

Following a disaster, the use of a Church meetinghouse as a community emergency shelter is occasionally needed. Permission to use a meetinghouse is granted by the stake president, after consulting with a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency. Following approval, the priesthood leader should contact his Church physical facilities representative (PFR).

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### **General Conditions and Guidelines**

- While the use of a meetinghouse as a temporary community shelter may occasionally be needed, a Church building generally should not be the first choice. Other community facilities are better suited to accommodate the lodging of large numbers of people.
- If wards or stakes are approached by a local organization desiring to enter into a pre-disaster agreement, the stake president should seek area approval. Following approval, the insurance section of the Risk Management Division should be contacted for needed documents.
- When a meetinghouse is used by a community agency, Word of Wisdom standards should be observed in the building and on surrounding Church property. The chapel and offices are not to be used except for Church purposes. Cooking equipment and heaters that are not part of the meetinghouse furnishings may not be used in the building. Pets, other than service animals, are not allowed in the building.
- The stake president or bishop should assign a priesthood holder to be present any time the building is being used.

#### **References:**

1. *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 1*, pages 10 and 182.
2. *Facilities Management Guidelines for Meetinghouses and Other Church Property* (United States and Canada), page 2.