

# **Annex C**

## **Delaware County**

### **IN-PLACE SHELTER ANNEX**

DELAWARE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN

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## ANNEX C IN-PLACE SHELTER

### I. INTRODUCTION

Recent events statewide have caused all levels of government to take a closer look at tornado protection. This annex to the Delaware County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan is for use by the County and local officials in addressing the threat of tornadoes.

Tornadoes, although short-lived, are the most violent and, over a small area, the most destructive of all storms. These violent storms frequently consist of whirling winds of up to 300 miles per hour. Tornadoes appear as a rotating funnel shaped cloud, ranging from gray to black, extending downward toward the ground from the base of a thundercloud. Tornadoes impacting the ground exhibit a characteristic sound, similar to that of an airplane or a freight train.

The following terminology should be used in describing the threat of a tornado:

Tornado Watch: Conditions are favorable for a tornado, and the skies should be watched.

Tornado Warning: Indicates that a tornado has been sighted or spotted on radar, take immediate cover.

### II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this plan is to ensure that all residents have access to basement protection in the event of tornadoes or other severe weather.

### III. BACKGROUND

Since 1950, at least three (3) tornadoes have been confirmed by the National Weather Service as touching down in Delaware County. The maximum intensity was an F-2 on the Fujita Scale, which ranks tornado intensity from F0 to F5, F5 being the strongest. In addition, tornadoes can be accompanied with heavy rains. The northern half of Delaware County has a moderate risk of flash flooding, while the southern half has a high risk of flash flooding.

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Generally, basements are considered adequate protection from a tornado. Most homes in Delaware County have basements that can be used for tornado protection. It is estimated that 10% of the residents within the County are without basements, including mobile homes and modular homes. For those residents that live in structures without basements, this plan identifies public basement protection in every town of the County, that can be accessible in a short time frame, and not located in flood prone areas.

### IV. GENERAL PROCEDURES

#### A. Residents With Home Basements

Residents with home basements should be educated to safely seek protection in their basement. This should include staying away from windows and exterior doors.

#### B. Residents Without Home Basements

Residents without home basements have three (3) options:

1. Identify a home basement in their neighborhood where they will be welcomed during a tornado threat. Plans should be made in advance to do so.
2. Proceed to the nearest public basement shelter as identified in Appendix 1.
3. Go to the center of the lowest floor in the structure they are in, seeking shelter in a small room, such as a closet or a bathroom, or under furniture, always staying away from windows and doors. This last option should only be used if options 1 and 2 cannot be used.

There are numerous mobile homes and trailer parks throughout Delaware County without basements, and residents should be informed that such structures are NOT to be used as a shelter.

#### C. Residents Away from Home or Outdoors

Residents at their place of employment working inside, or in school, should seek shelter in a basement. If no basement is available, they should seek shelter in an interior hallway or room on the lowest floor, or in a designated public basement shelter. In a school, always avoid seeking shelter in a gymnasium or auditorium because of the wide, free-span roofs.

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If residents are outside during a tornado threat, and there is not enough time to reach a safe shelter, they should go to the nearest ditch, ravine, culvert, or excavation, and lie face down covering their heads with their arms.

### V. ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY

As demonstrated by recent events, a tornado event may require the response by the County government, as well as State and federal authorities. With the response of multiple levels of government, the coordination between and among such agencies is a necessity. In addition, large-scale events such as this will be easier to manage using a Unified Command organization. The Incident Command System (ICS) is a means for ensuring that the required close coordination is realized. Delaware County and New York State will organize the response to a tornado event according to the Incident Command System.

#### Organizational Assignments

1. Delaware County Emergency Services Director is responsible for:
  - A. Receiving special weather statements, including watches and warnings.
  - B. Disseminating the hazardous weather information to County and local officials through the following means
    1. Email
    2. NY Alert
    3. Phone as needed
  - C. Alerting the American Red Cross for potential activation during a hazardous weather threat.
  
2. The American Red Cross is responsible for:
  - A. Maintaining an inventory of public basement shelters.
  - B. Recruiting and training shelter managers who will set up and administer the shelter operations, and assign, train, and supervise shelter personnel.
  - C. Activating and opening public basement shelters upon the advice or direction of County officials.
  - D. Provide services for the public in designated shelters.

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3. The Commissioner of Social Services shall:
  - A. Provide support to the American Red Cross at designated shelters.
4. The National Weather Service Shall:
  - A. Through NOAA Weather Radio, provide timely information to the public regarding tornado threats and protective actions to take.
5. The Broadcast Media shall:
  - A. Through the Emergency Alert System (EAS), provide timely information to the public regarding tornado threats, and the protective actions to take.
6. Delaware County Cooperative Extension shall:
  - A. Provide public education pertaining to hazardous weather, and the protective actions to take.

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### APPENDIX 1: PUBLIC BASEMENT PROTECTION

#### A. Overview

Some residents of Delaware County are without basement protection in the event of a tornado. This appendix identifies buildings in communities that can potentially provide public basement protection. Local emergency officials will direct residents to designated facilities.

#### B. Potential Public Basement Shelters

##### Town of Andes:

1. Andes Central School, 223 Delaware Avenue
2. United Methodist Church, 130 Route 1

##### Town of Bovina:

1. Bovina United Presbyterian Church, 201 Bovina Rd.

##### Town of Colchester:

1. Downsview Central School, Maple Avenue

##### Town of Davenport:

1. Charlotte Valley Central School, Route 23

##### Town of Delhi:

1. SUNY, Farrell Hall, Building # 29

##### Town of Deposit:

1. Deposit Central School, 840 Second Street

##### Town of Hancock:

1. Hancock Central School, Read Street

##### Town of Kortright:

1. South Kortright Central School, Route 10

##### Town of Masonville:

1. Masonville Federated Church, Route 206

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Town of Middletown:

1. Margaretville Elementary School, 126 Wagner Ave.
2. Margaretville High School, Main Street

Town of Roxbury:

1. Roxbury Central School, Main Street

Town of Sidney:

1. Sidney Elementary and Middle School, 13 East Pearl Street
2. Sidney Senior High School, 75 West Main Street

Town of Stamford:

1. BOCES Center, West Main Street
2. Hobart Activity Center, Maple Street

Town of Walton:

1. Walton Central School, 6 Miller Avenue
2. Walton Grange Meeting Hall, Stockton Avenue