

Emergency Closing Policy

Introduction

Walter E Olson Memorial Library is a public service organization and will make every reasonable effort to remain open during posted hours. The decision to close the library under adverse conditions rests with the Executive Director, and in the Executive Director's absence will fall to the Board President.

Directives issued by the national, state or local governments will be adhered to by the Library. The library may close or postpone opening when weather conditions exist making it hazardous for travel. The primary factor of any decision made will be the safety of the staff and the library patrons. However, maximum effort will be made to maintain regular library operating hours.

Inclement Weather

We use the Northland Pines School District weather related closings as a guide to make our decision. If you hear that Northland Pines is closed or has a delay due to road conditions, it means pay attention to the below-mentioned communication channels, because we MAY also have a closing or delay, but we do NOT automatically follow the school's decision.

Generally, if we have heat, we do not close or delay due to extremely cold temperatures.

The Vilas County Sheriff's Department may be called upon for advice concerning impending road conditions. If hazardous road conditions occur, the Director or senior staff member will call the Library Board President to advise him/her of the situation. If the Library Board President is not available, the library staff member will contact another Library Board Trustee.

A decision for an additional delay or closing of the Library will be based upon several factors that may include:

- General condition of the roads
- Projected forecast for worsening conditions
- Conditions of the Library's parking lot and walkways
- Availability of staff to open and operate the Library
- A state of emergency for the immediate area declared by local, county or state law enforcement agencies.

If we have a weather-related closing or delay, there are many ways employees and the public will be notified. They include:

- E-mail and text alerts are sent out to staff
- WJFW CH 12, WRJO radio and WXPR radio stations are notified and a listing specific to Walter E Olson Memorial Library should be seen or heard on those stations and their websites. We do not have control over how and when they post this information.
- Notice is posted on the Homepage of our website
- Notice is posted to our social media accounts
- When possible, the recorded greeting on the library phone will be changed to relay the closing information
- When staff can get to the library, signs will be posted on the entrance doors.

- We also do our best to contact outside groups who have reserved the meeting rooms, but they are also advised to check the public notifications.

Other Emergencies

For emergencies other than weather, staff will maintain operations if the safety of the staff and public are not endangered.

Tornadoes

When a tornado watch alert is issued, library staff will advise library patrons of the situation. If the alert elevates to a tornado warning, library staff will direct patrons to the lowest level of the building. A weather radio will accompany the group. Normal routine may resume when the all clear sign is given.

Fire

At the first indication of smoke or flame, staff will immediately call 911 and then clear the building.

Library staff will familiarize themselves with the type, location, and application of the fire extinguisher(s) in the building. Library staff and volunteers will be oriented to this information annually or when newly employed by the library.

FOR STAFF:

Inclement Weather

When adverse weather conditions make travel hazardous, staff members should use their judgment regarding personal safety and transportation to/from work. The library wants its staff members to feel safe. Staff members seriously concerned for their safety who choose not to travel to work, or choose to leave work before their shift is over, should feel comfortable doing so, notifying their supervisor as soon as possible.

If a staff member chooses not to work during his/her scheduled hours due to adverse weather conditions, the staff member will not receive pay for such hours missed. Employees may make up lost time or deduct the time lost from any accumulation of vacation or floating holiday, or they may flex their time during the same pay period at the discretion of the library director, or they may be away without pay.

If the library is closed because of emergency conditions, employees will be paid according to the hours they were scheduled to work that day. Staff members may not work at the library when it has closed due to emergency conditions.

If Closing the Building:

- Contact all staff, volunteers, and those with room reservations scheduled to arrive at a later time.
- Place appropriate signage at each entrance.
- Follow normal procedures to close building.
- Send closing messages to television/radio stations and social media.
- Change closing message on telephone to reflect emergency closing.