

Development of a Prestwick Emergency Situations Evacuation Plan

Although the probability is very low, it is possible that one day a governmental emergency services agency will contact Prestwick residents and instruct them to evacuate their homes and leave the community for their own safety. A leak of an underground oil - natural gas pipeline, a train derailment, concern of possible failure of the Sauk Trail Dam, etc. are emergency situations that might require governmental agencies to issue such an evacuation order (see attachment). These scenarios have a very low probability of occurrence but still can happen. Prestwick residents are therefore encouraged to plan accordingly and develop their own individual “emergency evacuation plan and egress routes”.

On your last vacation trip you listened intently as the flight attendant pointed out the exit doors to be used in case of an aircraft emergency. You perused the safety folder in the seat pocket in front of you that pictorially showed where the plane’s exit doors were located. You then counted the number of rows to these exits in back of and in front of your row. Later at your hotel you studied that sign on the back of your room’s door that showed the excavation routes to be followed in case of an emergency situation. You went down the hotel’s hallways and found each emergency exit and verified that the doors were not blocked and were accessible.

If an emergency situation impacted our community, we may be told to evacuate but we will not be told how to execute the evacuation. Typically getting into your car and driving out of the community would accomplish your evacuation but in an emergency your normal egress route (roadway) can be made unusable to vehicular traffic due to “high water”, downed trees, an influx of incoming emergency vehicles, etc. potentially isolating some residents.

It is not feasible to develop a secondary generalized “emergency evacuation plan and egress routes” for the Prestwick community. Prestwick residents should therefore develop an “emergency evacuation plan and egress routes” that is specific to them, their home’s location and the various emergency situations that might be encountered in our community. Developing such plans – routes jointly with your next door neighbors is suggested. Your plans and evacuation routes should be about the same as theirs.

Since an evacuation order might occur simultaneously with road closures you should pre-plan one or more “walk out” evacuation routes. This is especially important to those who live on dead end streets such as Aberdeen Road and Prestwick Drive along with their respective cul-de-sac streets. Residents living on the eastern portion of these 2-mile long streets will certainly have a different “emergency evacuation plan and egress routes” versus their neighbors on the western end of the same street.

Hopefully you will never need to implement these plans but it is wise to pre-plan now versus developing such plans at the time of an emergency situation.

Prestwick Homeowners Association Board of Directors
August 2014

ATTACHMENT

Emergency Situations to be Considered in Developing Prestwick Evacuation Plans

Train Derailment

Impact ranges from minimal to full evacuation depending if any cargo is spilled and the cargo's classification (inert to hazardous type materials). For certain cargo spillage situations, emergency responders could inform residents to stay in their homes with doors and windows closed or for other cargo spillage situations to evacuate their homes.

Derailment and spillage of typically transported flammable liquid type cargo (say ethanol or crude oil hydrocarbon) could result in evacuation of homes ½ mile in all directions from the spill (DOT Emergency Response Guidebook, Guide 127 – 128). This may require an evacuation of a very large portion of the Prestwick community, from Sauk Trail on the south to the Old Plank Bike path on the north.

Natural Gas - Petroleum Pipeline Leak

Leaks caused by the corrosion of a pipeline typically start off relatively small. Catastrophic type failures (weld failure, etc.) occur with less frequency. Typical cause of a leak is contractors digging and hitting a pipeline. Evacuation of residences up to 1000 feet down wind of the leak may be mandated. If a leak is involved with a fire then evacuation may be extended to ½ mile in all directions from the leak.

Failure of Sauk Trail Dam

Sauk Trail Dam is a Class I high hazard potential earthen dam. Failures of such dams have a very low frequency of occurrence. Forest Preserve District Will County personnel maintain Sauk Trail Dam and conduct monthly inspections. A qualified licensed engineer also performs an annual inspection.

Failure of earthen type dams typically occur after a period of time when the dam has been at maximum or at near maximum retention capacity. Telltale signs typically precede failure of earthen type dams. Forest Preserve District Will County personnel are instructed to look for these precursors during their higher frequency inspections of the dam when at near or full capacity.

If inspection of the dam indicates that the dam's integrity is of concern an evacuation of downstream communities will be initiated. Failure of the dam at such time could release a large volume of retained water upon an already high water situation. Properties that are at a higher elevation may become isolated islands with all possible egress routes under water. Therefore the entire Prestwick community and other communities immediately downstream of the dam will be called and an evacuation recommended.