



TROY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Emergency/Disaster Policy

FIRE

Do not panic, but do not under-estimate the potential danger to patrons or staff represented by a fire.

At the first indication of smoke or flame, investigate the situation to determine location and extent of the fire. Circulation staff should check the alarm panel if the alarm has sounded and make any necessary announcements over the Public Address system. Reference staff will check the reading room area and computer room. Young People's staff will check the basement area. If the fire can obviously be contained and extinguished quickly and safely by staff, proceed to do so.

However, if there is any doubt about whether the fire can be controlled, immediately call 911 and then clear the building.

If the fire alarm has sounded at the main library, the fire department has been called by operators at International Built In Systems. To manually operate the fire alarm there are two pull stations - one in the administration office and one in the boiler room.

At the Main Library evacuate to the sidewalk across the street from the front entrance on Second Street. At the Lansingburgh Branch, evacuate to the sidewalk across 14th street in front of the entrance to St. Augustine's School. At the Sycaway Branch, evacuate to the sidewalk across the street from the entrance on Lee Avenue. One reference staff member will be designated to prevent patrons from entering the building at this time. Do not re-enter the building until the fire department says all is clear.

Do not use the elevator.

The time to think about fires is before they happen. Familiarize yourself with the type, location, and application of the fire extinguisher(s) in the building. Orient all staff and volunteers to this information.

Health Emergencies

Staff members should exercise caution when administering first aid of even a minor nature because of the safety of the injured individual and the potential liability of the staff member. Without specialized

training it is not advisable for staff to undertake more than keeping the sick or injured patron comfortable and protected from needless disturbance until medical help can be obtained. Do not move the injured person. Since each case is unique, staff members should use their own judgment to do what is prudent and reasonable. 911 should be called immediately in the event of any serious problem. No medication, including aspirin, should ever be dispensed to the public. Gloves are available in the supply cabinet in the office.

Bomb Threats

Keep the caller on the line as long as possible. Ask the caller to repeat the message and try to write down every word spoken by the person. If the caller does not indicate the location of the bomb or the time of possible detonation, ASK FOR THIS INFORMATION. Pay attention to peculiar background noises such as motors running, background music and any other sounds, which may indicate a location where the call is originating. Listen closely to the voice (male, female), voice quality (calm, excited), accents and speech impediments. Immediately after the caller hangs up, call 911. Clear the building. The police will handle the actual bomb search.

Snow storms

Closing will be at the discretion of the Library Director or Board of Trustee President if the Director is not available.

Power Outage

If the director is not in the building, call and notify. If power outage lasts more than 1 hour CLOSE THE LIBRARY. Assist patrons in evacuating the building. Check all bathrooms to make sure patrons are not trapped inside without light.

There are emergency back-up lights by all the exits. If the lights fail to work notify the director so they can be repaired.

There are flashlights at both the circulation desk and the information desk.

Incident Documentation

Any unusual incidents occurring on library grounds should be documented by completing an Incident Report form.

Examples of incidents to be documented include:

- Injuries
- Bomb threats
- Fire or smoke emergencies
- Robbery or other criminal activities
- Theft of library materials
- Unattended children left after library closing, when police must be called
- Any incident which requires a police call

- Any incident of which the director should be made aware

Staff should complete an Incident Report, making sure to accurately describe the incident, and obtain names and addresses of all persons witnessing the incident.

When an incident results in injuries, complete the Incident Report while the injured party is present, if possible.

All incident reports should be given to the director as soon as possible.

Flooding

Immediately notify the director. If there is time, move books, furniture, equipment up or away to minimize damage from flooding. Priority: Computer routers and switches in the basement should be moved to a safe place, or at least shut down with cords up off the floor and the equipment covered with plastic.

There is always a danger from electricity when there is standing water.

Do not attempt to enter any area with standing water unless a safety official advises that it is safe to do so. As soon as possible, shut off all electrical power with the main power shutoff (labeled, of the large levers on the gray power box in the basement where the telephone switching equipment and circuit breakers are.) CAUTION: Once you have shut off the power it will be **dark** so carry a flashlight with you.

There may be danger of contamination from sewage and other hazardous materials following any flooding. Wear rubber gloves and boots or other protective clothing when reentering for cleanup. All surfaces will need to be disinfected.

The main water shut off is located in the basement in the boiler room near the water meter.

Damage Assessment

Determine how large the damaged area is and what kinds of records have been damaged. Books, paper files, audio and video tapes must be

salvaged/treated within 48 hours. Microforms can wait a maximum of 3 days. Computer disks and art works require specialized attention. Check for signs of mold.

TURN OFF HEAT in the building.

OPEN DOORS to create maximum air flow. USE FANS and DEHUMIDIFIERS to create air currents if electrical facilities are operational and equipment is available.

The extent and the source of the flooding will dictate if emergency personnel (police, fire, hospital etc.) need to be called or if water or electricity must be turned off/on.

Some supplies may need to be acquired at this time. Plastic sheets can be used to cover materials under running water. Get paper towels to absorb (don't wipe) water on shelves or books. Get mops and pails for clean up. Remove library materials from the floor if they are dry.

The Library Director will need to determine if specialized services need to be called to salvage materials and repair damaged areas of the building.

In the case of flooding, materials in the local history collection should be given highest priority in any salvage operation

Disturbed, abusive, or intoxicated patrons

Be quick about assessing the situation's potential for escalating into a confrontation and in assisting your fellow staff members. Inform the patron in a calm, courteous manner that his/her conduct is in violation of library rules and is disturbing others. If the behavior persists, ask the patron to leave the library. If the patron refuses, call 911 for assistance. Do not use any physical contact against the patron, act in any way aggressively towards him/her, or stand between the disturbed person and the exits.

In all cases, respond to an emergency in a calm manner; direct other, uninvolved persons out of the way of physical harm; and be observant and the best possible witness in case of legal action arising from an emergency situation.

Document the situation by using an incident report form.

Approved by the Board of Trustees January 11, 2011