

Bethel Red Cross Emergency Shelter

Six Month Summary: March – September, 2014

Facility: Volunteers have toured the facility and made space use determinations. The storage area [right corner of stage area above maintenance closet] has been reinforced and eight foot shelves built. Both activities were done with volunteer labor and donated materials. Written permission from the School Principal was obtained prior to both: copies are on file at the Town Office. The Facility Survey and Facility Agreement have both been up-dated to accommodate personnel changes: copies are on file with the Red Cross and at the Town Office. Responsibility for monitoring and maintenance of the generator has been clarified: the school will monitor [weekly test and fuel level] and the Town will maintain, including fuel. Annual maintenance this year is covered as part of installation: the Town Office will request this annually henceforth.

Supplies: The Red Cross provided eighteen boxes of two cots each, fifty blankets, and ten flats of bottled water. This water had an August 2013 ‘use by’ date and has been replaced with a flat of (48) 8 ounce bottles with a 2016 ‘use by’ date. A tracking form has been developed that will assure replacement of supplies prior to reaching ‘use by’ dates. The Bethel Food Shelf has agreed to dispense items with approaching ‘use by’ dates as well as provide additional storage space if needed, and to share food supplies as possible if the shelter is activated. Four plastic totes are being created to house: administrative items [Red Cross vests, forms, office supplies], comfort kits [soap, wash clothes and towels, deodorant, shampoo], activities [playing cards, books, toys, puzzles], and pet items [leashes, water and food dishes, pet food]. The Emergency Shelter Fund has been set up and is accepting donations. ‘Thank You’ letters are signed by the Shelter Manager and Town Manager: four have been sent to date. A ‘requisition form’ to access funds has been created in collaboration with the Assistant Town Manager- all requests will go through the Shelter Manager. The ‘Wish List’ letter has been provided to a number of residents by request and also to some retail businesses. It will be sent to local churches, businesses, and organizations soon.

Staff / Training: Current volunteers are a combination of the group from the Red Cross training at the Bethel school in December 2012 and more recent recruits. The list of 23 active volunteers has been updated with the Red Cross. The group has been meeting since March on the third Monday of each month: average attendance is twelve. Eight members attended a basic training at Sharon in May. The Shelter Manager attended a manager’s training in August: a copy of this certificate is at the Town Office. We have developed a staff list, a telephone tree, role responsibilities, and shelter rules.

Other: The Emergency Shelter staff will host a booth at the September 20th Forward Festival. On display will be ‘Disaster Shelter’ signs, a Red Cross blanket, a footprint of the Bethel school with Emergency Shelter space assignments noted, an enlarged copy of the ‘wish list’ letter, and a donation bucket. Donated door prizes will be offered.

‘To Do’ List:

- * provide the Town Office with training certificates for all group members;
- * familiarize ourselves with Red Cross forms and completion requirements;
- * determine signage needs at the facility and assure these are developed;
- * finalize an Evacuation Plan and identify a gathering place;
- * develop parameters and basic rules for pet owners;
- * investigate the Red Cross ‘blitz’ notification system so it can be utilized;
- * clarify our role in the local Emergency Response/Incident Command System;
- * run drills.