

AMHURST EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

What to do when experiencing an emergency or hazard

1. Fires

Fire is the most common of all hazards that are experienced by townhome residents. Improper cooking methods cause most fires. Other major causes are improper use of candles, clogged dryer vents and careless smoking. Amhurst has had three major structure fires. One was caused by improper storage of flammable materials, one by improper cooking methods used by a young child and the third by children playing with a lighter. The repairs cost close to \$50,000 per home. When it comes to fire, prevention is the key.

Planning Considerations:

- Take care in the handling, storage and disposal of hazardous and toxic materials.
- Remember, many common household-cleaning supplies can be very dangerous.
- Be very careful if you are a smoker.
 - Do not smoke in bed.
 - Make sure your finished cigarette is completely extinguished and placed into an appropriate receptacle (ashtray).
 - Do not throw cigarette butts in the garbage until you are sure they're completely extinguished.
- Ensure that all matches and lighters are out of the reach of children. One of Amhurst's major fires was due to a child playing with a lighter.
- Use candles very carefully. Do not leave lit candles unattended in your home, even for a moment. Do not go to sleep until all candles in the house are completely extinguished.
- Make sure your dryer ductwork is inspected and cleaned at least every two years. The same goes for chimneys. Do not leave your clothes dryer operating when you are away from your home.
- Make sure all appliance cords are in good shape.
- Do not overload household circuits. Be extra careful in your home offices. Check amperage requirements of all electrically powered equipment. Most circuits can handle no more than 15 amps.
- Never leave items cooking unattended. Make sure children are supervised when using cooking appliances.
- Do not store excessive quantities of firewood on patios or in your garage.
- Utilize fireplace screens or glass doors when having fires.
- Use caution when cooking with barbecues and using outdoor fire pits. Proper clearances should be maintained between grills and the fencing or other items on patios.
- Make sure you have working smoke detectors. Smoke detectors should be placed in bedrooms within a door length of the room entrance. Smoke detectors should also be installed in common areas and hallways of your home.
- A CO (Carbon Monoxide) Detector is highly recommended. Place this unit in a common area of the home following manufacturer instructions.

- Fire extinguishers are strongly advised for every homeowner. A five pound ABC fire extinguisher (UL Rated 2A;10B:C) is recommended.
- Limit the use of extension cords to temporary needs. The extension cord should be rated to provide at least as much power as the supply cords for the appliances being used. Otherwise, overheating of the cords can lead to shorts and fires. Be careful in your home office with all of its electronic equipment. If you have added aquarium heaters, coffee pots, etc. to the same outlet as your office equipment, you might be overloading the circuit.
- Plan what you and your family would do in a fire. Discuss emergency exits. Can you get out of your home via the second floor? If you have one of the Amhurst homes connected to the one-story garage structures, this route might be an excellent 2nd story escape.
- Develop a family emergency communication plan to be used as soon as possible after the immediate emergency situation is under control. Consider a plan where each family member calls, or emails, the same contact person. An out of state contact is suggested. Make sure each person knows the phone numbers well.
- If there is a resident who is physically or mentally challenged, make sure you carefully plan and practice evacuation scenarios. Enlist a neighbor's assistance in case of an emergency. Discuss this potential now with your neighbors.
- Learn how to shut off the power in your home.

What to do when experiencing a fire:

- If the smoke alarms sound, exit your home immediately. Do not gather any personal belongings. Make sure all occupants are out safely. Close all doors behind you as you leave.
- Call 911 from a safe location. Do not call 911 while in the home. Do not call the Association.
- If the fire is contained in a small area of your home, you may attempt to extinguish the fire if you have a safe escape route and you are confident you will be successful.
- If the fire is a major structure fire, leave immediately, making sure all persons are out of the house. Depending on the scope of the fire, you might be instructed to go to an off-site location or be removed from the area on buses.
- Make sure you stay away from the immediate area and allow the emergency workers and police to deal with the situation.

2. Floods

Floods are the most common and widespread of all natural disasters. We experience some level of flooding at Amhurst almost every year. A number of years ago, after torrential rains, the Park Lane parking lot and many of the garages flooded. So far, none of our homes have experienced ground water flooding, but it can happen. Remember the 1987 floods that occurred throughout the metro area? The good thing about floods is that they don't happen quickly. You usually have some warning. Flash floods, however, do not give that type of warning. Fortunately, flash floods in the metro areas of Minnesota are very rare. However, while not a community-wide problem, many of our residents have experienced major water damage in their homes due to broken water pipes, backed up sewers and the like.

Planning Considerations

- Inspect and replace, per manufacturer's guidelines, dishwasher and washing machine water lines with "burst proof" hoses. Burst hoses are a major cause of household flooding at Amhurst. These lines are always under pressure and do wear out.
- Do not flush inappropriate or large items down the toilets, which can cause backups and plugged drain pipes.
- Make sure you turn your outside water line (faucet) off and drain the line in the fall. Instructions for this are listed in the RESIDENT GUIDE and on our web site.
- Periodically check your home's water softener and water heater to make sure there are no signs of leaks. Also, ensure that your utility room floor drain is functioning properly. Backed up drains cause flooding.

What to do when experiencing a flood:

- If flooding is occurring just in your home: shut off the main water supply to your home (located in your front hall closet or in your utility room).
- Call a plumber for assistance. It is also recommended that a firm be hired to handle the results of all water intrusion. They will make sure your home is completely dried out to avoid mold and other water damage. (Such firms are listed in the yellow pages under "Fire and Water Damage Restoration. Lohman's Amhurst has successfully used Clean Response and Servpro.)
- If flooding is widespread throughout Amhurst; quickly gather your wallet/purse, lock your home and get to high ground. If the roads are flooded, do not attempt to drive out. Get to high ground.
- If you hear the public warning sirens, dangerous weather or emergency conditions exist. (These sirens are sounded at 1:00 PM on the first Wednesday of each month to test the system. No action is required at those times.)
- Assist other neighbors in evacuating.
- Allow emergency personnel to assist you. If instructed to do so or if there is no other discernable location to gather at, make your way to Knollwood Place which is the Amhurst Emergency gathering location. See map on page 32.

3. TORNADOS

Tornados are rare in the densely populated portions of the metro area. The Twin Cities lie along the northern edge of the area of maximum frequency in the US. Four severe tornadoes have struck Minneapolis and St. Paul in the past century: one each in 1904 and 1951, and two separate funnels during the evening of May 6, 1989. There have been other tornadoes in the greater metro area, but again, they are rare. Tornadoes begin with severe rainstorms and can be unbelievably destructive.

Planning Considerations:

- Choose a place in your home to gather if a tornado is headed toward Amhurst. It is recommended that you go to the first floor bathroom or pantry (in two story units), or to the internal utility room in one-story units. You want to be in an internal

room, with no windows. If you are caught upstairs, try to get into the bathtub or the center hallway. Attempt to cover yourself with a mattress or blanket.

- Develop a family emergency communication plan to be used as soon as possible after the immediate emergency situation is under control. Consider a plan where each family member calls, or emails, the same contact person. An out of state contact is suggested. Make sure each person knows the phone numbers well.
- Have your emergency kit ready to go; especially a battery operated radio and flashlights.
- Know the difference between a TORNADO WATCH and TORNADO WARNING. A WATCH means a tornado is possible in the area; a WARNING means a tornado has been confirmed as being in the area. SEEK SHELTER AND SAFETY IMMEDIATELY.

What to do when experiencing a tornado hazard:

- Listen to local radio and TV stations for up to date storm information.
- Be aware of major blowing debris and the sound of a 'freight train'. Both are signs of an approaching tornado. Be observant.
- If you hear the public warning sirens, dangerous weather or emergency conditions exist. (These sirens are sounded at 1:00 PM on the first Wednesday of each month to test the system. No action is required at those times.)
- Do not stand in your window looking for the funnel. Leave that up to the news media.
- Gather in the safe spot you have identified in your home. Make sure you have your emergency kit with you. Attempt to cover your face and head. You can protect your head with your arms and crouch down.
- Be calm and wait for the storm to pass. Take direction from the emergency broadcasts.
- When the storm has passed, emerge carefully. There might be major structural damage to your home. Move out of your home immediately.
- After a tornado has passed, survey the damage in your home.
- Do not use candles if the power is out. Use flashlights.
- Avoid all downed power lines. Stay well away from these potential hazards.
- Move quickly out of the immediate area of the destruction.
- The emergency responders will assist you.
- Attempt to stay calm, assist other residents and make sure your neighbors are out of their homes. If in doubt, let an emergency worker know your neighbor might still be in their home.
- Depending on the scope of the disaster, you might be instructed to an off-site location or be removed from the area on buses.
- Make sure you stay away from the immediate area and allow the emergency workers and police to deal with the situation.

4. Severe Winter Storms

These types of storms bring heavy snow, ice, low temperatures, strong winds and freezing rain. Our concern at Amhurst is the effect of this type of storm on the buildings, and the potential loss of heat and power. These storms can cause major power outages and frozen water pipes.

Planning Considerations:

- Make sure you have blankets and your home emergency kit available.
- Develop a family emergency communication plan to be used as soon as possible after the immediate emergency situation is under control. Consider a plan where each family member calls, or emails, the same contact person. An out of state contact is suggested. Make sure each person knows the phone numbers well.

What to do when experiencing this hazard:

- If you hear the public warning sirens, dangerous weather or emergency conditions exist. (These sirens are sounded at 1:00 PM on the first Wednesday of each month to test the system. No action is required at those times.)
- If there is major structural damage, stay out of your home.
- If there are life threatening situations, call 911
- Contact the Association immediately, but only after calling 911 should that be necessary.
- If you are in your home and have lost power, attempt to stay warm or if possible, leave your home and go to a safe location.
- Do not light fires other than in a fireplace to stay warm.
- Try to avoid using candles if the power is out. Use flashlights or other battery-operated lights.
- Avoid downed or live power lines.
- Move quickly out of the immediate area of the destruction.
- Let the emergency responders assist you and follow their instructions.
- Attempt to stay calm, assist other residents and make sure your neighbors are out of their homes. If in doubt, let an emergency worker know your neighbor might still be in their home.
- Make sure you stay away from the immediate area and allow the emergency workers and police to deal with the situation.

5. Hazardous Materials Incidents

Hazardous materials are substances that are flammable or combustible, explosive, toxic, noxious, corrosive, oxidizable, an irritant or radioactive. What might Amhurst experience, very rare as such an incident might be? One possible scenario could involve some type of tanker truck that is involved in a traffic accident on Hwy 169 or on 36th St. Another possibility would be an accident on the rail system just north of Minnetonka Blvd.

Planning Considerations:

- Develop a family emergency communication plan to be used as soon as possible after the immediate emergency situation is under control. Consider a plan where each family member calls, or emails, the same contact person. An out of state contact is suggested. Make sure each person knows the phone numbers well.

What to do when experiencing this hazard:

- If you observe fumes or clouds in your immediate area, avoid contact. Cover your mouth and nose with layers of fabric or paper towels.
- Stay upwind and/or leave the area.
- Stay away from, and avoid, breathing vapors involving spills of hazardous materials. If possible, evacuate the area.

- If you hear the public warning sirens, dangerous weather or emergency conditions exist. (These sirens are sounded at 1:00 PM on the first Wednesday of each month to test the system. No action is required at those times.)
- Emergency responders will assist you. Follow all their instructions.
- Attempt to stay calm, assist other residents and make sure your neighbors are out of their homes. If in doubt, let an emergency worker know your neighbor might still be in their home.
- Depending on the scope of the disaster, you might be instructed to an off-site location or be removed from the area on buses.
- Make sure you stay away from the immediate area and allow the emergency workers and police to deal with the situation.
- Depending on the scope of the disaster, you might be instructed to an off-site location or be removed

6. Terrorism

A few years ago, this topic would not have been part of an Amhurst Emergency Preparedness Manual. Terrorists around the world are obtaining chemical, nuclear, biological and radiological weapons. An attack near Amhurst is probably a very rare possibility but a potential, nonetheless. Preparation is the key to planning for this event.

Planning Considerations:

The material below was extracted from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security brochure entitled

Get Ready Now. The complete brochure can be seen or downloaded at www.ready.gov. Need a copy? Call the Association.

- Prepare an emergency kit.
- Develop a family emergency communication plan to be used as soon as possible after the immediate emergency situation is under control. Consider a plan where each family member calls, or emails, the same contact person. An out of state contact is suggested. Make sure each person knows the phone numbers well.
- Decide in advance under what conditions you might stay in your home at Amhurst or decide to leave the area. To do this, you need to understand the different potential terrorist threats and plan for each accordingly. For assistance, go to www.ready.gov.
- If staying put, review the procedures for preparing a 'shelter in place'.
- Listen to local emergency reports on radio and television, if possible. Take direction from the officials.
- Plan for the possibility of leaving. Plan in advance how you and your family will gather, and from where you will leave.
- Make sure your emergency kit is ready.
- Keep your car's gas tank at least half full at all times.
- Take your pets with you unless you are going to a public shelter. In most cases, the shelters will not take pets. (Is there a shelter in the area?)

What to do when experiencing this hazard: Review the Department of Homeland Security brochure for specifics steps for each potential threat.

Other sources of information on emergency preparedness:

- St. Louis Park Fire Department at www.stlouispark.gov
- FEMA: www.fema.gov
- Department of Homeland Security: www.ready.gov
- American Red Cross: www.redcross.org
- Hennepin County Library

AMHURST'S ALTERNATIVE (OFF-SITE) EMERGENCY LOCATION



KNOLLWOOD PLACE APARTMENTS, 3630 Phillips Parkway. This is the senior apartment high rise east of Amhurst on the east side of Hwy 169.

Directions: Leave AMHURST.

Cross the W. 36th Street Bridge.

Make first right turn onto Phillips Parkway. Go completely to the end of the road. Turn right into the underground parking garage.