

TOWN OF ARCADIA

ELECTION CONTINGENCY PLAN

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**Approved at the Town of Arcadia Board Meeting on
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**Thanks to the following for providing copies of their
plan:**

City of Chippewa Falls

City of Monona

City of Oconomowoc

City of Omro

Town of Winneconne

INTRODUCTION

Voting places and procedures, controlled by state laws, are highly diverse. Uniform state contingency laws to deal with terrorism emergencies during a presidential election or otherwise, would benefit everyone. Although these contingency laws have been highly discussed, they have resulted in no such developed plan.

Until this time, the Town of Arcadia's official polling place has not operated under the direction of an election contingency plan for guidance in the event of Terrorism, Fire, or any other Natural Disaster that may take place during the election process.

Suppose there were to be an organized effort by terrorists to implement a scheme of attacking polling locations across the nation. It would no doubt keep terrified voters from the polls, and it would distort and disrupt the democratic process. Polling locations are attractive targets and it is our obligation to provide certain protections for our democratic rights.

This plan is being developed to serve as an alternate plan of election operations for the Town of Arcadia in the event of a terrorist activity or an emergency that may evolve on Election Day. It in no way protects against such activity, however it will protect our right to continue to vote and carry out our democratic duties.

This plan will help to provide guidance to the operations our Election Inspectors and Town Officials will be responsible to carry out. It is designed to assist the Election Officials, in the case of an emergency or evacuation during the election process. All Election Officials, Town Elected Positions, and employees should be knowledgeable of what to do in the event of a fire, tornado, bomb threat, hazardous leak or any other threatening disaster or situation.

This manual will address the safety of Election Officials, Voters, and Town of Arcadia Staff, and will insure the integrity of the election by serving as a guide for emergencies. This Plan should be followed as closely as possible, with the first consideration being the safety of the Election Inspectors, Voters, and individuals in the facility. It should be understood that with an emergency situation there might be an element of unpredictability and a need to deviate slightly from the emergency plan. This manual in no way protects against a disastrous situation, but serves a guideline for the Election Officials when dealing with possible interruptions. Furthermore, it provides guidance to the Town of Arcadia Staff if they are called upon to implement an evacuation of the facility.

IN THE CASE OF A LIFE THREATING SITUATION ALWAYS USE "9-1-1"

AS YOUR FIRST SOURCE OF CONTACT.

LOCATION & HOURS OF POLLS

The Town of Arcadia has one polling location at W26051 State Road 95, the Town of Arcadia Town Hall. The hours of operation for public voting are from 7:00 AM until 8:00 PM. Voters in line waiting to vote at 8:00 P.M. are given the opportunity to vote. Voters who are not in line at 8:00 P.M. shall not be allowed to vote in accordance with State Statutes.

SNOW STORMS

In the event of a severe snow storm on Election Day, the first priority is the safety of all of the Election Inspectors. As soon as road conditions and time permits, the Town of Arcadia Road Crew will pick up the Election Inspectors at their home and transport them to the Town of Arcadia polling place.

TRAINING OF ELECTION OFFICIALS

All persons working at the polling facility will attend a training session where this Plan will be reviewed and discussed. Evacuation procedures at the polling site will be reviewed. Responsibilities and procedures for each event outlined in this plan will be discussed.

CREDENTIALS

All Election Inspectors will wear on their person a name tag issued by the Town of Arcadia Clerk. This will act as verification that the individual is an authorized Election Inspector for the Town of Arcadia.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

If there is an emergency at the polling place, Election Inspectors should immediately call **“9-1-1”**

Other Emergency Contacts:

Local numbers no need to dial area code.

Trempealeau County Sherriff	538-4351
Trempealeau County Clerk – Paul Syverson	538-2311 Ext. 201
Wisconsin Government Accountability Board	(608) 266-8005
Internet Access Code for the Town Hall	IP Address 192.168.11 Admin: townofrkd Wireless: RKD Password: townofrkd

Evacuation Site: Riverland Energy Cooperative 323-3381
N28988 State Road 93, Arcadia

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Know all the exit locations within the Town of Arcadia office and hall building. Know the safest evacuation routes from the various areas within the building.

Locate the all the fire extinguishers within the facility and understand the proper usage procedure.

Be knowledgeable of how to dial 9-1-1 from the telephones in the facility. A personal cell phone may be used. Be knowledgeable of how to use the radio unit in the office to reach emergency personnel.

Learn where to go in the facility in case of an emergency, severe weather or tornado.

The personnel will assemble inside at the south end of the community room/election polling room. The personnel will assemble outside on grassy area between Kwik Trip and the Town Hall by the Smokey the Bear Fire Sign.

Report any unusual activity or persons at the polling location. You must notify the Arcadia Town Clerk, or the Trempealeau County Sheriff's Department at 538-4351 or dial 911 to reach emergency personnel.

Document any evacuation or emergency activities on the Inspector Statement GAB-104.

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

A communications radio is provided in the Clerk's Office for use in the event of an emergency situation. This radio should remain turned on all day. The telephone in the kitchen is available to use in the event of an emergency situation.

A personal cell phone may also be a valuable communications source. If you have a cell phone in your possession, you should also keep it within easy access and hearing range. A cell phone will be extremely helpful in the event of downed telephone lines or power outages.

The Town of Arcadia has a 2-line telephone system. Telephone extensions are located in the following areas. Three (3) telephone units are located in the Town Hall, one (1) telephone unit is located in the Clerk's Office on the Clerk's desk, one (1) telephone unit is located in the Treasurer's Office on the Treasurer's desk, and one (1) telephone unit is located in the kitchen on the wall across from the sink and next to the stove. There are two (2) telephone jacks available to plug in two(2) telephones on the east wall of the community room/election polling room.

The office computer in the Clerk's Office has access to internet and email services for use in the event of an emergency. The office internet does have wireless capability. Specific instructions on how to access is in the Emergency Contact Information page.

Be sure to familiarize yourself with each of these communication devices. Your ability to reach the Trempealeau County Sheriff's Department and other emergency personnel when a disruption in election-day activities occurs could save the life of election officials, building employees and town residents.

ELECTION EQUIPMENT/BALLOT SECURITY

The most commonly asked questions in the event of a disruption at the polling place is where are the voted ballots, where are the un-voted ballots, and what do we do with these ballots and election equipment.

The decision on what to do with the ballots and election equipment will be directly proportionate to the type of emergency you are experiencing. When you are dealing with a life-threatening situation, the evacuation and safety of human life will be the first concern. Please remember to inform any voters at your location of the safety evacuation route.

In the case of the need to evacuate:

Temporary Evacuation---Temporary Evacuation would require leaving the polling place to seek alternate shelter due to a storm, tornado, etc. Secure all election materials and follow the evacuation procedures for the situation you are in. The Election Inspectors will secure the election materials and take them to the evacuation site until it is clear to return to the polling place. After returning to the polling place, the Election Inspectors will return the two (2) Edge units and the ballot box and proceed with the election. Note the time that the polling place reopens on the Inspector's Statement. Elections may continue in the original polling place as soon as emergency personnel have cleared the building for re-entry.

Permanent Evacuation---If for any reason the polling place needs to be permanently evacuated during Election Day, all election materials should be taken to Riverland Energy Cooperative located at N28988 State Road 93, Arcadia. (telephone number 323-3381). A notice will be posted on the entrance to the Town Hall notifying voters of the evacuation and that they should report to Riverland Energy Cooperative building to vote.

The Chief Election Inspector and the Election Inspectors should immediately take all un-voted ballots into custody. The two (2) Edge Voting Machines and all single the Ballot Boxes must be secured and escorted at all times by 2 (two) Election Inspectors while being transported to Riverland Energy Cooperative. If the voting table is used, which is too heavy to be transported, remove the voted ballots from the voting table ballot boxes and place them in a sealed ballot bags. Again, these sealed bags must be escorted at all times by 2 (two) Election Inspectors while being transported to Riverland Energy Cooperative.

The purpose for removing all un-voted ballots is to prevent anyone from entering and voting on unauthorized ballots while inspectors are out of the building.

Election Inspectors will take the secured Edge units and all ballots to the evacuation site, depending on the type of disaster.

AT NO TIME WILL THE BALLOT BOXES, EDGE VOTING MACHINES, SEALED BALLOT BAGS OR BALLOTS BE OUT OF SIGHT OF THE ELECTION INSPECTORS

Voting may continue in the grassy area between Kwik Trip and the Town of Arcadia Hall by the Smokey the Bear fire sign. This will be the designated outdoor emergency assembly point in the event an evacuation of the polling place becomes necessary. The Edge units should be able to count and record ballots while on battery backup and will retain all election history until building re-entry can be obtained or until it can be safely plugged in at another location. However, a power supply may be needed if this process would continue longer than 1/2--2 1/2 hours.

If the election is not able to be completed in the designated grassy area, then a change of venue will be required. Changing the voting location will require two Election Inspectors to escort the all the election materials and voting devices to Riverland Energy Cooperative. The Town of Arcadia Clerk will determine if the event requires a change of venue. See Change of Venue below to see the procedure for moving the entire polling location.

Elections may continue in the original polling place as soon as emergency personnel have cleared the building for re-entry.

Note the time of the evacuation and/or change of venue on the Inspector's Statement GAB-104.

CHANGE OF VENUE

When it has been determined by the Town of Arcadia Clerk, Deputy Clerk, Chief Election Inspector, or Emergency Personnel that a polling location needs to be moved to effectively respond to a disaster of any kind, the following process will be executed.

All Election Inspectors will assist in packing up all voting equipment, ballots, unused ballots, challenged ballots, recreated ballots, absentee envelopes, poll lists, new registration materials, and all election forms and information that needs to be relocated (election signs, posting materials, etc.) The ballot boxes and Edge voting machines will remain locked at all times.

The Town of Arcadia Clerk, with at least 2 (two) Elections Inspectors will transport the voting equipment and all election materials to Riverland Energy Cooperative. All Election Inspectors will assist the Clerk in moving the voting equipment and all election materials to the transport vehicle(s).

See evacuation information in section Election Equipment/Ballot Security on pages 4 and 5.

The Edge Units and the sealed ballot bags/boxes will be escorted by 2 (two) Election Inspectors to a vehicle for transportation to Riverland Energy Cooperative at N28988 State Road 93, Arcadia. At this location, all Election Inspectors and the Town of Arcadia Clerk will set up the polling location as normal and continue Election Day operations. The Edge units have a battery backup so no information should be lost.

All un-voted ballots should remain in the presence of the Chief Election Inspector and at least one other Election Inspector during this change of venue.

A sign will be posted on the front entry doors at the Arcadia Town Hall designating the new polling place location at Riverland Energy Cooperative. If possible, a notice will be placed on WHTL radio station and WKBT Channel 8 directing Voters to the new polling location.

The Chief Election Inspector will note this change of location on the Inspector Statement GAB-104.

TYPE OF EMERGENCY

WORLDWIDE TERRORISM EVENT

In the event of a Terrorist Activity, the Federal Government may have a preliminary plan in place for moving activities of election days. However, if no plan exists, it will be the policy of the Town of Arcadia to continue all elections unless Federal or State officials have ordered otherwise.

Although a worldwide terrorist event dramatically affects each voter on a personal level, it may not affect the daily operations of each polling location. If there is no police order to take cover or remain indoors, all operations of the polling locations can remain intact. If you are notified to evacuate the polling location, refer to the section Election Equipment/Ballot Security for evacuation procedures.

FIRE OR FIRE ALARMS

A fire in or near the polling place on an election day can impact the operations and procedures necessary to carry out the election process. It is expected that fire department personnel will respond to fire call as needed without interrupting the activities of the election; unless the polling place is the location of the fire or is near enough to another structure fire to make evacuation a necessity. In the event that a fire or fire alarm has disturbed the activities at the polling place, the following events will be used to effectively continue the election processes.

Stay Calm and Dial 911. If deemed necessary call the Trempealeau County Sheriff's Department for further assistance.

The evacuation and safety of human life will be the first concern. Please remember to inform any voters of the safety evacuation route. Refer to Election Equipment/Ballot Security Section for directions on dealing with ballots and equipment during evacuation.

Proceed to the designated assembly location. Be careful in crossing the parking lot in moving to the grassy area between Kwik Trip and the Town of Arcadia Hall by the Smokey the Bear fire sign.

Take a head count and note any missing people. Report any missing people to the Emergency Personnel. Stay in the designated area until you are directed to do otherwise.

Do not attempt to re-enter the building until advised by Emergency Personnel.

Do not speak to the media-----refer them to Emergency Personnel.

Receive all of your information from the Emergency Personnel.

TORNADO/SEVERE WEATHER

During inclement weather, the Fire Department and Trempealeau County Sherriff's Department will be kept appraised of the severity to alert the Town of Arcadia Clerk of possible situations.

Should an evacuation occur, the evacuation procedures listed below shall be followed. If a natural disaster such as a tornado warning occurs, which requires Election Inspectors and voters to seek cover, all un-voted ballots and poll lists will be secured with the Chief Election Inspector. The Edge units can remain unplugged, locked and moved into the storage room. No ballots will be allowed into the ballot box. No further voting will be done on the voting Edge units. No un-voted ballots will be released. After the situation is resolved, regular business will resume and the Chief Election Inspector will note on his/her inspector report the time from beginning to end.

If a tornado is reported or seen in the immediate area, immediately seek shelter in the Town Hall Office storage closet or the Town Treasurer's office. Sit on the floor, knees up, head down, and hands clasp over head. All Election Inspectors should know these locations ahead of time. If time does not allow you to evacuate to a safe location, find shelter under a heavy object such as a table and protect your head.

Do not stop for personal belongings, ballots, or election equipment.

Take a head count of your group. Try to remain calm and quiet during the waiting period. Do not wander. If the building is struck by a tornado, remain in your location until it is safe to evacuate.

It is important to stay away from all sources of power, power lines, phone lines, gas lines, and windows.

Once you are clear of the area, do not re-enter the building without clearance from Emergency Personnel. After the all clear is received, Election Day operations shall resume.

The Chief Election Inspector will note this incident on the Inspector Statement GAB-104.

SUSPICIOUS OBJECT

If you receive suspicious parcel, or if you find a suspicious object on the premises:

Keep everyone from the suspicious object. The object may be potentially dangerous. In addition, preservation of evidence is important for law enforcement.

Stay calm and Call 9-1-1.

Promptly write down everything you can remember about the suspicious object.

BOMB THREAT

Most bomb threats are received by telephone. In the event of a verbal or written threat is received in the election facility immediately call 9-1-1. All bomb threat should be assumed legitimate and a safety concern.

Promptly write down everything you can remember about receiving the verbal or written threat. Listen for background noise, pay attention to the caller's voice and what he/she said. If the situation allows, ask questions pertaining to where the bomb is located, when will it explode, what it look like, or what the person's name and address is. Police interviewers will need this information. A Bomb Treat Checklist is attached to assist you with gathering information.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS INCIDENTS

Many polling locations are located near railroad crossings or major roads. Hazardous substances are transported via both. A leak or spill is a possibility and a concern.

If you are the first person to identify a leak or hazardous substance, call 9-1-1 to report the incident.

The Arcadia-Glencoe Fire Department and County Emergency Government will be the Emergency Personnel to assess the situation.

Remain at the polling location unless notified otherwise by the Emergency Personnel. Close doors and windows if leak or spill is outside of the facility.

Refer to Election Equipment/Ballot Security Section for directions for dealing with ballots and equipment and also refer to the Change of Venue if required to evacuate the polling location.

POWER OUTAGE

The Edge units contain power supply backups that will continue to operate in the event of a power outage. The Edge internal battery should last approximately 1/2 to 2 1/2 hours depending upon activity. After 1/2 to 2 1/2 hours, turn off the Edge units and the voters must use the paper ballots. Note the time of the power outage on the Inspector's Statement GAB-104.

Should the polling place loose power, the Town of Arcadia Clerk will assist in providing flashlights and any other supplies. Election Day operations will continue as practical or until a change of venue is required. After the power returns, the Chief Election Inspector will turn on the Edge units. The Chief Election Inspector will note the time that power was lost and restored on the Inspector's Statement GAB-104.

If power is not restored before the end of Election Day, secure all of the voted ballots in a ballot bag and take all of the election supplies, including the Edge units, to Riverland Energy Cooperative. Ballots will then be processed at Riverland Energy Cooperative.

In the event of a long-term power outage, a change of venue will be required.

If there is a Town wide power outage, ballots shall be secured with the Election Inspectors at the Town of Arcadia polling location until 8:00 PM. Then, the ballots will be processed at the City of Arcadia.

If a power outage should occur:

Remain calm.

Provide assistance to visitors and staff in the immediate area.

If you are in an area that does not have windows, proceed cautiously to an area that has emergency lights.

The Edge unit(s) will retain all data in its memory and can be restarted after a power outage.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES: STAFF MEMBERS AND VISITORS

If you observe a staff member or visitor who appears to be seriously ill or injured:

Dial 9-1-1 immediately. Speak clearly and remain calm. Give the 9-1-1 Operator the location and type of emergency. Answer any questions posed by the 9-1-1 call taker. Listen to all instructions provided.

Unless it is a life-threatening situation, do not render first aid.

Do not move a person who has fallen.

Obtain from the injured person (if possible) his/her name, phone number, address, date of birth, and a brief description of what happened.

Avoid unnecessary conversation with, or about, the ill or injured person.

Report any employee injury to the Town of Arcadia Clerk.

The Chief Election Inspector will report the incident on the Inspectors Statement GAB-104.

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

Be aware of the possibility of an incident occurring at the voting location. Please note the following:

All threats of violence must be taken seriously.

Report any threats to the Chief Election Inspector to make a determination as to the next course of action.

For any situation that involves immediate threat of violence, an Inspector should notify local laws enforcement. Dial 9-1-1. Be prepared to provide the following information:

- The location and type of emergency.
- How many suspect(s) are involved.
- What type of weapons the suspect(s) have, if any.
- Description of suspect(s) including height, weight, gender, facial hair, tattoos, etc. (when describing think of someone you know of the same gender and compare;
- Description of motor vehicle, if known.
- In the event of a confrontation, do not panic.
- Do exactly what you are told---no more and no less. Do not do anything to surprise the individual.

The Chief Election Inspector will report the incident on the Inspectors Statement GAB-104.

If a hostage situation exists, be prepared to do the following:

- If you are able, call 9-1-1 and leave the line open
- Follow the orders from the hostage taker- DO NOT ARGUE!
- Use visual observation and hearing ability to gather as much information as possible.
- Listen for “statements” made by the hostage taker;
- Look for safe escape routes;
- Look for hiding places such as under desks, in closets, etc; (even if your entire body is not concealed, use it anyway);
- When law enforcement arrives follow their instructions.

NOTE: Elections Inspectors should consider having a predetermined word or phrase that would alert fellow Election Inspectors of the situation.

EFFECT ON POLL WATCHERS

Poll Watchers would be expected to exit any building that is evacuated and follow all emergency procedures. They may continue to watch the election processes without interruption. They will still be prohibited from interfering with the election process. If they are asked to leave and refuse to do so, they can be removed by the Trempealeau County Sherriff's Department.

CONCLUSION

Never before has the Town of Arcadia had to initiate a plan for these types of events. After the events of September 11, 2001, a concern has been raised on how to handle different types of emergency scenarios. This Contingency Plan allows for the immediate response to these situations. It prepares the Town Officials, Election Inspectors and enables voters to continue on with their democratic right to vote.

All questions and concerns regarding these policies should be referred to the Town of Arcadia Clerk at 608-323-3470.