

The refrigerator in Rocky Ripple's Town Hall is stocked if the building is needed to provide emergency shelter for residents, town President Robert Tomey said.



MICHELLE PEMBERTON / The Star

Whatever this storm brings, Rocky Ripple will be ready for it

By Vic Ryckaert

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Many Central Indiana communities were taking steps Tuesday to prepare for widespread power failures and other worst-case scenarios for the ice storm, but one Marion County town took hunkering down to new heights.

Rocky Ripple, tucked along the White River on the city's Northside, gathered generators, food and water in case the storm causes widespread power outages and other problems.

"If it gets to the point where the lines are down, roads are bad or people aren't getting out, we'll be knocking on doors and checking on people," Town Board Chairwoman Carla Gaff-Clark said.

Rocky Ripple, population 800, is made up of about 335 homes just north of Butler University. Gaff-Clark said the community has a history of banding together to fight floods, storms and anything else nature might throw its way.

"This is a little town where we have been known to come together and do sandbagging on houses if the people are out of town," Gaff-Clark said. "People just step right up and do those things."

Town Council President Robert Tomey said he is donating the use of his two generators and some camp stoves. Other residents and local groups have offered food, blankets and other supplies.

If things get really bad, officials will use Town Hall for an emergency shelter.

Townfolk also are getting ready for the inevitable after-storm cleanup, Tomey said.

"We have 20 guys with chain saws," he said. "If trees are blocking the road or something, we do that all ourselves. And we've done that for years."

★ Call Star reporter Vic Ryckaert at (317) 444-2761.

SHELTER FOR STRANDED MOTORISTS

The American Red Cross of Greater Indianapolis on Tuesday opened shelters for stranded motorists at the following locations:

- » American Red Cross of Greater Indianapolis Headquarters, 441 E. 10th St.
- » Traders Point Christian Church, 6590 S. Indianapolis Road, Whitestown.
- » Blue Ridge Elementary School, 1910 S. Jackson St., Frankfort.
- » Mays Elementary School, 929 E. South St., Mays. (Rush County)

Red Cross officials will issue updates if shelters are added or closed. National Guard Armory locations will not be used as shelters.

COMMUNITIES' PLANS

Here's a look at what some other Indianapolis-area communities were doing to provide shelter:

» **BROWNSBURG:** Shelter will be available at the Brownsburg Fire Territory headquarters, 470 E. Northfield Drive, and the Brownsburg Police Department Training Center, 75 Whittingham Drive.

» **CARMEL:** Officials are offering emergency shelter at Carmel High School, 520 E. Main St.; John Hensel Township Government Center, 1071 N. College Ave.; Creekside Middle School, 3525 W. 126th St.; and Clay Middle School, 5150 E. 126th St.

Those who would use the shelter should bring their own food, blankets and supplies, Carmel officials said.

» **HANCOCK COUNTY:** Officials were planning to use schools for emergency shelter if power outages last for more than 18 hours.

» **WESTFIELD:** Westfield High School cafeteria, 18250 N. Union St., will be used as a shelter if there is a massive power outage.