

CHURCH GUARDIAN



SHEEPDOG CHURCH SECURITY

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TORNADO HITS CHURCH WITH CHILDREN INSIDE

TOP NEWS STORY

A tornado struck a church building with 40 preschool children and 10 staff inside. It is being called a miracle because the only room that wasn't damaged was the room they had taken shelter in. The preschool director took the children into the innermost room of the church when the tornado hit. As the storm raged around them, they sang songs like "Jesus Loves Me" and "He's Got the Whole



World in His Hands". The church suffered massive damage including its roof being ripped off. A church member said, "We just give God the glory that no one was hurt." [Click the link to read more]

TRAINING SPOTLIGHT

Active Shooter Situations

The number of Active Shooters and Deadly Force Incidents in churches has doubled of the past 10 years. And yet, few churches are prepared with even a basic Lockdown Procedure.

SDCS developed the Active Shooter Neutralization and Lock Down Drills course to teach your team how to Deter, Detect, Deny, Delay and Defend against a violent attack. That's everything from simple lockdowns to neutralization.

Hundreds of churches have used the Active Shooter Neutralization and Lock Down Drills course to prepare their teams.

We offer the training in two ways.

First, the instructor Training Bundle contains everything you need to teach the course. It includes streaming video, an unlocked PowerPoint presentation which can be modified to fit your church's unique size, setting and procedures and it includes an Instructor Guide with slide by slide instructions.

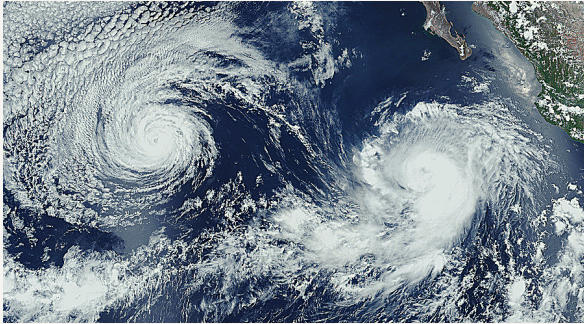
Second, the video-based online Individual Training course which you can earn a certificate from your own computer.

The Active Shooter Neutralization and Lock Down Drills course can be found with all our training resources at our online store. [CLICK PICTURE](#)



'TIL THE STORM PASSES BY

Based on the Sheepdog Church Security Training Course "Severe Weather and Natural Disasters" [1]



... in the shadow of your wings I will take refuge, till the storms of destruction pass by (Psalm 57:1.).

"Keep me safe 'til the storm passes by"[2] reminds us of an important part of the mission of a Church Safety Ministry. Protecting the flock includes safety from and during severe weather in all seasons, whether heavy snow, extreme temperatures, floods, damaging winds, lightning, hail, wildfires, or earthquakes.

The Sheepdog Church Security articles for March have been "Weathering Winter Storms" (Preparing for and Coping with Winter), "You Gotta Be Ready" (Preparing the Church for Severe Weather), "Severe Windstorms and Lightning" (Thunderstorms, Tornadoes, Tropical Cyclones, Nor'easters, Lightning and Hail), and "Shake, Drench & Burn" (Earthquakes, Floods, and Firestorms).

Issues in dealing with severe weather include weather worthiness of church buildings, local climate and terrain, being trained and equipped to respond, and knowledge of conditions. Know what kinds of severe weather and natural disasters your church is most likely to face, then prepare to deal with them while trusting God to protect us and give us wisdom.

Sheepdog Church Security has a training course for dealing with weather events: "Available as both a presentation bundle and an online course, this tutorial shows how to effectively prepare for severe weather when it strikes your church. Topics covered include teaching how to properly react during disasters, developing evacuation plans, organizing emergency supplies, setting up shelter centers, preparing buildings and grounds, and more."

Action Points and Questions

- Read the articles and, especially, listen to the podcasts. Discuss them with other members of the Safety Ministry.
- What types of severe weather and natural disasters are most likely for your location? Your state or county emergency management office may help.
- How prepared is your church for these events?
- What area law enforcement agencies, emergency services, and utilities would you have to contact in a weather emergency?
- Take the Sheepdog Church Security training course "Severe Weather and Natural Disasters." It is available for group training (training bundle) and individual training (online).

1. Sheepdog Church Security, Training Courses, "Severe Weather and Natural Disasters" –

> Online Training [<https://sheepdog-church-security.thinkific.com/courses/severe-weather-and-natural-disasters>],

> Training Materials [<https://sheepdog-church-security.thinkific.com/courses/severe-weather-and-natural-disasters-training-bundle>].

2. Tagline of "Till the Storm Passes By," words and music by Mosie Lister, ©1958

DIRECTOR'S FORUM

RESEARCHED AND WRITTEN BY WESLEY VAUGHN

Weathering Winter Storms Preparing for and Coping with Winter

BASED ON THE SHEEPDOG CHURCH SECURITY TRAINING COURSE
SEVERE WEATHER AND NATURAL DISASTERS [1]



In the Bible

Fire and hail, snow and mist, stormy wind fulfilling his word! (Psalm 148:8)

He hurls down his crystals of ice like crumbs; who can stand before his cold? (Psalm 147:17)

Pray that it may not happen in winter. (Mark 13:18)

Do your best to come before winter. (2 Timothy 4:21)

And because the harbor was not suitable to spend the winter in ... (Acts 27:12)

She is not afraid of snow for her household, for all her household are clothed in scarlet. (Proverbs 31:21)

In the News

Saturday, January 12, 2019, Asheville, NC area - Sunday services were canceled or delayed as a winter storm was moving in with ice and deep snow making hazardous driving conditions.

December 7, 2018, Charlotte, NC - For safety reasons, churches in the Charlotte area monitored a winter storm coming in bringing snow and ice. They were prepared to cancel or reschedule services and other activities.

October 17, 2018, Marysville, WA - Anticipating winter weather a little more than a month away, churches and fire department officials work together to find a compromise so they can shelter local homeless persons when it is freezing outside. The problem is that most local churches do not meet the code for housing people overnight.

Thursday, January 5, 2017, Martha's Vineyard, MA - Churches on Martha's Vineyard provide a safety net for island residents in need of food and shelter during the winter.

"Man, it's cold outside!"

This is being written while much of the country is in the grip of record lows and wind chills.

Winter weather in northern states extends into the first half of March. It's not too late to consider winter. We

can determine and plan to be better prepared for the next winter while this season is still fresh in our minds.

Winter - the Beautiful Beast

Winter can be beautiful. Many gorgeous photos shot of icicles, frost on windows, snow drifts, and flocked trees, also of children, and animals at play in the snow, grace calendars, greeting cards, and Internet pages. Beautiful, yes, but ...

Winter can also be a beast. Jesus told his followers to pray that they would not have to flee Jerusalem in winter. Paul asked Timothy "to come before winter." Winter has its hazards, with risks of illness, injury, and death. For instance:

Slips and falls on slick walking surfaces

Traffic accidents on icy roads

Blocked roads hampering access for supplies and vital services

Damage to pavement from freeze-thaw-refreeze cycles

Power outages

Damage from frozen pipes

Ice fingers in attics

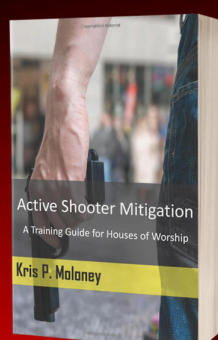
Snow falling from roofs

Ice downing trees and utility lines

Roofs collapsing from heavy snow

Hypothermia and frostbite

Fires and carbon monoxide poisoning from using



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FROM VIOLENCE**

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Weathering Winter Storms Continued...

heating devices and power generators

Winter readiness for churches means being ready to meet the beast in three areas: Structural Stewardship, Safety, and Health.

Structural Stewardship

Structural stewardship is taking care of the congregation's property. This may not look like a concern for the Church Safety Ministry, but it overlaps concern for safety and health. This is not an issue the Safety Ministry tackles alone, but it must be in cooperation and coordination with the church's governing board.

While preparing the church building for winter, it should also be readied for the hazards of other seasons. For instance, trimming branches which may break off if iced also protects against them breaking off during a thunderstorm, as well as reducing an exterior fire hazard and making it harder for a burglar or vandal to use it to gain access.

Structural Integrity

The integrity of the church building is an issue of both safety and health. If there is too much snow on the roof, it could collapse, endangering those inside. Melting snow and ice leaking through the roof could compromise ceilings, and ceiling tiles could fall on a room's occupants. The same could be said for a melting ice finger developing from loose or missing flashing on a gable.

Health Hazards

Leaks have led to the growth of toxic black mold. Public buildings and businesses have been closed by mold. In a high school in Virginia, the mold was discovered only after several illnesses were reported and investigated.

When pipes freeze, the water expands and could split the pipe. Then the water thaws and the pipe leaks, causing costly damage which may be a hazard to both safety and health.

Safety

This is the greatest category of winter weather concern for a Church Safety Ministry with safety issues, such as slips and falls, cascading snow and ice, falling lines and tree limbs, fire, carbon monoxide, and structural failure.

Slips and Falls

The Safety Team and custodians work together for safety of walking surfaces inside and outside.

Outside, keep walkways free of snow and salted to melt ice. Have the parking lot plowed. Inside, have safety mats to drain melting snow and provide traction in the entryway and foyer. Mop up water when needed, and have "wet floor" signs ready to use.

Check for tripping hazards created by the weather. Freeze-thaw cycles damage paved surfaces, such as parking lots, creating driving and walking hazards. People tripping on cracks, holes, and uneven pavement have filed insurance claims and lawsuits.

Cascading Snow and Ice

Metal roofs are nice for letting snow slide off, reducing the chance of building up too much. However, this creates the hazard of snow cascading off the roof (like an avalanche) onto people walking under the eaves. Even on a shingled roof, snow can still cascade off. The Christian Church in Kansas (Disciples of Christ) suggests using a snow rake to clear snow back from the edge of the roof [6]. A metal roof should have snow guards to break up snow when it starts to slide. If you are building or remodeling your church, consider a shelter for those walking under the eave.

Falling Lines and Tree Limbs

We can trim tree limbs over walkways to reduce the hazard of breaking off under ice, but have little choice in where utility lines go. We can, however, watch and warn. When we see a branch or line dangerously iced up, we can steer pedestrians around the hazard.

If a power line comes down, immediately call the utility. If it is over the church's property, block all routes under the line, even if it keeps everyone inside the building. If a tree blocks the street, call the local street department.

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FIRE ALARM

GENERAL INQUIRY

Weathering Winter Storms Continued...

Fire and Carbon Monoxide

Space heaters pose dual hazards. Using anything other than the installed heating system poses a fire risk. If the power is on, electric space heaters have to be a safe distance from combustible materials and have to be electrically safe - no overloaded circuits, worn cords, lines under rugs, etc.

Using combustion for heat and light if the power is out calls for extra care because of fire risks. If safe to do so, send people home. Combustible heat and light are not only fire hazards, but they use up oxygen.

Then, when the oxygen gets low, burning fuel emits less carbon dioxide and more carbon monoxide, which is toxic. Generators operated by combustible fuel engines are also carbon monoxide hazards.

Structural Failure

Structural failure is a low-probability hazard, but not entirely impossible. The most common winter structural failures are collapsing roofs, outside stairs, or canopies weighted down with snow and ice. Watch for build-up. Have it cleared if possible. Otherwise, warn people and restrict access to endangered areas.

Health

Winter has its health hazards. The most common are frostbite and hypothermia, but the crowding of people in enclosed places increases exposure to communicable diseases, such as influenza, tuberculosis, and measles.

Right now, about a third of the country has frostbite warnings with dangerously low wind chills, down to -50° or lower in some places. We don't expect it to be that cold in March, but persons out in freezing temperatures too long without gloves or proper shoes/boots can experience frostbite. This is an even greater danger to diabetics. Be prepared to recognize and treat frostbite

Hypothermia is always a hazard in cold weather. It does not have to be freezing. All it takes is for someone to be exposed long enough for their body temperature to fall too low. Again, we should be alert to persons at risk of hypothermia and try to prevent or treat it.

As to contagious disease, the best we can do is to try to keep a place well-ventilated while keeping it warm.

Preparation

Winter requires preparation. The woman in Proverbs 31 saw to it that her family was properly clothed for

winter. So must we, as a Church Safety Ministry, prepare for winter.

First, you and the rest of the Safety

Team should be properly dressed for winter. This means warm and skid-proof footwear, warm clothing for working in the foyer, and proper outerwear, including gloves, for the cold weather.

Be certain all doors are working properly. Not only should they seal when closed, they should not be subject to jamming on opening. The same goes for windows.

Have equipment and supplies on hand to handle snow and ice: brooms, floor squeegees, mops, shovels, snow blowers, safety salt and/or sand, emergency thermal blankets, flashlights, emergency barriers. Also have enough supplies if the church might become a shelter.

Winter Communications

Your church should be able to monitor the weather to know what to do. You also need a way to warn members of hazardous conditions, and to notify the congregation of cancellations, restrictions, and schedule changes due to winter weather conditions.

In December, Sheepdog Church

Security recommended using Alert.Church for communication with church staff, ministries, and members. [7][8]

There is More

Other articles in this series cover preparation for severe weather, earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, thunderstorms, tornadoes, firestorms, and providing shelter.

Check website for references:

<https://sheepdogchurchsecurity.net/articles/weathering-winter-storms/>

You Gotta Be Ready

Preparing the Church for Severe Weather

BASED ON THE SHEEPDOG CHURCH SECURITY TRAINING COURSE
SEVERE WEATHER AND NATURAL DISASTERS [1]



In the Bible

Shelter – I would hurry to find a shelter from the raging wind and tempest (Psalm 55:8).

Evacuation – So Lot went out and said to his sons-in-law, who were to marry his daughters, "Up! Get out of this place ..." (Genesis 19:14).

Now therefore send, get your livestock and all that you have in the field into safe shelter, for every man and beast that is in the field and is not brought home will die when the hail falls on them (Exodus 9:19).

Structural integrity – And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock ... And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house [built on the sand], and it fell, and great was the fall of it." (Matthew 7:25, 27)

Supplies – "Also take with you every sort of food that is eaten, and store it up. It shall serve as food for you and for them" (Genesis 6:21).)

In the News

Lynchburg, Virginia, Mid-November 2018 - More than a week before Thanksgiving Day, an early winter storm on its way. Local stores were already stocked up with winter weather supplies. A hardware store manager said, "You gotta be ready at any time, you never know what the weather around here is gonna do," [2]

Moore, Oklahoma, May 21, 2013 - A monster tornado had destroyed large sections of Moore, wiping out entire neighborhoods. Despite the extensive devastation, only 24 lives were lost. Many residents in affected neighborhoods sheltered, either in tornado shelters or in safe places such as bathtubs, basement corners, etc. [3]

Getting Ready for Severe Weather

We see several aspects of readiness and unreadiness for disaster in the Bible. David said he would rush to shelter from a storm. Lot told his daughters' fiancés to evacuate Sodom ahead of a fiery disaster. Jesus told about one house which would survive a storm and one which would not.

Noah stored food for riding out the greatest severe weather event in history.

Know Your Local Climate

Various government agencies, organizations, and news media urge us to be prepared for severe weather. Before we rush to prepare our home, school, business, or church, it makes sense to ask, "What are we preparing for?" Not every kind of severe weather comes to our town or county - at least not normally. We should know the local climate. For example, major concerns are wildfires and earthquakes in California, tornadoes and heavy snow in Kansas, volcanic eruptions In Hawaii, and hurricanes and storm surges in Florida.

The Weather Underground (WU) has a list of weather situations to prepare for:

Winter Weather

Hurricanes and Typhoons with Storm Surges

Lightning, Supercells, and Hail

Tornadoes

Flooding and Landslides

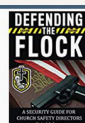
Earthquakes and Tsunamis

Extreme Heat

Wildfires

Volcanic Activity [4]

They have a page for each of these weather incidents, explaining the phenomenon and preparing for it. A church's preparations for severe weather fall into a few categories: Structural Readiness, Shelter in Place, Evacuation, Extraction, Communication, Tools and Supplies, Emergency Medical Supplies, Extended Stay Provisions, Records Preservation.



RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT FOR SAFETY MINISTRIES

VISIT THE SDCS ONLINE STORE



You Gotta Be Ready Continued...

Structural Readiness

If your church is building a new facility, consider structural readiness for the kinds of severe weather normal for your local climate. The building must be able to withstand expected wind strength and be able to shelter those in attendance. Roofs in northern states should be able to bear heavy snow and be designed to shed it safely. In flood-prone areas, electrical wiring should be above probable high-water levels. And buildings can be built to survive a firestorm.

For temperature extremes, consider the best kind of HVAC (Heating, Cooling and Ventilation) and insulation for your area.

Existing structures may be upgraded for better survivability and protection in extreme weather conditions, but there may be financial constraints. Some upgrades are more expensive than new construction, and the congregation's finances may be limited.

Shelter in Place

In tornado-prone areas, shelters have saved many lives, including in churches during services and meetings. This has also proved true in places hit by hurricanes. Having a shelter or certified safe area is not enough. The members should know where to go and practice in drills.

A U.S. pastor and his wife were on a Caribbean island in 2017 during a hurricane. The hotel manager in got all of the guests into the ballroom, then moved them into an interior safe room. After the storm, they emerged from the room to devastation, as shown in before and after photos. Many lives were saved because the hotel was prepared for a hurricane and the manager knew what to do.

Evacuation

We do not often associate evacuation with severe weather, but some events call for it. Plan and drill for evacuation likely for your area. Here are a few examples of evacuation events:

Earthquake

After the 7.0 magnitude Anchorage earthquake on November 30, 2018, some damaged business and government buildings, including the airport terminal, were evacuated until they could be inspected. This was on a Friday morning. If it had been on Sunday morning, churches would have been evacuated.

Tsunami

A tsunami alert is a real possibility for coastal areas. If it came during church services, it would mean evacuation. It can happen in the United States. The tsunami from the 1964 Great Alaska Earthquake killed people in Oregon and California, more than 1500 miles away. If that happened today, a tsunami alert would be issued, enabling people to evacuate areas at risk.

Wildfires

In November 2016, the Chimney Wildfire in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park became a firestorm. In the Pigeon Forge-Gatlinburg area, some churches serving as shelters had to be evacuated as the fire approached them. During the 2017 California wildfires, entire towns were evacuated.

Flooding and Landslides

Potential landslides and flooding have prompted evacuations of communities, including churches. Several times, vast areas of the Mississippi River basin have been evacuated as waters rose.

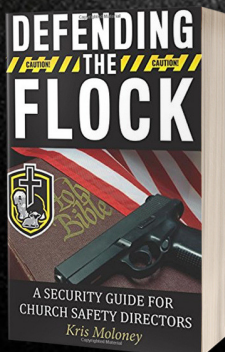
Extraction

How to get out may be an issue after a devastating storm, such as a hurricane or a tornado. People in safe areas have been blocked by debris across doors. For instance, in May 2017 in Emory, Texas, parishioners attending an event in a church took refuge in an interior hallway as a tornado tore apart the sanctuary on one side and the parish hall on the other. EMS helped them get out.

To keep from being trapped, have doors to the shelter open inward. Secure them with lock bars. That way you can still open the door.

Communication

Communication is a key to coordination during a weather emergency. Prepare by getting the necessary communication tools. These include



DEFENDING THE FLOCK
A SECURITY GUIDE FOR CHURCH SAFETY DIRECTORS
Kris Moloney

"A must have book for your church safety ministry."

GET IT ON AMAZON

You Gotta Be Ready Continued...

weather radios, two-way radios, cell phones, public address system, and a general messaging and notification service (such as Alert.church[5]). It could also include intercoms.

Tools and Supplies

Communications equipment can be included in tools for dealing with severe weather, but there is more.

For instance, in winter we need salt spreaders, snow shovels, snow blowers, and - if we have not contracted for the service - snow plows we can attach to mowing equipment. We also need weather mats for the entry. Other useful items could be fans to help dry the entry floor.

What tools may prove useful - even vital - for other kinds of severe weather?

Water hoses: some buildings survived California wildfires when owners kept the roofs wet.

Tarps: too many uses to list here.

Hammers, saws, and pry bars to break up and move debris.

Flashlights and lanterns.

Extra batteries for flashlights, etc.

Rope - useful almost any time.

Emergency Medical Supplies

We need emergency medical supplies all year long, more so in severe weather. Illness and injury can happen anytime, but they are more likely during severe weather. Extreme temperatures bring frostbite and hypothermia in winter, heat exhaustion and heat stroke in summer. Slips and falls are a risk of icy weather. Damage from high winds threatens injury, and the stress of threatening situations induces heart attacks.

What supplies do we need?

First Aid: cleansers, antiseptics, salves, bandages, medical tape.

CPR masks

AED heart restart unit

Tourniquets and compresses

Analgesics: aspirin, ibuprofen (such as Motrin or Advil) , acetaminophen (such as Tylenol)

Water: for cleansing, for hydration

Electrolyte replacement drinks or tablets

Extended Stay Provisions

If people who cannot stay in their home or cannot get home come to your church for shelter in severe weather, can you see that they are safe and sound?

If they have to stay overnight or for a few days, where will they sleep? And on what? With what will they cover themselves? What will they eat and drink? How about hygiene, sanitation, and privacy?

Suggested refuge shelter provisions include:

Cots or airbeds and blankets

Bottled water

Ready-to-eat and easy-to-prepare non-perishable foods

Hand-operated can openers

Hand sanitizers

Supplies for infants: formula, bottles, diapers, wipes

Records Preservation

Whatever the weather, it pays to protect the church's records. Severe weather and natural disasters are not the only threats to records. A fire can destroy everything in the office. A broken water pipe or a leak in the roof can soak vital papers. A computer glitch, clerical error, or hacker can destroy or corrupt digital files. A server can fail.

How can your church protect its records. The best answer is offsite copies. Have copies of important papers stored in another location, such as a lawyer's office or a bank vault. Electronic records can be copied to a document preservation service, or copies can be put on data DVDs and stored in the vault with the paper records.

What records are the most important to preserve?

Corporation papers

Inventory of church property

Bank information: account numbers, contact information

Insurance: contact information, policy types and numbers

Utility contact numbers

There Is More

Other articles in this series deal with winter weather, thunderstorms, hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, wildfires, and earthquakes.

Check website for references:

<https://sheepdogchurchsecurity.net/articles/you-gotta-be-ready/>

Severe Windstorms and Lightning Thunderstorms, Tornadoes, Tropical Cyclones, Nor'easters, Lightning and Hail

BASED ON THE SHEEPDOG CHURCH SECURITY TRAINING COURSE
SEVERE WEATHER AND NATURAL DISASTERS [1]



In the Bible

"... and behold, a great wind came across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young people, and they are dead, and I alone have escaped to tell you" (Job 1:19). Then Moses stretched out his staff toward heaven, and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and fire ran down to the earth. And the Lord rained hail upon the land of 1and of Egypt (Exodus 9:23).

The crash of your thunder was in the whirlwind; your lightnings lighted up the world; the earth trembled and shook (Psalm 77:18).

And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling (Mark 4:37).

In the News

Wetumpka Alabama, January 19, 2019 - A tornado struck the west side of town Saturday morning, extensively damaging the First Baptist Church and destroying the First Presbyterian Church. Fortunately, there were no fatalities and only a few injuries. Both congregations held services the next day in the Civic Center. [2]

Henrico County, Virginia, September 17, 2018 - A tornado ripped sheets of metal off the roof of West End Assembly of God Church. This was on a Friday, and the church was closed Sunday awaiting repairs. [3][4]

Lansing, Michigan, March 8, 2017 - A strong windstorm crossing the state tore a wall outside the sanctuary of St. Paul's Episcopal Church party away from the building. Thankfully, no one was in the sanctuary at the time. Services were held in the parish hall while repairs were made. [5]

Rochester, New York, March 8, 2017 - The same strong windstorm that hit Lansing struck Rochester. It bent the cross atop the steeple of St. Mary Catholic Church downtown. The sheet metal cross, which housed a lightning rod, had to be removed since it was a danger to persons on the street below. [6]

Stormy Weather

"Storms of life" and "rough sailing" are metaphors we use for situations with combinations of difficulty,

lconflict, loss, danger, and uncertainty. Physical storms cause literal rough sailing on lakes and seas, turbulent flying in the air, and difficulty on land.

Besides winter storms, covered in another article in this series, windstorms we may experience include thunderstorms, tornadoes, tropical cyclones (hurricanes or typhoons), and nor'easters, along with associated lightning and hail.

Of course, this is not new. Windstorms of different kinds and intensities are mentioned both literally and figuratively in the Bible. In the seventh plague on Egypt, thunder, lighting, and hail arrived together. In Psalm 77, Asaph associated whirlwinds (tornadoes) with thunderstorms and lightning. And on the Sea of Galilee, a powerful windstorm came suddenly.

Perilous Times

The approach and arrival of a major windstorm produces spectacular pictures. Most are awesome, some are beautiful, and many are scary - scary because strong windstorms are damaging and dangerous. Live news coverage of a powerful storm has updates on death tolls. To state that this is serious business would be telling people what they already know. For us in Church Safety Ministry, the issue is how we can protect those who come to church. We are also concerned about how to minimize damage to church property.

How to Protect the Flock

The steps in protecting church members and guests from severe windstorms are Education (knowing and understanding the risks), Knowing What's Coming



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Severe Windstorms and Lightning Continued...

(staying informed), Decision, Informing the Congregation, Equipping, and Planning Assistance (for those who may not make it on their own).

Educate Yourself

To prepare for severe windstorms, we must know what they are, know which ones are likely in our area, know the risks from each kind of windstorm, and know how to keep others and yourself safe.

Hurricanes or Typhoons

The hurricane season is usually from June through November. Hurricanes and Typhoons are tropical cyclones with sustained wind speeds of at least 74 mph. They are hurricanes in the Atlantic Ocean and eastern Pacific, typhoons in the western Pacific.

Tropical storms have wind speeds from 39 to 73 mph. At 38 mph or less, it is a tropical depression.

Gulf Coast and Atlantic Coast states are at risk for hurricanes and tropical storms, and remnants, such as Ike, can move far inland. Both typhoons and hurricanes have hit Hawaii.

Hurricanes are classified into five categories. A Category 1 hurricane can cause roof damage to well-built structures. A category 5 hurricane, such as Hurricane Michael, will cause catastrophic damage, destroying all but the most solid buildings. Hurricanes and tropical storms bring torrential rain and storm surges, which cause massive flooding. They also spawn tornadoes and lightning.

Depending where you are, the area around the church may have to be evacuated ahead of a hurricane. On the other hand, if the church's location is safe, they may provide shelter for those fleeing the storm. If you are in a hurricane-prone area, you should be prepared either way. The building should be built to withstand at least a Category 1 storm. It should be equipped to shelter storm refugees. And duplicates of vital records should be in a safe location.

Nor'easters

Nor'easters, so called because their strongest winds come from the northeast, are extra-tropical cyclones forming in the North Atlantic. They can come any time of year, but are more likely September through April. Besides the dangers of hurricanes, nor'easter can bring snow and ice, as in the Blizzard of 1888. Prepare for both severe winter storms and hurricane strength cyclones. The risk area extends from the Maritime Provinces and New England south to

Virginia.

Thunderstorms

A thunderstorm is more than just a noisy show, it brings rain, lightning and hail. Downpours can cause flash flooding, but lightning and hail result in more overall damage.

Lightning can kill. A strike on a tree can injure nearby people and animals. It can also set fire to buildings. Lightning rods, such as the one on St. Mary's, direct the lightning's current directly to the ground.

Large hail can cause significant and widespread damage. It can also kill and injure people and animals, as happened in Egypt. Porch roofs and covered drop-offs can shelter people outside in a hailstorm.

Tornadoes

Tornadoes, also called twisters or whirlwinds, cause the most intense damage, rivaled only by category 5 hurricanes. The tornado risk area is anywhere east of the Rockies.

Church buildings in tornado-prone areas should have places that can serve as tornado shelters. This means a sturdy interior room or corridor on the ground floor or basement. Suggested shelters include interior restrooms. It should have an inward-opening door so it can be opened if debris is in front of it.

In a tornado response, keep people away from windows and glass doors. Have them cover their heads. If there is a shelter or safe area, move them there.

Know What's Coming

Be aware of approaching storms. The church should have a weather alert radio such as the MIDLAND WR300 Weather Radio[7] on Sheepdog Church Security's Amazon page[8]. Also keep an eye out for the weather. Some systems can develop before a watch or warning is issued.

Know the difference between an advisory, a watch and a warning. An advisory is more general than a watch or warning. It can say that a system is heading our way days before arriving. Or it may include a watch or warning. A watch says that certain weather events are likely for a specific area - a tornado watch means conditions are right for tornadoes. A warning says that it is coming - a tornado warning means that a tornado has formed

Severe Windstorms and Lightning Continued...

and has been spotted.

Make a Decision

When you receive a long-term severe windstorm advisory (such as "Later in the week ..."), consider your readiness and plan accordingly. "What will we do?" When there is a watch, decide to be ready to act if it becomes a warning. For instance, if a tornado watch is issued, get everyone inside so they can go to the shelter if needed. Then when a tornado warning is issued or the tornado siren sounds, call for everyone to head to the tornado shelter - NOW!

Inform the Congregation

Tell the congregation what the planned response is to a severe windstorm. If the church building would not be a safe place in a hurricane, let them know. Tell them where the tornado shelter is. Have a tornado drill. On the West Coast, have earthquake drills. You may also have wildfire drills.

Use a mass notification service, such as Alert.church[9], to inform everyone when the church will be closed due to weather, and when caution is advised. Or in some situations, that the church will be a shelter from a storm (many churches have sheltered hurricane refugees).

Equipment and Supplies

Some supplies should be on hand for severe windstorms. Because of the increased risk of injuries and stress-related medical incidents (strokes, seizures, heart attacks), First Aid kits[10][11], nitrile gloves[12], tourniquets[13] and pressure bandages[14], CPR masks, and AEDs are at the top of the list.

If the church will be a community storm shelter, supplies such as drinking water, sleeping mats, blankets, hygiene needs, and non-perishable foods are needed.

Plan Assistance

Most churches have at least a few persons who cannot evacuate or move to shelter on their own. How will you evacuate the nursery and toddlers? How will you help mobility-impaired persons up or down stairs? How do you get cognitively impaired persons to understand instructions and cooperate? There is equipment to use for aiding evacuation. [15][16][17]

There is more ...

Other articles in this series deal with winter weather, preparations, floods, wildfires, and earthquakes.

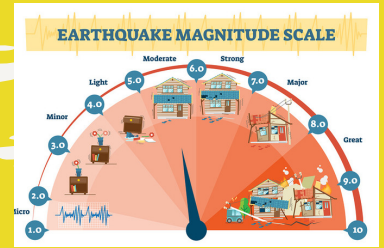
Check website for references:

<https://sheepdogchurchsecurity.net/articles/severe-windstorms-and-lightning/>

Shake, Drench & Burn

Earthquakes, Floods, and Firestorms

BASED ON THE SHEEPDOG CHURCH SECURITY TRAINING COURSE
SEVERE WEATHER AND NATURAL DISASTERS [1]



In the Bible

... And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind tore the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire ... (1 Kings 19:11b-12a)

... then the flood would have swept us away, the torrent would have gone over us (Psalm 124:4).

... How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! (James 3:5)

In the News

Napa, California, Aug 24, 2014 - A 6.0 magnitude earthquake south of Napa damaged United Methodist churches in Napa and Vallejo. The Vallejo church was certified for occupancy within a week, but it would take about a year for the Napa facility to be ready for services. [2]

Knik-Fairview, Alaska, November 30, 2018 - A 7.0 magnitude earthquake centered just south of Knik-Fairview (across the Knik Arm from Anchorage) downed a power line, which set fire to a church. Fortunately, no one was inside the building at the time. Most of the damage was to the sanctuary, estimated to cost "hundreds of thousands of dollars." [3][4]

Soddy-Daisy, Tennessee, Wednesday, September 26, 2018 - Torrential rain caused flooding in the Tri-State area, especially in Soddy-Daisy just northeast of Chattanooga, where a woman died. The lot and buildings of Soddy Church of God, which is next to Little Soddy Creek, were damaged, while the upper-floor sanctuary was untouched. While volunteers were cleaning the property, they also helped a nearby homeowner. [5][6][7]

Magalia, California, November 9, 2018 - The pastor and several members and neighbors of Magalia Pines Baptist Church were in the parking lot ready to head out of town to escape the Camp Fire when the firestorm exploded around them. They rushed into the church, closed the doors and prayed for safety. Miraculously, the church was unscathed and

deciduous trees on the church grounds also survived.

At least 88 persons died in this blaze. [8]

The Cursed Ground

In the garden after Adam and Eve had eaten the forbidden fruit, the Lord said, "Cursed is the ground because of you" (Gen. 3:17). The consequences described were agricultural, but that wasn't the end of it. About 1700 years later, Earth's first rain began (Genesis 6-8). A year that began with torrential rain, continued with world-wide flooding, massive volcano eruptions, and continent-sized earthquakes, and was followed by an Ice Age. Earth's crust and climate were forever changed - they too were cursed.

Nevertheless, God promised not to repeat the Flood, showing the first rainbow as His sign.

Millennia later, Jesus said, "There will be earthquakes in various places" (Mark 13:8), and there still are. Also we still have floods, though limited, and wildfires which sometimes seem to be part of the Apocalyptic Tribulation (Rev. 8:5).

Protection from the Curse

Seeing that we have these perils - earthquakes, floods, and wildfires - how do we protect the flock? Earthquakes come unannounced, but we usually do have some warning of floods and wildfires. In all cases, we need preparation, communication, and coordination.

General Measures

There are certain measures common to earthquakes, floods and wildfires. A few are: structural readiness, information reception, sheltering, evacuation, communication & coordination, and recovery.

Structural Readiness

The kind of structural readiness for severe weather and natural disasters that your church buildings need depends on which events are more likely in your area. For instance, it is obvious that if you are in California, you should be ready for strong quakes, wildfires, and the flooding and landslides which follow a wildfire. Structural readiness means your church's building enhances the survival and well-being of its occupants, in some cases ensuring the survival of the building itself. The land is also part of the equation.

Shake, Drench & Burn Continued...

Information Reception

Your church and its Safety Ministry need to be able to receive vital information from the weather service and local authorities and service agencies. This means both a weather radio[9], phones, and possibly also an emergency bands scanner. Vital information includes weather advisories and alerts, road and local conditions advisories, and evacuation orders. The phones - landline and/or mobile - are for contact with local law enforcement and emergency services.

Sheltering or Evacuation

Depending of the nature and severity of the natural disaster and your church's situation (location and structural readiness), people in the church may have to take shelter or evacuate. Church members not there may have to be told to stay away, to obey a general evacuation order for the community, or to come to the church for shelter.

Communication & Coordination

In any kind of severe weather emergency, including natural disasters, everyone should be working together, coordinating their efforts. The first need is to inform everyone in the church of the situation and what to do. Use a general notification system, such as Alert.church.[10]

Coordinate the Church Safety Team using two-way radios, such as those in the Sheepdog Church Security Safety Equipment Store[11][12]. These also have NOAA weather channels with alerts.

Recovery

After a natural disaster, there is work to do with cleanup, recovering valuable items, contacting the insurance company, repairs, helping injured and displaced persons, etc.

Protecting from Earthquakes

When we mention states at risk for earthquakes, most Americans think of the five Pacific states, the province of British Columbia, and maybe a territory or two. However, according to the American Red Cross, "Forty-five U.S. states and territories are at moderate to very high risk of earthquakes" [13]. That leaves very few states without even a moderate risk of an earthquake. Among those with a moderate to high earthquake risk are the states along the Mississippi and Missouri rivers and those by the Great Lakes. Newer buildings in West Coast states must meet building codes for earthquake safety. This includes churches. Some buildings can be retrofitted to

comply with codes. Churches in areas with a lower risk can be made to remain safe through moderate earthquakes. More than preventing property damage, the intent is protecting occupants from injury.

Many earthquake injuries come from objects knocked off shelves and shelves or bookcases toppling. Just look at pictures of goods in stores all over the floor, with entire racks on their sides. In the church, secure bookshelves and self-standing cabinets to studs to keep them from toppling in all but the strongest quakes

For the time being, there is no way to warn of a quake before it happens. Train and drill church members in what to do in an earthquake: get under sturdy furniture for protection against objects falling down, then hang on. Stay away from windows to avoid glass cuts. When the shaking is over, go outside to a safe area and wait for the building to be inspected for safety. There may be aftershocks.

Protecting from Floods

"The water runs deep, and the river runs high." In many places and for many reasons, this has been true, often for the first time in a long time. In the past twenty years, several locations have had hundred-year floods. How your church deals with flooding depends on where it is located. Is it on high ground, low ground, or in between? The Soddy-Daisy church in the news story above is on low ground with a creek on one side. Experts in flood safety advise having electrical outlets above probable high-water levels. They also advise water-resistant materials on the lower walls, Pay attention to flash flood warnings and conditions leading to steadily rising floodwaters. What if rising waters threaten your church on a Sunday morning? Is someone monitoring the level of nearby streams? How soon do you warn the congregation? Where will they go? If your church is on high ground, are you ready to take people in who are displaced by flooding?

Protecting from Wildfires

Recent years show that wildfires are possible in many places, depending on the terrain and vegetation. As we learned in November-December 2016 with the Great Smoky Mountains wildfires in Tennessee, the West is not the only part of the country at risk for massive wildfires and firestorms.

Shake, Drench & Burn Continued...

Over one hundred years ago in 1918, the Cloquet Fire in northern Minnesota killed hundreds of people and blackened a large swath of land. Whatever the cause, natural or human, when conditions are right, a small wildfire can spread rapidly and cover a lot of territory.

Churches have been damaged and destroyed by wildfires. Churches have also sheltered wildfire refugees and been staging places for firefighters. In Tennessee, some churches serving as shelters had to be evacuated. If a wildfire threatens the location of your church, the best thing to do is tell everyone to evacuate, get out of town.

On the other hand, some church buildings have survived wildfires while everything around them was devastated, such as the Banner Baptist Church in Gatlinburg, TN and the Magalia Pines Baptist Church near Paradise, CA. As recorded in the news story above, the Magalia church actually protected people from the firestorm.

A close look at images of these two buildings reveals metal roofs, non-combustible or combustion-resistant exteriors, and no visible unscreened vents. Also, except for a few deciduous trees, no shrubbery or trees were close to the buildings. Surviving homes in these areas share these characteristics. The message is that a church can be built and/or equipped to survive wildfires.

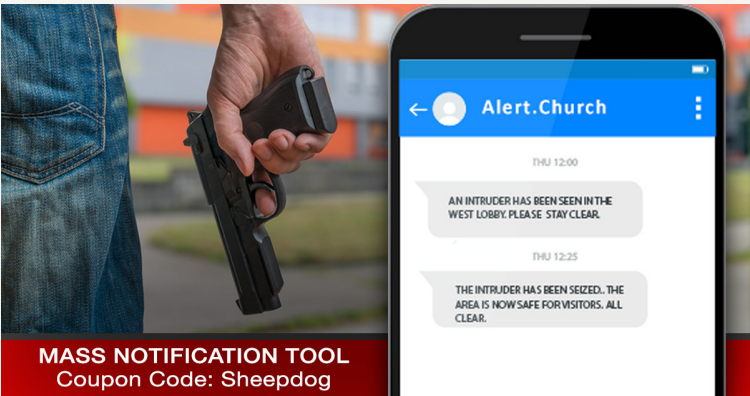
There Is More

Other articles in this series deal with winter weather, preparations, windstorms, lightning, and hail.

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Check the website for references:

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CHURCH SECURITY ROLL PODCAST

Weekly Tips and Encouragement for Church Security Teams based on the research and experience of Kris Moloney and the Sheepdog Church Security Team. Hosted by Ron Neeley and Kris Moloney



Weathering Winter Storms: Preparing for and Coping with Winter

Winter can be beautiful. Icicles, frost on windows, snow drifts, flocked trees, children and animals at play in the snow. Beautiful, yes, but ...Winter can also be a beast. Winter has its hazards, with risks of illness, injury, and death. Winter readiness for churches means being ready to meet the beast in three areas - Structural Stewardship, Safety, and Health.

[**CLICK HERE TO LISTEN**](#)



You Gotta Be Ready: Preparing the Church for Severe Weather

And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock ... And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house [built on the sand], and it fell, and great was the fall of it." (Matthew 7:25, 27)

[**CLICK HERE TO LISTEN**](#)



Severe Windstorms and Lightning

Thunderstorms, Tornadoes, Tropical Cyclones, Nor'easters, Lightning and Hail

Major windstorms can be spectacular. Most are awesome, some are beautiful, and many are scary - scary because strong windstorms are damaging and dangerous. For us in Church Safety Ministry, the issue is how we can protect those who come to church. We are also concerned about how to minimize damage to church property.

[**CLICK HERE TO LISTEN**](#)



Shake, Drench & Burn: Earthquakes, Floods, and Firestorms

Knowing that we have perils - earthquakes, floods, and wildfires - how do we protect the flock? Earthquakes come unannounced, but we usually do have some warning of floods and wildfires. In all cases, we need preparation, communication, and coordination.

[**CLICK HERE TO LISTEN**](#)

MAIL CALL

Messages from
Sheepdogs across the
country

DARREN R.

Well worth your time and investment to learn about keeping God's house and congregations as safe and secure as possible. I highly recommend Sheepdog Church Security as the quality of their materials and training are second to none.

MARK P.

Just finished the online class today offered by Sheepdog Church Security . All seven courses are very informative and now I know how to respond to each one of these incidents that my occur in my local church . Much thanks to Sheepdog Church Security and their willingness to help churches establish a safety plan . Thanks!

DALE B.

I find the info helpful and up to date. Recommend anyone who is looking at safety, either at their church or workplace to spend the time and go over the vast material that is at our finger tips. Thanks Sheepdog Church Security for all you do.

FREE MONTHLY DOWNLOAD

Severe Weather and Natural Disasters: Is Your Church Prepared
for Severe Weather



Severe weather can have a devastating effect on the people in your community. Your church should have a plan and your members should know what to do. The question is: Is your church ready?

Protect God's People with Our Church Safety Resource
[Free Download]

To Get this Resource, Click the Picture (Link) and enter your Email Address. You will receive an email with a Download Button. Click the Button in the Email to Download the Safety Ministry Resource. (The Download is in PDF format.)

Kris

THE CHRISTIAN SHEEPDOG

A COURSE CALLED “PROCRASTINATION 101?” I THINK I’LL WAIT.....

*“REMEMBER, IT IS SIN TO KNOW WHAT YOU OUGHT TO DO &
THEN NOT DO IT.” (JAMES 4:17 NLT)*

“No! I don’t want to!” Have you ever heard those words from your kids? Did you ever say them to your parents? But that only applies to kids... right? No! Adults can fall into the same situation! I think it’s safe to say we all have things we have to do that we don’t like.

As part of your church safety team, you’re called on to perform a wide variety of duties. Saying “I don’t wanna,” if you’re assigned a task that you’d rather would mean letting yourself, your team, and the Lord down (Colossians 3:23).

In the Bible, there was a guy whom God told to do a particular task. He might have gulped and said, “But, Lord! But, but, but...” Yet he put personal feelings and reservations aside and chose to obey. In Acts 6:10-19, God told Ananias to go and meet a guy who was notorious for persecuting believers, Saul of Tarsus. Yep, that Saul! Let’s face it, Ananias had to be thinking, “Huh? Lord, you want me to go and talk to a guy who wants to kill me...or at least put me in jail?” God said, “Yep!” And Ananias obeyed God’s voice! He was completely surrendered to His Lord’s will, and did something he was doubtless terrified to do. And we all know what happened. Saul became Paul, one of the greatest evangelists the world has ever known – all because Ananias did something he probably didn’t want to do.

Whether it’s a safety team task, a house chore you’ve been putting off, or having to do some job at work where you think that you’d rather hug a cactus, remember our buddy Ananias and do it! To help you with your priorities, simply think - for Whom are you doing this particular task? When you feel like procrastinating, keep in mind what we mentioned earlier about Colossians 3:23 and you’ll be fine!



A retired Army Sergeant, ordained pastor in both a non-denominational church and a professional chaplain’s association. Security industry experience as an operations manager, mall and city court security, as well as church safety and security teams. ~Ron Neeley

CERTIFIED ONSITE INSTRUCTORS

We are excited to announce that we have launched our Certified Sheepdog Instructor program! I can't tell you how many times, I have been asked about onsite instructors from both churches looking for training and from instructors wanting to use our materials. Right now, we have two fully qualified instructors that can train your volunteers to serve on a Safety Team. AND, get them to the point of certification.

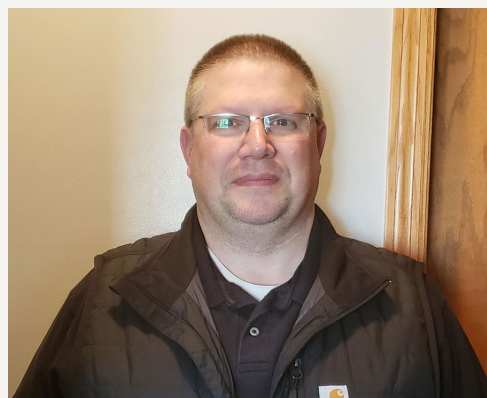


MAINE

MICHAEL MERCER

Michael Mercer is a retired police officer with over thirty years of crime-prevention experience. He is a nationally certified chemical agent specialist, an expert witness, and a national practitioner in crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED.) He is also a US Navy Veteran and the Past President of the Maine Association of Police, Retired. He is the Founder of Michael Mercer Consulting L.L.C. and specializes in House of Worship safety, security, and emergency operations.

Website: <https://michaelmercerconsulting.com>



MINNESOTA

BRIAN STOLT

My name is Brian Stolt. I am a certified NRA Basic Pistol Instructor, NRA Range Safety Officer and a MN DNR Hunter Safety Instructor. Prior to being a Firearms Instructor, I was a Police Officer for 18 years, with 14 of those years as a K-9 Officer. After I retired from policing, I began work as a firearms instructor where my experience and skills are used to help train others in the real world use of firearms and personal defense. I am currently working as an Account Manager for a private security company.

Website: <https://stolttacticaldefense.com/>



NEW JERSEY

MICHAEL & DESERÉE KENNEY

My name is Michael A. Kenney, the founder of The Kenney Protective Agency LLC, providing private security services in NJ. I have over 35 years experience in professional law enforcement and private security management. My wife Deserée is our Security Manager and Training Coordinator who has over 10 years experience supervising adult offenders and parolees in a community corrections setting. I am a NJ State Police Certified Security Officer Instructor, and we are both Certified Instructors for the SABRE Civilian Safety Awareness & College Safety Training Programs. We also specialize in Private Security and Safety Team Training for Houses of Worship.

<https://www.kenneyprotectiveagency.com/>

SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES

CHURCH SAFETY AND SECURITY EVENTS



SHEEPDOG SEMINARS

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON - APRIL 26-27

		RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT FOR SAFETY MINISTRIES
		
		
VISIT THE SDCS ONLINE STORE		

SHEEPDOG CORNER

Hi Sheepdog,

Nothing beats face to face conversations! As many of you know, we all face the same challenges when changing safety and security procedures. People resist change especially when it means they will be inconvenienced or they will have to put in more effort.

If you been following us for some time, you know that my church has an On-Off threat and right now it is on. Our potentially violent intruder is out of jail and as far as we know, he has not repented, and he is still a very real threat to the safety of the congregation.

Over the past two weeks we have been implementing new safety protocols and the resistance has been tough. I was quickly reminded that explaining the procedures by email only stirs up grumbling and complaining. This is not to say a detailed email is not a great way to roll out a new procedure, it just means that as the Safety Director we have to plan on spending some time on the phone and talking with people face to face until everyone is informed and onboard.

The key is to work with people as much as you possibly can. Let them know that you are there to help and to make the changes go as smoothly as possible. Change will always be hard so poor communication will only make things worse.

Your loyal companion in Christ,

Kris P. Moloney



A Police Officer with over 15 years of experience and a retired Army Captain and Company Commander. He has certifications in Crime Prevention, Security Assessments, and the Crime Free Program. He also has a Bachelor's degree in Ministry and a Master's degree in Organizational Leadership.

Kris P. Moloney



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