

Town of Dunn Storm Shelter Guide

STORM SHELTER RIBBON CUTTING AND OPEN HOUSE

Residents are invited to walk to the shelter site for a ribbon cutting ceremony and public address at 11:00 AM followed by an open house until 7:00 PM. Please stop in at your convenience for a tour of your new shelter. Staff will be available to answer questions. Cookies and lemonade will be served.

DATE: Friday, November 13, 2009

TIMES: Ribbon Cutting at 11 AM. Drop in for the Open House anytime until 7:00 PM.

WHERE: Town of Dunn Storm Shelter, 699 Norman Drive

Peace of Mind in Bay View Heights Neighborhood

by Cathy Hasslinger, Clerk Treasurer, WCMC

As I walk through the nearly completed Town of Dunn Storm Shelter, I feel a sense of relief. I am glad to know that folks in the neighborhood, who don't have basements, will have a safe place to weather a storm. To me, this building is much more than the sturdy walls designed to withstand 200 mile per hour winds. The secure foundation, storm shutters and heavy duty doors, locks and hinges are only part of the story. When I walk into this building I am reminded of the collaboration of public and private organizations and dedicated residents that made this project happen.

It is often assumed that the storm shelter was proposed in response to the August 18, 2005 devastating tornado that downed trees in the land parcels adjacent to Bay View Heights and destroyed homes just a half-mile away. The tragedy of the 2005 tornado brought much needed attention, but the Town of Dunn Storm Shelter project was already in planning stages when the 2005 storm hit. Grant applications had begun and Westbrook Associated Engineers, Inc. was already working with the Town on drawings required for grant applications.

The first grant applications submitted to FEMA did not result in funding. The Town was informed that the

project met the criteria, but that there simply was not enough money for all of the worthy projects submitted. The second application was successful and set into motion a project that would require coordination and collaboration in order to succeed.

Acknowledgements:

I would like to thank, in no particular order, some of the individuals and agencies that participated in the planning and construction of the Town of Dunn Storm Shelter:

Bryan Folz, Donn Barber, and Norm Schweiss of Bay View Heights Mobile Home Park for the donation of a 98-year lease on the land for the shelter and constant support for the operations and construction of the building.

Roxanne Gray of Wisconsin Emergency Management for her role in supporting this project through the State of Wisconsin to access FEMA funding that would not have been available to local government.

The Town of Dunn Mobile Home Commission, Pam Valenta, Bill Rusch, and Robert Radley for their steadfast support and diligent work on the operations planning. A spe-

cial thanks to Bill Rusch who took a special interest and followed up regularly on the progress of the shelter. Bill wielded a shovel at the groundbreaking ceremony and took great pride in seeing the shelter succeed. Bill passed away in September, but he will be fondly remembered by those involved with this project.

Dave Janda of Dane County Emergency Management for contributing storm data and analysis for grant applications and for designing the operations plan with the collaboration of the Town and the Mobile Home Commission.

Lori Basteau of Dane County Department of Human Services for her role in supporting this project through the Community Development Block Grant process.

Cindy Holmes of the Dane County Sheriff's office for her long-term support and participation in planning, operations, and co-ordination with the Sheriff's office.

Gary Bell of Dane County 911 dispatch for coordinating early warning, 911 call box, and remote opening of the shelter.

Marty Lamers, Stoughton Fire

Chief, for his participation in emergency response planning, design, and operations.

Contractors: Bret Newcomb of Newcomb Construction for the final design and construction, Chris Blum of Westbrook Associated Engineers, Inc for preliminary design, Bill Biesman of Vierbicher Associates for engineering in the final design, and the subcontractors and employees of these companies for their quality work.

The Town of Oregon, Town of Rutland, and Town of Dunkirk for providing labor and equipment under the Town's reciprocity arrangement.

Town staff and officials who have been persistent over many years and worked to see this project completed.

A big thank you in advance to those who have volunteered to serve on the Operations Team for their commitment to serve the community and ensure the safety of their neighbors.

We look forward to working together in future years with the neighborhood and emergency response personnel to assure that the Town of Dunn Storm Shelter protects lives and provides peace of mind.

An F5 (incredible damage) tornado touched down and remained on the ground throughout its entire 36-mile journey. Nine people were left dead.

An F3 (severe damage) tornado struck in the Town of Dunn, destroying over 60 homes.



An F3 (severe damage) tornado touched down in the Town of Dunn. Its track of devastation leaving 69 homes destroyed, 86 homes with major damage. Twenty-three residents were injured and there was one death attributed to the event.

June 1984

Within 30 miles of Bay View Mobile Home Park

June 1992

Within 3 miles of Bay View Mobile Home Park

August 18, 2005

Within 1/2 mile of Bay View Mobile Home Park

Why Do We Need a Storm Shelter?

The reason that the Town of Dunn built a storm shelter is that residents of the Bay View Heights Mobile Home Park do not have adequate shelter from tornados and high wind events. Most residents stay in their homes or attempt to drive to neighboring communities.

The American Meteorological Society states in their Mobile Homes and Severe Windstorms policy statement adopted October 8, 2004, that mobile home residents are injured or killed in disproportionate numbers from high wind events. Statistics from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Storm Prediction Center for the period from 1985-2002 show that 49% of the tornado fatalities in the United States are suffered by those who remain within or attempt to flee mobile homes.

In 2005, tornado fatalities in mobile homes were 34 individuals nationwide, while only three individuals

lost their lives in permanent homes as a result of tornadoes. One of the 2005 fatalities was caused by a tornado that passed within a half-mile of Bayview Heights Mobile Home Park.

A FEMA document entitled "Are You Ready" warns people in a vehicle, trailer, or mobile home to "Get out immediately and go to the lowest floor of a sturdy, nearby building or a storm shelter. Mobile homes, even if tied down, offer little protection from tornadoes." Unfortunately, residents of Bay View Heights Mobile Home Park are isolated in a rural area and did not have access to a nearby shelter. Residents of Bay View Mobile Home Park were at risk because there were no safe storm sheltering options. Staying in the mobile home is unsafe. Attempting to drive during a storm is perhaps more unsafe.

During the August 2005 tornado, a small number of residents sought

shelter in a culvert beneath US Highway 51 that is oriented east/west. The American Meteorological Society states in their May 2000 Bulletin that highway overpasses do not provide protection and can produce a wind tunnel effect. The east/west orientation of this large highway culvert is problematic in most wind events. Even if the culvert provided some protection, it would not be large enough to accommodate the residents of the mobile home park.

Recommendations of the National Weather Service and the American Red Cross for residents of mobile home parks in rural areas where there is no nearby shelter are to leave their home or car and lie down in a ditch and cover their head with their hands. We are not aware of any residents during either of the

Nationwide In 2005

Tornado fatalities in mobile homes were 34 individuals.

Tornado fatalities in permanent homes were only three individuals.

last two near-miss tornado events, that took their families out into the storm to

lie in a wet ditch and wait for the tornado to pass. While this recommendation is well publicized in our area, it is not practiced because it is counter-intuitive. It does not feel safe to go outside in the wind, rain, lightning, hail, and flying debris. Finally, residents of the Bay View Heights neighborhood have a safe place to weather the storm.



Town of Dunn Storm Shelter during construction in October of 2009

Map of Storm Shelter and Travel Routes



What to Bring to the Shelter

- Any needed medication or medical equipment.
- Personal care items, baby care items.
- Important papers.
- Appropriate clothing for weather conditions.
- Any essential supplies that you may need to assure your comfort and safety in the shelter.
- Cell phone
- Eyeglasses or contact lenses

What NOT to Bring to the Shelter

- No smoking, drugs or alcohol.
- No weapons of any kind
- No large items that take up space needed for people.
- All music and entertainment devices must be used with earphones or muted.
- It's best if you do not bring your pet, but if you feel you must, the pet must be confined in a carrier and must be kept in the designated area for pets. To protect people with severe allergies to pets, please see a member of the operations team immediately upon entering the shelter. They will assist you with your pet.

Join the Operations Team Volunteers Needed

The success of the storm shelter depends upon neighbors helping neighbors. Those who live closest to the shelter or who have experience or training in responding to emergencies are encouraged to volunteer for the Operations Team.

Operations Team members are responsible for monitoring weather conditions, opening the shelter as needed, assisting residents using the shelter, calling for emergency services when needed, turning on lights, televisions, weather radios, and climate control. Training is provided by the Town of Dunn and the Dane County Sheriff's Department.

If you are interested in volunteering, Call Mary at the Town Hall at 255-4219 ext. 201

Parking Regulations

Parking is not provided at or near the shelter building. Residents who are able should walk to the shelter. In the event that severe weather develops with very little warning and people need to drive to the shelter, or people need to drive due to mobility limitations or illness, cars may be parked in the grassy areas around the shelter. The driveway must remain clear for emergency vehicles.

Emergency Preparedness

The Town of Dunn recommends that all residents prepare themselves for inclement weather. It is better to have a plan now than to be caught off guard when a tornado strikes. Please consider undertaking these suggestions.

PREPAREDNESS ACTIVITIES:

- Establish an individual or family emergency plan
- Know the best routes to take to the shelter
- Know what kinds of things to bring (or not bring) to the shelter (listed at the top of this page)
- Have a weather radio or other means of receiving notifications in addition to the siren

DURING SEVERE WEATHER:

- Be aware of weather conditions especially if a Watch has been issued and respond to Warnings when they are issued.
- Bring essential equipment and supplies to the shelter such as infant and child care items, medications, protective clothing, important papers, and a cell phone.
- Walk to the shelter if safe and practical
- Assist neighbors if needed
- Remain calm and orderly when in the shelter and follow all rules.

AFTER SHELTER USE:

- Return the shelter to its pre-use condition
- Provide feedback on operations and potential improvements



Dane County Emergency Command Post responding to resident needs following the August 2005 tornado. Dane County Emergency Management has been pivotal in planning the operation of the storm shelter.



Damage from 2005 Tornado

Frequently Asked Questions

WHO owns the Storm Shelter?

The Storm Shelter is owned and maintained by the Town of Dunn. The Town coordinates with Bay View Heights management, but the shelter operations will rely on residents in the neighborhood who volunteer to respond in the event of severe weather by opening, operating and closing the storm shelter. Storms can strike at anytime of the day or night and Bay View Heights management and town staff may not be nearby.



WHEN will the Shelter Doors be Open?

The shelter building doors will normally be locked. The building will be opened when the National Weather Service issues the following severe weather advisories for Dane County:

- Severe Thunderstorm Warning
- Tornado Watch
- Tornado Warning
- Other weather-related emergencies. As ordered by Dane County Emergency Management, the Dane County Sheriff's Department or the Town of Dunn for the purpose of ensuring public safety in any emergency situation.



HOW will the Doors be Opened?

There are two important components to the opening of the storm shelter.

1. Bay View Heights Storm Shelter Operations Team
2. 911 Callbox and Keybox

When inclement weather strikes, one or more members of the Bay View Heights Storm Shelter Operations Team will unlock the shelter and residents may go inside. In the event that a resident arrives at the Storm Shelter before the Operations Team, a 911 callbox has been installed on the outside of the storm shelter. The phone inside this box will dial the Dane County 911 Center and a dispatcher will give instructions to residents on how to open up the keybox located near the door. Residents may then open the door with a key.



WHO can use the Shelter?

The shelter is a public building and when open, will be available for use by anyone seeking refuge from severe weather, including people who are not residents of Bay View Heights.



HOW will Residents Know when the Shelter is Open?

NOAA Weather Radios, radio and television broadcasts, and sirens will be used to disseminate warnings, however, the ultimate responsibility for receiving and acting on severe weather warnings rests with the residents. Town, County, or Bay View Heights management personnel WILL NOT perform door-to-door warnings of the residents.

Residents are encouraged to use the Severe Thunderstorm Watch and Tornado Watch information to anticipate the development of severe weather. In many, but not all cases, these Watches are issued well in advance of the storm. This should allow time for residents to gather essential items and walk to the shelter in an orderly fashion. People should not wait for a Warning to be issued to determine the need to seek shelter.



WHERE can I Purchase a Weather Radio?

A limited number of weather radios will be available for purchase at the Storm Shelter during the Open House event on November 13, 2009. The cost of a radio is \$25.

WHEN will Residents Know when to Leave the Storm Shelter?

There WILL NOT be an "All-Clear" message issued. Rather, all National Weather Service Watches and Warning have an expiration time, after which the severe weather conditions are no longer a concern. A television will be provided in the shelter so that people can monitor the situation and make their own determination as to when it is safe to leave. At the expiration of the weather watch/warning the shelter will be vacated and locked under the supervision of the Sheriff's Deputy if present or an Operations Team member.



WHO will assist residents when the Shelter is Open?

An Operations Team of trained residents will respond during shelter openings to provide support. The operations team will unlock the doors, turn on the lights, call 911 to report emergencies and have access to first aid supplies. The Dane County Sheriff's office will be notified of every shelter opening and will provide assistance as needed.



HOW can I Join the Operations Team?

Volunteers are needed! If you live in Bay View Heights and are interested in joining the operations team, please contact Mary Gross at (608) 255-4219 ext. 201. Operations Team members open and close the shelter and provide assistance to residents when the building is open. A cell phone and experience with first aid or emergency situations is helpful.



HOW will Children be Entertained in the Storm Shelter?

Please bring toys, books and quiet play items for young children. Severe weather can be unsettling and a favorite item may provide comfort. Electronics or games must be used with headphones or the sound must be muted.



WHAT Facilities/Supplies are available in the Storm Shelter?

The Storm Shelter will have restrooms and a drinking fountain and is ADA accessible. Emergency supplies are limited and will not support long-term operations. In the event of storm damage and a need for long-term shelter, other resources will be used. Buses may transport residents to a better equipped facility. Residents are encouraged to bring with them any essential supplies that they may need to assure their comfort and safety.



WILL my taxes increase to pay for the shelter?

We do not anticipate any tax increase for the construction of the shelter. The Town received grants from FEMA and the CDBG program that cover most of the out of pocket costs. These grant funds were budgeted by other agencies and were scheduled to be awarded to the most qualified projects. If the Town had not built the shelter, those grant funds would have been used elsewhere. The Town experienced substantial use of staff time, labor from other municipalities within our reciprocity arrangement, and equipment use.



WHAT will the conditions inside the shelter be during a storm?

The building is climate controlled, but residents are encouraged to dress for the weather because it may take some time for the building temperature to adjust. The shelter may be very crowded and provide for mostly standing room. Seating may be insufficient for the number of users. In wet weather, the floors may become wet from the foot traffic coming in from outdoors. There will be a weather radio and television to provide information about developing weather conditions.