

First Unitarian Church of Alton General Safety Guidelines

Safety in any setting begins with prevention. The more we can do to prevent hazardous events from occurring, the safer we can all be. Of course, there are some hazards we cannot prevent. In those instances, being prepared for how to respond will allow everyone to be as safe as possible in the event of a crisis event. The following guidelines are suggestions for response. Some of this will be made into policy. If you have suggestions or would like to help create safety policy for the congregation, please contact a Board member or Rev. Sunshine.

In safety always remember- BEWARE = BE + AWARE

- Be aware of your surroundings.
- Know who is near you.

KNOW your preferred response:

- Act, Feel, Think
- Fight, Hide, Run

IDENTIFIED RISKS FOR FIRST UNITARIAN

- Medical emergency
- Domestic violence
- Vandalism/robbery
- Fire
- Tornado
- Extreme Temperatures
- Power outage
- Active shooter situation
- Lesser risks include: earthquake, hazardous material from river, dam/lock failure, water failure, arson, cyber threat (stealing information from our office computers, off of Yahoo! or Facebook, or e-mail accounts)

BUILDING SAFETY

- When we exit our cars or the building is the time when we are often thinking about something else and not paying a lot of attention. Be aware of your surroundings- especially after dark.
- Unless there are three or more people in the same part of the building- keep the building locked and the doors shut.
 - It is convenient to prop open the door, but it is not safe.
 - If you are the last person to leave the building, please make sure that all doors are locked and windows closed.
- At twilight and through the night, turn on lights in the halls while people are in the building.
- Turn off all lights in the building if you are the last one to leave.
- Do not open the door to strangers if you are the only one in the building.

- Make sure that all coffee pots and smaller appliances are off and/or unplugged (never unplug the coffee pot).
- Children/youth:
 - Children and youth under the age of sixteen should never be at the First Unitarian without a designated adult guardian.
 - Designated guardians must be eighteen years old or older.
 - Children/youth should never be outside of the building without two adults present.
 - All children/youth should have a completed registration form with information on allergies, medications, and emergency contact information.
 - Two or more adults should be in any room where children are present.
 - Two or more adults over the age of 25 should be in any room with youth 13-18 years old.

COMMUNICATIONS SAFETY

Protecting the private information of our members is paramount to preventing some of the most common crimes today: identity theft and domestic violence. In addition, preferential offenders may utilize photos or other online information to commit a crime. For these reasons, the following guidelines for communication are recommended:

- Limit access to the congregation's Directory. We want all members to have access to the Directory AND we want to limit the risk of crime that can easily be committed by acquiring the information in the Directory. For prevention:
 - Never e-mail or place the Directory online.
 - Ask members to sign for their initial copies of the Directory.
 - Utilize postal mail to send Directories to members who cannot pick it up.
 - Maintain a list of friends (non-members) who have the Directory.
 - Do not include the names of children under the age of 16 in the Directory.
 - Inclusion in the Picture Directory requires permission from a parent or guardian (Usually the photography company handles this).
- Never post a personal house address in any online or printed publication or social media.
- Without express permission, do not share e-mail or phone contact information online including e-mail, Yahoo!, Facebook, The Beacon Weekly, or The Beacon Monthly.
- If your e-mail address is posted regularly for church events:
 - change your password at least once every 6 weeks
 - use a password combination that is not obvious and that includes a mix of upper and lower case letters, numbers, and symbols.
- Only post photos on Yahoo!, Facebook, the website, or other only sources with permission.
- Never post photos of children and youth under the age of 18.
- For the safety of everyone, do not open e-mail or online links from a person you do not know, a website you do not know, or from a mass e-mail. If you are not sure, contact the friend/acquaintance who sent it to you in a separate e-mail or phone call and

confirm that they have sent it and opened it safely. This is the primary source of internet viruses on computers.

IDENTIFYING SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOR

There is no such thing as a suspicious person- only suspicious behavior. Determining suspicious behavior is more of an art than an absolute science. Frequently, people are perceived as suspicious who are not and vice versa. The majority of violent acts occur between people who know one another. So, it is important to know what behaviors to look out for. Some of the suspicious behaviors may be common in a first time visitor or someone living with mental and developmental disabilities. It is important to not react, but simply be aware of those who may display more than one of the following:

- Does not or refuses to respond when greeted.
- Avoids contact with the people in our community.
- Eyes move around rapidly or who refuses to give eye contact.
 - Eye contact varies depending on culture. A person who does not give eye contact out of respect will engage in conversation and show respect in other ways.
- Does not appear to be in a part of the building they should be in.

RESPONDING TO SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOR

- Nametags are not only welcoming, but they ensure the safety of our community.
- *ALWAYS* be kind, present, and helpful to new people. A person may appear suspicious because they are unsure or anxious about being accepted and welcome in our community.
- Get a second opinion. Have another person interact with them. This does two things:
 - It helps us check our assumptions
 - If the person is a risk, they will likely leave for being seen.
- If you think the person is a risk, make sure that someone who is calm keeps an eye on the person and report the situation as follows:
 - On Sunday Mornings or Major Fellowship Events:
 - Minister
 - Religious Education Coordinator
 - Designated R.E. Lead
 - Worship Associate
 - Board President
 - If event, then coordinator of the event
 - Other than Sunday Morning:
 - Any staff in the building
 - Other people in the building
- Watching a person who is actually planning violence is usually sufficient to hinder them. However, if a person makes a verbal or physical threat, do the following:

- If you have a cell phone, take it out and pretend to talk on it or actually call someone and talk to them. Seeing the phone is often enough to deter someone bent on committing a crime because of the ease a person has of getting help on a cell phone.
- Get yourself to a safe location
- Call 9-1-1
- If possible, inform appropriate people of the situation (same as those listed above).

MEDICAL EMERGENCY

- If there is an imminent threat, move person to safety. If there is not an imminent threat, never move an injured person- it could cause further injury.
- Call 9-1-1-
- If trained, provide emergency response based on need.
- Know where you should be:
 - Times other than worship:
 - Have someone stay with the person.
 - If they are physically able to move themselves without duress from activities, then they may do so
 - If someone doctor, nurse, or someone trained in CPR/First Aid present, then they will respond.
 - Wait patiently for EMTs
 - Sunday Morning during worship in Sanctuary:
 - Minister or Worship Associate/Liturgist stays on chancel and the other responds (unless there is a guest speaker and then W.A./Liturgist stays on chancel)
 - Encourage everyone to stay seated unless they are a doctor, nurse, or trained in CPR/First Aid
 - If a doctor, nurse, or someone trained in CPR/First Aid is present, then they will respond.
 - If person is able to move themselves without duress, then they can go out into Wuerker Room.
 - If not, then encourage people to stay seated or lying down, think healing thoughts or offer prayer/meditation for the person until EMTs arrive
 - Sunday Morning R.E. for Children and Youth:
 - If a doctor, nurse, or someone trained in CPR/First Aid is present, then they will respond.
 - One adult stays with person experiencing duress.
 - One adult or identified child/youth leads the children and youth from the classroom to nearest classroom.
 - Once 9-1-1 is called and everyone is secure, DRE or designated RE Lead locates parent/guardian.
 - Wait patiently for EMTs to arrive

- Provide aftercare/support:
 - Remain as calm and non-anxious as possible.
 - Keep people informed of what is happening.
 - Reassure all involved that everything is being done.
 - Follow-up with leaders in the incident to give pastoral care.

FIRE

- R-A-C-E
 - Rescue-
 - rescue all in immediate danger of the fire
 - Activate-
 - call 9-1-1
 - Contain-
 - close all doors nearest fire
 - Extinguish-
 - if it is safe to do so, locate one of the fire extinguishers to put out the flames
- P-A-S-S
 - Pull
 - pull the pin out of the fire extinguisher
 - Aim
 - aim the nozzle at the fire
 - Squeeze
 - squeeze the handle to release the retardant
 - Sweep
 - move the nozzle in a sweeping motion above the fire

TORNADO

- Below ground level if possible
 - Downstairs Hallway
 - Classrooms without windows
- If cannot physically get to ground level, then go to the hall by the Minister's Office, Men's Bathroom, or Gender Neutral Bathroom

ACTIVE SHOOTER SITUATION- Sunday Mornings and Major Events

- Active shooter situations remain highly unlikely, however, they are on the rise in the United States and a Unitarian Universalist congregation experienced one just a few years ago.
- Three key steps:
 - Run
 - If possible, get out of the room where the gunmen is and then the building.
 - Walk/run up to a location across the street from the church.

- Our gathering point for everyone is the City Hall parking lot.
 - DO NOT go to your vehicle.
 - Hide
 - An assailant is less likely to walk into a room where they do not see people
 - If you cannot safely run, then hide.
 - Go to a room where you can close and preferably lock the door
 - If the room has a window hide in a place where you cannot be seen
 - Turn off the lights in the room you are in
 - In classrooms, teachers cover the windows on the doors with construction paper= preferably with green if everyone in the room is ok or red if someone is injured
 - Fight
 - If an active shooter comes upon you, your best chance of survival may be fighting
 - This is a last resort
- Anyone who has access to a phone should call 9-1-1 as soon as possible.
- You can text the Minister, DRE, and your family your status.
- If possible, evacuate the building and walk to the City Hall parking lot.
- If it is not safe to evacuate, then hide and defend.
 - In Sanctuary, hide under pews.
 - In classrooms, cover windows, latch doors and hide in corner against the wall.
- If you see a police officer, immediately get on your knees and put your hands where they can see them until the shooter has been apprehended. They have no way of knowing who is a shooter and who is not.
- DO NOT take your child(ren) from the property or designated meet-up location until all children and youth are accounted for.
- Remember some of the best trained people in our building during an emergency are our children who attend school. They practice at school regularly.
- Finally, do not leave the property or designated safe locations until everyone is accounted for and emergency personnel have collected the information they need.