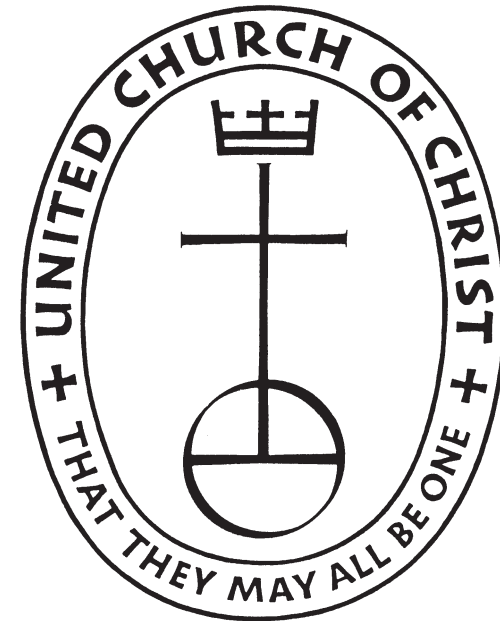


3. What Your Church Can Do

Develop a disaster preparedness plan with the following considerations:

- The kind of natural and human-caused hazards faced by the community and the community's vulnerability to disaster
- Adequate insurance on buildings and contents
- Protection of vital church records from fire and water damage
- Make church facilities available for shelter or other uses through the American Red Cross and/or other care-giving agencies (showers, generators, etc.)
- "People" resources – how can members serve in an emergency (who are nurses, EMTs, physicians, mental health workers, machine operators and mechanics, carpenters and builders, child care workers, those who can speak various languages, HAM radio operators, etc.)? Is the list readily available?
- A telephone tree or system to check on member needs
- Promote Family Preparedness – educate families about preparing for disasters
- Meet with the community Emergency Management Director and invite that person to meet with the church's leadership/management personnel
- Ask for the Community Disaster Plans and the congregation's role in that plan (keep a copy of the plan in the church office)
- Contact the UCC Conference Office (866-367-2822, Ext. 120) and/or members of the Conference Disaster Ministries Network

IS YOUR CHURCH READY?



**Disaster Response Ministry Team
Connecticut Conference UCC**

If the fire alarm rings during a Sunday morning Worship Service (assuming, of course, that your church has a fire alarm system), is an evacuation plan in place? Do you know which exit to take from the Sanctuary? Is anyone prepared to direct visitors and to assist those with mobility problems to an exit? Has the Church School had a fire drill? Do the teachers know what to do when the alarm goes off?

Do you know who the Emergency Management Officer is in your community? Is your church prepared to respond to a community-wide disaster? Is there a plan in place with the rest of the faith community in your town so resources are shared and not duplicated?

These are just a few questions that every congregation needs to answer. The following Local Church Check List will help you get started on an assessment of your church's preparedness in case of an emergency or community disaster.

Disaster Response Ministry Team
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Marie Baker, Hamden
Karl Duetzmann, Ansonia
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CONNECTICUT CONFERENCE of the UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST Disaster Response Planning Local Church Check List

1. Emergency Fire Planning

- Does your local fire department have a plan of the building?
- Are the rooms marked on the plan indicating where children are during specific days/times of the week?
- If you use propane gas, are the locations of the tanks clearly marked on the plan? Where is gasoline for a snow blower and/or lawn mower stored?
- Does your church have a fire alarm system? Has it been tested recently?
- Are fire drills held regularly for the children and adults who work or regularly attend programs held in the church?
- Have you had a fire drill during a Sunday Morning Worship Service?
- Is there information in the pews that clearly indicates which exits to use in case of an emergency?

2. People Needs

- Are those with mobility problems identified?
- In case of an emergency during Sunday morning worship, is there a plan to assist those with mobility problems?
- In the event of a community disaster (flood, major fire, hurricane, ice storm, etc.), is there an up-to-date list of people in your parish who would need assistance to evacuate their homes, who need transportation to a shelter, etc?
- Are there people who may have difficulty understanding English?