



Guide for

Emergency and Disaster Response

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Introduction

This *Guide for Emergency and Disaster Response at VIMS* is intended to provide information that will be helpful should an emergency or disaster impact the campus of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science. It is impossible to plan for every imaginable type of incident, but the principles guiding our actions in response are constant. It is important that everyone in the campus community be familiar with the general contents of this Guide. Each person should learn about the hazards that might strike at home and work. You should have a copies of this Guide at home and at work.

VIMS Campus Emergency Notification System

VIMS has an Emergency Notification System with several means of rapidly contacting everyone in the campus community. Fire alarms are separate from the Emergency Notification System. Depending upon the situation, part or all of the system would be used. The full system will be tested early in each academic term. The system can be activated only by the Dean and Director, the Director for Research and Advisory Services, the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Chief Administrative Officer, or the Director for Operations, Support Services and Special Projects.

The following is a description of the components of the Emergency Notification System.

Audio: There are Public Address speakers in every occupied building and in several outside locations. When the speakers are activated, everyone on campus should be able to hear them. Except for tests and other rare circumstances, the speakers will be used only in an emergency. Messages will be brief and tailored to the situation.

E-mail: If there is an on-campus emergency, an e-mail will be sent to everyone with a vims.edu e-mail address. The e-mail will state that an emergency exists, briefly describe the situation, and provide basic guidance on actions to be taken.

Telephone: Emergency telephone announcements will be sent to every telephone number that each person has entered as an emergency contact number in the Banner system (www.wm.edu then click on myWVM - or go directly to <https://mywm4.wm.edu> -, log in, click on "Banner", click on "Personal Information," click on "Update Campus-wide Emergency Phone Numbers," click on "Click here to update your contacts" and follow the prompts). These generally are the office, home, and cell phone numbers.

Text Messages: Emergency announcements will be sent as SMS text messages to telephone numbers that have been entered into the Banner system as describe above. Text messages may not be delivered as quickly as other means.

TDD: Emergency announcements will be sent as TDD messages to telephone numbers that have been entered into the Banner system as describe above.

Fire Alarm: Each building has a fire alarm that is independent of the Emergency Notification System. Fire alarms are both audio and visual (strobe light). Unless you have specific knowledge that the alarm is being tested, activation of a fire alarm means that you must ***leave the building immediately***.

You: Each individual is an important component of the Emergency Notification System. Especially in an on-campus emergency, be sure that your office and lab neighbors are aware of and are responding to the situation.

The e-mail, telephone, text, and TDD components of the Emergency Notification System will be used to announce weather closures and delayed openings.

Types of Hazards and Emergencies

There are many different types of hazards and emergencies that might affect the VIMS campus. Fire, a spill of hazardous materials (HazMat), sudden illness, injury, tornado, and a suspicious or violent person or “shooter” are examples of situations requiring immediate response. Events for which there is some advance warning, such as a hurricane or pandemic illness, require different actions .

The following is intended as general guidance to the actions needed in different situations. Actual circumstances will dictate the specific actions that are necessary and appropriate for any individual event.

Fire:

If you discover a fire, sound the alarm. Then you should assess whether or not there is anything you can or should do to contain or suppress the fire. Your safety and the safety of everyone in the area are the primary concerns.

The best way to sound the alarm for a fire is with the nearest fire alarm box. Take a minute to review the locations of the alarm boxes close to your work areas and how each is activated. After sounding the alarm, if the situation permits, telephone the VIMS Telephone Console Attendant (press 0 - zero) who then will notify other persons on campus, as appropriate, and will verify with the County Emergency Services Dispatcher that the alarm has been received.

If you have had training in the use of fire extinguishers and if you can do so without putting yourself at risk, use a fire extinguisher. Remember the acronym PASS for **P**ull the pin at the top of the fire extinguisher, **A**im at the base of the fire, **S**queeze the lever or trigger slowly, and **S**weep the spray from side to side. Never get into a position where the fire is between you and the exit.

If you hear a fire alarm, immediately stop what you are doing, perform a rapid shut-down, if possible, on any equipment that might be in use, and exit the building quickly. Again, a fire alarm means you must leave the building now. If you see the fire and have had training in the use of a fire extinguisher, consider fighting the fire as described above. When you exit the building, try to keep everyone together and check to see if anyone is missing and perhaps still in the building. If you know or strongly suspect that people may have remained in the building, inform the first arriving fire fighters. DO NOT return into the building until an official “All Clear” has been issued.

HazMat Spill:

If you are present at a hazardous material spill, check to be certain that no one is injured. If someone has been splashed, get them to an emergency drench shower or eyewash as appropriate. Secure the immediate area and let everyone in adjoining spaces know of the incident. Contact the Office of Safety and Environmental Programs either by telephoning the VIMS Telephone Console Attendant or by paging the staff of the Safety Office (see the “emergency” stickers on most telephones and the listing at the end of this Guide). If you have spill containment materials in the area and know how to use them, do so, otherwise wait for the Safety Officers.

If the spill is large or especially toxic, call the Gloucester County Emergency Dispatcher (9 911).

Fully opening the sashes on fume hoods while closing doors to other spaces will maximize the removal of smoke and fumes from individual rooms. In most fume hoods at VIMS, the strength of the draw is proportional to how far the sash is open. Closing the lab door both minimizes the potential for contamination of other areas and allows the “make-up” air system in the lab to function most efficiently.

Sudden Illness or Injury:

If you are present when someone experiences a sudden, acute illness, such as an apparent heart attack or stroke or a potentially disabling injury, offer to help the person, call for help and call the Gloucester County Emergency Dispatcher (9 911) for an ambulance. If the ill person appears to be suffering from a heart attack, send someone to get an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) – locations are posted on the entry doors of each building where there is an AED. Have someone else call the VIMS Telephone Console Attendant and describe the situation. The attendant will verify that the Gloucester County Emergency Dispatcher has been contacted and will attempt to send other assistance.

When assisting someone who is injured or ill, remember that your own safety and health are very important. Should you be injured while attempting to help someone, there now are two persons who need care.

Do not attempt to move victims of falls. Do provide first aid to the level of your training. Instruction in First Aid and CPR, including use of an AED, is available from the Office of Safety and Environmental Programs.

Report injuries to the Workers' Compensation Coordinator in the Office of Safety and Environmental Programs.

Tornado Warning:

During office hours, Tornado Warnings will be broadcast over the full Emergency Notification System. Seek shelter in interior rooms on the lowest floor of the building until an "All Clear" is announced. The National Weather Service issues a Tornado Warning when a tornado is observed or is indicated on radar in the area.

Should a tornado strike campus, be very careful as there may be downed, live power lines, debris, etc. Check with your co-workers to see if anyone is injured or needs assistance. Report to your supervisor for further instructions.

Suspicious or Violent Person or "Shooter" on Campus:

This topic includes a range of situations, each of which is complex. The information presented here is for general guidance only and will have to be adapted to the specific conditions. In all circumstances, your safety and the safety of all other persons on campus is the primary concern.

Should you see a **person with a gun or a knife** on campus, call the Gloucester County Emergency Dispatcher (9-911) then, if you can do so, call the VIMS Telephone Console Attendant and advise your co-workers. If you can do so safely, keep track of where the armed person goes so that you can inform the law enforcement officers when they arrive. Do not approach or challenge the armed person.

If you see a **violent person** on campus, (someone who is fighting or loudly threatening others), call the Gloucester County Emergency Dispatcher (9-911) then call the VIMS Telephone Console Attendant. In deciding whether or not you should interfere, your own safety and the safety of others is a paramount concern.

Your response to an active **"shooter"** on campus will depend on where you are in relation to the shooting.

If you witness a shooting, if you can do so safely, quickly leave the immediate area or hide in a safe location, preferably behind locked doors. Call the Gloucester County Emergency Dispatcher (9-911) and ask the Dispatcher to call the VIMS Telephone Console Attendant. It is likely that the Dispatcher will want you to stay on the line.

As soon as it is known that there is an active shooter, the Emergency Notification System will be activated. Your response should be to minimize the chance that you will encounter the shooter. Actions you

might take would be 1) to hide in a secure area behind locked doors; rooms with windows are preferable so that responders can see where you are and that you are safe, or 2) to leave campus. If you leave campus, check back with your supervisor, a co-worker, or the VIMS Telephone Console Attendant so that it can be verified that you are safe and not missing or presumed a victim. After the initial announcement over the Emergency Notification System, updates will be issued by e-mail, voice mail, and/or the VIMS home-page on the web.

Other Situations

Snow Closure or Delayed Opening:

If it is necessary to close campus or delay opening because of snow or ice, an announcement will be made as early in the morning as possible. The announcement will be made over the e-mail, telephone, text message, and TDD components of the Emergency Notification System, selected radio and television outlets, the recording on the main VIMS telephone, and the VIMS home page. Unless there is a specific need, such as care of live animals, please do not come to campus until it has reopened. It is more difficult to clear parking lots when vehicles are in them and walkways may not have been cleared and may be slippery and unsafe. Individuals who are expected to report to work to assist with snow removal will be notified by their supervisors. When you do return to work, please be careful. The decision to reopen campus is based on conditions at VIMS; conditions near your home may be different.

Extended Closure Due to Hurricane Damage:

When a hurricane threatens the region, the VIMS Emergency Management Team will coordinate activities to prepare and secure the campus to the greatest extent possible. Information about campus closure will be distributed in the same way as for snow closures. Unless you have specific responsibilities, such as live animal care or clean-up, do not come to campus until it is open or you are called in by a supervisor.

Contagious Illness:

There are two, broad categories of contagious illness that are of concern: individual and widespread. Most of the **individual contagious illnesses** are the routine colds and flu. Should you be afflicted with one of these “bugs,” please do not come to work until you no longer are contagious. By coming to work while the illness can spread from you to your co-workers, you increase the likelihood that they will become ill. At all times, especially during cold and flu seasons, everyone should practice the common sense health practices of covering your mouth when you cough and frequently washing your hands.

Widespread, contagious illnesses are of a greater concern. It has been estimated that should there be a pandemic outbreak of avian flu, a third of the general population might become ill and work-place absenteeism might exceed fifty percent as people stay home either ill themselves or caring for ill family members. Fortunately, there would be a period of warning during which we could prepare. All state agencies, including VIMS, are required to have a written plan for coping with such a circumstance. The Pandemic Flu / Contagious Threat Annex to the Institute’s Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP Plan) addresses many of these concerns.

Given the potential for extremely high absenteeism, it is important that every working group develop a list of back-up personnel for all critical activities, especially the care of live animals. If the illness is very severe, it might be necessary to implement measures far beyond the common sense activities noted above. “Social distancing” would be used to attempt to limit the spread of the illness. This would involve cancelling classes, meetings, and other events involving groups of people. In the extreme, it might be necessary to close campus for an extended time. This decision might be made in response to significant absenteeism as well as a means of social distancing. If this tactic were employed, it might be necessary for some individuals to work from home.

Miscellaneous

In some situations you might have to contact your supervisor or head of your department or center or you might have to contact someone to fill in for you if you are not able to go to work to perform some critical task. Fill in the contact information below

Department Head: home: _____ cell: _____

Supervisor: home: _____ cell: _____

Co-worker #1: _____ home: _____ cell: _____

Co-worker #2: _____ home: _____ cell: _____

Emergency Telephone Numbers

Gloucester County Emergency Dispatcher 9 911

The outside **"Blue Light" Emergency call boxes** can be used to call the Gloucester County Emergency Dispatcher

(All VIMS internal phone numbers are 804 684 #####)

VIMS Telephone Console - 7000 or 0

VIMS Security Cell Phone (nights, weekends, and holidays) - 804 694 7300

Facilities Management 7096, 7048, or 7092

Safety and Environmental Programs 7152 or 7147
or by pager 804 642 8914 or 804 642 8915

Dean and Director of VIMS - 7102

Director for Operations, Support Services and Special Projects - 7271

Field Support - 7055 or 7056

Vessel Emergency - 7600

To check office voice-mail from home, call 804-684-7100 and at the prompts enter your extension number and password.