

# WILLIAMSTOWN LIBRARY DISASTERS POLICY

## **Fire**

Do not panic, but do not under-estimate the potential danger to customers or staff represented by a fire. At the first indication of smoke or flame, investigate the situation to determine location and extent of the fire. If the fire can obviously be contained and extinguished quickly and safely by staff, proceed to do so. However, if there is any doubt about whether the fire can be controlled, immediately call 911 or the fire department and then clear the building.

The time to think about fires is before they happen. Familiarize yourself with the type, location, and application of the fire extinguisher(s) in the building. Orient all staff and volunteers to this information. If you share a building with another agency and it occasionally initiates fire drills, library staff should respect those training exercises and respond as they would in the case of a real fire.

## **Health emergencies**

Staff members should exercise caution when administering first aid of even a minor nature because of the safety of the injured individual and the potential liability of the staff member. Without specialized training it is not advisable for staff to undertake more than keeping the sick or injured patron comfortable and protected from needless disturbance until medical help can be obtained. Since each case is unique, staff members should use their own judgment to do what is prudent and reasonable.

911 should be called immediately in the event of any serious problem. No medication, including aspirin, should ever be dispensed to the public.

## **Bomb threats**

Keep the caller on the line as long as possible. Ask the caller to repeat the message and try to write down every word spoken by the person. Immediately after the caller hangs up, call the police. Clear the building. The police will handle the actual bomb search.

**Snowstorms**

Sometimes when school closes and the library is open that evening, for instance, the storm is over, therefore, the library is not automatically closed whenever school closes because of a snowstorm. Closing will be at the discretion of the Library Director.