

Middleborough Housing Authority Natural Disaster Response Policy

The Middleborough area, as all areas, is subject to natural disasters. These guidelines focus primarily on how the Authority shall react to such a disaster. While the preparations we can make for a disaster are limited, the Authority will take all reasonable steps to enable it to act promptly and effectively in an emergency.

The Middleborough Public Safety Agencies shall be the first responders and decision makers in any public emergency situation, including natural disaster. If evacuation is necessary, a list of community shelters will be provided by the Middleborough Public Safety Agencies.

Call 911 for transportation to emergency shelter. Shelter location:

- **Nichols Middle School - 112 Tiger Drive, near intersection of Wood & Wareham Streets**

Preparation:

The following steps will be taken to prepare for a natural disaster:

The Executive Director shall serve as the coordinator of the Middleborough Housing Authority's disaster response efforts. As such, the Executive Director shall serve as the liaison to any community-wide disaster planning efforts. If the Executive Director is unavailable her designee will serve as MHA coordinator.

By adopting these guidelines, The Board of Commissioners recognizes that extraordinary efforts will be needed if a natural disaster strikes the Authority. Therefore, employees will be encouraged to potentially operate outside their job descriptions in any way required to assist in the recovery effort.

Reaction:

The following steps will be taken in order to react to a natural disaster:

- If a disaster occurs during working hours, all employees will immediately report to the main office for assignment. If the main office is damaged beyond usage, they shall report to the nearest un-damaged building at Riverview Apartments to coordinate efforts with the Middleborough Public Safety Agencies.
- Outside of normal working hours, employees are expected to ensure the safety of their own families prior to reporting to work. If safe to do so, employees shall report to the main office for instructions.
- MHA staff and residents shall follow any and all command decisions made by the Middleborough Public Safety Officer in charge.
- If an employee/resident suspects a trapped resident/individual they will summons local emergency crews to enter and provide logistical support to the rescue/recovery. Structures will be searched for trapped survivors. Survivors shall be freed if possible without endangering the lives of others.
- Gas and electric shall be disconnected from any building with severe structural damage by Middleborough Gas and Electric. Water shall be disconnected from any building with severe structural damage by MHA staff.
- Lists of non-habitable buildings or units and trapped survivors shall be delivered to the main office as soon as practicable.

- Work assignments will be made based upon reports received regarding damage sustained.
- As soon as practical, the Executive Director as Secretary of the Board, with the consent of the Chairperson, will call a Special Emergency Board Meeting on the situation and apprise the Board of emergency decisions made arising from the disaster and recovery activities.

EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Evacuation of a MHA building(s) may be necessary in the event of a fire, an environmental hazard in the part of the town in which the building is located, or damage from an earthquake, severe weather conditions, or other source.

In many of these circumstances, the Middleborough Police or community emergency response officials will be coordinating decisions on a community-wide scale. In this case, MHA employees are urged to cooperate fully with the authorized persons in charge. The following guidelines apply primarily to situations which originate in a MHA building.

1. Walk quickly, **DO NOT RUN**, to the exit nearest your area.
2. People using wheel chairs or crutches should be assisted.

IMPORTANT

1. Do not turn back for any reason
2. Be calm at all times. Do not panic
3. Do not tie up equipment that will be needed by the fire department or other emergency response personnel (e.g., fire extinguishers, fire hoses, etc.)
4. Do not block any roadways needed by emergency response personnel
5. If fire is blocking your corridor or escape route, climb out your window if possible. Close ALL doors. Open windows necessary for fresh air and yell for assistance. History of fires indicates that more people are injured or killed by smoke, heat or suffocation in a fire than by the flames.
6. All employees are to meet in the front of the administration building.
7. All residents should meet:
 - Riverview - in front of the administration building
 - Nemasket 1 - on Park Street by the walkway to the community building
 - Nemasket 2 - at the intersection of Sproat Street and Maddigan Way
 - Archer Court - on the school side of Mayflower Avenue by the entrance to the development
8. **REMEMBER: WALK DO NOT RUN** to the nearest fire exit in an emergency.
9. The Executive Director will account for all persons, arrange for necessary first aid, and report any missing persons to emergency response service.
10. Staff shall notify the Executive Director and/or Maintenance Supervisor of the location and severity of fire or damage so that she/he can communicate with the emergency response personnel when they arrive.

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