

ESTHERVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY EMERGENCY PROCEDURES POLICY

General Information:

- Emergency phone numbers are posted by all library telephones.
- All exits are clearly marked.
- Emergency Procedures Policy is available online and in print.
- Staff on duty are responsible for informing users in the building at the time of the emergency. Staff members are not responsible for decisions made by members of the public during an emergency situation.
- If evacuation of the building is necessary, those who escape should plan to meet at the Law Enforcement Center (or Courthouse grounds) if it is safe to do so.

Active Violence:

Active violence occurs when an individual (or individuals) are engaged in activities that pose threat of bodily harm to those on the library premises. Acts of violence could include firearms, knives, chemicals or other weapons.

Secure Immediate Area:

- Be aware of your surrounding environment and watchful for possible dangers
- Library staff and patrons must determine, based on the situation, if it is safer to stay or to exit the building. Those who escape should plan to meet at the Law Enforcement Center. If unable to exit, secure the area, unless advised otherwise by police (using the following steps).
- Take note of the available exits in case it becomes necessary to flee
- If possible, lock and barricade doors to secure an area of the library as a means of protection for staff and patrons
- Cover windows that have a direct line of sight, if there is a safe opportunity to do so
- Pull shades and turn off lights to give the impression that the room is empty
- Silence all cell phones
- Instruct all staff and patrons to remain silent

Contact Authorities:

- Call 911 when it is safe to do so
- Give your specific location in the library and number of people with you
- If known, give the number and location of offenders including gender, physical features, clothing description, and other information such as weapon type, or other details that may be helpful

Bomb Threat:

In case of a bomb threat, evacuate the building, call 911, and follow the instructions of the authorities.

Elevator Failure:

When the elevator fails to move from floor to floor or an elevator door fails to open, the alarm may or may not be heard. Notify the Library Director and check to see if anyone is trapped in the elevator. If someone is in the elevator, ask if he or she has used the telephone to call for help. Dialing a number on the handset will automatically connect the person to the local dispatch center, no matter what number is dialed. Call 911, or the non-emergency law enforcement center number, to report the problem depending on the urgency of the situation. Reassure the person that help is on the way. Do not force the elevator doors open, as a person climbing out could be crushed if the elevator moves unexpectedly. Report the incident and contact elevator maintenance for inspection.

Fire:

In case of fire evacuate the building immediately. There are four exit doors in addition to any windows. Fire extinguishers are available on both floors. Call 911 from a nearby phone.

Gas Leak:

In case of a suspected gas leak, evacuate the building immediately, call the gas company (Black Hills Energy, 1-800-694-8989), and also the Fire Department (911), as needed.

Medical Emergency:

In case of a medical emergency, call 911 and use basic first aid techniques as needed.

Pandemic:

In the event of a public health emergency, the Library Director and Board President may enact emergency changes to policies and procedures such as open hours, availability of services, and requirements for receipt of service (such as mask wearing, etc.). Information provided by the local Emmet County Public Health, Iowa Department of Public Health, as well as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will be considered. When possible, changes to service levels will be made during a regular meeting of the Estherville Public Library Board of Trustees. Management of staffing (on-site and off) will fall to the Library Director, in cooperation with current City of Estherville employment policies.

Power Failure:

In the event of a power failure, staff on duty will utilize flashlights to assist patrons in ~~restrooms and the elevator~~ dark spaces to find their way to a safe place to wait until the power returns. The Library Director may decide to close the library if the absence of natural light, heating, cooling or water make it problematic or unsafe to continue to serve the public.

Tornado:

If a siren is sounded in Estherville for a sighted tornado please evacuate the main floor, go to the basement to the designated tornado safety area and stay away from windows. Stay there **and listen to local radio for updates** until the all-clear signal has been given. Main floor and children's department doors should be locked upon evacuation **(if it is safe to do so)** and all people directed to the safety area.

Winter Storm:

Patrons must have safe access to the building and the library must be adequately staffed during regular working hours in order to remain open. Any changes to the library's regularly-scheduled hours will be based on a concern for the welfare of the staff and patrons.

Closing the Library:

- The Estherville Public Library will follow the recommendation and actions of the Estherville Police Department, **Emmet County Sherrif's Department**, and National Weather Service, in the event of inclement weather. Closing will be at the discretion of the Library Board President and Library Director. The Library Director will notify the local radio station (KILR 95.9) of the library's closing. In the event the library closes, all scheduled meetings including reservations to use the Community Room will also be canceled. In the event that the Estherville Community School District has a two hour late start, there will be no bookmobile or daycare outreach services. These will be rescheduled for another time.
- When safe access is no longer possible **for any reason** the Library Director will close the library.

Preparedness:

- Annually, or as needed, supplies such as flashlights, batteries and first aid will be checked and re-stocked.
- Heating, electrical, plumbing and other systems within the building will be kept in good repair.
- Ensure that a battery-operated radio **or cellular device** is on site and in working order so as to receive weather updates during a power outage.
- Ensure phone numbers of local emergency and law enforcement are posted by each phone. Keep in touch with these individuals on local conditions.
- Library staff members are expected to work at scheduled starting times during all weather conditions, unless they have been excused by the Library Director.
- When open, the front walk, main entrance, and all doors must be kept free of snow and ice to maintain safe access to the library.

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