

SAFETY, SECURITY & EMERGENCIES

PURPOSE

West Perth Public Library is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all who use the Library. The Board acts to protect the Library property, and the Board and Library staff share the responsibility to ensure a safe and secure workplace. This policy is to ensure that all Library staff, patrons, assets and property are safeguarded during an emergency or disruption to Library operations, and that West Perth Public Library is prepared to provide the best possible service in an emergency situation.

RESPONSIBILITY

The *Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)* and Regulations impose a legal duty on employers and supervisors to ensure the wellbeing of workers under their supervision, and to take reasonable measures to protect employee and public safety.

1. The Library Board:
 - a. designates the CEO as the Supervisor in accordance with the OHSA;
 - b. ensures that resources are dedicated to training the staff in safety, security and emergency procedures;
 - c. requires each individual staff member to take responsibility for their own health and safety, as well as that of the patrons. Each person will take initiative on health and safety issues and will work to solve problems and make improvements on an ongoing basis.
2. The CEO is responsible for the Library's safety plans, including procedures, implementation, enforcement and reporting for:
 - a. disasters such as fire and flood that threaten the Library's people, collections, furniture and equipment;
 - b. events which would compromise the safety and health of the staff and public, including harmful, abusive or dangerous behaviour by individuals, medical emergencies and bomb threats;
 - c. crime prevention, including theft, vandalism and substance abuse;

- d. safe work practices, including staff work schedules that strive to ensure a minimum number of staff members working together at all times.
3. The CEO or designate will determine when to close the Library during an emergency. The primary consideration in making the decision to close the Library is the safety of all persons in the building and on the property.

BUSINESS CONTINUITY

When a major emergency event happens, it is possible that:

1. The business of the Library is interrupted, up to and including the closing or loss of the building;
2. If the Library is relatively unaffected by an emergency event in the community, the Library becomes a key community resource centre for persons directly affected by the event.

Risk identification and mitigation

- ILS (integrated library system)
 - Servers are hosted offsite;
 - Offline mode is available if the ILS is non-functional for short periods of time. Offline mode would allow library service to continue;
- Multi-location collections
 - If West Perth Public Library became inaccessible or unsafe, other Perth County public libraries would remain open and available to all West Perth Public Library patrons;
- Backups of shared drives and data are automatically created regularly. Cloud-based service is used for email and electronic file storage.

Impact

The following situations may arise from emergencies in or around the Library:

- Unsafe access to the premises;
- Unsafe operation of the Library due to fire, flood, etc.;
- Loss of electricity or plumbing services on the premises;
- Loss of internet connectivity in the building;
- Loss of the ILS availability for an extended period of time.

The library building infrastructure, furniture and fittings are at risk from:

- Fire;
- Flood;
- Inclement weather;

- Malicious damage;
- Structural collapse;
- Infrastructure failure.

In case of emergency, the Library CEO or senior staff member on duty would evacuate using the *Fire and Evacuation* procedure.

It may be necessary for the Library to adjust service levels in the case of a longer failure or emergency, such as:

- An emergency in the community not directly impacting the Library building. The Library may act as a gathering place for services such as a climate-controlled area, technology charging point, and/or information centre, and may offer extended hours if it is safe to do so;
- An emergency affecting electricity, plumbing, or air quality. The Library will close if power, clean water or air is not restored within designated time periods.

The Library has available the most current Perth County Emergency Management Plan: <https://www.perthcounty.ca/en/living-here/resources/files/Perth-County-EMP.pdf>

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

West Perth Public Library Policy. *Health and Safety*.

West Perth Public Library Policy. *Prevention of Workplace Violence*.

West Perth Public Library Policy. *Workplace Discrimination and Harassment*.

West Perth Public Library Procedure. *Fire and Evacuation*.

West Perth Public Library Procedure. *Risk Management*.

Municipality of West Perth. *Employee Policy Manual*.

Municipality of West Perth. *Health and Safety Manual*.

Perth County. *Emergency Management Plan*.

Government of Ontario. *Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

Government of Ontario. *Public Libraries Act, R.R.O. 1990*.

POLICY TYPE: Operational

POLICY NUMBER: OP-20

DATE ADOPTED: October 2015

LAST REVIEWED: April 2026

NEXT REVIEW: April 2029