

BAY COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM WEATHER EMERGENCY POLICY

The Bay County Library System recognizes the importance of maximizing the number of days and hours open to the public as a service to the community. On occasion, severe weather may cause conditions that render opening or keeping the Library open unsafe for the public and Library employees. In the event of closing for severe weather, local television and radio stations will be notified by Library administration so that public announcements can be made as early as possible. Generally, closings will affect all Library facilities equally. The decision to close library facilities is the responsibility of the Library Director, Assistant Director, or designee.

The following media outlets will be notified:

Television: WNEM TV-5
 WEYI TV-25
 WJRT TV-12

Radio: WSGW 100.5 FM WHNN 96 FM
 WCEN 94.5 FM WIOG 102.5 FM
 WGER 106.3 FM WKQZ 93.3 FM
 WYLZ 100.9 FM

Once contacted by Library administration, it is the responsibility of the Managing Librarian, or person-in-charge of the building, to notify their staff of closing.

For emergency closings during open hours the following procedures apply:

Tornado – Library staff will announce when there is either a tornado watch or tornado warning in effect. Issuance of a *tornado watch* by the U.S. Weather Service means weather conditions are favorable for the development of a tornado. A *tornado warning* means a funnel has been spotted in the vicinity and all persons should take cover immediately. Library staff will encourage the public to gather in the designated tornado shelter in the building. When an “all clear” is issued for either a watch or a warning, Library staff will advise patrons and resume regular business. Library staff should see also ‘Tornado Procedures’ for individual buildings in the Safety Manual, which is available in both hard copy and on the library Intranet.

High Wind or Straight Line Wind Warnings – In the event that the National Weather Service issues high wind or straight line warnings, staff should follow the Tornado Procedures if the National Weather Service issues the warning that high wind speeds may pose a hazard or is life threatening. In Michigan, a high wind warning may be issued when sustained winds greater than or equal to 40 mph last for one hour or longer, or winds greater than or equal to 58 mph last for any duration.

Ice/Snowstorm – In the event of a winter storm with road conditions becoming extremely dangerous, the decision to close libraries rests with the Director, Assistant Director, or designee. Patrons and staff should consider their own safety to be paramount when deciding to drive to or from the Library when road conditions are hazardous.

Library staff should notify the Technology Supervisor to record an appropriate message on the phone system.

05/26/10 board approved