

Disaster Recovery Plan

Newton Central Appraisal District

2024

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Introduction

This Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP) captures, in a single repository, all of the information that describes Newton Central Appraisal District's (NCAD) ability to withstand a disaster as well as the processes that must be followed to achieve disaster recovery.

It is the responsibility of the district to protect district personnel and property from the effects of disastrous events when possible and to be ready to mitigate any damage in an efficient manner. As further described below, the Chief Appraiser will be the lead contact during any disaster or emergency situation. The Board of Directors will work in conjunction with the Chief Appraiser in the planning and decisions to be made. In the event the Chief Appraiser is unavailable or incapacitated, the primary contact will be the Deputy Chief Appraiser.

Definition of a Disaster

A disaster can be caused by man or nature and results in NCAD not being able to perform all or some of their regular roles and responsibilities for a period of time. NCAD defines disasters as the following:

- *One or more vital systems are non-functional*
- *The building is not available for an extended period of time but all systems are functional within it*
- *The building is available but all systems are non-functional*
- *The building and all systems are non-functional*

The following events can result in a disaster, requiring this Disaster Recovery document to be activated:

- *Fire*
- *Hurricane*
- *Utility Outage*
- *Workplace Violence*
- *Theft*
- *Interstate Accident Causing Hazardous Situation*

Purpose

Note that in the event of a disaster the first priority of NCAD is to prevent the loss of life. Before any secondary measures are undertaken, NCAD will ensure that all employees, and any other individuals on the district's premises, are safe and secure.

After all individuals have been brought to safety, the next goal of NCAD will be to enact the steps outlined in this DRP to bring all of the district's departments back to business-as-usual as quickly as possible. This includes:

- *Providing for a facility to operate out of (if building is damaged or destroyed) in a timely manner*
- *Ensuring that the facility is safe for the employees and general public*
- *Preventing the loss of the organization's resources such as furniture, fixtures, hardware, data and IT assets*
- *Minimizing downtime*
- *Keeping the business running in the event of a disaster*

Scope

The NCAD disaster recovery plan takes all of the following areas into consideration:

- *Real Estate Related Damage*
- *Personnel Issues (Payroll, Status Notification, etc.)*
- *Telephone System*
- *Data Storage and Backup Systems*
- *Computer and Server Systems*

Disaster Recovery Responsibilities

In the event of a disaster, the Chief Appraiser may delegate duties to other management personnel and personnel within the various departments.

- *Deputy Chief Appraiser – to assist in all responsibilities*
- *GIS Supervisor – To help with any mapping needs*
- *Info System/Exemption Supervisor*

The lists of roles and responsibilities in this section have been created by NCAD and reflect the likely tasks that the persons listed above will have to perform. These personnel will be responsible for performing all of the tasks below. In some disaster situations, they may be called upon to perform tasks not described in this section.

Policy

It is the policy of the Newton Central Appraisal District office to minimize the effects of disasters or emergencies of any kind to property owners and employees of Newton County. Mitigation should form the foundation of every disaster/emergency plan procedure. The policies and procedures in this document will align with the policies and procedures as outline in the “2022 Newton County Hazard Mitigation Action Plan” as prepared by the Newton County Hazard Mitigation Committee with assistance from Traylor & Associates, Inc under the authority of Newton County Commissioners Court and the City of Newton City Council. A copy of the plan is available upon request. The most important result of this policy is to provide aid to property owners and employees of Newton County. Establish a communication location to aid other community leaders in responding to the needs of local citizens which will in turn secure the safety and welfare of those in need.

Chief Appraiser

The Chief Appraiser is responsible for making all decisions related to the disaster recovery efforts. The Chief Appraiser’s primary role will be to guide the disaster recovery process and all other individuals involved in the disaster recovery process will report to him/her in the event that a disaster occurs.

Role and Responsibilities

- *Make the determination that a disaster has occurred and trigger the disaster recovery plan and related processes.*
- *Ensure that all employees, Board of Directors and anyone else pertinent to the operation of the district are notified.*
- *Be the single point of contact for and oversee all of the disaster recover processes.*
- *Present to the Board of Directors the state of the disaster and any decisions that need to be made. Called meetings of the board will be made on an as needed basis.*

Contact Information

Name	Role/Title	Work Phone Number	Extensions
<i>Ronald Hughes</i>	<i>Board Chair</i>		
<i>Charles Summers</i>	<i>Vice Chair</i>		
<i>Robert Kester</i>	<i>Member</i>		
<i>Luke Smith</i>	<i>Member</i>		
<i>Joe Waldrem</i>	<i>Member</i>		
<i>Margie L Herrin</i>	<i>Chief Appraiser</i>	<i>409-379-3710</i>	<i>230</i>
<i>Kathy Maier</i>	<i>Deputy Chief Appraiser</i>	<i>409-379-3710</i>	<i>234</i>
<i>Sherry Bossier</i>	<i>System Operator / Administrator of Appraisers</i>	<i>409-379-3710</i>	<i>222</i>
<i>Julie Matthews</i>	<i>Appraiser Clerk</i>	<i>409-379-3710</i>	<i>227</i>
<i>Keeley Siau</i>	<i>Appraiser Clerk</i>	<i>409-379-3710</i>	<i>236</i>
<i>Chrissy Kelley</i>	<i>Appraiser</i>	<i>409-379-3710</i>	<i>224</i>
<i>Colton Davison</i>	<i>Appraiser</i>	<i>409-379-3710</i>	<i>226</i>
<i>Kordell Peek</i>	<i>Appraiser</i>	<i>409-379-3710</i>	<i>300</i>
<i>Andrew Franks</i>	<i>GIS</i>	<i>409-379-3710</i>	<i>260</i>
<i>Theresa Clifton</i>	<i>GIS</i>	<i>409-379-3710</i>	<i>240</i>
<i>Erika Yawn</i>	<i>Collections</i>	<i>409-379-3710</i>	<i>229</i>
<i>Madison Hubbard</i>	<i>Collections</i>	<i>409-379-3710</i>	<i>223</i>

For home &/or cell phone numbers, please contact the Human Resources Department

Disaster Recovery Call Tree

In the event of a disaster requiring all personnel and the Board of Directors to be notified, the list developed above will be used to make those contacts. The calls will be made by the Chief Appraiser, Deputy Chief Appraiser as necessary. It is the responsibility of the Office Manager to maintain the list with current information.

Recovery Facilities

In order to ensure that the NCAD is able to withstand a significant outage caused by a disaster, it has provisioned separate dedicated standby facilities.

Description of Recovery Facilities

Temporary Contingency Location – If a situation should occur where the appraisal district building is damaged or destroyed, the Newton Civic Center will be used as a temporary facility. This location will be used only until a more permanent location is acquired or until the appraisal district building is repaired or replaced.

Data and Backups

Currently, NCAD maintains an off-site backup and data recovery system. The district’s data recovery system utilizes dual backup data storage locations. As mentioned above, one copy is maintained off-site at First Financial Bank in Newton, Texas and the second is on a 16-terabyte external hard drive situated in the district’s computer room. Also, data is backup on the cloud and data is backed up each night on both systems.

In the event of a disaster that damages or destroys the district’s computer systems, we estimate 2 to 5 days of hardware and software replacement and backups to be in full service. NCAD employees will continue to maintain annual certifications of Cyber Security.

Communicating During a Disaster

In the event of a disaster NCAD will need to communicate with various parties to inform them of the effects on the business, surrounding areas and timelines. The Chief Appraiser or his/her designee will be responsible for contacting any entities necessary.

Contacts

Authorities	Point of Contact	Phone Number	E-mail
<i>Harris Govern</i>	<i>Randy Sprouse</i>	<i>972-265-7300</i>	<i>rsprouse@harriscomputer.com</i>
<i>Tax Assessor/Collector</i>	<i>Melissa Burks</i>	<i>409-379-4241</i>	<i>Melissa.burks@co.newton.tx.us</i>
<i>County Judge</i>	<i>Ronnie Cochran</i>	<i>409-379-5691</i>	<i>newtoncojudge@co.newton.tx.us</i>
<i>County Sheriff</i>	<i>Robert Burby</i>	<i>409-379-3636</i>	<i>Robert.Burby@co.newton.tx.us</i>
<i>TML Liability/Property Claims</i>		<i>800-537-6655</i>	
<i>National Weather Service</i>			<i>www.srh.noaa.gov/fwd</i>
<i>Texas Div. of Emergency Management</i>		<i>512-424-2208</i>	<i>www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem/index.htm</i>
<i>Texas Dept. of Public Safety</i>		<i>512-424-2000</i>	<i>www.txdps.state.tx.us</i>
<i>Texas Dept. of Transportation</i>		<i>800-558-9368</i>	<i>www.txdot.gov</i>

Communicating with Clients

After all of the organization's employees have been informed of the disaster, the Chief Appraiser or his/her designee will be responsible for informing the taxing entities and property owners of the disaster and the impact that it will have. This will be accomplished by preparing a press release to be delivered to the local radio, television and print media as appropriate. Such information as a description of the damage and an approximate date as to when the office will be back open and available to assist them will be provided.

Communicating with Vendors

After all of the organization's employees have been informed of the disaster information will be provided to the district's vendors of the disaster and the impact that it will have on the following:

- *Adjustments to service requirements*
- *Adjustments to delivery locations*
- *Adjustments to contact information*
- *Anticipated timelines for making payments for services, etc.*

Dealing with a Disaster

If a disaster involving the Newton Central Appraisal District occurs, the first priority is to ensure that all employees are safe and accounted for. After this, steps must be taken to mitigate any further damage to the facility and to reduce the impact of the disaster to the organization.

Damage Rendering Facilities Unusable

1. Long term repair or replacement – As soon as practical, the Chief Appraiser or his/her designee will inspect the facilities and make a determination of the amount of damage to:
 - A. The building and grounds
 - B. The computer systems
 - C. Records
 - D. Miscellaneous equipment, furniture and supplies

This should be done, if possible, within a 24-hour period.
2. The Chief Appraiser will notify the Chair of the Board of Directors as to the extent of the damage to the facilities and equipment.
3. The Chair will call a meeting of the Board of Directors within a week of the incident unless circumstances require a longer period of time. An alternate board meeting site will be chosen if necessary. Items to be discussed and/or approved would include but not limited to:
 - A. Authorizing the Chief Appraiser to locate potential alternate locations to temporarily house the District. This would typically be the Newton Civic Center.
 - B. Authorizing the Chief Appraiser to obtain proposals for the repair or replacement of the District facility.
4. Board meetings will be called as information becomes available to make any necessary decisions outside the purview of the Chief Appraiser.

5. The Chief Appraiser will maintain contact with the insurance company and provide any information required to expedite processing of the District's claim.
6. The Chair of the Board of Directors will appoint a committee to work with the Chief Appraiser to review repair/replacement proposals and make recommendations for Board approval.
7. The Chair of the Board of Directors will appoint a committee to work with the Chief Appraiser to oversee construction once the Board has made the decision to retain the services of a contractor.
8. The Chief Appraiser will be responsible for submitting all legal information to the District's attorney for review on an as-needed basis.
9. The Chief Appraiser will be responsible for having all computer equipment repaired or replaced as necessary. Backed up computer programs will be re-installed and tested for accuracy with the assistance from Harris Govern. If the District office has been relocated, a temporary network will be established and internet service installed to allow for multiple users.
10. Damaged district furniture and equipment will be replaced as necessary.
11. As described earlier in this plan, the district's computer files are backed up in two locations. Harris Govern will assist the district in replacing hardware if necessary and reinstalling all software and files in a timely manner.

Damage Not Requiring Relocation

1. The Chief Appraiser will notify the Chair of the Board of Directors as to the extent of damage to the building and/or equipment within 24 hours of the incident.
2. If necessary, the Chair will call a meeting of the Board of Directors to authorize the Chief Appraiser to obtain proposals for the repair of damage to the building or equipment. The severity of the damage and the necessity/urgency of repair will determine how quickly the meeting will need to be called.
3. The Chief Appraiser will maintain contact with the insurance company and provide any information required to expedite processing the district's claim.
4. When the required number of bids (proposals) have been acquired by the Chief Appraiser, the Board Chair will call a meeting to select a proposal and approve the work to be done or the equipment to be purchased, whichever applies.

Loss of Utilities / Services

1. Electrical Disruption
 - A. Upon disruption of electrical power to the building, the Chief Appraiser, after waiting a reasonable time, will contact City of Newton to determine the cause for the outage and the approximate amount of time needed to repair the problem.

- B. The NCAD has a full-size generator that is operated on natural gas and will run the entire office. If repairs are estimated to take an extended amount of time (four or more hours), the employees will be sent to lunch (if the situation occurs in the morning) or home for the day (if the situation occurs in the afternoon). A skeleton crew will remain to ensure lights and computer equipment is properly handled when the power is restored.
- C. If the disruption is caused by an internal problem, the Chief Appraiser will immediately call an electrician to diagnose the problem and repair if necessary. If the problem is extensive (costing more than Board policy allows the Chief Appraiser to spend without Board approval), the Chief Appraiser will acquire three proposals (if possible), contact the Board Chair and determine if an emergency meeting of the Board is required. If no meeting is required, the Chief Appraiser will select the most appropriate proposal and begin the repairs.

Sec. 4.02 Board Policy Manual

2. Loss of Water Supply and/or Sewer System

- A. Upon the loss of water to the District building, the Chief Appraiser will determine the cause of the problem and the amount of time necessary to have the problem repaired.
- B. If the problem is determined to be caused by the City of Newton Water Supply, the Chief Appraiser will coordinate with the supplier to ensure the repairs are made in a timely manner.
- C. If the problem is one caused by District equipment, the chief Appraiser will immediately call a plumber to determine the extent of the problem. If the problem is extensive (costing more than Board policy allows the Chief Appraiser to spend without Board approval), the Chief Appraiser will acquire three proposals, contact the Board chair and determine if an emergency meeting of the Board is required. If no meeting is required, the Chief Appraiser will select the most appropriate proposal and begin the repairs.

Sec. 4.02(b) Board Policy Manual

- D. Bottled drinking water is supplied for the employees by the district. If the water supply is disrupted for an extensive period, arrangements will be made for sanitary service. The employees will be allowed, as necessary, to go to nearby businesses to use their public facilities.

3. Communication Services Breakdown

- A. Telephone – If the District experiences a disruption to its telephone service, the employees will continue to work. The Chief Appraiser will be responsible for making contact with the telephone provider to notify them of the outage and to get an estimate as to when the service will be restored.
- B. Internet – If the District experiences a disruption to its internet service, the employees will continue to work. The Chief Appraiser will be responsible for making contact with the internet provider to notify them of the outage and to get an estimate as to when the service will be restored.

4. Other Emergency Situations

- A. Fire – The District’s building is equipped with smoke and fire alarms. In the event of a fire, the employees should immediately evacuate the building through the nearest exit. Exit signs are lighted and emergency lighting is available to help find the exit doors. The employees should congregate in the parking lot and a count will be made to determine if everyone is out of the building. If customers are in the building, the department which is helping them will be responsible for making sure that they exit the building. Quarterly, the Chief Appraiser will be responsible for ensuring the smoke and fire alarms are functional. Fire extinguishers located throughout the building are inspected annually to determine that they are up to date and in functional condition.
- B. Theft – In the event of a break in or theft, the Chief Appraiser or his/her designee will be responsible for contacting the Sheriff’s department to report the incident. The building has an alarm that calls the sheriff department also. The Chief Appraiser will be responsible for following the instructions of the Sheriff as to disturbing evidence and providing information in the investigation. The Chief Appraiser will notify the Board Chair as to the situation and keep him/her informed as to the progress of the investigation.

Workplace Violence

Workplace violence may consist of several types of issues:

- A. Taxpayer / Customer Violence – If a taxpayer / customer should become threatening or violent, the Chief Appraiser or Deputy Chief Appraiser should be notified immediately. If the situation cannot be diffused, the Sheriff’s Department (911) should be notified immediately. The NCAD has panic buttons on our alarm system they will call sheriff office if the buttons are activated. The NCAD has interior cameras recording all public counters, hallways and exterior of the building. In the event of a potential weapon, employees should be evacuated from the situation. If anyone is injured, an ambulance should be requested at the time of the 911 call. Unless absolutely necessary, no attempt should be made to restrain the person causing the violence.
- B. Employee Violence – If an employee becomes threatening or violent, the Chief Appraiser or Deputy Chief Appraiser should be notified immediately. The employee should be sent home if physical violence has not already occurred, or 911 called and a complaint filed if physical violence has occurred. A decision should be made as to disciplinary action and conditions allowing the employee to return to work made. The Chief Appraiser will contact the district’s attorney as to how to proceed.
- C. Terroristic Threats – If a threat is made against an employee or the District, the chief Appraiser should be notified immediately and the Sheriff’s Department notified. Specific information should be gathered (person making the threat, time, information about the threat, etc.) to present to the police. If the threat involves a bomb, etc., the employees should be evacuated immediately to a safe location until the police determine it is safe to return.
- D. The District’s phone system has the capability to record a conversation occurring on the telephone. If a taxpayer gets abusive or threatening, the employee involved should press the record key on his/her phone and record the conversation. If a taxpayer is being abusive but not threatening, attempt to get the Chief Appraiser or the Deputy Chief Appraiser involved in the conversation or politely end the conversation and hang up. Arguing or retaliating with the taxpayer is not appropriate.

Plan Testing & Maintenance

While efforts have been made initially to construct this disaster plan in as complete and accurate a manner as possible, it is essentially impossible to address all possible problems at any one time. Additionally, over time the Disaster Recovery needs of the district will change. As a result of these two factors this plan will need to be tested on a periodic basis to discover errors and omissions and will need to be maintained to address them.

Identifying and planning for potential disasters and other emergencies may reduce the danger of serious injury or property damage. To prepare for these situations, the district will attempt to review and test the procedures contained in this plan on a periodic basis. The district participates in emergency preparedness training annually along with other local emergency management officials to ensure the district is prepared for an emergency or disaster and to provide any assistance possible with our GIS or ownership records.