# **Section 6 – Emergency Preparedness Policy**

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# **Section 6 – Emergency Preparedness Policy**

**I.** The Need for Emergency Policies

While all major library policy is critical important, emergency preparedness has a special urgency for the following reasons:

* The library may be legally liable if the library director, staff, and trustees do not have plans in place that will protect public property and library users during an emergency or disaster. An Effective Emergency Plan that all are familiar with is the library’s best defense against legal vulnerability.
* A swift and intelligent response to disaster can protect the building from further damage and save materials.
* The library staff is responsible for people in the library if there is severe weather, a flood, a sudden fire, building damage, a bomb threat, an illness, a disturbed individual, or other emergency. Planning is the best was to meet the library’s obligations to protect library users.
* A swift and intelligent response to a medical emergency can save the individual from unnecessary suffering or damage. The library may be liable if a staff member does not know the library’s policies for medical emergencies.

## **II**. The Emergency Preparedness Plan

An emergency preparedness plan will assist both trustees and staff to understand exactly what should be done under a variety of emergency circumstances. The plan will be drafted by the library director with appropriate assistance from the system and state library consultants if needed. The plan will be formally approved by the board.

## **III.** Emergency Plan Review and Training

Trustees and staff should be familiar with an established emergency plan. The plan should be reviewed and updated by the board at least every two years, and reviewed by staff every year. All staff and primary volunteers should know:

* how to operate a fire extinguisher
* how to evacuate the library and how to confirm that evacuation is complete
* how to direct people to the safest place during tornado warnings
* how to shut down utilities and computer systems
* how to handle an abusive or threatening phone call
* how to handle an abusive or disturbed library user
* how to find and use emergency phone numbers

## **IV. Components of an Emergency Plan**

### Emergency Telephone Numbers

#### LIBRARY 785-484-3393

Director Jerie Tichenor (c) 785-633-7788

Board President Kris Welborn (c) 785-249-3101

Board Vice-President Jenni Greene (c) 785-806-2104

Board Secretary Jeanette Waters (h) 785-876-2183 (c) 785-231-9699

Board Treasurer JoDee Brockhoff (h) 785-484-2397

Board Members: Jennifer Persing (c) 785-633-1801

 Heather Williams (c) 785-231-6816

 Clede Garinger (h) 785-484-3761 (c) 785-231-8054

System Personnel NEKLS 785-838-4090 (Laura De Baun, director)

Emergency Services 911 (ambulance, fire, police, sheriff)

Insurance Company Bolz Insurance 785-856-5355

Insurance Company Farm Bureau 785-484-2409 (building contents)

Insurance Company Farm Bureau 785-484-2409 (workman’s compensation)

Bonded Insurance Bolz Insurance 785-856-5355

Utility Companies Westar (outage) 800-544-4857

Computer Support NEKLS 1-888-296-6963

*Updated January 2018*

## Rodent and Insect Infestation

If rodent or insect infestation is apparent:

* Isolate the rest of materials from the collection
* Identify the type and extent of infestation
* Consider options for pest management, including routine professional examinations

It is possible to rescue a book by placing it in an airtight container and in a heated environment. An infected book should never by returned to library shelves until it is completely cleared.

## Disasters

Because buildings are vulnerable to tornadoes, lightning strikes, flooding, wind and hail storms, and ice and snow storms, staff should take appropriate actions as follows:

* **Escape Route** – establish quickest and safest escape routes, and post in the library
* **Tornadoes** – Staff should have a pre-determined area for safety, and this too should be posted in the library. Keep radio and flashlight in the library at all times, with fresh batteries. When a tornado warning is announced, staff should establish procedures for protecting staff and patrons. Entry doors should remain unlocked during a tornado warning.
* **Lightning/Fire** – Staff should be familiar with fire procedures and the location and

operation of fire extinguishers. There should be at least two smoke detectors and these should be checked every six months.

If only the smell of smoke is detected, the source should be determined and the person in charge notified. If there is a fire, the absolute first action to be taken is to notify those in the building of an emergency. The fire alarm should be activated and the fire department called. An orderly evacuation of the building should proceed under established policies. All areas of the library should be carefully checked.

Handicapped or disabled persons in the building are the first to be evacuated and directed

outside and away from the building. If the fire is small, a fire extinguisher may be used, but fire extinguishers should not be considered a significant fire-fighting aid.

* **Flooding** – In the event of flooding in the building, staff and users must STAY OUT of the affected area and keep users away with barriers. No one should enter a flooded area until the electric company has disconnected the electricity.

After the electric company has given permission to enter the flooded area, salvage operations should begin immediately. While slightly damp materials can be treated with fans and dehumidifiers, it is usually best to freeze wet books in some pre-arranged facility until experts can be consulted to determine what can be done.

* **Ice and Snowstorms** – The library may close early by decision of the Library Director and/or Board President. Generally, closures occur along with local school closures. When Jeff West School District 340 closes for ice and snow the library will also close. Scheduled programs, etc. must be canceled. When Jeff West School District 340 is not in session the Library Director and/or the Board President will make the decision to close or remain open.

## Structural Damage

If shelving collapses, immediately rope off the area from staff and public. Removal of materials should only be done if there is no risk of personal injury. Assessment of damage should be made and the proper authority called for evaluation, safety and repair.

## Computer System Catastrophe

If the system is damaged with open files, it may be necessary to run a recovery routine. Before power is returned to the room, contact the NEKLS tech staff for instructions on how to protect disc drives, etc.

## Bomb Threats

If a bomb threat is received, staff members are to remain calm and keep the person talking. The person receiving the call should try to gain as much information as possible about the explosive device and its location and timing. They should also note style of speech, use of language, manner of the caller, and any background noise. If others are in the library, signal them to call authorities. The board president should be notified at once.

## Medical Emergencies

A seriously ill or injured person should not be moved unless it is absolutely necessary. They should be reassured. They may be covered with a blanket or coat to help treat shock. An ambulance should be summoned at once. Emergency personnel should be given the address and exact location of the victim, the victim’s visible condition, and the caller’s name. Medical personnel may have additional questions.

The board president or other designated authority should be notified after emergency personnel.

If a person is irrational due to psychiatric illness or drug use, staff should speak gently and calmly and avoid argument. They should avoid touching the person or violating their personal space. Contact police immediately and give the person’s name, symptoms, and location.

1. Active Shooter Response Procedure

An active shooter is defined as a person or persons who appear to be actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people at the library premises. In most cases active shooters use firearms and display no patterns or methods for selection of their victims. In some cases active shooters use other weapons and/or explosive devices to increase the numbers of victims and to act as impediments to law enforcement responders.

This plan cannot address all possible scenarios, but outlines a general planned response.

**Best Practices for coping with an active shooter situation**

Be aware of your environment and any possible dangers.

Take note of the two nearest exits in any facility you visit.

If you are in an office, stay there and secure the door.

If you are in a hallway, get into a room and secure the door.

As a last resort, attempt to take the active shooter down. When the shooter is at close range and you cannot flee, your chance of survival is much greater if you try to incapacitate him/her.

**Potential Responses**

If possible, the first employee to identify an active shooter situation will:

Attempt to call 911 with the following information:

* Caller’s name
* Location
* Physical description of shooter
* Type of weapon, if known

Call 911 and setting the phone down will result in law enforcement being dispatched to the location.

The employees at the location where the active shooter situation is occurring have three possible courses of action to follow in response to the danger.

 Evacuate / Run

 Hide

 Self Defense / Fight

**Evacuate / Run**

If there is an accessible escape path, attempt to evacuate the premises, following these recommendations:

* Have an escape route and plan in mind
* Leave your belongings behind
* Help others escape, if possible
* Run in a zig zag pattern away from shooter
* Prevent individuals from entering an area where the shooter is
* Keep your hands visible
* Follow the instruction of law enforcement
* Do not attempt to move wounded people
* Call 911 when you are safe

**Hid**e

If evacuation is not possible, find a place to hide where the active shooter is less likely to find you, with these recommendations:

The hiding place should:

* Be inconspicuous
* Be out of the active shooter’s view
* Provide physical protection if shots are fired in your direction
* Not trap you or restrict your movement

To prevent an active shooter from entering the hiding place:

* Lock the door, if possible
* Blockade the door with heavy furniture

If an active shooter is nearby:

* Silence cell phones
* Hide behind large items, like cabinets or desks
* Remain quiet and motionless

**Self Defense / Fig**ht

If it is not possible to evacuate or hide, then consider self-defense, with these recommendations:

* Remain calm
* Do not do anything that will provoke the active shooter
* Dial 911, if possible, to alert law enforcement to the active shooter’s location
* If you cannot speak, leave the line open to allow the 911 dispatcher to listen

Take action against the active shooter only when you believe your life is in imminent danger, and then attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the active shooter as follows:

* Acting as aggressively as possible against him / her
* Throwing items and improvising weapons
* Yelling
* Commit yourself to defensive physical actions

**Law Enforcement Resp**onse

Comply with law enforcement instructions. First responding officers will focus on stopping the active shooter. Officers will proceed directly to the area in which the last shots were heard. Officers may shout commands, and may push individuals to the ground for their safety.

When law enforcement arrives:

* Remain calm and follow instructions
* Put down any items in your hands
* Raise your hands, spread your fingers apart
* Keep hands visible at all times
* Avoid quick movements
* Avoid pointing, screaming, yelling

**Gathering Place / Safe Place**

Be prepared to share information:

* Number of shooters
* Number of victims
* Type and number of weapons
* Events that provoked the shooter
* Identify library staff
* Notify Board President that you have evacuated the premises due to an active shooter situation.

Once you have reached a safe location or an assembly point, you will likely be held in that area by law enforcement until the situation is under control and all witnesses have been identified and questioned. Do not leave until law enforcement authorities have instructed you to do so.

## V. Emergency Equipment

Staff must be familiar with the library’s emergency equipment, when first hired and during annual drills.

## Basics

The following equipment needs to be in the library at all times:

* flashlight with extra batteries and bulbs
* a transportable first-aid kit
* a battery-operated radio with spare batteries

## Fire Extinguishers

Dry chemical extinguishers will smother any type of fire, including electrical and chemical, by coating the burning area with a powder that cuts off the supply of oxygen. This powder should be vacuumed away from library materials once the fire is out. This type of extinguisher should not be sprayed on a person unless he/she is actually on fire and there is no other alternative.

## C. Fire Alarms

Smoke detectors are equipped with alarms. Staff and volunteers must know the location and operation of the fire alarm system, including how to deactivate the system.

##  Sprinkler Systems

No system is in place.

## Smoke Detectors

Batteries in smoke detectors should be checked every six months and changed at least once a year. A suggested time to check detectors is on standard time/daylight savings time changes, and should be noted on the library’s calendar.

## **VI**. Insurance

Information on the quantity and value of library materials covered by insurance shall be kept up to date. This can be done by maintaining an accurate shelf list. Insurance coverage should be reviewed with an agent every **two** years.

## **VII.** Past Disasters

Experience is the best teacher. Following a disaster, record all details and retain in this portion of the policy manual. Information should include type of disaster, location, date, and a narrative explaining how it happened, what was the damage, and steps taken to remedy the situation.