National Tornado Summit & Disaster Symposium

The Importance of Opening Protective Systems in Shelter Operations

Presenter
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Importance of Signage

- Terminology is very Important
  - **Storm shelter**: A building (or portion thereof) that provides life-safety protection from severe wind events. They are designed and constructed to meet ICC 500 criteria.
  - **Safe room**: A storm shelter (see above) specifically designed to meet additional FEMA P-361 Recommended Criteria. Safe rooms provide near-absolute life-safety protection in severe wind events.
  - **Best available refuge areas**: A temporary area in an existing building that has been deemed by a registered design professional to be least vulnerable to tornado damage. Since refuge areas do not meet ICC 500 criteria, occupants may still be injured or killed during severe wind events. **Warning: Refuge areas are often mislabeled as 'Shelters'**

FEMA Identifies The Importance Of Shelter Doors

- FEMA developed new door fact sheets for community and residential shelters in Nov. 2018
  - Independent certified labels are required on all doors
  - Installation of hardware requires inspection to verify that it was installed per manufacturers installation instructions
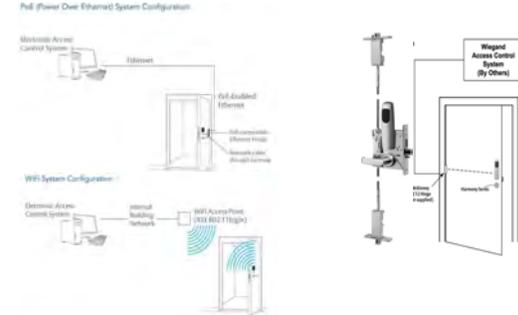 - Maintenance and inspection schedules are recommended

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Securing Shelter Doors

- Most shelter doors require a physical key or electronic hardware with some other form of credentialing (card/fob/chip) to gain access to shelter (Needs someone on-site with key)
- Some shelters utilize a knox box on the exterior of the building holding a key to gain entry. The code for this box would be held by a first responder that has been assigned to open the shelter during a storm warning. The code could be passed on by phone to someone at the shelter if no one shows up by someone in the emergency call center.
- Shelters can now be opened remotely using on-line systems or cell technology today.

Remote Unlocking

Mobile Access Solutions

Mobile access is the use of a mobile device (e.g. smartphone, tablet or wearable) to gain access to secured doors, gates, networks, services and more. Our solutions allow organizations to meet the growing demands of a mobile-first world.