



Rowlett Area Chamber
& Visitors Center
Emergency Plan

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I. Mission Statement

The purpose of the Emergency Operations Plan is to provide a systematic approach to follow in the event of an emergency with an emphasis of ongoing safety awareness and preparedness in the workplace. The order of priority for the Chamber in any emergency is:

1. The safety and well-being of our employees, their families, members, and visitors.
2. The securing and restoration of the Chamber's headquarters.
3. Minimize loss of data.
4. Facilitate timely recovery of core business functions.
5. Providing services to Chamber members and the business community at large.

This plan is general in nature and should not be construed to be all-encompassing. While an effort has been made to address potential threats that the Chamber may face, it should be understood that emergency events may not fit squarely into the categories listed herein. Common sense should be used to determine the best course of action to take during an event. Management guidance and policy take precedence over this plan.

II. General

Components of the Plan

There are three components to the Emergency Operations Plan:

1. Planning and Preparation
2. Crisis Management
3. Response and Recovery

One or all the components may be put into action based on the nature of the emergency. The President/CEO will determine the appropriate component to use in the event of an emergency.

Before, during or after any emergency condition, all calls from local or outside media should be directed to the President/CEO. As done in ordinary, daily practices, any statements concerning the organization to be made public through news releases, interviews on media programs or press conferences, shall be coordinated through the President/CEO.

1. Planning and Preparation – Employees will be kept up to date on the possibility of a crisis occurring, e.g., severe weather warnings or tornado watches. Based on the nature of the emergency, the President/CEO will gather facts available, determine the need to close the building, evacuate the area, reschedule meetings, reassign staff, open remote locations, etc.
2. Crisis Management – After the President/CEO determines the status of the crisis and the plan for communications, he will communicate with staff to keep them informed of the status and procedures.
3. Response and Recovery – As soon as possible following the crisis/emergency the President/CEO will gather facts available, assess employees' needs, determine time frame to open the building or when temporary facilities will be available to resume operations, to ensure, to the fullest degree possible, the continuation of the programs and services of the organization, etc.

In the event of an emergency, programs and services will likely be **added and /or reorganized** to enable the organization to survive as a business and for members to receive valuable information and services. These services will assist members in the continuance of business. During the response and recovery

phase of an emergency, employee jobs may be adjusted to fit the nature of the emergency. If employees are required to work from home, they should adhere to the Remote Work Policy.

Authority – Declaration of Emergency

If an emergency or disaster occurs, the employee first aware of the situation is responsible for contacting the President/CEO immediately.

The President/CEO is the only person who may close the Chamber office and is ultimately responsible for determining whether employees will report to work. Employees who wish to leave work before the offices are officially closed may do so provided, they notify the President/CEO prior to leaving and understand that they may either must take leave without pay or vacation during the interim time before the offices are officially closed. The President/CEO will decide on salary/wage benefits paid for unscheduled time off due to closings/evacuations.

The President/CEO will act as the public information officer (PIO) and is responsible for all statements to the media. Employees are not permitted to make statements to the media on behalf of the Rowlett Area Chamber & Visitors Center.

III. Action Steps/Procedures

General Security Checklist

The last person leaving the premises should follow these procedures to ensure the security of the building:

- Turn off electronic equipment – coffee pots, printers, copiers, etc.
- Check all exit doors to make sure they are closed and locked.
- Turn off all lights.

Building Evacuation and Assembly Plan

The evacuation and assembly plan details actions required to exit the building in the event of a major emergency. It will minimize confusion, time delays and account for all working personnel in a safe manner. Office exits are clearly marked, and evacuation routes are posted in all areas.

Evacuation and assembly plan procedures:

- You will be notified when evacuation is necessary. If there is time, turn off all equipment in your office and go to the nearest exit door. If the nearest door is close to the scene of the emergency, go to the next safest exit door.
- Report to the area in the parking lot on the north side of the building.
- You should check in with the President/CEO to be accounted for.
- Remain there until notified.
- Know where the nearest evacuation plan is and how to read it.
- Respond quickly, do not panic.

Mandatory Evacuation and Remote Office Operation

The Chamber office will follow the procedures listed below during the following time periods:

Observances when a severe weather **WATCH is declared:**

1. Backups of all computer systems are stored in the cloud remotely, but staff will need to ensure that all laptops are properly secured.
2. President/CEO should prepare press releases on community and tornado aftermath and prepare media files for distribution.
3. Staff will change the voice mail message.
4. Staff will prepare laptops for transport and prepare to move them to a safe location.
5. Office Coordinator will ensure that all cash goes in the bank.
6. In the event of a **TORNADO WARNING** and if there is adequate time staff should seek shelter in the restroom facilities of the skate park, at one of the local churches across the street or at the Rowlett City Hall. If the tornado is imminent then staff should gather in the women's restroom.

To be observed after the storm has passed.

1. After the storm has passed staff will be assigned to assess the business community of what businesses are operational and the businesses that have damage.
2. The President/CEO will make decisions on what needs to be done first in terms of getting the office up and running.
3. President/CEO will begin ad placement for economy recovery, and coordinate with local COAD or Long-Term Recovery Group.

Note: This plan will be used as a safe precautionary procedure and recovery for any natural disaster our community will endure (i.e., terrorist threat, tornados, unforeseen calamity, etc.).

Staff Special Needs and Responsibility

The Chamber recognizes employees cannot function adequately on the job if their personal lives have been adversely disrupted by a disaster. Every effort will be made to accommodate these employees including providing physical assistance from other staff members who have not been affected by the disaster and whose regular job duties cannot be accomplished until the organization returns to a more normal operation.

The President/CEO will conduct periodic training sessions to increase safety awareness among the staff. Examples include demonstrations on how to use the fire extinguishers, conducting fire drills and conducting tornado preparedness sessions.

Resuming Operations

After an emergency, the President/CEO will determine if the building is accessible. If it is not, then the President/CEO may choose to authorize working from home. Staff should follow procedures and guidelines on the Remote Work Policy.

After any emergency, staff members are responsible for making every attempt to contact the President/CEO as to their whereabouts and safety.

If an event is one that has a community wide impact the Chamber, at the direction of the President/CEO, will be a source of information. Information gathered from local authorities will be shared with the business community – both Chamber members and non-members – to support and lead the community in the recovery process. Staff may also volunteer to help with community wide recovery efforts and will be allowed to do so with pay for their normal work schedule.

Corporate Continuity of Management

1. Board of Directors – During the continuation of an emergency, the Executive Committee will be authorized with all the powers of the Board of Directors if there are not sufficient Board members

for a quorum. In the event there is no quorum for the Executive Committee, those from the Board who remain will serve, along with remaining Executive Committee members, as an Emergency Management Committee with all the powers of the Board during the continuation of an emergency.

2. President/CEO – In the event of an emergency requiring President/CEO succession, the Office Coordinator, with the assistance of the Chair of the Board of Directors, will manage the day-to-day operations in accordance with the policies and procedures.

IV. Types of Emergencies

Medical Emergency

Quick and proper action is important in the event of a medical emergency. If an employee becomes aware of a medical emergency, the employee should call 911.

The employee should stay on the line and answer as many questions as possible regarding the condition of the injured person. At the conclusion of the call notify the President/CEO.

Bomb Threats

While 95% of all written or telephoned bomb threats are hoaxes, the first line of defense is threat analysis.

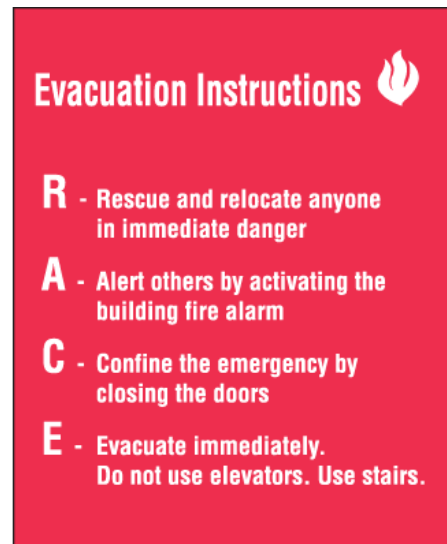
- Note exact time of call.
- Pay close attention to the caller and make every attempt to determine the location, time of expected detonation and type of explosive device.
- At the conclusion of the call, notify one of President/CEO and call 911.
- Authorities will be notified, and the most appropriate response will be determined. All employees should be warned, and the building evacuated immediately.

Fire

No matter how small the fire seems to be, sound the alarm, and call 911. Large fires start as small ones. If smoke is evident near your exit use an alternate route. If you must use an escape route where there is smoke, stay as low as possible. Crawling lets you breathe the air near the floor as you move toward an exit.

- Leave the area as quickly as possible. If possible, close the door to the room where you saw the fire.
- If possible, close all doors that you pass through on your escape.
- Proceed directly to the nearest fire exit.
- Before you open a closed door, feel it with the back of your hand. If it is hot, leave it closed and use your alternate escape route. If it feels normal, brace your body against the door and open it a crack. Be prepared to slam it shut if heat/smoke rushes in.
- Proceed to the previously designated location and form a group. A head count needs to be taken to ascertain that no one was left in the building.

As you are evacuating, follow directions from the President/CEO. Once outside, move to the assembly area, away from the building so you are not in the way of fire fighters.



Tornado

Very little preparation can be done in advance of a tornado. If a **TORNADO WARNING** is issued, employees should take shelter immediately and crouch down, covering their heads. The safest areas are inside rooms without windows, with the doors closed.

If you are outside when a tornado hits and do not have time to seek indoor shelter, lie flat in the nearest ditch, ravine or culvert with your hands shielding your head.

Hazardous Material

While hazardous materials are not ordinarily handled in an office environment, all employees should be alert to suspicious parcels, materials and/or persons. If you encounter a suspicious looking piece of mail or think you may have been exposed to hazardous material stay calm and make sure the suspicious substance is not spread. Do not touch it but report it to the office manager immediately.

What constitutes a suspicious letter or parcel? Some typical characteristics which ought to trigger suspicion include letters or parcel that:

- have any powdery substance on the outside
- are unexpected or from someone unfamiliar to you
- are addressed to someone no longer with your organization
- have no return address or have one that can be verified as legitimate
- have an unusual amount of tape on them.
- marked with restrictive endorsements such as “Personal” or “Confidential”.
- have strange odors or stains
- show a city or state in the postmark that doesn’t match the return address

What should I do if I receive a suspicious letter/parcel or anthrax threat by mail?

- Immediately call 9-1-1 and exit the building.
- As soon as practical, wash your hands with soap and water.

V. Supporting Material

Glossary of Terms

- ❖ Funnel Cloud – a funnel shaped rotating cloud descending from a thunderstorm which does not reach the ground
- ❖ High Wind – normally indicates sustained winds of 40 miles per hour or greater are expected to persist for one hour or more
- ❖ Local Statement – a public release prepared by the Weather Service Office giving specific details on local weather conditions, areas that should be evacuated and precautions that should be taken to protect life and property
- ❖ Severe Thunderstorm – a thunderstorm that produces wind gusts of 58 miles per hour or greater and/or hailstones of 1 inch or greater in diameter
- ❖ Severe Thunderstorm Watch – a bulletin issued when atmospheric conditions are favorable for the development of severe thunderstorms over a large area
- ❖ Severe Weather Statement – public releases normally associated with thunderstorms and related phenomena (tornadoes, gusty winds) issued to provide information on severe weather

- watches or warnings, on severe weather, which is occurring or has occurred, and on developing weather which may become severe
- ❖ Tornado Watch – a bulletin issued when atmospheric conditions are favorable for the development of tornadoes over a large area
 - ❖ Travel Advisory – alerts motorists of hazardous driving conditions caused by snow, sleet, freezing precipitation, fog, wind, dust, etc.
 - ❖ Wall Cloud – a circular cloud which forms at the base of a thunderstorm from which a funnel cloud will develop
 - ❖ Winter Storm Warning – a bulletin issued to cover the expected occurrence of one or more of the following weather elements: heavy snow, accumulations of freezing rain or freezing drizzle and heavy sleet
 - ❖ Winter Storm Watch – a bulletin issued to cover possible occurrence of heavy snow, accumulations of freezing rain or freezing drizzle and/or heavy sleet