

What to do in case of a Natural or Man-made Disaster

- The Village of Alfred has an after action disaster plan in place but does not have a severe weather or man-made disaster warning system, however the SUNY campus and Allegany County 911 does. The SUNY warning system is similar to the familiar fire whistle heard throughout the village but by volume alone. The noise emitted from the SUNY siren is distinct and if heard residents should seek shelter until the danger passes. The Allegany County 911 Center is equipped with reverse 911. In an event of a disaster the 911 center may call your residence with an automated message or instructions regarding an ongoing event. Otherwise residents should turn to the Weather Channel or your local television or radio station for storm information. Residents should make certain every adult and teenager in your family knows what to do when a severe weather "watch" or "warning" sounds. Learn about your workplace's disaster safety plans and similar measures at your children's schools or day care centers.

Tornado

Decide in advance where you will take shelter (your underground cellar or in-residence "safe" room). When a tornado approaches, go there immediately. If your home has no cellar or in-residence "safe" room, head to the centermost part of your home away from windows and preferably under something sturdy like a workbench or staircase. The more walls between you and the outside the better.

Move anything in your yard that can become flying debris inside your house or garage before a storm strikes. Do this only if authorities have announced a tornado "watch," however. If authorities have announced a tornado "warning," leave it all alone.

Don't open your windows. You won't save the house, as once thought, and you may actually make things worse by giving wind and rain a chance to get inside.

Don't try to ride out a tornado in a manufactured home. Even manufactured homes with tie-downs overturn in these storms because they have light frames and offer winds a large surface area to push against. In addition, their exteriors are vulnerable to high winds and wind-borne debris.

Winter Storms

Winter storms can be deceiving. Even a small amount of precipitation can cause problems, especially in areas where snow is an unusual occurrence. Many fatalities from vehicular accidents occur as a result of slippery roads. And downed trees and power outages can be caused by ice storms or heavy, wet snow. Residents should stay home and indoors if possible, until outdoor conditions improve.

Flooding

Wide spread flooding is not a common event for Alfred, though flash floods are becoming more frequent. A flash flood is a quick-rising flood that usually occurs as the result of heavy rains over a short period of time, often only several hours or even less. They can also be caused by ice jams on rivers in conjunction with a winter or spring thaw. The constant influx of water causes a treacherous overflow powerful enough to sweep vehicles away, push debris into roadways, and uproot trees, level buildings, and drag bridges off their piers. Most frightening is the rapidity with which the water rises.

Pedestrians and motorists should never attempt to cross any moving or standing water due to the difficulty in determining depth and swiftness.

Earthquake

Earthquakes are not a frequent occurrence in Alfred. However they have occurred in the past and there is a major fault line which runs through New York State. In the unlikely event Alfred experiences an earthquake; residents should take the following precautions.

If You Are Inside:

Drop under something heavy, like a desk or sturdy table, or take cover against an inside wall.

Cover your head.

Hold onto the furniture you have ducked under.

Stay Inside - never leave a building during an earthquake because objects and outside walls can fall on you. If you are in bed, hold on and stay there, protecting your head with a pillow.

If You Are Outside:

Move into the open, away from buildings, bridges, power lines, utility poles, and trees.

Drop to the ground.

Stay in the open until the shaking stops.

If You Are In a Car:

Stop immediately and remain in your car.

If necessary and possible, move to a clear area away from buildings, trees, bridges, overpasses, wires, and utility poles.

Once the shaking has stopped, proceed cautiously.

Avoid bridges or ramps that might have been damaged during the quake.

Man-made Disaster (Fire, Hazardous Materials, Criminal Activity, Etc.)

If you are notified of a man-made disaster via SUNY warning siren or Allegany County 911 Center you should shelter in place or seek the nearest shelter until you receive more information or an all clear from local authorities.

What ever the disaster residents should put together an emergency kit that includes a three-day supply of drinking water and food you don't have to refrigerate or cook; first aid supplies; a portable NOAA weather radio; a wrench and other basic tools; a flashlight; work gloves; emergency cooking equipment; portable lanterns; fresh batteries for each piece of equipment; clothing; blankets; baby items; prescription medications; extra car and house keys; extra eyeglasses; credit cards and cash; important documents, including insurance policies.