

**Emergency Action Plan
for
Saint Joseph Church**



417 6TH Ave, De Witt, IA 52742

563-659-3514

www.StJoseph-DeWitt.weconnect.com

June 1, 2018 (Revised June, 2022/June, 2026)

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Emergency Action Plan (EAP) Oversight.....	3
EAP Associated Building and Grounds Responsibilities.....	3
Training.....	4
Leader Knowledge of EAP.....	4
Tornado / Severe Storm	5
Fire	7
Fire Staging Locations.....	8
Medical Emergency.....	9
Intruder / Shooter.....	10
Observing / Following suspicious People	12
Chemical Spills.....	13
Religious Education Classes.....	14
Appendix.....	15

Introduction

This emergency action plan consists of six categories of incidents: 1. Tornado / Severe Storm 2. Fire 3. Medical 4. Intruder / Shooter 5. Threats (Suspicious people, unruly people, bomb, etc.) 6. Chemical (Truck or railroad spills)

The church building is utilized by many people and groups in both a formal organized function and non formal visits, all of which may occur in various areas and rooms in the building; typically between the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Individuals leading the activity may not be familiar with the building and full time church staff may or may not be present. Therefore an emergency action plan cannot address every situation during every day of the week or every hour of the day. This emergency action plan is written to address various emergency scenarios during typical Saint Joseph Church organized activities.

Emergency Action Plan (EAP) Oversight

Oversight of the EAP is the responsibility of the EAP Committee subsequent to coordination and approval by the Parish Council.

EAP committee Responsibilities:

The EAP committee is entrusted with the responsibility to take the actions necessary to ensure the following:

1. The designated fire numbers adjacent to the 6th Ave. entrance are clearly visible and are reflective to facilitate rapid identification of our address by emergency responders.
2. The perimeter lights are functioning properly and illuminate all entrances to the buildings and eliminate shadows in which intruders can hide.
3. The shrubs adjacent to the buildings are maintained to make it difficult for intruders to hide.
4. Trees close to the buildings are trimmed to a height that permits proper illumination and do not significantly block visibility of the building.
5. The entrances on the front and sides of the building which form alcoves are lighted to eliminate shadows in which intruders can hide.
6. Ensure fire extinguisher, detector and alarm maintenance contract is in place to comply with state fire code regulations.
7. Coordinate fire drills and periodic inspections by the De Witt Fire Department and the Clinton County Sheriff's Department / De Witt Police Department.
8. Facilitate annual refresher and EAP review with church ministries and non church groups that frequently use the facility. This also includes an open invitation to interested members.

Training

Church leaders, staff, committee chairs, ushers and leaders of non church groups who regularly use the church facility (all collectively referred to as “leaders”) should read the emergency action plan. At least annually, a review refresher should be held with the leaders and the plan updated to address concerns, changes in logistics, organizational structure, demographics, etc. It is recommended that representatives of the fire department and law enforcement be involved for input.

EAP training should be made available to all Religious Education teachers prior to the beginning of classes and any frequent users of Harness Hall.

Leader Knowledge of EAP

In the event of an emergency, leader responsibilities may include the following:

- Knowing how to correctly respond to and summon help for a medical emergency.
- Knowing how to correctly report a fire, smoke or gas leak emergency using the 911 emergency numbers.
- Knowing the locations of the manual fire alarm pull stations in their area.
- Knowing how to correctly respond to a fire warning alarm.
- Knowing the facilities lock-down/shelter in place procedure.
- Knowing designated shelter areas and precautions to take in the event of a tornado emergency.
- Becoming familiar with exit routes and knowing alternate exits to correctly respond to a call for an evacuation.
- Closing all opened doors as they evacuate an area.

Tornado / Severe Storm

The National Weather Service has developed a method of identifying storm conditions that foster the development of tornadoes. The classification and definitions of storm conditions are:

- Severe Thunderstorm Watch
- Tornado Watch
- Severe Thunderstorm Warning
- Tornado Warning

A Severe Thunderstorm Watch - This is issued by the National Weather Service When conditions are favorable for the development of severe thunderstorms in and close to the watch area. A severe thunderstorm by definition is a thunderstorm that produces one inch hail or larger in diameter and/or winds equal or exceed 58 miles an hour. The size of the watch can vary depending on the weather situation. They are usually issued for a duration of 4 to 8 hours. They are normally issued well in advance of the actual occurrence of severe weather. In the event that a **Severe thunderstorm Watch** has been issued by the National Weather service during a Church event, such as a Mass, no immediate action needs to be taken by the Ushers or occupants of the Church. The Ushers or church occupants will need to maintain monitoring of the situation with their personal cell phones tuned to a local weather service. During the watch, people should be prepared to move to the designated storm shelter locations.

A Severe thunderstorm Warning - This is issued when either a severe thunderstorm is indicated by radar or a spotter reports a thunderstorm producing hail one inch or larger in diameter and/or winds equal or exceed 58 miles an hour; therefore, people in the affected area may need to seek safe shelter indoors immediately. The ushers/leaders may need to move the building occupants away from exterior windows and move to interior locations of the building or move to the designated storm shelters. Severe thunderstorms can produce tornadoes with little or no advance warning. They are usually issued for a duration of one hour. They can be issued without a Severe Thunderstorm Watch being already in effect. The parish priest will make the final decision as to whether to move everyone to the designated storm shelter during Mass. For other events the person in charge of the event will make the decision.

A tornado watch - This is issued by the national Weather Service when conditions are favorable for the development of tornadoes in and close to the watch area. They are usually issued for a duration of 4 to 8 hours. They normally are issued well in advance of the actual occurrence of severe weather. During a **Tornado Watch**, no immediate action is required, but people should be prepared to move to a place of safety if weather conditions change and threatening weather approaches.

A tornado warning - This is issued when a tornado is indicated by radar or sighted by spotters; therefor, people in the affected area should seek safe shelter immediately. A Warning can be issued without a Tornado Watch being already in effect. They are usually issued for a duration of around 30 minutes.

In the event that a **Tornado Warning** has been issued by the national Weather Service during a Church event, such as Mass, the Mass Ushers or event leader will alert the church occupants to the situation and ask everyone to move to the designated tornado shelters until further notice and an all clear is communicated. **DO NOT RUN** and stay calm.. Ushers or other Church Parishioners may need to assist disabled or elderly people to the shelter areas.

Storm or Tornado Shelter - Usher/Leader responsibilities will be needed to direct everyone to designated shelter areas and hold inside doors open to areas of shelter. In the event of severe weather or tornados the following areas have been designated as storm shelters.

- School lunchroom
- School lower hallway
- School locker rooms

If disabled or elderly can not be moved that far, then the following can be used:

- Gathering Space Restrooms located in the SE corner of the Gathering Space
- Parish office copier area
- Coat closet area next to Gathering space

Diagram of bad weather shelter on page 1 of Appendix.

1

FIRE : If you detect smoke and/or fire:

- Activate the manual fire alarms (Pull Stations are located at most Exits)

NO PULL STATIONS AT DOOR #1 A, 7 D or 10D

- Initiate evacuation procedure for any occupants of the affected area.
- Call 911 (move to a safe area before making this call).
- Give your name, telephone number, and location.
- Describe the situation.
- Do not use the elevator.
- If you know how to use and are physically capable. Decide if the best course of action is to attempt to extinguish the fire. Locate an extinguisher (9 locations are noted in EAP) and without risking injury attempt to extinguish the fire.
- Isolate the fire by closing doors in area affected after evacuation is complete.

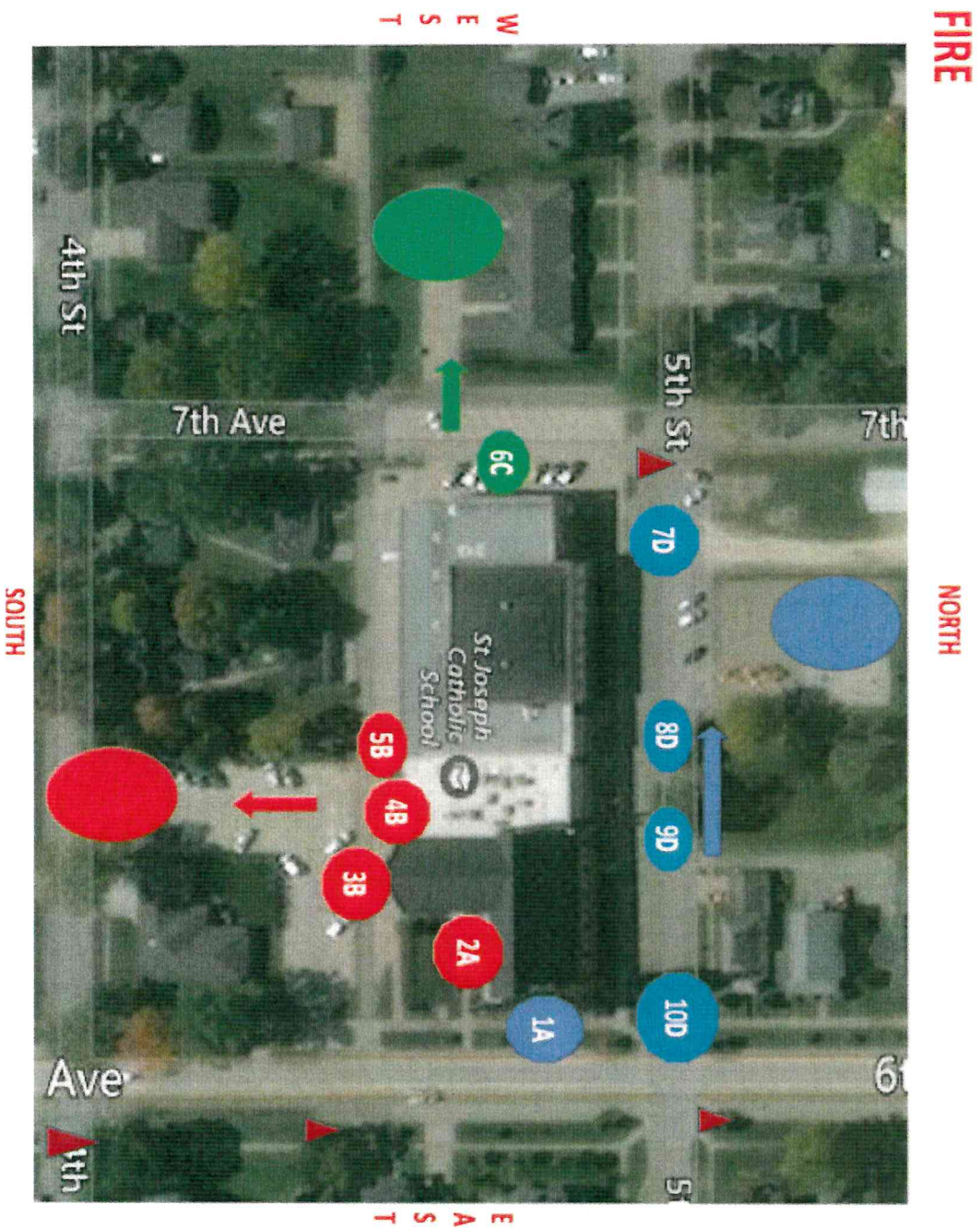
If the Fire Alarm Sounds- Immediately initiate evacuation procedures

- Evacuation areas are color coded and designated areas are specified by which door is exited.
- **Doors 2A , 3 B, 4 B, & 5 B are RED, Door 6C is GREEN, Doors 1A , 7 D, 8 D, 9 D, & 10D are BLUE.**

See next page for EAP Plan for Fire staging locations

- Assist Children, Disabled and Elderly in your area.
- All rules of fire safety apply, if you encounter smoke, short breaths through the nose, drop and crawl if possible. If disoriented find a wall and stay close to it. (Rescue personnel are trained in search techniques based off the walls).
- Feel all doors before opening them. Use the back of your hand. Do not open hot doors.
- If the door is cool, open slowly. Always open a door that you are behind to give you additional protection in case you need to shut it quickly.
- Proceed out the building to your designated staging color coded staging area.
- No one is to move or leave in their automobile. This can hinder Emergency Vehicle Operations on scene. (Emergency Personnel may ask for vehicles to be moved after arriving on scene)
- Stay in your staging zone until cleared by Emergency Personnel.
- No re-entry is allowed until an "All Clear" is determined by Emergency Personnel.

Diagram of Fire Extinguishers locations is in the Appendix.



Medical (diagram of location of First Aid Kit & Automatic External Defibrillator shown in Appendix as blue triangle and green square).

Call 9-1-1. Be prepared to give the following information:

- Name and phone number.
- Location (Indicate the door number & letter nearest to your location)
- Number of people involved.
- Nature of injury or illness.
- Remember to stay on the line until help arrives, if at all possible.

Note: Treat minor injuries from supplies in the **first aid kit**. The kit is located in the gathering space coat closet on the shelf (a sign outside the closet marks the location).

While waiting for professional help do not move the ill or injured person, unless safety considerations necessitate movement or transportation to a safer location. When professional help arrives:

- Allow responding units to take control of situation.
- Medical Emergency response team members may stand by to assist as needed

Heart Attack / Defibrillator

The Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) is located just outside the gathering space coat closet. (a sign marks the location)

- The AED is designed for use by trained or untrained individuals. Follow the device's voice instructions.
- Any person who uses the automatic external defibrillator shall request emergency medical assistance (call 9-1-1) as soon as possible.
- Any person who uses the AED shall report the use of the device to the church office.
- The AED shall not be placed back into the cabinet until properly inspected for reuse.

Remember, in a medical emergency your first step should be to call 911 and be sure to direct the EMT's to the numbered door closest to your location. If immediate assistance is needed direct someone to make an announcement asking for a medical professional during Mass or other event to respond to help.

Chemical Spills

Being in close proximity to a major railway and an agricultural business, a chemical spill could create an emergency outside of the church premises.

If such an emergency is declared, instructions provided by local authorities will be followed. They may include;

1. House in place/Lockdown - Local authorities may determine that the safest plan is to remain in place. If this is determined, all occupants of the church will remain inside the church. No one shall leave the building. Ushers will shut down the HVAC system and check all exterior doors and windows to make sure they are closed. The reduction of outside air entering the building is vital at this point. Only the local authorities will determine when it is safe to exit and when to conclude this plan of action.

2. Immediate evacuation - All patrons of the church will calmly proceed to the nearest exit and leave the building. When outside the church, follow all commands of the local authorities on which route to take to evacuate the church premises.

Variables such as the change in weather and wind direction can create the need to change a plan of action during a chemical spill. The local authorities will determine which plan of action is the safest and declare when the emergency has ended. All their commands will be followed.

Religious Education:

If any of the events listed in this EAP should take place while Religious Education classes are in session the Religious Education Administrator and classroom leaders should follow the EAP of the school that is in effect at the time.

The Religious Education Administrator and classroom leaders should become familiar with the EAP plan of the school and drills should be conducted so as to be ready for an emergency.

A diagram of the school first floor and second floor is shown in the Appendix on pages 2 and 3 respectively for information.

