

Groton Public Library Disaster Plan



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INTRODUCTION

In the event of a disaster, staff and volunteers will immediately react to ensure the safety of everyone at the Groton Public Library. **911 should be contacted** and the safety of patrons and staff assured. After that, the President of the Library Board of Trustees and the Library Executive should be contacted. Emergency numbers are available at the Circulation Desk and a map of exits and fire safety equipment is on display. Emergency numbers are also contained at the end of this policy.

Recovery operations will be overseen by the Library Executive, staff, and the Board of Trustees. Duties will be delegated by the Board President in conjunction with the Library Executive.

I. PURPOSE OF DISASTER PLAN

The disaster plan policy functions to:

- Prevent disasters.
- Provide a procedure for emergencies.
- Provide useful contact information relevant to disaster readiness.
- Provide information on the location of Groton Public Library's safety equipment and supplies.
- Recover from disasters.

II. OBJECTIVE AND DEFINITION

Objective: To prevent disaster within the library and minimize injury and damage through proper preparation, damage control, and prompt personnel actions.

Definition: Disaster, in terms of the Groton Public Library, is any sudden, severe, or catastrophic event that threatens the lives of the occupants of the building. These may include:

- Fire – electrical failure, intentional or accidental ignition of combustible materials, e.g. wood and paper.
- Explosion – ignition, or threat thereof, of natural gas, whether by leakage, failure to ignite or vandalism. Also includes real or reported bomb threats.
- Flooding – accidental release of water or other water-related catastrophe.
- Dangerous Person – armed or threatening person.

Also of concern are the collections, management records, and equipment, but these are replaceable and are of low priority compared with human safety.

III. PREVENTION

- Building Design – the library building incorporates safety features such as
 - emergency exits
 - portable extinguishers
 - flashlights
 - smoke alarms

Fire extinguishers must pass annual inspection by fire department inspectors, and may need recharging or replacement.

- Safety Practices – training all personnel in recognizing and preventing dangerous conditions. (See IV. Procedures)
- Structural evaluation will be conducted annually by the Boards building and grounds committee to ensure that the roof, plumbing and grounds are in good condition.
- Board and staff will annually review the procedure for handling specific disasters. This should be done near the beginning of the fiscal year (July).
- Map of exits and fire extinguishers are posted at the circulation desk and in the kitchen. These will be reviewed annually and updated as needed.
 - Exits (3):
 - front door (main door)
 - side door (across from the childrens' room)
 - rear door (at the back of the community room)
 - Fire extinguisher locations:
 - Back side of the column behind the circulation desk
 - Wall just inside the doorway to the community room
 - Bottom of the stairs to the basement
 - Kitchen
 - Director's Office

IV. PROCEDURE

Indoor Threats: Interior threats include: explosion, fire, bomb, dangerous/threatening patron/s, and flooding.

If any of these events occur you should:

1. Leave the building if there is imminent danger, ensuring that no one is left behind.
2. **Call 911.** In case of imminent danger, call from outside the building.
3. Call the library executive and the president of the Board of Trustees as listed below. (Appendix D)
4. In the event of a violent or dangerous patron, call 911 and avoid confrontation with the patron(s).

Exterior Threats: Exterior threats include any threat to the safety of patrons, staff, and the library from outside sources (including natural disasters).

1. In the event of a tornado, move all staff and patrons to the basement and shelter in the two front storage areas, away from the window in each room/area. The basement door is located in the middle of the library on the west side. **Call 911.** In case of imminent threat, call from outside the building.
2. Call the Library Executive and the president of the Board of Trustees as listed below. (**Appendix D**)
3. In the event of a violent or dangerous patron, **call 911** and avoid confrontation with the patron(s).

Fire:

1. If the smoke alarm goes off, call the fire department by dialing 911.
2. Assist in evacuation of the building if safe and when possible. Remember to check bathrooms, offices, and check around the library to ensure that there are no stragglers.
3. Call the Board President and the Library Executive (**Appendix D**) immediately.
4. Do not re-enter the building until it has been declared structurally sound.

Water:

1. **Until electricity has been disconnected, never enter an area that has been flooded!**
2. Move books higher on shelves and/or carry to other dry locations.
3. Call the Board President and the Library Executive. (**Appendix D**)

Explosion:

1. **Call the Fire Department (911) after leaving the building.**
2. Do not operate any electrical equipment before leaving the building.
3. Assist in evacuation of the building if safe and when possible. Remember to check bathrooms, offices, and check around the library to ensure that there are no stragglers.
4. Do not re-enter the building until it has been declared safe.

Bomb Threat:

1. **Call 911** and immediately evacuate everyone from the building.
2. Obtain the following information, if possible:
 - a. Time of threat.
 - b. Description of caller's voice and any background noise.
 - c. Location, type, description of bomb, and when it will explode.

Problem Patrons:

See [Code of Conduct Policy](#) for list of examples.

1. Do not ignore patron/s whose behavior is disruptive.
2. Be tolerant of patron who behaves unusually, as much as possible
3. If verbally and/or physically threatened:
 - a. Tell the Library Executive if they are in the library, if not then
 - b. call the Police - 898-3131 (if no answer call 911)
4. In cases of imminent danger - evacuate library.

V. RECOVERY AND SALVAGE

In the event of a disaster the Board President will call an emergency Trustee meeting to create an immediate plan of action appropriate to the circumstances.

- Cause
 - Work with authorities to determine the cause of the disaster.
 - Consider prosecution in the event of malicious intent.
- Insurance
 - Work with insurance provider(s) to recover damages.
- Injuries/Death
 - Provide compassionate assistance for staff,volunteers, patrons etc.
- Collections
 - Rehabilitate damaged items.
 - Replace destroyed items on an as-needed basis..
 - Rebuild the collections in line with prevalent usage.
- Salvage Priority List
 - Local History – on the southwest side of the original library.
 - Library Executive’s computer.

VI. TECHNOLOGY

- Regular scheduled back-ups of the library executives computer will be completed monthly and stored on an external hard drive. The hard drive is located on the desk in the Library Executive’s office and should be removed in case of emergency if retrieval poses no danger to staff etc.
- Computers should not be touched if there are any electrical concerns.
- Technology support is available through the Finger Lakes Library System at 607-273-4074, ext 237

VII. POWER OUTAGE

1. Computers will automatically shut off and all lights except for one (so you can see when power has been restored).
2. Determine if the power outage is just the library or the surrounding area. If it is just the library, consult with the Library Executive– if unreachable the library assistant, senior library clerk, or a trustee. (**Appendix D**)

VIII. MEDICAL

- Minor Incident
 - There are 3 first aid kits in the library: at the front desk, in the staff office and the kitchen. These should be periodically checked by library staff to ensure they are properly stocked.
 - Patron/s are given the kit to treat themselves with assistance from staff if necessary.
 - No medicines should be dispensed to the public.
 - Exercise caution in treatment due to liability to self and library.
- Major Incident
 - **This is defined as anything that requires more than a first aid kit.**
 - Call 911.
 - Do not move the injured, especially if unconscious or from a bad fall, unless they are in danger where they are (ie: fire, electric hazard) This is to prevent damage to the neck/spine.
 - Keep the injured comfortable until the ambulance arrives.
- Incident Report/Witness Report. (**Appendix C**)
 - Injured fills out an Incident Report, with staff assistance (if needed).
 - Staff witness fills out the Witness portion of the report then signs.
 - Public witness, if any, fills out the Witness portion of the report then signs.

IX. WINTER STORM CLOSING

1. Consult with the Library Executive– if unreachable the library assistant, senior library clerk, or a trustee (**Appendix D**). **Do not put off a decision to close if there is an immediate safety risk.**
2. Contact other employees that are working later in the day, if needed.
3. Post a sign on the door saying **EMERGENCY CLOSING** or **CLOSED DUE TO WEATHER** before leaving.
4. Update Facebook with closing information.

LOCATION OF EMERGENCY SYSTEMS

(Addendum to Disaster Plan)

1. MAIN UTILITIES

- Water shut off valves:
 1. Main shut off (full shut off for the building): front left (northwest) corner of the basement in the large basement storage room.
 2. A secondary shut off for hot water is located on top of the hot water heater located immediately to the left of the doorway entering the large basement storage room.
- Circuit breakers:
 1. Main panel- basement rear storage room (straight ahead at the bottom of the stairs), lefthand wall.
 2. Staff/public access can be made at the large grey panel labeled LB-1 on the top frame (Breakers labeled on the interior door panel).

There are two secondary panels (electrician access only) –

- One is located immediately to the left of the grey LB-1 panel in the basement.
- The other is a small locked panel box in the hallway wall outside of the privacy room near the side exit of the library.

NOTE: Neither of these panels should be accessed by a non-professional nor should there be a need to do so as all needed operations can be performed via the LB-1 panel.

- Heating controls: for the front room they are on the right side post when looking at the front desk and the back room's controls are on the left side in the front of the stacks by the copier.
- Air Conditioning controls: the front room's controls are on the wall as you enter the children's room and the back room's controls are on the left side in the front of the stacks by the copier.

2. FIRE SYSTEMS

- Fire Extinguishers and type (A/B/C/ABC): Library Executive's office; just outside back office/kitchen; bottom of basement steps.
- Smoke Detectors: The library has three battery operated smoke detectors:
 1. Above the door to the basement.
 2. At the bottom of the basement stairs.
 3. At the divider between the large and small front storage rooms of the basement.

NOTE: The HVAC systems in the addition/s to the original building have integrated smoke detection systems hardwired into their operation.

3. KITS

- First Aid Kit: one in circulation desk drawer and second in kitchen bottom cupboard.
- Toolbox: on bottom shelf of the shelving cart.

4. MISCELLANEOUS

- Keys: in Library Executive's file cabinet and in front desk drawer.

DRYING PROCEDURES OF MATERIALS

(Addendum to Disaster Plan)

- A drying area should be an area unaffected by the flooded area. This drying area should have good air circulation. This is one of the key components of the process. Fans help out greatly in doing this.
- When the books are drying, they should not be laid flat and on their spine as this causes damage to them. Instead, every 20 pages or so, put in some paper towels to soak up water. If the paper towels become thoroughly wet, they may be changed with new towels, as needed.
- Any books that are less damp could be stood on their edges, lightly fanned, supported so that the pages don't curl, and allowed to dry in a current of air.
- Freeze any books that you won't be able to get to for later drying. Keep these books wet until they are placed in the freezer.
 - This is especially true for any books that have coated pages, such as photo books, which may possibly be salvaged with towels in between every page. When these books dry naturally, the pages fuse together like glue.

POST DISASTER REPORT FORM

Appendix A

Date and time of the disaster: _____

Location of incident: _____

Type of incident: (circle one):

Water, Fire, Other _____

Items affected: (list below):

Source of Problem: (circle all that apply)

Pipes

Electrical

Drains

Trash

Sink/Toilet

Kitchen

Roof

Other _____

If other, give description: _____

Enclose any photos of the incident with this form. They will be kept on file and reviewed by the Library Executive and Library Trustees.

An audit should be completed every year or two to examine, in detail, conditions of the library that could potentially be hazardous to patrons, staff, or the building itself. Audit is usually done by the Board of Trustees.

EXTERIOR:**INTERIOR:**

Main room:

Children's room:

Stacks:

Offices:

Bathrooms:

Basement:

Great room:

Kitchen:

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Appendix C

Date and time of incident: _____

Location of incident: _____

Type of incident: _____

Person/s involved (name and contact information): _____

Public witness (name and contact information): _____

Public witness report and signature:

Staff witness (name and contact information): _____

Staff witness report and signature:

Medical treatment refused?: _____

Name and contact information (if medical treatment refused): _____

COMPLETE EMERGENCY CONTACT LIST

Appendix D

Library Executive
Sara Knobel
(607) 345-5294
director@grotonpubliclibrary.org

Groton Public Library Board of Trustees 2025-2026

Nancy Dailey, President
(607-379-3319)
ndailey@grotonpubliclibrary.org

Polly Case-Codner, Vice President
(607-227-4785)
pjcase.codner@gmail.com

Laura Watson, Trustee	(405-406-9379)
Sarah Lubold, Trustee	(607-280-1321)
Liz Lawrence, Friends of GPL Liason	(607-222-9252)
Brendan Komala, Bldgs & Grounds	(607-227-6628)
Cathy Klimaszewski, Finance Officer	(607-800-1717)

DPW – 607-898-3345

Village of Groton – 607-898-3966

Fire – 911

Police – 607-898-3131, if no answer dial 911

Electrician
Pleasant Valley
607-272-6922

Burris Plumbing
Jim Proper
607-257-4554

Air Conditioning
HSC Associates
607-273-2180

Insurance
Chris Dempsey
607-898-5134