

Farm Emergency Plans

Tips for Extension Educators

Purpose

This emergency plan template is designed to provide farm families and emergency providers clear and concise information about a farm in the event of an accident, fire, or natural disaster.

- The template is set up to be a resource for both the farm family/staff and for emergency responders
- We recommend the producer shares the plan with their local fire department / first responders
- County EMS directors may be willing to input the plan information into the county GIS system so the 911 dispatcher has immediate access during an emergency call
- Insurance companies may offer a discount if a farm has a formal emergency plan

Educator's Role

The extension educator will work directly with the farm family and assist them in completing the emergency plan template. This program provides an excellent opportunity for educators to work with and get to know producers who might not actively participate in other extension activities.

Process

While the process of completing the emergency plan will vary between educators, the following steps are recommended in order to produce a quality, useful plan for the producer.

- Promote the emergency plan at producer meetings, personal contacts, commodity groups
- When a farmer expresses interest, follow-up with a phone call to set an appointment for a farm visit.
The template can be started during the initial phone call by obtaining:
 - o Name and address of farm
 - o Directions to the farm
 - o Confirm location of farm site on Google maps (or similar) during initial phone call
 - o Describe the template and the information to be obtained. If possible, email a pdf copy of the template to the producer and encourage them to begin completing some of the sections (contacts, farm staff, resources page)
 - o Typically the maps (farmstead, neighborhood) will be completed during the farm visit
- Locate the farm site on Google maps. Take a screen shot of the farm site (or sites) and copy into the MS Publisher template
 - o Press "CTRL PrSc ", then paste into template
 - o Using the crop function to remove unnecessary parts of the image by using the "Format Picture" menu or by right-clicking on the image. Adjust size as necessary (the bigger the map is on the page, the easier to see details)
 - o Use the same process for the "Neighborhood Map" and for any additional farmsteads used by the operation.
- Take a "work copy" of the template to the farm visit that has any information already obtained.

- During the farm visit, complete each page/section of the template. While hopefully the farmer already has completed some of the information, the educator will likely need to talk through each section with them.
- Label the appropriate buildings, features, and fixtures on the maps.
 - o The map will probably be the most useful tool for emergency responders.
 - o Put as much information on the map as possible so that responders can quickly locate hazards and possible resources in an emergency situation.
- ** Depending on your preference, an educator may handwrite the information on a paper copy of the template during the meeting, and complete the template on the computer at a later time. Or you may prefer to take a laptop and type the information during the meeting. If you type in the information during the meeting, WiFi access is very helpful so that maps can be changed if necessary or phone numbers, etc. can be quickly accessed.*
- The farm visit is an excellent time for a farm tour, and also provides the chance for the educator to take note of features or issues potentially missed while completing the template.
- After the information is gathered during the farm visit, the educator can then complete the template at the office (if not done on-site).
 - o Type the information into the correct section on the template
 - Add pages or lines as necessary
 - o Label the maps using text boxes, shapes, etc. in MS Publisher
 - o On a computer GPS coordinates can be obtained in Google Maps by left-clicking a location on the map. A pop-up box will show the coordinates for that spot.
 - Format can be in Degrees/Minutes/Seconds or decimal (decimal coordinates are easier to type).
 - o Delete unused pages (e.g. “Additional Farmstead Map”).
 - o Print at least two copies of the completed template (one for the farm family and one to provide to the local fire department).
 - If possible, laminate at least one of the copies for the farm family.
 - Some producers may request a copy for their insurance provider as well
 - o Deliver or mail the completed template to the producer
 - Encourage them to share the document with the local fire department and county EMS director
 - o Save the file as a .pdf document and email a copy to the producer.

NOTES:

- This is a “hands-on” process. We want to work directly with (and for) the farmers to ensure that the emergency plans are completed.
- The template is flexible – add, delete, change as necessary depending on the situation
- Plan on a significant time commitment for completing the emergency plan. The following are estimates:
 - o 1 hour – Prep time including initial phone call, some data entry, and copying maps into template

- 2-3 hours – Farm visit and completion of template
 - 1 hour – Finish typing template, printing, follow-up and delivery/ mailing of finished product.
- This template is set up to produce a basic “starter” plan. Some situations may require much more detailed information (Certified Livestock Producer, large bulk fertilizer or chemical storage facilities, etc.)

Recommended Information for Maps

- Label using the names the family uses (red barn, old tool shed, etc.)
- Barns, houses, shops, outbuildings, silos, grain bins, manure storage/pits, livestock barns (note if manure storage below), upright or bunker silos
- Land features
 - Roads and crossroads, driveways and lanes, fences and gates
 - Wells and/or municipal water supply, hydrants, ponds, streams, rivers, lakes and wetlands
 - Septic tanks, wastewater systems, cisterns
 - Drainage ditches, culverts, surface drains
 - Slope of land (drainage direction)
 - North direction
- Possible access challenges (narrow bridges, steep slopes)
- Chemical/Fertilizer/Fuel storage
 - Abbreviations that can be used:
 - AST – Aboveground storage tank
 - CG – Compressed gasses (oxy/acetylene)
 - E – Main electrical shutoff
 - EP – Emergency plan location
 - G – Main gas shutoff
 - LP – Liquid propane (note if buried)
 - RU – Refrigeration units/compressors and coolant type
 - UST – Underground storage tank
 - Well – Farm water well