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# Rusk County

## Election Contingency Plan



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# INTRODUCTION and PURPOSE

## **INTRODUCTION**

Notably, none of the Rusk County polling places are, or ever have been, protected from acts of terrorism, fire, or natural disasters.

This plan has been developed to serve as an alternate plan of operation for municipalities in Rusk County in the event of terrorist activity, or any emergency on Election Day. This contingency plan in no way protects against such activity, however it will protect our right to continue to vote and carry out our democratic duties. This will further provide guidance to the overall operation, which our Election Inspectors and Municipal Officials will be responsible to carry out.

## **PURPOSE**

This document will serve as the emergency response/contingency plan in case of any unexpected circumstance that requires a change in the standard operation procedures on Election Day. The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for election staff, and for the general safety of polling locations, all while maintaining the integrity of an election.

This document shall be reviewed with Election Inspectors as part of the Clerk's pre-election training. The document and its contents shall be considered sensitive in nature. County Clerks, as well as polling place property owners and facility managers, should be notified of relevant aspects of these plans.

# POLLING PLACE INFORMATION

TOWN	LOCATION	HOURS
Atlanta	N5200 Hwy 40 – Bruce	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Big Bend	N1195 Hwy 40 – New Auburn	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Big Falls	W6945 Hwy J – Ladysmith	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Cedar Rapids	W3160 Hwy B – Glen Flora	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Dewey	N5323 Hwy I – Tony	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Flambeau	W8493 E. Parkview Rd – Ladysmith	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Grant	W8494 Hwy P – Ladysmith	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Grow	N4310 Hwy I – Tony	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Hawkins	705 Main St – Hawkins	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Hubbard	N9967 Hwy J – Ladysmith	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Lawrence	W3570 Walrath Rd – Glen Flora	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Marshall	W5594 Main St – Sheldon	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Murry	W10625 Lone Pine Rd – Bruce	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Richland	4500 Dahl St – Ingram	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Rusk	N704 Hwy F – Chetek	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
South Fork	N7384 Hwy M – Hawkins	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Strickland	W16508 Hwy 8 – Rice Lake	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Stubbs	N3305 S. Hutchinson Rd – Bruce	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Thornapple	N4502 Hwy E – Bruce	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
True	N5746 Cedar St – Glen Flora	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Washington	N1146 Hwy E – Bruce	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Wilkinson	N6304 Stout Rd – Weyerhaeuser	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Willard	N1510 Hwy 27 – Conrath	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Wilson	W16097 N. Bucks Lake Rd – Birchwood	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
VILLAGE	LOCATION	HOURS
Bruce	100 W. River Ave – Bruce	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.

Conrath	N2720 Park St – Conrath	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Glen Flora	N5746 Cedar St – Glen Flora	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Hawkins	509 Main St – Hawkins	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Ingram	N5970 Hwy 73 – Ingram	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Sheldon	W5594 Main St – Sheldon	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Tony	N5323 Hwy I – Tony	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
Weyerhaeuser	N3723 2 <sup>nd</sup> St – Weyerhaeuser	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.
<b>CITY</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>HOURS</b>
Ladysmith	511 Miner Ave W. – Ladysmith	7:00a.m. – 8:00p.m.

## LOCATION STAFFING

Each polling location will have the following staff members present:

- Chief Election Inspector (1-3)
- Election Inspectors (4-12)

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Chief Election Inspectors should ensure that Election Inspectors are made aware of these procedures and their responsibilities in advance of an election, if possible. Identifying duties and assigning them in advance may help alleviate stress and clarify responsibilities in case of an emergency.

### WORLDWIDE TERRORISM EVENT

In the event of 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 Rusk County to act accordingly. All elections will continue unless Federal or State officials have ordered otherwise. If this were to happen, the County Clerk will be notified by the official designated agencies. The County Clerk will notify the county emergency management coordinator, county law enforcement, and municipal clerks of the course of action. It will be the municipal clerk’s responsibility to notify all the polling places under their jurisdiction. The County Clerk will contact the Municipal Clerk if any court decision is made to change polling hours on Election Day.

A worldwide terrorist event, although could dramatically affect 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.

## ACTIVE SHOOTER

Active shooter situations are unpredictable and evolve quickly. As a result, these situations may be over even before law enforcement arrives on the scene. Individuals must be prepared, both mentally and physically, to react to an active shooter situation.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security recommends these best practices when coping with an active shooter situation:

- Be aware of your environment and any possible dangers.
- Take note of the two nearest exits in any facility you visit or are assigned to work as an Election Inspector.
- If you are in an office, stay there and secure the door.
- If you are in a hallway, get into a room and secure the door.
- As a last resort, attempt to take the active shooter down. When the shooter is in close range and you cannot flee, your chance of survival is much greater if you try to incapacitate him/her.
- Dial 9-1-1 WHEN IT IS SAFE TO DO SO!

## WORKPLACE VIOLENCE / OTHER ACTS OF VIOLENCE

Be aware of the possibility of an incident occurring at your voting location. Treat all threats and warnings seriously.

- Report any and all threats to the Clerk and Chief Election Inspector to decide as to the next course of action.
- If a situation involves an immediate threat of violence to persons and/or the election process, dial 9-1-1.
- In the event of a personal confrontation, do your best to stay calm.

## THREATENING PHONE CALL/BOMB THREAT/SUSPICIOUS OBJECT

If you receive a written threat, suspicious package, or find a suspicious object on the premises:

- Keep anyone from handling or going near the object in question as it may be dangerous. In addition, preservation of evidence is important for law enforcement.
- Stay calm and dial 9-1-1.
- Promptly write down everything you can remember about receiving the threat and/or finding/receiving the suspicious object.
- Depending on where the object is found (and in accordance with instructions from 9-1-1 operator/law enforcement), you may need to evacuate the polling place. If you are notified to evacuate the polling place, follow the instruction regarding evacuation in this plan.

## EVACUATION

Treat all threats and warnings seriously. If an evacuation becomes necessary (i.e., fire, fire alarm, etc.), the following steps can help keep people safe and effectively continue the election processes:

- Stay calm and dial 9-1-1.
- The evacuation and safety of human life is the first concern. Inform any voters at your location of the safety evacuation route.
- Secure election materials, if possible (voting equipment, ballots, inspectors' statements).
- Proceed to the designated area (**determined by each polling location**) until/unless you are directed to do otherwise. If possible, the Chief Inspector may allow voting to continue in the designated area.
- Take accountability and note any missing people. Report missing people to emergency personnel.

## SEVERE WEATHER/NATURAL DISASTER

To ensure safety and security during inclement weather, the Clerk shall monitor and be in communication with local law enforcement, emergency responders, and Chief Election Inspectors. Safety of human life is the first concern.

- If a natural disaster occurs that provides ample time and requires inspectors and voters to take cover in the designated area. All unvoted ballots and polls lists will be secured by the Chief Inspector. The voting equipment/ballot box can be unplugged and locked in a secure storage area. No ballots shall be inserted into the voting equipment/ballot box, nor should any additional ballots be issued during this time. When regular business resumes, the Chief Inspector shall note the time from beginning to end that voting was suspended on the Inspectors' Statement.
- If a tornado is reported or seen in the immediate area, seek shelter in the designated area (**determined by each polling location**). 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 accountability and note any missing people.
  - If the building is struck by a tornado, remain in your location until it is safe to evacuate.
  - Stay away from sources of power, power lines, phone lines, gas lines, and windows.
  - Once you are clear of the area, do not re-enter the building until/unless authorized by emergency personnel.
  - Report missing persons to emergency personnel.

## ELECTRICAL OUTAGE

In the event a polling location loses power, the voting equipment contains power supply backups that allow the equipment to continue to operate for approximately 3-4 hours. This battery backup also stores the totals for ballots already recorded.

Turn off the voting equipment and have voters deposit their ballots into the equipment's auxiliary compartment. Note the time of the power outage on the Inspectors' Statement and contact the Clerk immediately. If flashlights and/or emergency lighting is not already available at the polling location, Clerks should reach out to the Municipal Board to deliver flashlights and any other necessary supplies.

When power is restored, turn the voting equipment back on and process any voted ballots located in the auxiliary compartment through the equipment. If power is not restored before the end of Election Day, secure all voted ballots in a ballot bag and bring them, along with all of the election supplies, to the alternate location. Ballots will be processed at the alternate location.

In the event of a long-term power outage, a change of venue may be required (see Change of Venue). If there is a wide spread power outage, ballots should be secured with the Election Inspectors at the polling location until 8:00p.m. and then they will be processed by the Clerk and Election Inspectors. In addition to the instructions listed above:

- Stay calm.
- Provide assistance to visitors and staff in our immediate area.
- If emergency lighting is available, proceed with caution to the area with lighting (perhaps this may be natural light from windows).
- Turn off the voting equipment. The tabulator memory device will retain all data in its memory and can be restarted after a power outage.

## MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

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

- Stay calm and dial 9-1-1.
  - Provide your location and the nature of the emergency.
  - Answer all questions asked by the 9-1-1 operator.
  - Listen to and follow all instructions provided by the 9-1-1 operator.
- Do not move a person who has fallen.
- Unless it is a life-threatening emergency, do not render first aid until a qualified individual arrives or you are instructed to do so by the 9-1-1 operator.
- If possible, try to obtain from the injured person his/her name and what happened.
- Report any injury to the Clerk (after the injured person is safe).
- Avoid unnecessary conversation about the ill or injured person.
- Do not speak to the media – refer them to the Clerk, Chief Inspector, or emergency personnel.



# CHANGE of VENUE

When it has been determined by the Clerk (in consultation with the Chief Inspector and emergency management personnel, if applicable), that a polling location needs to be moved to effectively respond to a disaster/emergency, follow this guidance:

- The Election Inspectors will assist in packing up all voting equipment, ballots, poll lists, registration materials, and all election forms and information that needs to be relocated (i.e., signs, notices, etc.).
- The Clerk will organize transport vehicles and report to the polling location to help facilitate the move.
- All Election Inspectors will assist the Clerk in moving the election materials/equipment to the transport vehicles.
- The voting equipment/ballot box(es) will remain locked at all times.
- The voting equipment/ballot box(es) will be escorted to a municipal vehicle, or police vehicle, if available. At this location, the polling place will be set up as normal.
- All unvoted ballots should remain in the presence of the Chief Inspector and at least one other Election Inspector during the change of location.
- A sign should be posted on the front entry doors of the original polling location designating the new polling place (if the building is safe), or at a place as close to the entry doors as possible.
- A designated person will remain at the original polling location to direct voters to the new location.
- Notice should be provided/posted to the County's website, local Public Access Channel, local radio, social media, etc. to direct voters to the new location.
- Notice should be provided to the Wisconsin Elections Commission.
- Inspectors should document the change of venue and what time voting resumed on the Inspectors' Statement.

# ELECTION DAY EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Listed below are potential Election Day emergency contacts.

Rusk County Clerk	Name: Connie Meyer
	Daytime Phone: (715) 532-2101
	After Hours Phone: (715) 314-0165
Chief Deputy Clerk	Name: Jill Buchholz
	Daytime Phone: (715) 532-2198
Deputy 1	Name: Karen Whittaker
	Daytime Phone: (715) 532-2102
Fire/Police/EMS	9-1-1
Fire/Police/EMS (non-emergency)	(715) 532-2200
Wisconsin Elections Commission	Help Desk: (608) 261-2028
	Help Desk Email: elections@wi.gov
Command Central	Help Desk: (320) 259-7027