



Establishing a Designated Emergency Evacuation Shelter Evanston, Illinois

Many thanks to all the members of your House of Worship for deciding to participate in building a network of Emergency Evacuation Shelters! This is very important work that will make our community a safer place to live and will touch lives should disaster strike. Here is an outline of the steps involved in getting things set up:

1. Designate a Primary Contact Person

Identify a person who will be the lead representative of your organization for setting up and operating the shelter. We'll share their information with Evanston's emergency response organizers who will be helping you navigate the process and get things up and running. If you have questions or need assistance, *please contact any of us:*

Kimberly Kull Division Chief, Evanston Fire Department
kkull@cityofevanston.org
Mobile: (224) 707-3248 Office: (847) 866-5922

Hank Welch Duty Officer, American Red Cross
hankwelcharc@gmail.com
Mobile: (847) 721-7598

Robert Lounsbury IPERC Coordinator
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Mobile: (312) 502-6900

2. Inventory your Facilities

Take a look at your facilities and decide what areas would be available for use as a shelter in an emergency. Take approximate area measurements; note entrances and exits; look at accessibility. Call us; we will be happy to walk around with you.

3. Complete the Red Cross Pre-Inspection Survey

Download a copy of the [American Red Cross site survey form](#), fill it in and submit it to the Red Cross.



4. On-Site Inspection by the Red Cross

Once the Red Cross has your survey they will work with you to schedule a site visit. They will walk through your building and talk with you about how different areas could be used in a shelter operation.

5. Red Cross Formal Letter of Agreement

Following the site survey, the Red Cross will send you a formal letter of agreement. This should be carefully reviewed and officially approved by your governing body, and signed by an authorized officer. This is the formal step that creates the designated emergency shelter.

6. Create Your Shelter Team

You will need a team of volunteers willing to respond and operate the shelter in the event of an emergency, and IPERC can help guide you through this process. IPERC will add you to their online system, so you will have access to administrative tools that will help manage your team.

A key thing to remember is that everyone is busy and has a life to live: it is understood that not everyone can show up every time an emergency is declared. It only takes a handful of volunteers to open the doors, turn on the lights, and get ready for the inbound Red Cross team.

7. Train Your Team

The Red Cross will provide onsite training for your team (about 3 hours), and additional online courses are available for those who are interested in learning more.

8. Prepare for Action

You will need to set up procedures for contacting your shelter team in the event your shelter is activated. IPERC can help with this: the online system provides for managing call lists, and a new system to automatically send out alert text messages and emails is in the works.

Thank you for being part of this very important work!