

# **The USD 348 Performing Arts Center (FEMA Tornado Shelter)**

## **The shelter:**

The FEMA approved tornado shelter was designed and built to withstand an F-5 tornado. It is designed to sustain wind gusts up to 250 miles per hour. It seats 625 people but can hold up to 1800 people as a shelter. In a tornado it is the safest structure in Baldwin.

## **Location:**

415 Eisenhower Street, Baldwin City

## **Where do I enter?**

Use the double white metal doors located on the North side of the Performing Arts Center (PAC) closest to the high school. The glass doors will not be opened.

## **Where am I safe?**

Any where inside the auditorium, the stage and the restroom area are safe. The lobby area and hallway is not safe. That area only has a metal decking over it and a tornado would more than likely shred the area.

## **Where do I park if I drive?**

In the high school parking lot or in the stalls provided just north of the gymnasium. Do not park in the fire lane right next to the shelter.

## **How will the door be unlocked?**

The lock on the door will be remotely unlocked from the home computers of district staff members.

## **What if the power is off, will the door still open?**

There is a battery backup on the signaling device that will keep it operating for an hour or more.

## **What if the remote lock malfunctions?**

On the door there is a sign that gives instructions if the door is not unlocked. A phone number is listed there that will connect you with someone who can give you a code to open the door. The code will open the door like a motel room lock. If that code does not work there is a key box they can give you a code for.

## **How do I turn on the lights? If they are operating.**

The light button is located to the left of the door as you enter. It is a push button and there are two of them. One of them will turn the lights on or off.

## **When will the door be unlocked?**

The door will only be opened if the tornado sirens sound. It will not be opened for every storm or every watch.

## **How do I determine if I should go to the PAC?**

If you cannot be inside the PAC in less than 10 minutes you need to shelter elsewhere. If you can see the tornado close by you should shelter in place. Most people are injured by flying debris in tornados. You do not want to be caught outside your home or the PAC while the tornado passes. You will have to use your best judgement as to whether you attempt to leave your home to come to the PAC.

## **What should you bring?**

I suggest you bring a cell phone, flashlight, and maybe a battery powered radio. The cellphone in case you have to call to get the code for the auditorium. The flashlight in case the electricity is off. The radio so you can listen for weather reports.

## **What should I not bring?**

Do not bring pets. Do not bring food or drinks. Do not bring a firearm or weapon. You can bring bottled water.

## **Why can I not bring my pets?**

People are already nervous because of the situation and some people are afraid of animals. There is no place for pets to urinate or defecate and you may be inside the shelter for a long time.

## **During the event what do I do?**

Please sit away from the door. Just relax and remain calm during the event. You will probably hear loud noises outside and there is a possibility that the lights will go out. Please do not let children run around or climb on the seats.

## **Will emergency staff stop by the PAC?**

First Responders may attempt to stop by if they are not busy elsewhere. During an actual tornado they will be where they are most needed.

**What do we do when the event is over?**

Please pick up any trash and take it with you. The last person out the door should turn off the lights. The door will lock behind you as you leave.

**What if the event occurs during the school day?**

Come to the doors of the PAC and they will let you in the PAC if you arrive quickly. You do need to arrive quick as they will not open the doors after a certain time. All students and staff move into the PAC in less than 5 minutes.

Please use the PAC with care. Please monitor people during the event. We do have cameras in the PAC so everything is recorded. Any vandalism or theft could end the use of the PAC as a tornado shelter.