

## Disaster/Emergency/Critical Incident Considerations for Churches:



Would you be willing to provide temporary shelter for individuals and families or are displaced?

Would you be willing to provide temporary housing for long-term disaster workers?

If considering sleeping people at churches, there is a permit required from the State of Maine Fire Marshal's Office. You may be able to have a Memorandum of Understanding (OU) with local agencies. Talk to your local fire chief.

Could your church be a Warming or Cooling Station or a Charging Station?

Who staffs church for emergency operations? What about children and any type of health challenge (physical/mental)?

Do you have a Safe Church policy? How would that be implemented in any sheltering or feeding operations?

Would you be willing to prepare and serve or prepare and deliver meals?

Do you have a protocol in place if someone were to act out in a way that could be seen as physically dangerous? Do you have a disruptive persons policy or a behavioral covenant? (Sample links provided)

What about follow-up socio-emotional/spiritual care/discussion groups? Are there chaplains in the church? (Deacons/elders?)

Do you have work groups? Walking Group/Women's or Men's Groups/Yoga, etc...

Calling trees? Zoom neighborhood pods?

Have you ever had conversations with your local ecumenical and interfaith clergy colleagues about working together in the event of an emergency or disaster?

Who initiates the disaster plan? When and by whom is the decision made to cancel service, classes or other activities at the church? How will members of the congregation be notified?

What happens if the church buildings cannot be used or sustain significant damage?

How will the community be informed of ongoing needs or changes?

Is there a CERT Team in your community (Community Emergency Response Team). Your town's Emergency Manager can provide information about the CERT Team. CERT is a national program which has volunteers that are available in the event of a disaster. Learn more here: <http://www.fema.gov/community-emergency-response-teams>

Do you have emergency contact sheets for children AND adults? (Does it include contact info for friend/family out of state? Does it include info about where people would evacuate? Does it include info about special needs?)

Is there a list of where building shut off valves are for water and gas? Is there documentation of where electrical panels and boiler are located?

Does your local fire department have current key to the church? If you use a lockbox, do you have current keys inside-- and are they labeled?

Do you have a list of trusted, reliable contractors?

How long has it been since your church reviewed its insurance policy?

Do you have a weapons policy? Pet policy? Security cameras?

## A Local Church Asset Inventory for Disaster and Traumatic Circumstances

With thanks to the Florida Conference United Church of Christ Disaster Response Ministries, legacy Massachusetts Conference Disaster Resource and Response Team and Rev. Doug Dunlap for his framework.

### How to use this Inventory

**Purpose:** The inventory aids a congregation to identify spaces, materials and equipment, and skill-sets that may serve as assets to people impacted by disaster or traumatic events.

**Who completes the Inventory:** The pastor and/or designated laypersons could lead the completion of the Inventory, which might occur in a congregational discussion; or could be completed by a designated team and then brought to the congregation for review and the possible addition of new information.

**Sharing of the Completed Inventory:** Once completed, the Inventory is to be shared with Emergency Management personnel for the local community. A church may also choose to share its completed inventory with other churches of the Association, or with faith communities of a local or regional ecumenical ministry in order to respond collaboratively when a need arises.

**Storage/Display/Updates:** The Inventory is to be kept in readily accessible location(s). An annual review for updating purposes is advised, with a designated committee or team responsible to lead that process.

\*\*\*

**Date Completed** \_\_\_\_\_

**Church contact person(s) for congregation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Church media spokesperson:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Church contact for Emergency Management:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Town Emergency Management Director/Contact** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date Inventory Shared with Emergency Management** \_\_\_\_\_

**Other Authorities and dates shared**

**Fire Department (s)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Sheriff** \_\_\_\_\_

**Police** \_\_\_\_\_

**Ecumenical Ministry Group Name/Contact:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Association Contact/Position:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Space Assets

Parking lot (dimensions; paved/unpaved) (Could it be used for staging/storage/distribution/parking?)

Outdoor gathering space (dimensions/sheltered space)

Gathering hall, other than sanctuary, such as space used for church suppers (dimensions, furniture [e.g. tables and chairs to seat 50 people]/accessibility/emergency lighting)

Inside meeting rooms (dimensions/furnishings/accessibility/emergency lighting)

Movable partitions

Storage space for emergency items (such as airbeds) or items that may be dropped off (such as bottled water)?

Kitchen (electric vs. gas—commercial kitchen vs. residential stove, city water vs. well water, dishware, etc...)

Toilets (how many/accessibility/which levels/singles/changing tables)

Showers (how many/accessibility)

Auxiliary Power (type/fuel/run time on full tank) (Auxiliary fuel stored on site? Capacity?)

Internet? Wifi? (which rooms?)

Nursery (Equipped with crib? Changing table? Toys?)

Room or hall for crated pets

Library

Other space assets:

## Material Assets: Equipment and Supplies

Food pantry

Clothing Closet

Clothing Washer/Dryer

Thrift store

TV/Videos

Snow removal equipment (specify) and fuel>

Tools

Durable Medical equipment? Wheelchairs, walkers, canes, etc...

Heaters

Fans

Air purifiers

Masks

Children's books and playthings

Generator

Blankets

Shawls/scarves

Emergency lighting supplies: lanterns/flashlights/headlamps/batteries

Emergency food supplies for on-site (type/quantity)

First aid supplies

Personal Hygiene kits

Diapers

Disaster clean-up kits (5-gallon pails with supplies), for distribution

---

Gift cards for gas or groceries

Other material assets:

## Human Assets/Skill Sets and Goods

Tradespeople in your congregation? (contractors, electricians, plumbers)

Who has 4 -wheel drive vehicles for snow or flood emergencies?

Fluency in languages other than English (inc.ASL)?

Members with disaster response experience? (First responders, medical personnel, mission trippers?)

Designated Emergency Management Contact Persons in the church (More than one)

Watercraft/row or paddle

Watercraft/motorized

Passenger van (licensed driver/capacity)

Truck or cargo van (licensed driver/capacity)

Tractor with bucket (driver/capacity)

Infant care

---

Child care

Youth Support

Adult support

Therapy Dog

Phone support/social networking support:

Other skill sets: (Feel free to think outside the box...children could draw or write messages of support on paper lunch bags for food to be distributed.)

Helpful links to share:

[MaineUCC.org/disaster-ministries](http://MaineUCC.org/disaster-ministries)

UCC National Disaster Ministries: [Disaster Ministries - United Church of Christ \(ucc.org\)](http://DisasterMinistries-UnitedChurchofChrist(ucc.org))

Maine Emergency Management Agency: [Maine.gov/MEMA](http://Maine.gov/MEMA)

Federal Emergency Management Agency: [FEMA.gov](http://FEMA.gov)

International Critical Incident Stress Foundation: [ICISF.org](http://ICISF.org)

[Coping With Anger | SAMHSA](#)

[Disaster Preparedness, Response, and Recovery | SAMHSA](#)

Here are some helpful behavioral covenant/disruptive persons links:

[Search UUA and Other UU Sites | UUA.org](#)

<http://www.covchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/20/2011/02/Behavioral-Covenant-Samples3.pdf>

Emergency Contact Form (on DRRT page)

MOU: (SAMPLE to put on DRRT page) Memorandum of Understanding for disaster relief agency and church. Having one in advance means moving more quickly when disaster strikes. This template is of an actual MOU a Massachusetts church had with an agency. Everything is negotiable in this agreement; it is provided as a starting point only. Every church will have its own needs and requirements to consider before entering into this type of agreement. We advise that your congregation discuss exactly what the church is willing to provide long before the time when such an agreement might become necessary, consider the impact upon your renters, talk with your insurance company, and have it reviewed by an attorney before signing it.

---