

## **Dighton Housing Authority Natural Disaster Response Policy**

The Dighton area, as all areas, is subject to natural disasters. These guidelines focus primarily on how the Authority shall react to such a disaster. While the preparations we can make for a disaster are limited, the Authority will take all reasonable steps to enable it to act promptly and effectively in an emergency.

### **Preparation:**

The following steps will be taken to prepare for a natural disaster:

The Executive Director shall serve as the coordinator of the Dighton Housing Authority's disaster response efforts. As such, the Executive Director shall serve as the liaison to any community-wide disaster planning efforts.

A list of potential community shelters shall be compiled and retained by the Authority for use in the case of a disaster.

By adopting these guidelines, The Board of Commissioners recognizes that extraordinary efforts will be needed if a natural disaster strikes the Authority. Therefore, employees will be encouraged to potentially operate outside their job descriptions in any way required to assist in the recovery effort.

### **Reaction:**

The following steps will be taken in order to react to a natural disaster:

\*If a disaster occurs during working hours, all employees will immediately report to the main office for assignment. If the main office is damaged beyond usage, they shall report to the nearest damage site to assist in the recovery effort.

\*Outside of normal working hours, employees shall immediately inspect their assigned Housing Authority properties then report to the main office for instructions. Employees are expected to ensure the safety of their own families prior to reporting to work.

\*Individual employees will be directed to assess for habitability with particular attention being paid to structural integrity.

\*Structures will be searched for trapped survivors. Survivors shall be freed if possible without endangering the lives of others. Employees will not immediately enter structurally damaged buildings, but will summons local emergency crews to enter and rescue any trapped residents.

\*Gas, electric and water shall be disconnected from any building with severe structural damage.

\*Lists of non-habitable buildings or units and trapped survivors shall be delivered to the main office as soon as practicable.

\*Work assignments will be made based upon reports received regarding damage sustained.

\*As soon as practical, the Chairperson of the Board of Commissioners, will call a Special Emergency Board Meeting on the situation and apprise the Board of emergency decisions made arising from the disaster and recovery activities.

Approved by Board Action at its Tuesday, March 19, 2002 Meeting.