights and a battery-operated radio with extra batteries for both. Some of these supplies should be packed in a duffle bag or backpack to carry in the car when evacuating.
3. Get trained. The Red Cross offers many courses for emergency preparedness, including CPR/First Aid for adults, children and infants (and even for pets!)
4. Volunteer. The Red Cross and other service organization need volunteers,

- especially following disasters (but they usually require training.)
5. Give Blood. The Red Cross always needs blood but the need becomes especially acute after a disaster.

Contact the local Red Cross chapter for this brochure and other emergency preparedness information.

b. The Parish Office in an Emergency

This section deals with the situation in which the disaster occurs during the working week.

i. Preparing before the emergency. Some steps are:

1. Meet to discuss the emergency procedures and be sure that everyone understands them, e.g., evacuation routes, location of building utilities and how to shut them off.
2. Check emergency supplies frequently and restock as necessary (See Appendix E for a list.) Especially important is a battery-operated radio with extra batteries. It may be the only way of getting official emergency information.
3. Back up computer files and store them off-site.
4. Individual staff members should copy their most critical files to disks that they can carry with them if they evacuate.
5. Staff members should have lists of clergy and staff home phone numbers, cell phone numbers, and e-mail addresses with them at all times.

ii. Evacuation ordered. In his memo to the clergy, the Rev. Bob Wagenseil, emergency operations coordinator for the Diocese of Southwestern Florida, wrote this:

“ Dead heroes are useless. Do not try to ‘ride out’ this storm (Wilma) if your church is in an evacuation zone. Your services will be needed after the storm”

This is good advice for everyone. If local authorities order an evacuation, the diocesan staff should comply immediately. As time allows, secure the building, gather important material and follow evacuation instructions.

Depending upon the situation, the rector may designate an alternate site where the staff can function until it is safe to return to the church. This would probably be an Episcopal Church outside of the evacuation zone. As soon as personal and family safety considerations are taken care of, staff members should

report to that place to carry out parish functions.

If the building is damaged or contaminated, the church should not be reoccupied until experts have declared it safe.

- iii. Sheltering in place. Warnings from local emergency officials may direct everyone to stay where they are and seek shelter in the building. Typical situations are tornadoes or toxic fumes in the area.
 1. For tornado warnings, seek shelter in the basement or the lowest floor. Stay away from windows and loose objects that may fly around.
 2. In the case of toxic chemicals, do not go to the basement. Chemicals are heavier than air and will enter a building at the lowest level. Close all windows and doors and turn off heat or a/c so they won't draw fumes into the building. Gather in an interior room and wait for information that it is safe to leave.
 3. In the case of an earthquake, there will probably be no warning. At the first tremor, get under a desk or table. When the shaking stops, check on the condition of other occupants and leave the building until it is safe to return. Remember that there may be aftershocks.
 4. If there is a fire in the building, use a fire extinguisher for a small fire (see Appendix D) For a larger fire, alert the building occupants, call 911 and evacuate the building immediately.

IV. Coordinating the Response to a Wide-spread Disaster

1. The role of the Diocese: In the event of a disaster that affects a large area of the Diocese, damaging or destroying churches, injuring clergy and congregational members, and scattering people away from their communities, the Diocese becomes a control and communications center for relief and recovery. Each disaster will require a response tailored to that specific situation.
2. Disaster Response Organization. Each staff member will assume an emergency role as necessary to carry out the operations required, but flexibility is required to assure that any contingency is met.
3. Disaster Response Operations. Some likely steps are:
 - (a) The staff will take on the emergency organization configuration. The Bishop and the staff will meet and plan

the actions that they will take based on information they have in hand.

- (b) Lines of communication will be established as the aftermath of the disaster permits and information on the condition of clergy and parishes will be collected.
- (c) Communication with local emergency organizations (e.g., Red Cross, local Emergency Operations Center) and VAVOAD will be established for coordination purposes.
- (d) Likewise, communication with Episcopal Relief and Development will be made to discuss the application for a disaster grant if necessary.
- (e) Evans House should be the hub of a communications network that has information flowing in to determine needs and flowing out to request aid or to supply assistance to distressed parishes (see Appendix F).
- (f) During the Recovery Phase, the staff will continue to assist clergy and congregations as required while phasing back to normal workload. A Long-Term Recovery Group may be formed to address unmet needs and manage the effort.

Prayer on Occasion of a Disaster

Compassionate God, whose Son Jesus wept at the grave of his friend Lazarus: draw near to us in this time of sorrow and anguish, comfort those who mourn, strengthen those who are weary, encourage those in despair, and lead us all to fullness of life; through the same Jesus Christ, our Savior and Redeemer, who lives and reigns with you,, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God and ever and ever.

Appendix A



U.S. Disaster Program

Disaster Preparedness Initiative

Episcopal Relief & Development's U.S. Disaster Program is launching an initiative to better equip dioceses to prepare for and respond to disasters. The Pilot Phase will begin this year, 2011, during which we will work with a targeted group of approximately 30 higher risk dioceses around the country. The invitation to participate will be extended to all dioceses in the U.S. Episcopal Church by 2013.

Goal: Dioceses in the Episcopal Church are prepared to respond to all hazards that might affect their communities, prepared to mitigate the impact of those disasters, and equipped to help the vulnerable make a full and sustained recovery.

What does Episcopal Relief & Development provide?

- Funding to train clergy and Episcopal volunteers on disaster preparedness and response activities
- An annual training to allow Diocesan Disaster Coordinators to further their knowledge on disaster preparedness and response, and how to implement that knowledge in their diocese – the first of these regional trainings will take place February 2011
- A team of experienced disaster responders, called Partners in Response, available to support the Diocesan Disaster Coordinator and affected congregations after a disaster
- Templates and other technical assistance to help the diocese and parishes create disaster preparedness plans and plan response programs
- Assistance to track Episcopal assets, both human and physical, through: Ready to Serve, an online volunteer database and a comprehensive asset mapping system to be built later in 2011

What does a participating diocese look like?

A prepared diocese is working toward these goals:

- Has an engaged Diocesan Disaster Coordinator supported by a Diocesan Disaster Committee
- The Diocesan Disaster Coordinator and Diocesan Disaster Committee are actively building relationships with key partners in the community and government
- Responds to disasters that occur within the diocese – with Episcopal Relief & Development's support, the diocese supports parishes to create programs that reach out to assist the vulnerable in the community
- Encourages and supports parishes with their preparedness planning
- Incorporates disaster preparedness and response as often as possible at major diocesan events – clergy conferences, diocesan convention, etc. This can include business continuity planning, pastoral care responses, how to plan a mission trip, etc.
- Has a well-understood and accessible diocesan disaster preparedness plan that looks at both business continuity and response planning
- Tracks human and physical assets in order to help parishes (and the diocese) identify resources they can use to respond to a disaster

What is expected of Virginia VOAD member agencies?

A member organization agrees to participate in disaster relief activities in Virginia, to the best of their capability. Typically, a group will identify one or several response activities in which it has an interest, expertise or material or human resources to share. To be an effective relief organization as a Virginia VOAD member, the group is expected to:

- ★ Maintain current contact information for the notification and activation if its members.
- ★ Develop an internal response plan that describes group activities when called by Virginia VOAD.
- ★ Work to increase group response capability through planning, recruiting, training, exercise, equipment and supplies acquisition and other measures applicable to the group's chosen response activity.
- ★ Participate in semiannual general membership meetings of Virginia VOAD, conducted for sharing information and determining policy for the collaboration.

How do I find more information?

Virginia VOAD welcomes inquiries from voluntary groups whose service area encompasses all of Virginia or major regions of the state and who are willing to explore means of collaborating to providing disaster services. Contact Virginia VOAD, c/o Virginia Council of Churches, 1214 West Graham Road, Suite 3, Richmond, VA 23220; 804-321-3300; fax 804-329-5066.

Virginia Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

Members

- Adventist Community Services*
- American Disaster Reserve*
- American Red Cross*
- Baptist General Association of Virginia*
- Catholic Diocese of Arlington*
- Catholic Diocese of Richmond*
- Christian Church (DOC)*
- Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints*
- Church of the Brethren*
- Church World Service*
- Cooperative Baptist Church*
- Episcopal Church*
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*
- Federal Emergency Management Agency*
- Federation of Virginia Food Banks*
- Friends Disaster Service*
- HOPE, Animal Assisted Crisis Response*
- Humane Society of the United States*
- Industrial & Commercial Ministries*
- Jewish Community Federation*
- Knights of Columbus*
- Lions Clubs of Virginia*
- Lutheran Disaster Response*
- Mennonite Disaster Service*
- Operation Blessing International*
- Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*
- Psychiatric Society of Virginia*
- The Salvation Army*
- Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia*
- United Church of Christ*
- United Methodist Church*
- United States Air Force Auxiliary*
- United Way of Virginia*
- Virginia Commission on National & Community Service*
- Virginia Council of Churches*
- Virginia Department of Emergency Management*
- Virginia Department of Health*
- Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development*
- Virginia Department of Social Services*
- Virginia Disaster Recovery Taskforce*
- Virginia Federation of Humane Societies*
- Virginia Jaycees*
- Virginia Roundtable*

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Appendix B

Preparing for the Next Disaster --- NOW!

...in the wake of a disaster, the first and most important step is to ensure the safety of your family and yourself. This means having a plan in place before disaster strikes. A disaster plan should include a list of emergency contacts, a map of escape routes, and a list of items to take with you. It should also include instructions on how to shelter in place and how to evacuate if necessary. Regularly practicing your disaster plan can help you and your family stay calm and organized during a crisis.

Introducing Virginia VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster)

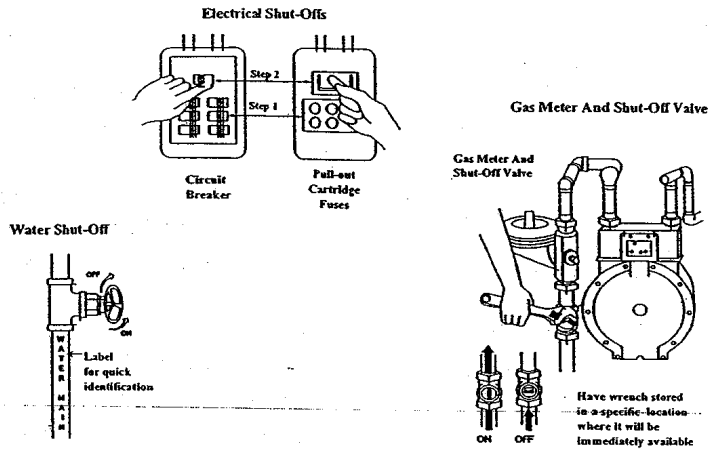
...the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (V.O.A.D.) is a national organization that provides a network of support and resources for disaster relief efforts. V.O.A.D. is composed of over 100 member organizations, including churches, schools, and community groups. These organizations work together to provide disaster relief services, such as food, shelter, and financial assistance, to those in need. V.O.A.D. also provides training and technical assistance to help organizations prepare for and respond to disasters.

...in partnership with



NATIONAL VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVE IN DISASTER

HOME AND WORKPLACE PREPAREDNESS (CONTINUED)

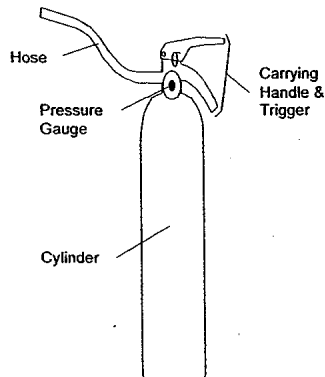


Utility Shutoffs

Utility Shutoffs: Electrical, Water, Gas. The electrical shutoff procedure shows both a circuit box and a fuse box and shows two steps. Step 1 is to turn off all individual breakers (or unscrew fuses). Step 2 is to shut off the main circuit (or main fuse switch). The water shut-off indicates a clockwise turn of the valve to shut off and a counter-clockwise turn to turn on. The gas meter shut-off diagram indicates the shut-off valve location on the pipe that comes out of the ground. To turn off the valve, use a wrench to turn the valve clockwise one-quarter turn.

FIREFIGHTING RESOURCES (CONTINUED)

OPERATING A FIRE EXTINGUISHER



Components of a Portable Fire Extinguisher

Components of a portable fire extinguisher: Hose, carrying handle and trigger, pressure gauge, cylinder

A portable fire extinguisher includes four components:

- A pressure gauge
- A hose
- A cylinder
- A carrying handle with trigger

You should always operate portable fire extinguishers in an upright position.

The acronym for operating a fire extinguisher is P.A.S.S.:

- Pull
- Aim
- Squeeze
- Sweep

To ensure that the extinguisher is working properly, test it before approaching any fire.

Appendix E



Together, we can save a life

Personal Workplace Disaster Supplies Kit

For the workplace, where you might be confined for several hours, or perhaps overnight, the following supplies are recommended.

Flashlight with extra batteries

Use the flashlight to find your way if the power is out. Do not use candles or any other open flame for emergency lighting.

Battery-powered radio

News about the emergency may change rapidly as events unfold. You also will be concerned about family and friends in the area. Radio reports will give information about the areas most affected.

Food

Enough non-perishable food to sustain you for at least one day (three meals), is suggested. Select foods that require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking, and little or no water. The following items are suggested:

- Ready-to-eat canned meals, meats, fruits, and vegetables.
- Canned juices.
- High-energy foods (granola bars, energy bars, etc.).

Water

Keep at least one gallon of water available, or more if you are on medications that require water or that increase thirst. Store water in plastic containers such as soft drink bottles. Avoid using containers that will decompose or break, such as milk cartons or glass bottles.

Medications

Include usual non-prescription medications that you take, including pain relievers, stomach remedies, etc. If you use prescription medications, keep at least three-day's supply of these medications at your workplace. Consult with your physician or pharmacist how these medications should be stored, and your employer about storage concerns.

First Aid Supplies

If your employer does not provide first aid supplies, have the following essentials:

- (20) adhesive bandages, various sizes.
- (1) 5" x 9" sterile dressing.
- (1) conforming roller gauze bandage.
- (2) triangular bandages.
- (2) 3 x 3 sterile gauze pads.
- (2) 4 x 4 sterile gauze pads.
- (1) roll 3" cohesive bandage.
- (2) germicidal hand wipes or waterless alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- (6) antiseptic wipes.
- (2) pair large medical grade non-latex gloves
- Adhesive tape, 2" width.
- Anti-bacterial ointment.
- Cold pack.
- Scissors (small, personal).
- Tweezers.
- CPR breathing barrier, such as a face shield

Tools and Supplies

- Emergency "space" blanket (mylar).
- Paper plates and cups, plastic utensils
- Non-electric can opener.
- Personal hygiene items, including a toothbrush, toothpaste, comb, brush, soap, contact lens supplies, and feminine supplies.
- Plastic garbage bags, ties (for personal sanitation uses) .
- Include at least one complete change of clothing and footwear, including a long sleeved shirt and long pants, as well as closed-toed shoes or boots.
- If you wear glasses, keep an extra pair with your workplace disaster supplies.

General Information

- Your kit should be adjusted based on your own personal needs.
- Do not include candles, weapons, toxic chemicals, or controlled drugs unless prescribed by a physician.

Appendix F

The Episcopal Diocese of Southwestern Virginia

Parish Disaster Response Information

Date of this report _____

This form is for collecting information about the extent of damage to parish property, the status of clergy and parish members, the needs of the parish for relief and recovery, and the capability of the parish to provide aid to others. Parishes are requested to communicate this information to the diocesan office by any means available as soon as possible after a critical event, with frequent updates. If the diocesan office has relocated, you will be informed as soon as possible.

If the space below is inadequate, use additional pages.

Parish Identification

Parish name: _____

Address: _____

Email and website: _____

Telephone number(s) and Fax: _____

Emergency contact person(s): _____

Status of the Parish

What was the nature and extent of the disaster to your community? _____

Please briefly describe the current situation of the parish, extent of damage, whether or not facilities can be utilized, etc.

Status of parish clergy and their families:

Status of parish members—numbers killed, injured, missing, etc.

Relief Needs

What are the most critical needs of the parish that the diocesan office can supply or communicate to other providers?

Clergy for pastoral support: _____

Volunteers on site to assist parish members: _____

Funds from ERD or other sources: _____ \$ _____

Emergency housing for survivors or relief workers: _____

Supplies __ list type and number: _____

Transportation needs: _____

Relief Resources The Parish Can Provide

Sanctuary open for prayer and pastoral support: _____ Hours: _____

Parish facilities available as a shelter, providing beds, meals, etc. _____

(Red Cross certification may be necessary, check with local chapter.)

Food preparation and service: _____ Number meals per day: _____

Volunteers to assist relief workers--number available: _____

List skills (medical, engineer, social worker, etc.)

Transportation for victims or relief workers: _____

Emergency financial assistance: _____

Other assistance that you can provide: _____

Do you need resources in order to provide relief? Please describe: _____

Other information that you can provide:

Some Useful Websites

Diocese of Southwestern Virginia
www.dioswva.org/programs/disaster

Red Cross USA
www.redcross.org

Federal Emergency Management Agency
www.fema.gov

Virginia Department of Emergency Management
www.vdem.state.va.us

Lutheran Church Disaster Response
www.elca.org/disaster/prepared

Office of the Bishop Suffragan for Chaplaincies,
 The Episcopal Church USA
www.ecusa-chaplain.org

Episcopal Relief and Development
www.er-d.org

The diocesan representative is Nick Moga;
 email nickmoga@aol.com

Official federal government website for
 information about pandemic flu for faith
 communities
<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/community/faithcomchecklist.html>

Voluntary Organizations Assisting in Disaster
 (VOAD)
www.void.org

Community Arise: Online training for the Faith
 Community
www.communityarise.com

O God, our help in ages past,
 Our hope for years to come,
 Our shelter from the stormy blast,
 And our eternal home!
 --Isaac Watts



Contact Information

For a copy of the complete Disaster
 Preparedness Planning Guide, contact
 Bill Lindsay at Evans House:
blindsay@dioswva.org

The Episcopal Diocese of Southwestern Virginia
 1002 First Street, Roanoke, VA 24016
 1-800-DIO-SWVA
www.dioswva.org

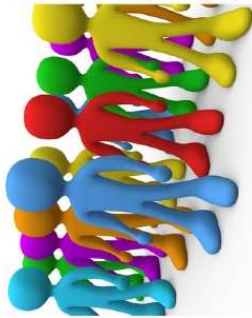


Disaster Preparedness For Parishes

After the disaster is not the time to get organized.

Preparedness

The most important part of the plan is to recruit, organize, and provide for the training of an Emergency Response Team comprising volunteer members of the congregation.



Develop the Emergency Response Team

The clergy and the vestry should appoint an individual or a small committee to prepare the parish Disaster Preparedness Plan.

As many volunteer members of the congregation as possible should be asked to serve, to ensure that an adequate number will be able to respond in a given emergency. Designate a leader of the team and several deputies or alternates to assure continuity of leadership throughout the crisis.

Logical Steps for the Team to Follow

1. Assess the situation and adopt an operation plan suited to the specific emergency, assigning members to appropriate roles.

For instance, there should be an office team to answer phones and send emails, a kitchen team, etc.

2. Check on the clergy.

Find out how they are doing and what the team can do to assist them as they carry out their pastoral duties during the crisis.

3. Secure the property.

If there is any chance the church properties have been damaged, conduct a thorough inspection and take necessary action, such as declaring areas off limits. If the entire structure is in a dangerous condition, work with the clergy to relocate the parish office.

4. Establish lines of communication.

If the diocesan emergency response team has not called you, contact Evans House and report the condition you have found, the help that you need, and the assistance you may offer to the diocese, other parishes, or the community.



5. Open the sanctuary.

If instructed by the clergy, open the sanctuary and maintain a presence there so that parishioners and others, such as rescue workers, can find a place to pray, meditate, and rest.

6. Open the parish hall and kitchen.

In addition to the sanctuary, the parish hall is a logical place for people to find shelter from what may be a chaotic scene outside. Team members can furnish water, coffee, snacks, and possibly meals if the situation permits.

7. Manage unsolicited volunteers.

It is very likely that members of the parish and possibly the neighborhood will call or come to the church to see if they can help. One or more team members should be tasked to talk to or meet with these people and find tasks that they can perform. Team members will find the situation very stressful, and new volunteers (after a briefing) can spell them.

8. Manage information flow.

Emergency authorities and regular news sources will be giving out current information as the crisis develops. (This is why it is important to have battery-operated radios.) One or more team members should follow this news and transmit it to everyone there. Try to squelch rumors as quickly as possible!

9. Provide volunteers to other organizations.

If requested by the diocese, other churches, or relief organizations, you may be able to send some volunteers from your parish to help them.

Appendix H

Disaster Preparedness Planning

Some Useful Websites

www.dioswva.org/programs/disaster - Diocese of Southwestern Virginia

www.redcross.org -Red Cross USA

www.fema.gov – Federal Emergency Management Agency

www.vdem.state.va.us - Virginia Department of Emergency Management

Email: Michael.Guzo@roanokeva.gov - Emergency Management Coordinator, City of Roanoke

www.er-d.org - Episcopal Relief and Development
(Nick Moga is the diocesan representative: nickmoga@aol.com)

<http://vavoad.org> - Virginia VOAD

www.communityarise.com - Community Arise: Online Training for the Faith Community from Church World Service