

Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses



The Ridgeway, London, NW7 1RN Telephone: 020 8906 2211

January 6, 2012

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: Disaster preparedness and response

Dear Brothers:

This letter replaces the letter dated July 6, 2006, to all congregations regarding disaster preparedness. That letter should be removed from the congregation permanent file of policy letters and be destroyed.

Because of the increasing number of natural and man-made disasters, as well as the potential for acts of terrorism or armed conflict, we wish to remind you of the importance of being prepared, regardless of whether or not this seems likely in your area. This letter outlines important steps that should be taken now and in the case of a disaster.

The bodies of elders should take the following steps in preparation for a disaster: (1) Maintain an up-to-date list of emergency contact information for all publishers. Review it every year. Make sure each elder has a copy. (2) Have a plan that outlines how to care for those with special needs and what assistance they may require in an emergency. (3) Provide contact information for your traveling overseer to all of the elders. (4) Annually review this letter and the information on disasters in the *Shepherding* textbook, chapter 12, paragraphs 24-26. (5) Plan how to protect and preserve congregation records and confidential files.

Annually, one of the local needs parts on the Service Meeting should be used to review with the congregation the steps they need to take to prepare for the possibility of a disaster, including the following basics: (1) Have important documents ready for immediate evacuation. (2) Have a three-to-five day supply of emergency items, including food, medication, and safe drinking water, that can also be quickly taken in an evacuation. (3) Be prepared to evacuate and know where to go. (4) Follow the directions of local authorities and the elders. It is best if the congregation can stay together. The references listed at the end of this letter may be referred to during the local needs part as appropriate.

In view of the foregoing, each elder should make the following notation next to paragraph 24, chapter 12, in the *Shepherding* textbook: "See letter dated January 6, 2012, to all bodies of elders regarding disaster preparedness and response."

We hope this information is of assistance in your efforts to care for the needs of our brothers. Be assured of our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

*Christian Congregation
of Jehovah's Witnesses*

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cc: Kingdom Hall Construction Groups
Regional Building Committees
Traveling overseers

PS to secretary:

This letter should be retained in the congregation permanent file of policy letters. You may wish to update the congregation copy of *Index to Letters—For Bodies of Elders* (S-22) at this time as well.

REFERENCES FOR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

September 2007 *Awake!*, pages 4-7, “Is God Responsible?”
January 2007 *Our Kingdom Ministry*, page 4, “Are You Prepared for a Natural Disaster?”
June 2006 *Awake!*, pages 14-19, “Heeding the Warnings Made a Difference”
July 22, 1995, *Awake!*, pages 4-8, “Man’s Fight Against Disasters”

REFERENCES IN THE EVENT OF A DISASTER

September 2007 *Awake!*, pages 8-9, “Disasters Are Nearing Their End”
August 2006 *Awake!*, pages 23-25, “Young People Ask . . . How Can I Help Those in Need?”
June 22, 2003, *Awake!*, pages 12-14, “Young People Ask . . . How Can I Cope When Tragedy Strikes?”
August 22, 2001, *Awake!*, pages 4-7, “Post-traumatic Stress—What Is It?”
August 22, 2001, *Awake!*, pages 7-10, “Traumatic Stress Will End!”