



# **Emergency Preparedness Plan**

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# Unitarian Universalists of the Chester River Basic Emergency Preparedness Plan

## Introduction

As a faith-based community that supports its members and friends in times of crisis and need, it is the intent of the Unitarian Universalists of the Chester River (UUCR) Board of Trustees to ensure that UUCR members, friends, visitors and staff feel safe and secure while in and on its property. We also wish to ensure the readiness of our congregation to respond to emergencies to the fullest extent possible, given our size and the resources at our disposal.

Although rare, disruptions, vandalism, and violent action targeting houses of worship of all denominations and faith traditions are increasing on a national level. There is a potential for Unitarian Universalist congregations, because of our prominent and active social justice programs and liberal stances on issues, to attract attention from those seeking to cause disruption or harm. Therefore, the UUCR Board of Trustees has created this emergency management plan.

The UUCR Basic Emergency Preparedness Plan supplements the Kent County Emergency Services Crisis Response Guide (“the red flip book”).

### Emergency Contacts:

For any emergency.....911

Office of Emergency Services....410-778-1241

#### Police Departments

Chestertown.....410-778-1800

Kent Co. Sheriff.....410-778-2279

State Police.....410-778-4511

#### Medical

UMD Shore Regional Hospital...410-778-3300

Poison Control.....800-222-1222

#### Crisis and Social Services

Mobile Crisis Hotline..... 800-310-7273

For All Seasons (rape, trauma).....410-778-5147

MidShore Council/Family Violence..410-778-4616

Kent Co. Social Services.....410-778-7371

Kent Cty Behavioral Health.....410-778-6404

Contact Information for 911:

Unitarian Universalists of the Chester River  
914 Gateway Drive

## **Types of Emergencies**

Following are some of the types of emergencies that UUCR may need to respond to:

- Medical Emergencies (fainting, strokes, heart attacks, etc.)
- Evacuation Emergencies (Fire, Smoke, chemical
- Severe Weather Emergencies (tornados, hurricanes, blizzards, floods, etc.)
- Terrorism (intruder/active shooter)

## **Prevention**

The first line of defense in an emergency, whether unwelcome intrusions, fire, or natural disasters, is the design and condition of our building and grounds. The Building and Grounds committee is the primary point of contact for this responsibility. The Board of Trustees must ensure that adequate funding is maintained and made available for necessary maintenance and repair of the building, as well as improvements and upgrades to security features. Administrative staff are responsible for assisting with the implementation of access control policies.

## **People Who Might Be Involved**

Ideally, *every* member and friend of UUCR should be aware of emergency prevention and response procedures, but some are more likely to be involved than others. The Board of Trustees, working with the Building and Grounds Committee, shall schedule an annual training session for key personnel to review these procedures, including:

1. All Members of the Board of Trustees
2. All Chairs of UUCR Committees
3. The Minister and the Pastoral Associates
4. All instructors, staff and volunteers who work with our children
5. Every Service Leader and Greeter
6. Persons qualified for medical emergencies (e.g., who know CPR, who have experience in the medical or response field)

This training will include information about potential emergencies, response procedures, building evacuation procedures, and the location of:

- First Aid Kits
- AED (automated external defibrillator)
- Fire Extinguishers (and how to operate them)
- Available landline telephones (and how to use)

- UUCR Emergency Preparedness Plan
- Kent County Emergency Services Crisis Response Guide (the red flip book)
- Security of the building (locks, keys for doors and windows etc.)

Written procedures and a building schematic with the location of the tools listed above will be distributed during the training and posted throughout the building.

### **Building and Grounds Committee**

The B&G Committee is responsible for the following:

1. Ensuring that all doors and windows lock from inside, open and shut easily, and that the area outside windows is clear (annual check.)
2. Ensuring that all exterior lighting is in good working order, including the motion sensor lights (annual check.)
3. Ensuring that all fire extinguishers and smoke detectors are in working order (annual check.)
4. Ensuring that all emergency lighting is in working order (annual check.)
5. Maintaining an institution- level first aid kit that is located in a readily accessible place.
6. Maintaining the AED (automated external defibrillator) for proper functioning and battery replacement (annual check.)
7. Posting emergency procedures and a building schematic with location of all doors, fire extinguishers, first aid kit and available landline telephones with instructions. Evacuation routes and building schematic should be posted in all rooms within the building.
8. Controlling the distribution of keyless entry cards and keeping current records of who has them, assisted by the Church Administrator.

### **Standard Safety Practices**

1. During Sunday morning services one greeter/usher should be posted immediately inside double door entrance to the sanctuary and one seated in the far right corner at the back of the sanctuary (near the small door). Both greeters should have their cell phones with them ***and turned on (silent mode)***. If a greeter is unable or unwilling to occupy either of these positions on a given occasion, someone else should be asked to serve instead.
2. Once a service is underway, entrance to the building should be restricted to the double doors of the Main Entrance and the handicap access entrance. All other single entrance doors should be locked.
3. Any suspicious activities or persons should be immediately reported either to the minister, or the service leader, or a greeter, or other key personnel.

4. The church phone message and TV stations WBAL (channel 11) and WJZ (channel 13) should provide notices regarding weather emergencies and cancellation of activities.
5. For activities other than Sunday service, the activity leader should be provided with written procedures and a building schematic with relevant information.

## **EMERGENCY RESPONSE DRILLS**

Ideally, emergency response drills will be scheduled at periodic intervals so that the congregation becomes familiar with these routines and how to respond.

### **Evacuation of Building**

- Follow evacuation routes posted in the building.
- If access through doors is blocked, evacuate through windows.
- Close doors when leaving rooms and do not touch the light switches.
- Direct all people to the designated safe gathering area (Memorial Garden – no weapons involved; Presbyterian Church – weapons involved.)
- Take a head count/roll call.
- Wait for further instructions.

### **Shelter in Place**

- When the announcement is made, report to nearest specified area as noted above.
- DO NOT attempt to leave for any reason.
- Stay calm and keep people calm.
- Take a head count or roll call.
- Wait for further instructions.

### **Lockdown**

- When the announcement is made, report to nearest specified area.
- Close all windows, lock doors, and do not leave for any reason.
- Cover all room and door windows if possible.
- Stay calm and keep people calm.
- Stay away from all doors and windows, and move to the interior wall. Get on the floor.
- Turn off lights and be quiet!
- Take a head count or roll call.
- If instructed to evacuate, follow instructions.

## **COMMON EMERGENCIES AND HOW TO RESPOND**

Following are some of the more typical emergencies that might arise at UUCR or to which we might need to respond. A more comprehensive listing can be found in the **Crisis Response Guide** compiled by the Kent County Office of Emergency Services (the red flip book.)

### **Severe Weather (tornados, high sheer winds, severe lightning storms)**

- Take cover immediately, preferably in a room in the interior of the building without windows (bathrooms, closets.)
- Stay calm and keep others calm.
- Take a head count and/or complete a roll call.
- If damage has occurred to the building, evacuate the affected area after immediate danger has passed and report to 911.
- Discourage others from leaving the area until the severe weather passes.

### **Fire**

- Call 911; give the specific location (914 Gateway Drive, Chestertown)
- Verify that all windows and doors are closed.
- Assist in evacuating the building and assemble in the designated safe area (UUCR Memorial Garden.)
- Take roll call.
- Ensure the building is evacuated.
- Signal an "All Clear" when appropriate.
- Notify Building and Grounds chair to have the fire extinguishers recharged/replaced where appropriate.

### **Arson**

Arson means the unauthorized starting of a fire on the property, or assisting another in starting a fire.

- If arson is suspected, inform the responding police/fire personnel.
- Assist the police/fire by providing requested information.

- Help identify any possible suspect and/or witness(es).
- If the fire was extinguished without need to call 911, and arson is suspected, report the fire to the fire department for investigation.

### **Medical Emergencies**

- Call 911. Advise them of the number of injured and of the situation. Give the location (914 Gateway Drive, Chestertown.)
- Try to secure and isolate the area.
- Direct any unaffected persons to a safer and secured area.
- IF THE SCENE IS SAFE, proceed to the victim(s) and assess the severity of the injuries.
- IF THE SCENE IS NOT SAFE (i.e. downed electric wires, electrocution, HAZMAT spills, unstable structure, etc.) wait for EMS.
- If any persons are trained in First Aid/CPR/AED, request their assistance at the scene.
- Assign an individual to meet and escort the emergency responders to the scene (i.e. wait at the road.)
- Provide police and EMS with emergency information.
- Accompany the victim(s) to the hospital if their emergency contact is not present and cannot be reached.

### Basic First Aid:

- Remember that professional rescue help is only minutes away – DO NO HARM.
- Try not to move victim unless their life is in imminent danger.
- Attempt to slow severe bleeding by applying direct pressure to the wound.
- Assess victim for breathing and consciousness.

### CPR Guidelines:

- Call 911.
- Establish an **A**irway (head-tilt/chin-lift method)
- Check for **B**reathing (look, listen and feel for 10 seconds. If not breathing, give 2 rescue breaths)
- Provide **C**irculation (30 chest compressions just below the nipple line)
- Continue at a rate of 30 compressions to 2 breaths until help arrives.

### AED Instructions:

- Call 911
- Turn on AED



- Insert the correct pads (adult or child)
- If chest is wet, wipe quickly and apply the pads
- Place 1 pad on upper right chest and 1 pad on lower left side
- Connect pads to AED
- Follow AED instructions

### **Suspicious Person on Site**

- IF PERSON IS INSIDE THE BUILDING:
  - Ask the person the nature of their business.
  - Ask for their identification.
  - If there is no acceptable reason for them to be in the building, ask them to leave.
  - If they leave: call 911, provide description of suspect, await police response.
  - If they refuse to leave: call 911, provide description of suspect, await police response.
- IF PERSON IS OUTSIDE THE BUILDING:
  - Do not allow them inside the building unless you can verify their identity.
  - If there is no acceptable reason for them to be on the property: call 911, provide description of suspect, await police response.
  - Close and lock all doors and windows, turn off all lights, keep everyone away from the windows and doors. Await police response.

### **Weapons on Property**

- Stay calm and keep people calm.
- Call 911.
- IF THE PERSON WITH THE WEAPON IS OUTSIDE THE BUILDING:
  - Try to get your group into the building and lock the doors and windows.
  - If your group cannot get inside, help them move to sheltered areas and stay hidden, moving as soon as possible to the Presbyterian Church on Gateway Drive, until emergency responders signal “All Clear.”
- IF THE PERSON WITH THE WEAPON IS INSIDE THE BUILDING:
  - Have people take cover behind walls, equipment, or drop to the ground. Hide under chairs or inside closets. When possible, evacuate building and have people take shelter at the Presbyterian Church on Gateway Drive.
  - Try to keep a mental note of where people have taken shelter.
  - If a weapon is found, isolate the area and do not touch the weapon. Police will secure it for evidence.
  - Await further instructions from the emergency responders.

### **Mental Disturbance or Suicidal Threat or Gesture**

- Call 911.
- Secure and isolate the area.
- Direct any unaffected persons to a safer and secured area.
- Stay calm and keep the person calm; communicate and cooperate with the person.
- Do not attempt to subdue or confiscate the weapon.
- Await emergency responders.

### **Bomb Threat**

- If a call is received, record as much information as possible:
- Time call received:
- Time call ended:
- Caller's name and address, if known:
- Sex: Male, Female
- Age: Adult, Youth
- Voice characteristics: Tone (loud, soft, high pitch, low pitch, stutter, lisp, disguised, foreign), Speech (fast, slow, distorted, cursing, slurred), Language (excellent, good, fair, raspy, nasal.)
- Background noise: music, traffic, voices, machines, cell phone, quiet, children, typing, other (describe)
- Questions to ask the caller:
  - When will it explode?
  - Where is the bomb right now?
  - What kind of bomb is it?
  - What does it look like?
  - Why did you place the bomb?

### **Bomb Threat with Explosion**

- Evacuate building and have all people assemble at the designated site (Memorial Garden)
- Call 911.
- Do not move victims unless they are in immediate danger.
- Quickly take a head count or roll call.
- Close doors when leaving a room and do not touch the light switches.
- Report missing persons to emergency responders.
- Remain with your group and await further instructions from the emergency responders.

### **Designated Safe Gathering Area**

**EMERGENCIES WITHOUT WEAPONS:** The designated safe gathering area is the UUCR Memorial Garden. This area provides cover and protection, and is far enough away from the building as well as emergency responders and their equipment.

**EMERGENCIES INVOLVING WEAPONS:** The designated safe gathering area is the Presbyterian Church located on Gateway Drive (permission has been granted.)

## Appendix

Questions related to the plan:

1. How can we make these procedures available to outside groups using the facilities, such as WC ALL?  
*Post an information sheet that is clearly visible near the office or lobby*
2. Who is responsible for maintaining the messaging for weather emergencies?  
*Can Margo use remote call-in to the UUCR phone answering machine to change that message? Is it even possible to have messages on the website (too labor intensive?)  
Maybe easier to add cancellation notices to channel 11 and 13 weather closings.*

### Considerations for future planning:

1. Do we have adequate insurance on buildings and the contents therein?  
*That should be evaluated annually with our insurance agent; currently assessed every other year by Finance Committee.*
2. Are our vital records protected from fire and water damage?  
*They are stored in the bank safe deposit box, but is there a record or listing of what those documents are and where they are stored?*
3. Do any of our people have specific talents that could provide services to members, friends, and visitors in an emergency?  
*CPR, First Aid, etc; short term housing; crisis counseling; rebuilding/carpentry*
4. In addition to 911, do we have telephone numbers for emergency contact people, support agencies, and facilities? Is that list readily available?  
*Kent County Office of Emergency Services should be the first point of contact.*
5. Do we need a plan to help our members/friends with disabilities, seniors, or others who might be particularly vulnerable to a disaster?  
*This involves longer-range planning for a widespread disaster from flood, tornado, hurricane, extended power outages, or terrorist attack.*
6. Are there services we could provide to the general community in the event of a community-wide emergency?
  - a. Could we provide shelter? food service? drivers? volunteers?
  - b. Are there ways we might help with restoration (rebuilding)?*This involves longer-range planning.*

**Kent County Department of Social Services, local police, the fire department, the rescue squad, etc., will be glad to offer advice, information and training to us at no cost.**

**Churches can consult with the local Emergency Manager (Kent County Emergency Management Office) in preparing their facility plan.**

**Additional Suggestions:**

- **Designate someone to secure all entrances to the church other than main entrance once service has started.**
- **Post emergency contact info and evacuation plan where it is accessible to congregation.**
- **Plan an emergency evacuation drill during a service.**
- **Check with building and grounds committee to make sure fire extinguishers and smoke detectors are in working order.**
- **Prepare a shelter in place bucket for the nursery providing water bottles, snacks and toiletries.**
- **Check that church records are protected from fire and water damage.**
- **In the event of a church cancellation due to weather implement a contact procedure for congregation.**