

Annex J: Flood Guidance

Initial actions

Rescue anyone in immediate danger while protecting the safety of rescuing staff member(s).

- If the flood poses danger to residents, staff, or visitors, call 9-1-1 immediately and include the following information:
 - Name of facility
 - Address and nearest cross street
 - Describe flood situation (basement, room #'s, etc.)

Activate facility's Flood policy and procedure and appoint a facility Incident Commander (IC) if warranted.

- Alert residents, staff, and visitors.
- Unplug non-essential appliances, equipment, and computers. Move critical equipment to a safe location.
- Check for gas leaks, water line ruptures, sewage contamination, etc.
 - If you smell gas, and it is safe to do so, shut off the gas. Do not do so unless the need is certain as only the gas company can turn it back on.
- Report utility problems to utility company/agency.
- If water lines are disrupted, consider the water supply to be contaminated and follow the facility plan for emergency water.
 - Be aware of any public health notices regarding water contamination (including the following notices: Boil Water, Do Not Drink Water, and Do Not Use Water).
 - Consider all flood water contaminated. Avoid walking through flood waters and wash hands thoroughly after contact.
 - Do not use pre-packaged food and drink products that encounter flood water.
 - Report utility problems to appropriate utility company/agency.
- If needed, activate your emergency water plan.
- Gather critical supplies to take to higher ground/evacuation (e.g., medications, drinking water, health records, communication devices, blankets, etc.)
- Do not allow electrical devices to contact water.
- If the decision is made to evacuate the facility, see **appendix I**.
- Notify the local response authorities and the State Licensing Authority to report an unusual occurrence and activation of facility's EOP.

If evacuation if needed, see Appendix I for more information

Guidance for Working with Other States/Facilities

This guidance should be considered when working with other facilities both within Minnesota as well as facilities across the borders (North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa and Wisconsin).

A facility operating in Minnesota may:

- Receive requests for information regarding the availability of beds within their facility
- Receive advance notice of the potential need (“pre-planning”) for sheltering of residents from other facilities (including out-of-state facilities) in their facility.

As you receive or make such requests, please keep in mind the following:

- Facilities should be discussing in advance options for relocating residents including space and staffing, in an actual emergency, evacuations from other states should be managed through the appropriate State Incident Command Structure for that state.
- Facilities may be asked to temporarily shelter residents by providing short-term beds beyond their normal licensed bed capacity.
- In emergency situations, short-term relocation of residents to another facility is not considered a “new admissions.” If your facility provides shelter to residents beyond your licensed bed capacity, contact the MDH Health Regulation Division at (651) 201-4200 and we will work with you on any state or federal compliance issues.

In addition, please note that emergency “pre-planning” does not obligate a facility to hold a bed in order to provide temporary shelter to any resident.

Facilities should not “hold” beds open and as a result, deny temporary shelter or formal admission to other individuals who have an immediate need for temporary shelter or admission. Denying admission to an individual based on a “bed hold” for another individual that has not been formally admitted to the facility, may violate Medicaid and/or Medicare regulations and the rights of the individual seeking formal admission to the facility.

Providing temporary shelter, as well as the formal admission of residents, should be made on a first-come, first-served basis and with consideration for the ability of the facility to provide an appropriate bed and care for that individual.

For questions related to federal and state licensing requirements, please contact the Minnesota Department of Health at (651) 201-4200.

Additional resources:

[Floods - Minnesota Dept. of Health](#)

www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/emergency/natural/flood/index.html