



Board of County Commissioners Agenda Request

51
Agenda Item #

Requested Meeting Date: January 2, 2024

Title of Item: Adopt Updated Safety Policy and Emergency Action Plan for Employees

<input type="checkbox"/> REGULAR AGENDA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONSENT AGENDA <input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION ONLY	Action Requested: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approve/Deny Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Adopt Resolution (attach draft) <i>*provide copy of hearing notice that was published</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Direction Requested <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Item <input type="checkbox"/> Hold Public Hearing*
Submitted by: Bobbie Danielson, HR Director		Department: HR
Presenter (Name and Title): Bobbie Danielson, HR Director		Estimated Time Needed: N/A Consent Agenda
Summary of Issue: Policies are reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis. Highlights of changes include: Designated assembly areas for fire evacuation updated. Dispatch emergency alert and storm/tornado warnings sections updated. Lockdown areas updated. Tornado/Storm shelter areas updated. Maps are also being updated and will be available on the intranet. (Staff file note: Review and update, if needed, the Table of Contents page numbers after all maps are inserted.)		
Alternatives, Options, Effects on Others/Comments: 		
Recommended Action/Motion: Motion to adopt the Aitkin County Safety Policy and Emergency Action Plan for Employees, effective 1/2/2024.		
Financial Impact: Is there a cost associated with this request? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No What is the total cost, with tax and shipping? \$ Is this budgeted? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Please Explain:		



AITKIN COUNTY

SAFETY POLICY
AND
EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN
FOR EMPLOYEES

INCLUDING SOME OF THE KEY OSHA REQUIREMENTS FOR EMERGENCIES

(For staff safety, this version excludes lockdown areas.)

Board Adopted, January 2, 2024 - pending

EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose

This Emergency Action Plan is for internal use only. It is different than the “county-wide” local Emergency Operations Plan (EOP*) prepared by the County Emergency Management Director that addresses the general public and Aitkin County as a whole and does not include Public Health Pandemic Preparedness which is coordinated by local Public Health officials. This Emergency Action Plan is for Aitkin County Employees only.

This Emergency Action Plan covers designated actions department heads and employees must take to ensure employee safety from fire and other emergencies. The goal is to protect lives and property in the event of an emergency. Management and employee commitment and support are critical to the plan’s success. Each employee is responsible for knowing their role in the event of an emergency.

*A copy of the Aitkin *County-Wide* Emergency Operations Plan can be obtained from the Sheriff’s Office.

EMERGENCY PLANNING

Establishing Communication Protocols with Employees

Each department is tasked with implementing an effective communication system to connect with staff members, whether it's to inform them of organizational closures or to reach specific individuals in the event of a crisis. This system can take various forms, ranging from a simple, tangible solution such as a phone card containing names and numbers that employees can carry, to more sophisticated methods like a phone tree or a mechanism for sending voicemails, text messages, and/or emails to multiple employees simultaneously. Department heads are strongly encouraged to conduct annual tests of the communication system to ensure its reliability and efficiency in reaching every staff member.

It is crucial to acknowledge that during a disaster or interruption, the ability to dial in, log in, or walk in may not always be reliable. Additionally, in emergency situations, having prompt access to essential personal information about your staff becomes paramount. This encompasses their home telephone numbers and the names and contact details of their next of kin.

Training and Conducting Emergency Drills

Ensuring the safety of both employees and the organization involves proactive preparation for responding to emergencies. Since clear thinking during a crisis can be challenging, thorough preparation in advance is vital.

Department heads are mandated to provide employees with comprehensive training covering individual roles and responsibilities, potential hazards, notification and communication procedures, methods for locating family members in an emergency, emergency response protocols, evacuation and shelter procedures, accountability measures, as well as the

identification and use of common emergency equipment and shutdown procedures. Once the emergency action plan has been thoroughly reviewed, and employees have received the requisite training, it is advisable to conduct practice drills annually or as needed to sustain employee readiness.

Following each drill, it is recommended to convene management and employees within the department to assess the effectiveness of the exercise. Identifying both the strengths and weaknesses of the plan allows for continuous improvement efforts.

MEDIA COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL

In the event of media inquiries, all staff members are directed to redirect the media to a designated County spokesperson. The County holds the responsibility for disseminating public statements during an emergency.

The County Administrator or an appointed designee will act as the official County spokesperson.

DEFINING WORKPLACE EMERGENCIES

A workplace emergency is characterized as an unexpected situation posing a threat to employees, customers, or the public, with the potential to disrupt or halt business operations and cause physical or environmental harm. Emergencies can manifest as both natural and manmade events, encompassing:

- Floods
- Tornadoes
- Fires
- Toxic gas releases
- Chemical spills
- Explosions
- Civil disturbances
- Workplace violence leading to bodily harm and trauma.

This comprehensive list aims to identify diverse scenarios that could potentially constitute a workplace emergency.

CHAIN OF COMMAND AND AUTHORITY FOR EVACUATION OR SHUTDOWN

The County Administrator, in collaboration with the Sheriff, assumes responsibility for leading and coordinating the execution of the emergency plan, including the evacuation process. Their responsibilities include:

- Assessing the situation to determine the activation of emergency procedures.
- Supervising all efforts within the area, including the orderly evacuation of personnel.
- Coordinating external emergency services, such as medical aid and local fire departments, ensuring their availability and prompt notification when necessary.

- Directing the shutdown of business operations when deemed necessary.
- Providing training to employees designated to assist in emergency evacuation procedures, ensuring they possess the capability to recognize when to abandon operations and evacuate.

In addition to the County Administrator and Sheriff, Department Heads and Supervisors will act as additional emergency action plan coordinators, offering support to employees during emergency situations.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT TEAM AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Crisis Management Team

The Aitkin County Crisis Management Team comprises the following members:

County Administrator
 County Sheriff
 County Attorney
 HHS Director and other HHS/Public Health staff as assigned by the Director
 County Engineer
 County Auditor
 Business Manager, Long Lake Conservation Center (LLCC)
 Human Resources Director
 IT Director
 Facilities Coordinator

Additional employees may be called upon to assist as required. The County Administrator, in collaboration with the County Sheriff, holds authority for making critical decisions, encompassing but not limited to determining the need for facility evacuations. The Crisis Management Team plays a pivotal role in orchestrating effective responses to crises and maintaining the overall well-being of Aitkin County.

Crisis Management Team Duties and Responsibilities

At their discretion, the County Administrator is empowered to:

- Convene the Crisis Management Team.
- Execute emergency procedures and evacuation orders in collaboration with the Sheriff.
- Notify County Commissioners, with the potential for calling an emergency County Board meeting when deemed necessary.
- Notify relevant community agencies as required.
- Act as the designated media spokesperson.
- Implement measures for recovery and business continuity.

The County Sheriff is responsible for:

- Implementing emergency procedures and staff evacuation orders, in collaboration with the County Administrator.

- Acting as the media spokesperson if requested, in the absence of the County Administrator.

Other members of the Crisis Management Team are expected to:

- Serve as the media spokesperson if requested, in the absence of the County Administrator.
- Provide assistance to the County Administrator and Sheriff as directed.

This delineation of roles ensures a coordinated and effective response from the Crisis Management Team in times of emergency.

EVACUATION PROCEDURES, INCLUDING ROUTES AND EXITS

Each department is required to prominently display evacuation procedures, complete with evacuation routes and exits, for all employees to easily access. Department heads will be responsible for designating primary and secondary evacuation routes and exits within their respective areas. These routes and exits should adhere to the following conditions to the extent possible under prevailing conditions:

- Clearly marked and well-lit pathways.
- Sufficient width to accommodate the number of evacuating personnel.
- Unobstructed and free of debris at all times.
- Unlikely to expose evacuating personnel to additional hazards.

In addition, department heads are tasked with assigning employees responsible for assisting coworkers with disabilities, conducting checks of offices, conference rooms, bathrooms, and other spaces before being the last person to exit the area. These assigned employees may also be charged with ensuring that fire doors are closed upon exiting. To enhance preparedness, all employees designated to assist in emergency evacuation procedures shall undergo training conducted by the Facilities Coordinator, covering the complete workplace layout and various alternative escape routes in case the primary evacuation route becomes obstructed. This comprehensive approach aims to ensure a safe and efficient evacuation process for all personnel.

PROCEDURES FOR ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Individuals may present with a range of abilities, including limitations in hearing, vision, speech, cognitive function, or language proficiency. In consideration of this diversity, some individuals may face challenges in receiving or responding to information, particularly during emergencies. Barriers such as limited ability to hear verbal messages or comprehend directional signs may impede their understanding and ability to seek help.

To address these concerns, employees are encouraged to offer assistance to individuals with disabilities during evacuation scenarios. Department heads play a crucial role in ensuring that emergency routes and exits remain clear of debris at all times, minimizing obstacles for wheelchair users. It is important to note that elevators should not be utilized for evacuation

purposes. This inclusive approach promotes the safety and well-being of all individuals, recognizing and accommodating individuals with disabilities within the workplace.

ACCOUNTING FOR STAFF FOLLOWING AN EVACUATION

Ensuring the safety and well-being of all employees is paramount in the aftermath of an evacuation. Swift and accurate accountability of personnel is crucial to prevent potential delays in rescuing individuals trapped in the building and to avoid unnecessary and hazardous search-and-rescue operations. To achieve this, designated assembly areas will be utilized for the fastest and most precise employee accounting.

After evacuating, employees are obligated to report to the designated assembly area. Each department is responsible for conducting a head count post-evacuation, identifying individuals not accounted for, and promptly relaying this information to the County Administrator. In situations where employees had clients or other customers with them during the evacuation, they are required to notify their department head of any unaccounted individuals at the assembly area. This information will be passed on to the County Administrator for comprehensive accountability.

In the event that the incident escalates, necessitating further evacuation measures, the County Administrator or Sheriff may implement measures such as sending employees home through standard means, directing them to an alternate assembly area, or arranging transportation to an offsite location. This proactive approach ensures a coordinated and effective response to evolving situations.

RESCUE OR MEDICAL DUTIES

The responsibility for rescue operations will be assigned to individuals who have received proper training, possess the necessary equipment, and hold relevant certifications for conducting rescues. Onsite First Aid and CPR/AED training will be periodically provided by the employer to ensure employees are adequately prepared to respond to medical emergencies.

Employees expressing interest in participating in this training are encouraged to reach out to their respective department heads. For information on upcoming First Aid and CPR/AED training schedules, department heads may contact the Human Resources department. This approach ensures that rescue and medical duties are entrusted to individuals equipped with the requisite skills and certifications, fostering a safer and more effective workplace response to emergencies.

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

Dial 911 for fire, ambulance, and police.	
American Red Cross	(800) 950-4275
Homeland Security and Emergency Management	(651) 201-7400
Crisis Line and Referral Services	(800) 462-5525

FLOODS

When a river reaches flood stage, the National Weather Service employs three flood severity categories: minor flooding, moderate flooding, and major flooding. Each category is defined based on the level of property damage and the potential threat to public safety.

1. **Minor Flooding:** Involves minimal or no property damage, but may pose some public threat or inconvenience.
2. **Moderate Flooding:** Characterized by flooding of structures and roads near streams. Some evacuations of people and/or property transfers to higher elevations may be necessary.
3. **Major Flooding:** Entails extensive flooding of structures and roads, requiring significant evacuations of people and/or property transfers to higher elevations.

The local impacts of floods can vary, necessitating employee vigilance. Extreme caution must be exercised near riverbanks, and immediate relocation to higher ground is imperative if rising water poses a threat to safety. It's crucial to note that most flood-related fatalities occur in automobiles. Employees are advised against walking through areas where water covers roadways and refraining from driving vehicles into flooded areas. Floodwaters are typically deeper than they appear, with just one foot of flowing water having the potential to sweep vehicles off the road. These precautions are essential for ensuring the safety and well-being of all employees during flood events.

Flood Duties and Responsibilities for Department Heads and Supervisors

In the event of a **Flood Watch** being issued in the area, department heads and supervisors are responsible for the following actions:

1. **Monitoring Emergency Alert Stations or National Weather Service:**
 - Stay vigilant and keep abreast of updates from Emergency Alert Stations and the National Weather Service.
 - Maintain regular communication with local emergency management officials for the latest information.
2. **Reviewing Evacuation Procedures:**
 - Ensure that employees and visitors are familiar with established evacuation procedures.
 - Provide necessary guidance and clarification on evacuation routes and safety protocols.

Should a **Flood Warning** be issued in the area, department heads and supervisors will take the following additional steps:

1. **Advising Staff:**
 - Promptly inform all staff members of the Flood Warning and its implications.
 - Disseminate critical information related to the flood situation.
2. **Implementing Emergency Procedures and Staff Evacuation Orders:**
 - Act in accordance with directives from the County Administrator or Sheriff.
 - Implement emergency procedures and issue staff evacuation orders as directed, prioritizing the safety and well-being of employees.

By adhering to these responsibilities, department heads and supervisors play a crucial role in safeguarding the workforce and ensuring a coordinated response to flood events.

SEVERE THUNDERSTORMS POLICY

All employees are encouraged to sign-up for the Aitkin County Emergency Alert System.
<https://www.co.aitkin.mn.us/departments/sheriff/everbridge.html>

Severe Thunderstorm Watch:

A Severe Thunderstorm Watch is issued to alert individuals about the likelihood of severe thunderstorms. Stay informed by observing the sky and tuning in to the National Weather Service, radio, or television.

Severe Thunderstorm Warning:

A Severe Thunderstorm Warning is declared when severe weather is reported or indicated by radar, signifying imminent danger to life and property.

Severe Thunderstorm Warning Procedures:

Upon issuance of a Severe Thunderstorm Warning:

- All employees and visitors must promptly move to the nearest designated storm shelter area within the building they occupy.

Thunderstorm Guidelines

Guidelines for dealing with thunderstorms in your area include:

- Postponing outdoor work activities.
- Seeking shelter inside a building or hard-top automobile.
- Remembering that rubber-soled shoes and tires provide no protection from lightning.
- Securing outside doors and closing windows, blinds, shades, or curtains.
- Using corded phones only for emergencies; cordless and cellular phones are safe.
- Utilizing a battery-operated Weather Radio for updates.

Lightning Safety Tips for Inside Buildings

During a severe thunderstorm, prioritize safety by following these guidelines:

- Avoid contact with corded phones, electrical equipment or cords, and plumbing.
- If unplugging electronic equipment, do so well before the storm arrives.
- Stay away from windows and doors.
- Do not lie on concrete floors or lean against concrete walls.

Places to Avoid during a Severe Thunderstorm / Employees in the Field

For employees in the field during a severe thunderstorm, take the following precautions:

- Avoid natural lightning rods, such as tall isolated trees in open areas, hilltops, open fields, the beach, or a boat on the water.
- Steer clear of isolated sheds or other small structures in open areas.
- Stay away from anything metal, such as tractors, farm equipment, motorcycles, golf carts, golf clubs, and bicycles.

For additional guidance on shelter during a tornado, refer to the tornado and storm shelter areas detailed in the sections "Employees in a Vehicle" and "Employees in the Outdoors."

Severe Thunderstorm Duties and Responsibilities for Department Heads and Supervisors

When a severe thunderstorm warning is issued, department heads and supervisors will:

- Gather employee rosters and a weather alert radio.
- Direct employees and visitors to proceed quickly and orderly to the nearest storm shelter in the building.
- Instruct employees and visitors not to leave the building.
- Take roll call upon arriving at the shelter area and report missing individuals to the County Administrator.

Severe Thunderstorm Duties and Responsibilities for Employees

When a severe thunderstorm warning is issued, employees will:

- Bring a weather alert radio to the storm shelter area if available.
- Proceed to the nearest designated shelter area in the building using the quickest route, assisting clients, customers, and/or individuals with disabilities.
- Move quickly but in an orderly manner to ensure everyone arrives safely.
- Take a seat in the shelter area or calmly remain standing.
- Remain in the shelter until the weather threat is over. Note that there is no "all clear" signal; it will typically be provided by listening to the radio or TV station or by contacting the County's dispatch center.

TORNADO POLICY

All employees are encouraged to sign-up for the Aitkin County Emergency Alert System.
<https://www.co.aitkin.mn.us/departments/sheriff/everbridge.html>

Tornado Watch

Tornadoes are nature's most violent storms, capable of causing fatalities and devastating neighborhoods in seconds. A tornado appears as a rotating, funnel-shaped cloud extending from a thunderstorm to the ground with winds reaching up to 300 miles per hour.

Tornado Warning

A tornado warning means that a tornado has been sighted or indicated by radar. Take shelter immediately. Tornadoes can form and move quickly, so there may not be adequate time for a warning.

Tornado Warning Procedures

When a tornado warning is issued, tornado sirens will be activated. All employees and visitors will proceed to the nearest designated tornado/storm shelter area in the building. Shelter areas depend on your location at the time of the tornado warning. If you are in a building, stay there and go to the nearest designated tornado/storm shelter area, such as a basement. If there is no basement, go to the center of an interior room on the lowest level, away from corners, windows, doors, and outside walls.

Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside, get under a sturdy table, and use your arms to protect your head and neck. Do not open windows.

If you are outside, immediately enter the nearest building and proceed to the nearest designated tornado/storm shelter area. If you are outside with no shelter, lie flat in a nearby ditch or depression and cover your head with your hands, being aware of the potential for flooding. Do not get under an overpass or bridge; it is safer to be in a low, flat location.

Never try to outrun a tornado in a vehicle; leave the vehicle immediately for safe shelter and watch out for flying debris, which causes most fatalities and injuries.

Places to Avoid During a Tornado / Employees in the Field

- Avoid all outside walls, elevators, and windows of buildings.
- Avoid any low-lying area that could flood.
- Do not use vehicles for shelter.
- Avoid building areas with large roof spans.

For employees in the field, refer to the tornado/storm shelter areas below, sections "Employees in a Vehicle" and "Employees in the Outdoors."

Tornado Duties and Responsibilities, Department Heads and Supervisors

When a tornado warning has been issued, department heads and supervisors will:

- Gather employee rosters and weather alert radio.
- Direct employees and visitors to proceed in a quick and orderly manner to the nearest tornado/storm shelter area in the building.
- Instruct employees and visitors not to leave the building.
- Take roll call upon arriving at the shelter area and report missing people to the County Administrator.

Tornado Duties and Responsibilities, Employees

When a tornado warning has been issued, employees will:

- Bring a weather alert radio to the tornado/storm shelter area if they have one.
- Proceed to the nearest designated shelter area in the building by the quickest route, assisting clients, customers, and/or individuals with disabilities.
- Move quickly but in an orderly manner to ensure everyone arrives safely.
- Take a seat in the shelter area or calmly remain standing.
- Remain in the shelter until the tornado warning is over. Note, there is no "all clear" signal given – this information will typically be provided by listening to the radio or TV station, or by contacting the County's dispatch center.

TORNADO / STORM SHELTERS AREAS POLICY

In the event of severe weather conditions, occupants of the following buildings should go to the storm shelter area indicated:

Building or Worksite	Severe Thunderstorm Warning	Tornado Warning
HHS Building, Sheriff's Office, and Jail	Interior room in the building (office, hallway, restroom, etc.). <i>Gather by unit.</i>	Basement of the building they are currently in.

Building or Worksite	Severe Thunderstorm Warning	Tornado Warning
Government Center and Judicial Center	Interior room on 1st floor (e.g., hallway in the Auditor's Office) or basement.	Interior room on 1st floor (e.g., hallway in the Auditor's Office) or basement.
Employees in a Vehicle	Do not drive unless necessary. Tune in to radio. Pull onto the shoulder away from trees. Stay in the car with flashers on.	Do not drive during tornado conditions. Seek shelter in a nearby building. Lie in a ditch if no shelter. Avoid bridges.
Employees in the Outdoors	Seek shelter in a vehicle or sturdy building. Avoid lightning rods.	If possible, seek shelter in a sturdy building. If not, lie flat on low ground away from trees and cars.
Land Department	Interior room in the building (office, hallway, restroom, vault, etc.).	Enclosed, windowless area in the center of the building (Vault) away from glass. Crouch down and cover your head.
Long Lake Conservation Center	Interior room in the building (office, hallway, restroom, etc.).	Northstar Lodge inner hall or Marcum House "show room" if time allows. Otherwise, enclosed, windowless area in the center of the building – away from glass. Crouch down and cover your head.
Road & Bridge Shops	Interior room in the building (office, hallway, restroom, etc.).	Enclosed, windowless area in the center of the building away from glass. Crouch down and cover your head.

FIRE EVACUATION POLICY

Emergency Procedures and Evacuation Plans:

Each department is equipped with an emergency procedures and evacuation plan for fire incidents. These plans are prominently displayed in common areas and bulletin boards on each floor of the facility. Exits, fire extinguishers, and first aid kits are strategically located on every floor. Additionally, a fire extinguisher training video is accessible for employees on the intranet. All employees are expected to familiarize themselves with the locations of this essential equipment.

Immediate Response to Fire:

If an employee observes smoke or flames, they must promptly activate the nearest fire alarm and then call 911 from a safe location. If time allows, it is also advisable to notify the County Administrator. In the event the fire alarm system is activated, all employees must evacuate the building following the outlined procedures.

Evacuation Procedures:

In the case of a fire alarm test, the Building Maintenance department will make an appropriate announcement before the test. If no announcement is made, employees should assume the fire

alarm is for an actual fire emergency. In any emergency, employees should stop their activities, remain calm, and report to the designated assembly area for fire evacuation. The last person to exit each room should close the door. The priority is to prioritize safety, and all employees are reminded that safety to life takes precedence.

During evacuation, if the nearest stairwell is obstructed by smoke, employees should use an alternative stairwell. Elevators are not to be used. It is the responsibility of able staff to assist individuals with disabilities in descending the stairwell safely. Department heads are expected to have prearranged assistance for these individuals in case of an emergency.

Assembly Area Protocols:

Employees arriving first at the designated assembly area must position themselves away from entrance doors and the building to facilitate clear assembly and clearance for emergency vehicles. Streets must be kept clear to allow unimpeded access for emergency vehicles.

Facilities Coordinator Role:

The Facilities Coordinator or designee will meet the fire department at the entrance to provide additional information. Re-entry into the building is prohibited without permission from the County Administrator, Fire Chief, or Sheriff's Office representative.

Department Heads and Supervisors Responsibilities:

In the event of a fire evacuation, department heads and supervisors will:

- Gather employee rosters and floor plans.
- Check the area before leaving, if safe to do so.
- Take roll call at the designated assembly area and report missing persons to the County Administrator.
- Consult with appropriate officials to potentially relocate employees and visitors to alternate locations, such as Aitkin City Hall (primary) or Journey North Church (secondary) in case of inclement weather or building damage.
- Await notification from the County Administrator, Fire Chief, or Sheriff's Office representative regarding reentry.
- Report the incident to the Fire Marshal, as mandated by State Law.

Designated Assembly Areas for Fire Evacuation (Primary Relocation Center)

Building or Worksite on Fire	Designated Assembly Area
Government Center and Judicial Center	Aitkin High School Parking Lot. North lot (aka parking lot at the school's main entrance) for Government Center and Judicial Center.
Sheriff's Office and Jail	Follow departmental procedures
HHS Department	Aitkin PUC Garage Bays (gather by unit)
Land Department	Aitkin County Fairground (by paddle wheel)
Long Lake Conservation Center	LLCC Dining Hall Parking Lot
Road & Bridge, Aitkin Shop	Cold Storage Building
Road & Bridge, Palisade Shop	R&B to Palisade Community Center
Road & Bridge, Hill City Shop	Hill City City Hall
Road & Bridge, Jacobson Shop	Jacobson Fire Hall
Road & Bridge, McGrath Shop	McGrath DNR Building
Road & Bridge, McGregor Shop	McGregor City Hall

If the designated assembly areas are unsafe, the secondary relocation centers are as follows:

- For Government Center, Judicial Center, Sheriff's Office and Jail, and HHS Department staff: Church at 810 2nd Street NW, Aitkin, MN.
- For Land Department, Long Lake Conservation Center, and Road & Bridge, Aitkin Shop staff: Government Center 1st floor.
- For all other Road & Bridge Shops: Aitkin Road & Bridge Shop.

DEMONSTRATION OR DISTURBANCE

In the event of a demonstration or disturbance, generally there will be no evacuation of the building. When a demonstration or disturbance develops, the County Administrator will, at his or her discretion:

- Notify police, if necessary.
- Notify Department Heads and County Commissioners.
- Initiate lock-down procedures, if deemed appropriate.
- Ask demonstrators to disperse.
- Contain unrest. Seal off area of disturbance.
- Move people involved in disturbance to an isolated area.
- Document incidents with recorder or take detailed notes.

When a demonstration or disturbance develops, department heads and employees will:

- Lock office doors and windows. Close window blinds.
- Keep employees and visitors calm.
- Not allow employees to leave the building until an all-clear signal is received from the County Administrator or Sheriff's Office representative.
- Take roll call. Attempt to contact employees who are away from the office, but are anticipated to return to notify them of the demonstration or disturbance, if deemed appropriate.
- Document all incidents.

WORKPLACE SECURITY AND SAFETY STATEMENT

Our commitment to workplace security and safety extends to safeguarding individuals and property, both within the facility and in off-site locations. It is imperative that every individual assumes responsibility for maintaining vigilance and prioritizing security and safety. Preparedness is key, as security risks may not always be immediately apparent.

The following precautions and measures should be taken for on-site security:

- Arrange office furniture in a secure set-up.
- Lock doors at night and unlock doors in the morning.
- Stay between the individual and the exit door.
- Keep the door cracked open if you know someone is a security risk.
- Clear desk and area of objects that could be harmful.
- Develop a signal or phone message in office to obtain assistance or break individual's train of thought.
- Send an e-mail to notify staff of potential volatility of individual prior to their visit to your office.
- Bring in another staff member if meeting alone. They can offer assistance and assess the situation.
- Be aware of the individual's body language.
- Depart as soon as possible.
- Scream loud for help if needed.

The following precautions and measures should be taken for off-site security:

- Review and notes/discussions about the individual prior to meeting off-site visit or similar types of calls/visits.
- Request the individual to come to the office.
- Take a cell phone.
- Dress for safety. Avoid wearing jewelry, restrictive clothing, and carrying valuables.
- Check in with staff before and after the appointment.
- Be exceptionally alert when subjects are unknown, if the area has a high crime rate, or is isolate, or for indicators of a domestic dispute or physical violence.
- Maintain your car in good mechanical condition (examples: replace a low battery and have a full tank of gas)

- Check out the neighborhood before parking and getting out of your vehicle.
- Park your vehicle close to the area you are visiting and in a manner to allow fast and easy exit where you won't be blocked in.
- State clearly who you are and why you are there.
- Explain your responsibility to inquire about visitor's identity.
- Anticipate the unexpected and make a tentative plan of action.
- Be cautious about entering homes or places with large groups of people. Only allow one person to talk at a time.
- Make note of all exits. Stay near the door and keep car keys accessible.
- Take Self Defense course(s)
- If you are suspicious or it is known to be a hostile environment, bring a co-worker along. For certain job positions, take a deputy along.
- Obtain a list of out-of-town law enforcement for closer assistance in the field.
- If the environment is hostile, leave and come back another time. Do not turn your back or allow disturbed persons to walk around you.

Warning sign that a person is becoming hostile:

- History of Violence
- Increase physical activity: pacing, restlessness, inability to sit still.
- A sudden stopping of activity.
- Forced eye contact – staring, lack of eye contact, avoidance
- Body language/non-verbal indicators include: clenched fists, dilated pupils, coiled posture, etc.
- Non-communication: sullen, underlying anger and consciously holding back.
- The person physically moves back and tells you to get away or move back.
- Dress that is inappropriate for the weather or time of year.
- Body language that doesn't match verbal clues or messages.
- Possible active state of mental illness – acting in a bizarre manner.
- Carrying a weapon and making it visible to you.

In the event someone is poses a security/safety concern take the following actions:

- Stay calm, remain patient, be courteous, and listen attentively
- Maintain eye contact. Give the individual an opportunity to turn away, break eye contact.
- Keep control of the situation and yourself.
- Keep pitch and volume of your voice down. Keep your muscles relaxed.
- Talk to them and inform them of their rights.
- Let them know you understand their anger and are here to help.
- Do not invade personal space. Keep a distance of three feet and stand at a 45 degree angle from the person.
- Remain seated as long as the individual.
- Find out why and whom the anger is directed toward.
- Stand to the side of the individual.

- Offer appeasement and appear sympathetic. Be prepared to follow through on any statements you make.
- Signal a co-worker or supervisor that you need help.
- DO NOT CONFRONT dangerous individuals or put yourself or others in harm's way.
- Use your prearranged duress signal.
- Scream loud for help.
- Never attempt to grab a weapon
- Watch and take advantage of any opportunity to escape if the individual is armed.

GUIDELINES FOR ENGAGING WITH CLIENTS EXPERIENCING MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

Our commitment to supporting individuals experiencing mental health challenges involves the implementation of guidelines to ensure a respectful and empathetic interaction. Mental illness, in itself, does not inherently increase the risk of violence; however, when combined with other risk factors like substance abuse, the potential for violence may elevate. The following guidelines are designed to enhance staff members' ability to engage with clients, both in the office and in the field:

1. Clearly state your identity and the purpose of your contact.
2. Demonstrate respect and empathy towards the individual. Respectful and attentive communication fosters reciprocal respect and openness to dialogue.
3. Provide honest, factual answers when required. If uncertain, admit not knowing.
4. Avoid minimizing any concerns raised by the individual. Acknowledge the reality of their experiences, especially in cases of hallucinations or delusions. Recognize that their perceptions are valid to them, and refrain from attempting to persuade them otherwise. Be mindful of personal space, particularly with individuals experiencing paranoia.
5. Listen actively and strive to understand the individual's communication. Identify practical, reality-based needs that can be addressed professionally, not personally.
6. Refrain from offering psychological advice, especially during initial contact when the full extent of the individual's challenges may not be apparent.
7. Express support through both verbal and non-verbal means, recognizing that non-verbal communication, such as facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice, is impactful.
8. Maintain an up-to-date list of community resources that can be recommended to individuals in need.
9. Call for assistance if you feel physically threatened or require support in de-escalating the situation.

LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES POLICY

A lockdown is a temporary sheltering technique, typically lasting from 30 minutes to several hours, strategically employed to minimize civilian exposure during incidents such as an "active shooter" scenario. In the event of a lockdown, employees within any identified building are

required to promptly initiate procedures to secure the premises. This involves locking all doors and windows, preventing both entry and exit until an official "all-clear" notice is issued by law enforcement officials. This transformation effectively turns the building into a large "safe room" to safeguard individuals within.

Responsibility for on-scene incident command during a lockdown rests with the Sheriff. The Sheriff, along with the County Administrator, may issue specific instructions to initiate lockdown procedures for designated areas or the entire facility.

The lockdown procedures outlined below are to be rigorously followed in response to directives from law enforcement or authorized personnel:

1. **Receive Notification:** Upon receiving instructions from the Sheriff or County Administrator to initiate a lockdown, all employees must respond immediately.
2. **Secure Entrances and Exits:** Lock all doors and windows, prohibiting access from both inside and outside.
3. **Remain Inside:** No one is allowed to enter or exit the building until an official "all-clear" notice is provided by law enforcement officials.
4. **Follow Additional Instructions:** Comply with any additional instructions communicated by law enforcement or designated authorities during the lockdown.
5. **Stay in Designated Safe Areas:** In the absence of specific instructions to relocate, employees are advised to remain in their current location, taking cover as necessary.
6. **Silence Communication Devices:** Maintain silence on personal and work-related communication devices to avoid attracting attention.
7. **Do Not Open Doors:** Refrain from opening doors or windows unless directed to do so by law enforcement personnel.
8. **Assist Others:** Employees are encouraged to assist others in reaching safety as needed.

These lockdown procedures are critical for ensuring the safety and well-being of all individuals within the facility during emergency situations. Regular training and drills will be conducted to familiarize staff with these procedures, promoting a swift and effective response.

- 4. Secure Doors and Windows:**
 - Lock all doors and windows.
 - Close blinds for added security.
- 5. Minimize Visibility:**
 - Turn off all lights.
 - Sit below window level, towards the middle of a room away from windows and doors.
- 6. Maintain Silence:**
 - Keep noise to a minimum.
 - Silence radios, devices, and cell phones.
- 7. Safety Measures in Response to Gunshots:**
 - If gunshots are heard, take cover on the floor using heavy objects for shelter.
- 8. Turn Off Appliances:**
 - If safe, turn off gas and electric appliances, including heaters, fans, coffee makers, gas valves, lights, and locally controlled ventilation systems.
- 9. Limited Phone Use:**
 - Use phones only for emergency notification to police or dispatch.
- 10. Avoid Open Areas:**
 - Do not shelter in open areas like hallways or corridors.
 - Head to the nearest lockable space, such as a vault, office, conference room, or basement.
- 11. Outdoors Safety:**
 - If outdoors, seek shelter behind large objects like trees, walls, mailboxes, or vehicles.
 - Wait for further instructions from law enforcement.
- 12. Wait for Clearance:**
 - Do not unlock doors or attempt to leave until instructed to do so by law enforcement officials.

Evacuation:

If instructed to evacuate a building, individuals must follow the directions provided by law enforcement officials.

Alternative Shelter:

In the event of a lockdown, staff outdoors should seek immediate cover using available objects like trees, mailboxes, walls, vehicles, fire hydrants, or trash cans. Law enforcement will identify appropriate alternative shelters and assign licensed peace officers to secure those locations.

HOSTILE INTRUDER OR SHOOTING

Over the past several years, there have been incidents of extreme violence committed at government centers, schools, and college campuses across the country. While we have been fortunate not to have experienced such an occurrence, it is prudent and responsible to set forth procedures in reference to the response and management of a hostile intruder incident. One of the key components to safety in the workplace and elsewhere is to be vigilant on being the eyes and ears of the public safety community and to report all suspicious activity to law enforcement.

Although the probability of such an incident occurring is minimal, it is our intent to make information available so that employees might increase their chances of survival in a hostile intruder situation. In the event that a person(s) threatens the personal safety of Aitkin County employees, please be aware of the following guidelines for hostile intruder situations.

These guidelines cannot cover every possible situation that might occur, but it is a tool that can reduce the number of injuries or death if put into action as soon as the situation develops. Time is the most important factor in the optimal management of these types of situations.

Notification of Hostile Intruder(s)

You may be the first to encounter the hostile intruder by sight or sound (e.g., gunshots). If so, dial 911 as soon as you are safe to report the situation. If you are safe to report the situation, also notify the County Administrator and your department head. Aitkin County will use all means available to notify employees of the presence of a hostile intruder including email and phones.

Department Head and Supervisors may issue lock-down procedures whenever deemed necessary. (Refer to Lockdown Procedures section).

Hostile Intruder in the Building

When a hostile person(s) is actively causing death or serious bodily injury or the threat of imminent death or serious bodily injury to person(s) within a building, and if you cannot escape the threat by getting out of the building without putting yourself in harm's way, we recommend the following procedures be implemented:

- If communication is available, dial 911.
- Implement lockdown procedures. Lock employees and visitors in an office or room, and if possible cover any windows or openings that have a direct line of sight into the hallway.
- If you are not in a room, try to get into one.
- Do not sound - or respond to - a fire alarm. A fire alarm would signal the occupants to evacuate the building and thus place them in potential harm as they attempt to exit. Turn off the lights, lock the windows, and close the blinds or curtains.
- Stay away from the windows and doors.
- Keep everyone together. Try to remain as calm as possible.
- Keep rooms secure until law enforcement arrives and gives directions.
- Stay out of open areas and be as quiet as possible.

If for some reason you are caught in an open area such as a hallway, you must decide what you are going to do. This is a very crucial time and it can possibly mean life or death.

- If you think that you can safely make it out of the building by running, then do so. If you decide to run do not run in a straight line. Attempt to keep objects such as desks, cabinets, fixtures, etc. between you and the hostile person(s) to block your view from the intruder.

When away from the immediate area of danger summon help any way you can and warn others.

- You can try to hide, but make sure it is a well-hidden space or you may be found as the intruder moves through the building looking for victims.
- If the person(s) are causing death or serious physical injury to others and you are unable to run or hide you may choose to play dead if other victims are around you.
- If you are confronted by the hostile intruder, cannot run away, and feel that your life is in danger you will have to decide if it is necessary to fight back to survive.

CLEARLY THIS OPTION IS A LAST RESORT:

- Throw things at the intruder's head to first create a distraction. This may even buy enough time to allow you to run away.
- If you are with others, attack as group all at once.
- If you are caught by the intruder and are not going to fight back, obey all commands and do not look the intruder in the eyes. Be respectful. Ask permission to speak and do not argue or make suggestions.
- Once law enforcement arrives, obey all commands. This may involve your being handcuffed, or keeping your hands in the air. This is done for safety reasons and once circumstances are evaluated by the police, they will give you further directions to follow.

SERIOUS INJURY OR DEATH

When a serious injury or death incident occurs on county property, department heads, supervisors, and/or employees will:

- Dial 911.
- If possible, do not leave the victim unattended.
- In situations where a Public Health Nurse is present, that nurse will conduct an initial assessment and perform first aid as necessary. ¹
- Do not move the victim, except if evacuation is absolutely necessary.
- If the person is suicidal, try to isolate him from other people. Keep the incident site and victim area free from non-essential personnel. Stay with the person until law enforcement arrives. Do not leave a suicidal person alone.
- Notify the County Administrator.
- If it's an employee, notify the employee's Emergency Contact Person (on file in the HR office).
- An incident report should be completed by an Aitkin County employee who witnessed the accident or who was given information by the victim or another witness. If the injured/ill party refuses to have an ambulance summoned and/or to seek medical attention, this should be specifically noted on the form.

¹ When incidents occur on the courthouse campus, Aitkin County Public Health nurses will do an initial assessment and initiate first aid. The responding nurse will complete a nursing assessment form at the time the individual is examined. The originals will be sent to the Human Resources office. It is to be noted that, while a nurse is usually accessible to Public Health staff via

telephone, there is not always a nurse physically present in the office. In the event that no nurse is available, the support staff taking the call will inform the caller that is the case.

When a serious injury or death incident occurs on county property, the County Administrator or designee will, at his or her discretion:

- Notify appropriate department heads and County Commissioners.
- Activate the crisis management team.
- Direct witness(es) to the Employee Assistance Program and/or critical incident team.
- Determine method of notifying employees.
- Refer media to County Sheriff.

When a serious injury or death incident occurs outside of work, the County Administrator or designee will, at his or her discretion:

1. Activate the crisis management team as needed.
2. Notify appropriate department heads before normal operating hours.
3. Announce availability of counseling services for those who need assistance.
4. Implement post-crisis intervention:
 - a. Meet with critical incident team/EAP counselors .
 - b. Determine level of intervention for employees and/or witnesses.
 - c. Designate rooms as debriefing areas.
 - d. Direct affected employees in work unit and other “highly stressed” individuals to debriefing areas.
 - e. Assess stress level of employees. Recommend additional counseling, EAP, or debriefing as needed.
 - f. Follow-up with people who received debriefing.
 - g. Allow for changes in normal routines to address injury or death.

BOMB THREAT

Bomb Threat Duties and Responsibilities, Employees

When a Verbal Bomb Threat has been received, employees will:

- Record the phone call, if feature is available.
- Complete the “Bomb Threat Phone Report” and “Caller Identification Checklist” on the following page. Keep a copy of this form under your desk phone for quick and convenient access, if necessary.
- Listen closely to the caller’s voice and speech patterns and to noises in the background.
- After hanging up the phone, immediately notify the Sheriff’s Office, County Administrator, and your Department Head.
- Evacuate to a safe distance outside of buildings, perhaps to the motor pool garage if deemed appropriate based on the circumstances.
- Do not use cell phones or two way radios. Bring vehicle keys. Do not enter vehicles.

- Unless asked by fire or law enforcement official to help search their work area, no employee may re-enter the building without permission from the County Administrator or designee.

When a Written Bomb Threat has been received, employees will:

- Immediately notify the Sheriff's Office, County Administrator, and your Department Head.
- Avoid any unnecessary handling of the note. It is considered evidence by law enforcement. Law enforcement will collect the note as evidence.
- Evacuate to a safe distance outside of buildings, perhaps to the motor pool garage if deemed appropriate based on the circumstances.
- Do not use cell phones or two way radios. Bring vehicle keys. Do not enter vehicles.
- Unless asked by fire or law enforcement official to help search their work area, no employee may re-enter the building without permission from the County Administrator or designee.

Bomb Threat Duties and Responsibilities, Department Heads and Supervisors

When a Bomb Threat has been received, department heads and supervisors will:

- Gather employee rosters and floor plans.
- Report any unusual activities/objects immediately to law enforcement or fire department personnel.
- Evacuate staff and visitors immediately to a safe distance outside of buildings, perhaps to the motor pool garage if deemed appropriate based on the circumstances.
- Take roll call upon arriving at the relocation center. Report missing people to the County Administrator.
- After consulting with the County Administrator or other appropriate officials, the Department Head may move employees and visitors to alternate locations.
- The County Administrator or designee will notify employees when they can re-enter the building.

Bomb Threat Phone Report	
1. Date and time call received:	
2. Exact words of caller:	
3. Keep the caller talking; ask these questions:	
a. Where is the bomb?	
b. What does the bomb look like?	
c. When will it explode?	
d. What will cause it to explode?	
e. How do you deactivate it?	
f. Why was it put there?	
g. Did you place the bomb?	
4. Inform the caller about potential danger:	
If the building is occupied, inform the caller that detonation could cause injury or death to innocent people.	
5. Check the origin of the call (for digital phones):	
Origin of call: <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/> Long Distance <input type="checkbox"/> Internal	
Caller Identification Checklist:	
Caller's identity:	
Did caller sound familiar? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, describe	
Did caller appear familiar with the building or area? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, describe	
Sex/Age group: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Juvenile <input type="checkbox"/> Adult	
Approximate age: _____ Years	
Origin of call: <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/> Long Distance <input type="checkbox"/> Internal	
Caller's voice:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Loud <input type="checkbox"/> Soft <input type="checkbox"/> Fast <input type="checkbox"/> Slow <input type="checkbox"/> Deep <input type="checkbox"/> Squeaky <input type="checkbox"/> Stutter <input type="checkbox"/> Crying <input type="checkbox"/> Accent	
<input type="checkbox"/> Distant <input type="checkbox"/> Distorted <input type="checkbox"/> Sincere <input type="checkbox"/> Raspy <input type="checkbox"/> Stressed <input type="checkbox"/> Nasal <input type="checkbox"/> Drunken <input type="checkbox"/> Slurred	
<input type="checkbox"/> Lisp <input type="checkbox"/> Disguised <input type="checkbox"/> Broken <input type="checkbox"/> Calm <input type="checkbox"/> Irrational <input type="checkbox"/> Rational <input type="checkbox"/> Angry <input type="checkbox"/> Incoherent	
<input type="checkbox"/> Excited <input type="checkbox"/> Laughing	
Background noises:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Voices <input type="checkbox"/> Airplanes <input type="checkbox"/> Street traffic <input type="checkbox"/> Animals <input type="checkbox"/> Party	
<input type="checkbox"/> Quiet <input type="checkbox"/> Music <input type="checkbox"/> Horns <input type="checkbox"/> Bells <input type="checkbox"/> Trains <input type="checkbox"/> Office machines <input type="checkbox"/> Factory machines	
Name of employee receiving the call:	
Telephone number call received at:	

Immediately after caller hangs up, report bomb threat to 9-1-1.

BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

Bloodborne Pathogens means pathogenic microorganisms that are present in human blood and can cause disease in humans. These pathogens include, but are not limited to, hepatitis B virus (HBV) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

Employees who may encounter blood, urine, feces, vomitus, wounds, saliva, and other bodily fluids on the job shall receive bloodborne pathogens training. Tasks include, but are not limited to, providing emergency aid, nursing care, obtaining lab specimens, conducting sewer inspections, assessing of garbage, collecting contaminated water samples, working in tile and culvert conduits, mopping/cleaning, plumbing repairs, emptying trash, cleaning urinals, toilets, and drinking fountains, conducting pat and cell searches, responding to disturbances and fights, cleanup of blood/body fluid specimens, administering medication, chainsaw usage, and litter pickup.

Each department having employees with occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens shall establish a written Exposure Control Plan designed to eliminate or minimize employee exposure. OSHA 1910.1030

The departmental policy shall be attached as an addendum and distributed to applicable employees.

EYE AND FACE PROTECTION

Where the eyes or body of any employee may be exposed to injurious corrosive materials, suitable facilities for quick drenching or flushing of the eyes and body shall be provided and properly maintained within the work area for immediate emergency use. OSHA 1910.133

RESPIRATORY PROTECTION

It is the employer's intent to prevent atmospheric contamination as far as feasible by accepted engineering control measures, such as enclosed or confinement of the operation, general and local ventilation, and substitution of less toxic materials. When effective engineering controls are not feasible, or while they are being instituted, appropriate respirators shall be used to control occupational diseases caused by breathing air contaminated with harmful dusts, fogs, fumes, mists, gases, smokes, sprays, or vapors. A respirator suitable for the purpose intended shall be provided to each employee when such equipment is necessary to protect the employee's health. OSHA 29 CFR 1910.134

HEAD PROTECTION

A protective helmet that complies with ANSI standards shall be provided to each employee who works in areas where there is a potential for injury to the head from falling objects. Employees are required to wear the protective helmets when working in said areas. OSHA 29 CFR 1910.135

FOOT PROTECTION

Employees who work in areas where there is a danger of foot injuries due to falling or rolling objects, or objects piercing the sole, or where such employee's feet are exposed to electrical hazards are required to wear protective footwear. OSHA 29 CFR 1910.136

HAND PROTECTION

Employees are required to use appropriate hand protection when employees' hands are exposed to hazards such as those from skin absorption of harmful substances, severe cuts or lacerations, severe abrasions, punctures, chemical burns, thermal burns, and/or harmful temperature extremes. OSHA 29 CFR 1910.138

PERMIT-REQUIRED CONFINED SPACES

Each department having operations that take place in permit-required confined spaces shall implement and maintain a departmental confined spaces emergency action plan to include rescue procedures that specifically address entry into each confined space. (See also OSHA Publication 3138, Permit-Required Confined Spaces, and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Publication 80-106, Criteria for a Recommended Standard...Working in Confined Spaces.)

The departmental policy shall be attached as an addendum and distributed to applicable employees.

LOCKOUT/TAGOUT: THE CONTROL OF HAZARDOUS ENERGY

Each department that performs the servicing and maintenance of machines and equipment in which the unexpected energization or start up of the machines or equipment, or release of stored energy, could harm employees shall implement and maintain a departmental lockout/tagout procedure and emergency action plan. Refer to OSHA 29 CFR 1910.147 for requirements.

The departmental policy shall be attached as an addendum and distributed to applicable employees.

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES / HAZARD COMMUNICATION

Each department that uses or stores hazardous substances at the worksite faces an increased risk of emergency involving hazardous materials. The department head shall implement and maintain a departmental emergency action plan concerning hazardous substances.

OSHA's Hazard Communication Standard (29 CFR 1910.1200) requires employers who use hazardous chemicals to inventory them, keep the manufacturer-supplied Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) for them in a place accessible to workers, label containers of these chemicals with their hazards, and train employees in ways to protect themselves against those hazards. A good way to start is to determine from your hazardous chemical inventory what hazardous

chemicals you use and to gather the MSDSs for the chemicals. MSDSs describe the hazards that a chemical may present, list the precautions to take when handling, storing, or using the substance, and outline emergency and first-aid procedures.

For specific information on how to respond to emergencies involving hazardous materials and hazardous waste operations, refer to 29 CFR, Part 1910.120(q) and OSHA Publication 3114, Hazardous Waste and Emergency Response Operations. Both are available online at www.osha.gov.

The departmental policy shall be attached as an addendum and distributed to applicable employees.

TOXIC SPILLS: SOLID, LIQUID, OR GAS

Anything toxic – solid, liquid, or gas – can escape the thing it's contained in and create a spill. When it's a gas (or an aerosol version of a liquid or a solid), it's generally called a *release*. The toxic substance forms a cloud, but it's still a toxic spill. If a train derails or a tanker truck has an accident and a toxic spill occurs on water, land, or underground, an evacuation may be ordered by the County Administrator or law enforcement officials.

When employees are alerted to the fact that there's a toxic spill nearby, before anything else everyone should get inside, close all windows and doors, and turn off the air conditioning, heating, and fresh air ventilation systems.

If an evacuation is necessary, relocation facilities will vary based on the circumstances, but may include areas such as the Land Department, Road & Bridge facility, Long Lake Conservation Center, Aitkin County Fairgrounds, McGregor Airport/Industrial Park, City Parks or Campgrounds. (Maps attached.)

SAFETY IN THE FIELD AND IN CLIENT HOMES



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Pets and Pests: Best Practices for Identifying and Controlling Risks

Date: December 2015

Off-site employees may be exposed to pets, parasites, rodents or stinging insects while working. It is important to develop methods to recognize and mitigate the risks of these potential hazards. Mitigation efforts should focus on limiting the spread or severity of the risks to employees and clients. Specific situations may require consultation with professional exterminators to remove the source of the hazard.

What to Look for with Pets	Control Techniques
<p>Dogs¹</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raised ears, stiff tail, back hair standing up, staring or growling with lips pursed and teeth exposed • Protectiveness of food and toys • Eagerness to chase things 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request the client put the dog in another room with a closed door or outside during the visit • Ask clients what may trigger the dog and how the dog usually responds to triggers. Keep this information and ensure it is shared with anyone else who visits that location. • Remain calm² • Avoid sudden movements² • Avoid petting the dog² • Have something in hand with which to shield yourself, such as a bag, briefcase or purse² • Turn your side to an aggressive or threatening dog and back away slowly² • Do not turn your back on the dog² • Avoid direct eye contact² • If attacked and knocked down, use hands to protect head and neck in the fetal position²
<p>Cats¹</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tail thumping • Hissing or growling • Puffing of fur (trying to appear bigger) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request the client put the cat in another room with a closed door or outside during the visit • Ask clients what may trigger the cat and how the cat usually responds to triggers. Keep this information and ensure it is shared with anyone else who visits that location. • Remain calm • Back away from the cat slowly • Do not disturb or try to pet the cat • Keep skin covered below the knee

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What to Look for with Pests	Control Techniques
Rodents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chewing on food packaging³ • Droppings or urine³ • Dead rodents • Rodent nests (shredded paper, fabric or dried plant matter)³ • Holes in walls or floors that rodents chewed open³ 	Rodents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid touching dead rodents, droppings, urine or nesting materials with bare hands⁴ • Disinfect dead rodents, droppings or urine before cleaning up⁵ • Discard any food in food containers on which rodents have gnawed⁵
Parasites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rashes or lesions on the client • Visible bugs:¹ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In cracks and crevices in the walls, floors and furniture ○ In baseboards ○ In seams of mattresses or box springs ○ Behind headboards • Bug fecal stains or molted skins 	Parasites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a portable hard surface chair or stool to sit on, avoid sitting on anything else, especially upholstered furniture, bedding or client clothing.⁶ • Only bring what is necessary into the home • Use proper personal protective equipment when appropriate⁶ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shoe booties ○ Coveralls ○ Gown ○ Disposable gloves ○ Clean pads (to serve as a barrier for any equipment to be placed on the floor) ○ Dispose of all personal protective equipment after use • Wash hands frequently • Avoid skin-to-skin contact with people with parasites • Keep vehicle clean to avoid any pest hitchhikers⁶ • Wash any infested clothes on high heat (130 degrees or the hottest fabric can withstand) for at least 30 minutes.⁶
Ticks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High grass⁷ • Bushy areas⁷ • Leaf litter⁷ 	Ticks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wear light colored clothes⁸ • Inspect self for any pests⁸ • Wear insect repellent with 20percent to 30 percent DEET on exposed skin and clothing⁹
Bees, Wasps and Hornets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unusually high number of wasps, hornets or bees in a certain area • Wasp, hornet or bee nests • Litter or food waste with sugary substances likely to attract insects 	Bees, Wasps and Hornets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid wearing fragrances that may attract insects¹⁰ • Avoid swatting or making fast movements at stinging insects¹⁰ • If a hornet, bee or wasp is found in the car, open car windows, pull over, stop and exit until the insect has left¹⁰ • Do not attempt to remove a nest¹⁰

Originally published in "Safety and Health Resources for Employees Who Work Off Site," December 2015

¹ The Occupational Health & Safety Agency for Healthcare in British Columbia. "Home and Community Care Risk Assessment Tool Resource Guide." Last modified April 2008.

² The Hawaiian Humane Society. "Be Canine Smart."

³ United States Environmental Protection Agency. "Identify and Prevent Rodent Infestations." Last modified Nov. 17, 2015.

⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "How People Get Infected With Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome." Last modified Aug. 29, 2012.

⁵ National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. "Hantavirus-Worker Protection." Last modified July 26, 2010.

⁶ Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. "Bed Bug Action Plan for Home Health Care and Social Workers."

⁷ Minnesota Department of Health. "Tick ID Card: In the Woods: Spray Before You Work or Play." Last modified April 25, 2014.

⁸ National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Protecting Yourself from Ticks and Mosquitoes."

⁹ National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Ticks and Lyme Disease."

¹⁰ Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety. "Working Safely Around Stinging Insects." Last modified Aug. 13, 2015.

Noxious Plants¹

Date: May 2016

Some employees who work off site may encounter plants that can produce strong allergic reactions and may even cause more harm. Many of these plants receive the noxious designation from federal and state agencies. Although this is not a complete list, the following are some of the most common noxious plants or weeds in Minnesota. According to the Minnesota Department of Transportation all of the plants listed regularly appear in roadside ditches or along other paths of travel.

Wild Parsnip



Description/Identification: Consists of a hollow grooved flowering stalk that can grow up to five feet in height. The leaves at the base can be up to six inches in height and have between five and 15 leaflets. The plant also features small yellow flowers on umbrella-shaped growths 2 to 6 inches across.

Precautions: Use protective clothing, goggles or face mask. Contact with the plant's sap can cause severe blistering and swelling when combined with exposure to sunlight.

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Poison Ivy



Description/identification: Can be encountered as a shrub up 2 feet or a vine up to 10 feet. It has three shiny- or dull-surfaced leaflets with smooth to very coarsely toothed edges. Lower leaf surfaces tend to be pale and hairy. Small greenish flowers are present on leaf axils. Creamy white to tannish, round, berry-like fruits approximately one-fourth inch in diameter grow in August through September and persist through winter.

Precautions: Use protective clothing, rubber gloves and long sleeves. Contact with the compound urushiol found in the sap and oils from the plant can cause blistering even during the winter. Smoke from burning poison ivy can deliver urushiol to airways and lungs. Urushiol can stay on pets, tools, toys and other objects for long periods and can effectively be transferred and cause irritation at a later date.

Giant Hogweed



Description/identification: Large plant (10-20 feet tall) with leaves up to five feet across. Features spotted leaf stalks with the underside of leaves and stems covered with coarse white hairs. Has umbrella shaped flowers that sprout small white florets.

Precautions: Use protective clothing, goggles or face mask. Contact with bristles (stiff hairs) or the plant's sap can cause severe blistering and swelling when combined with exposure to sunlight.

Grecian Foxglove



Description/identification: Has alternate, smooth, stalk-less upper leaves with toothless edges (lance shaped). Leaves at the base are oval and rounded. Tubular flowers attached to a central stalk. Flowers have a brown or purple veined upper hood and a creamy-white elongated lower lip.

Precautions: Use protective clothing, in particular, rubber gloves and long sleeves. Grecian foxglove contains toxins (cardiac glycosides) that potentially can be absorbed through the skin. These compounds are harmful to livestock and humans.

Common Tansy



Description/identification: Reaches 2 to 5 feet in height. Stems appear woody and are slightly hairy to smooth and at the base are purplish-red. Leaves are toothed on edges and 2 to 12 inches long. Single stems support multi-branched, flat clusters of bright yellow button-like flowers and like the leaves are strongly aromatic.

Precautions: Gloves should be used when handling this plant. The alkaloids contained in common tansy are toxic to livestock and humans if consumed in quantity. Toxins can potentially be absorbed through skin.

¹ Minnesota Department of Transportation with the United States Department of Agriculture Plants Database. "Minnesota Noxious Weeds." 2015.



Be Canine Smart

Dog Bite Prevention Program



Date: April 2015

It is no wonder that dogs are the most popular pet in America. They are wonderful companions and playmates, and offer comfort, unconditional love and joy to their owners and caretakers. They join in the daily activities of life at home and grow to be important members of the family.

This program was developed to help people and dogs live harmoniously together in the community. You will learn a few preventative measures to help you avoid unexpected confrontations with dogs. The program will also help you understand dog behavior and show you how to respond safely to an unfamiliar dog.

Considering that approximately 75 million dogs are owned by U.S. households, this information could prove to be valuable to you, your family members, co-workers and the entire community in the encounters with dogs we are all certain to have in our lifetime.

Preventing Surprises

When approaching an unfamiliar house, your best defense is to be prepared. Identify whether a dog is present before you attempt to approach an unfamiliar property. If possible, remain in your vehicle—your safe harbor—and take the following steps.

Be aware of dogs that may be loose nearby in the neighborhood: Someone may be walking their dog nearby or have allowed their pet out of the yard. Always politely ask an owner to restrain their dog and not allow the dog to jump on you. Remain in your vehicle if you see a loose dog in the area.

Evaluate the property for signs of a dog:

- Look for food bowls, feces, dog house, chain or a path worn in the grass.
- Before entering, try to draw a dog out by whistling or calling for the dog; honk your car horn; or jingle your car keys.

If you discover there is a dog on the property, assess if the dog is safely secured:

- The fence is of adequate height and strength.
- The fence has no holes underneath or on the side.
- The chain, rope or leash is strong and short enough for you to pass.
- The windows and doors are secure if the dog is inside the house.

Always have something in your hand to protect yourself if a dog surprises you or charges. This item could be:

- A soft briefcase, purse, satchel, jacket or towel.
- Something soft and easily compressed, not hard.
- Put a barrier (bicycle, bag, etc.) between you and the dog.

- Assume the side posture and slowly back away from the dog to safety.

Smell is a dog's most important sense. Their noses help them scent food, territory odors, and even emotional states in other animals. This reliance on smell is why, when being introduced to an unfamiliar dog, you should always offer the back of your hand for the dog to sniff before petting or stroking the animal.

If Suddenly Confronted by a Dog

The dog jumps at you and attempts to bite:

- Stop and present the soft object for the dog to grab.
- Shake and pull the object while the dog is grabbing it and slowly back away to safety.
- Once near your vehicle, let the dog have the object as you retreat to your vehicle.

You have no object to distract the dog, and the dog bites or jumps on you:

- Stand quietly. Do not kick or attempt to hit the dog.
- Place your hands in fists around your head and neck for protection.
- Slowly, with your side facing the dog, walk to safety.

You are knocked down by the dog:

- Lie quietly in a fetal position.
- Place your hands in fists around your head and neck for protection.
- Remain in this defensive posture until the dog goes away or you are rescued.

You are chased while jogging or bicycling:

- Stop all movement. Do not run or shout.
- If on a bicycle, dismount and put the bike between you and the dog.
- Assume the side posture and slowly back away from the dog to safety.

When Bitten by a Dog

- Wash the wound thoroughly with soap and water. A visit or call to your doctor is also recommended.
- Report the incident to the appropriate local animal control. Give as much information as possible about the dog—its size, sex, color, age, features, where you saw the dog, whether you have seen the dog before, and so on—so that animal control may counsel the owner and help prevent others from being bitten. For your safety and the safety of the neighborhood, please report the dog bite incident.
- If you see a loose dog or are aware of a situation where the owner is irresponsible for the care and control of a dog, call your local animal control to report the problem.

The information contained in this resource is also available in a DVD produced by the Hawaiian Humane Society. MCIT members can obtain a copy of this DVD by contacting their loss control consultant at 1.866.547.6516.

This educational program has been made possible through the generous support of Larry and Patricia Rodriguez in memory of Mr. Bugs, their wonderful, feisty fox terrier who gave them years of joy, love and companionship — and chose his friends carefully.

On behalf of the many people and dogs who will benefit from this program, the Hawaiian Humane Society and the Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust extend their thanks to Larry and Patricia Rodriguez for their commitment to helping animals and people.

This program was originally designed for people whose job brings them to unfamiliar homes. The information can be applied to many circumstances. We know you will be better protected from dog bites after reviewing these pages.

Ticks and Lyme Disease



For more information about Lyme disease, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/Lyme>

How to prevent tick bites when working outdoors

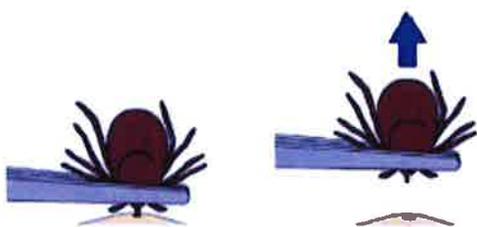
Ticks can spread disease, including Lyme disease. Protect yourself:

- Use insect repellent that contains 20 - 30% DEET.
- Wear clothing that has been treated with permethrin.
- Take a shower as soon as you can after working outdoors.
- Look for ticks on your body. Ticks can hide under the armpits, behind the knees, in the hair, and in the groin.
- Put your clothes in the dryer on high heat for 60 minutes to kill any remaining ticks.

How to remove a tick

1. If a tick is attached to you, use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick at the surface of your skin.
2. Pull the tick straight up and out. Don't twist or jerk the tick—this can cause the mouth parts to break off and stay in the skin. If this happens, remove the mouth parts with tweezers if you can. If not, leave them alone and let your skin heal.
3. Clean the bite and your hands with rubbing alcohol, an iodine scrub, or soap and water.
4. You may get a small bump or redness that goes away in 1-2 days, like a mosquito bite. This is not a sign that you have Lyme disease.

Note: Do not put hot matches, nail polish, or petroleum jelly on the tick to try to make it pull away from your skin.



If you remove a tick quickly (within 24 hours) you can greatly reduce your chances of getting Lyme disease.

National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases
Division of Vector Borne Diseases | Bacterial Diseases Branch



CS22427 A



Facial paralysis.



Bull's eye rash on the back.



Arthritic knees.



When to see your doctor

See a doctor if you develop a fever, a rash, severe fatigue, facial paralysis, or joint pain within 30 days of being bitten by a tick. Be sure to tell your doctor about your tick bite. If you have these symptoms and work where Lyme disease is common, it is important to get treatment right away.

If you do not get treatment, you may later experience severe arthritis and problems with your nerves, spinal cord, brain, or heart.

Antibiotics are used to treat Lyme disease

Your doctor will prescribe specific antibiotics, typically for 2-3 weeks. Most patients recover during this time. You may feel tired while you are recovering, even though the infection is cured.

If you wait longer to seek treatment or take the wrong medicine, you may have symptoms that are more difficult to treat.

Looking ahead to recovery

Take your antibiotics as recommended. Allow yourself plenty of rest. It may take time to feel better, just as it takes time to recover from other illnesses.

Some people wonder if there is a test to confirm that they are cured. This is not possible. Your body remembers an infection long after it has been cured. Additional blood tests might be positive for months or years. Don't let this alarm you. It doesn't mean you are still infected.

Finally, practice prevention against tick bites. You can get Lyme disease again if you are bitten by another infected tick.

Additional information

1. <http://www.cdc.gov/Lyme>
2. The Clinical Assessment, Treatment, and Prevention of Lyme Disease, Human Granulocytic Anaplasmosis, and Babesiosis: Clinical Practice Guidelines by the Infectious Diseases Society of America
<http://cid.oxfordjournals.org/content/43/9/1089.full>
3. Tick Management Handbook (Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, New Haven)
http://www.ct.gov/caes/lib/caes/documents/special_features/tickhandbook.pdf

For more information please contact Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Road NE, Atlanta, GA 30333
Telephone: 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)/TTY: 1-888-232-63548
Email: cdcinfo@cdc.gov Web: www.cdc.gov



Tick ID Card

Source: Minnesota Department of Health

The Minnesota Department of Health provides PDFs of the below cards to identify ticks. These cards provide a way for employees to carry information with them about identifying ticks that could cause Lyme disease, tick removal instructions and tips for preventing tick bites. Cards fit easily in wallets. Members can download PDFs from this Web page: www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/dtopics/tickborne/card.html

Tick ID Card Front:



Tick ID Card Back:



ERGONOMICS

Ergonomic assessments are available to staff through MCIT. To schedule an ergonomic assessment of your work area, please contact the Human Resources Department.

REPORTING HAZARDS

Employees are required to promptly report to their supervisor when they observe an employee or non-employee accident or fall, documenting the date, time, and circumstances observed.

Employees are required to report all workplace safety and health concerns to their department head and/or the Human Resources Department so that the employer may attempt to eliminate or reduce the hazards.

QUESTIONS / MORE INFORMATION

Employees may contact their department head or the Human Resources department at any time for more information about the Emergency Action Plan or for an explanation of their duties under the plan.

[Maps are currently being updated. Will attach maps from building maintenance here.]



HCS Pictograms and Hazards

Health Hazard



- Carcinogen
- Mutagenicity
- Reproductive Toxicity
- Respiratory Sensitizer
- Target Organ Toxicity
- Aspiration Toxicity

Flame



- Flammables
- Pyrophorics
- Self-Heating
- Emits Flammable Gas
- Self-Reactives
- Organic Peroxides

Exclamation Mark



- Irritant (skin and eye)
- Skin Sensitizer
- Acute Toxicity
- Narcotic Effects
- Respiratory Tract Irritant
- Hazardous to Ozone Layer (Nonmandatory)

Gas Cylinder



- Gases Under Pressure

Corrosion



- Skin Corrosion/Burns
- Eye Damage
- Corrosive to Metals

Exploding Bomb



- Explosives
- Self-Reactives
- Organic Peroxides

Flame Over Circle



- Oxidizers

Environment (Nonmandatory)



- Aquatic Toxicity

Skull and Crossbones



- Acute Toxicity (fatal or toxic)



Aitkin County

**Safety Policy and Emergency Action Plan for Employees
Acknowledgment of Receipt**

Adopted: January 2, 2024

Directions: Please sign and return this acknowledgement form to the Human Resources Office. The signed form will be placed in your personnel file.

The Aitkin County Safety Policy and Emergency Action Plan for Employees contains important information pertaining to my employment at the County. I understand that I should consult my supervisor if I have any questions about the information contained in the policy.

A copy of this policy has been given to me to retain for future reference and/or I have been provided with the following intranet address, <https://acc.co.aitkin.mn.us/resources.php>, where I have obtained an electronic copy of the policy. I agree to familiarize myself with its contents and comply with the information provided.

Furthermore, I understand that the policy may be modified by the County Board, at its sole discretion, with or without notice, at any time. I understand the policy is not intended to cover every situation which may arise during my employment, but is simply a general guide.

I have received the policy and I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained within and any revisions made to it.

If any specific provisions of this policy conflicts with any current union Agreement, the union Agreement rules will prevail. Nothing in this policy is intended to modify or supersede any applicable provision of state or federal law.

Employee's Name (printed): _____

Employee's Signature: _____ Date: _____