

POLICIES

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Christopherson was able to meet up with them early Friday morning, around 7:30 a.m., to provide them with a check so that they could go out and purchase some necessities, she said.

The family, who Christopherson said is a "sweet young couple with four children," needed new car seats, clothing items, shoes and more after the tornado destroyed their home, she added.

Because the family had a local insurance agent, they were able to get help immediately, said Christopherson, noting that after a catastrophe like this, having a local agent can be very beneficial.

When there is massive, widespread damage from a

storm, Christopherson said her agency has had to prioritize clients who have the greatest needs, or in this case, those who had homes that were uninhabitable.

"Our clients have been so understanding and know that those with the worst damage come first," she said.

As with the family living along South Darling Drive who lost their home, Christopherson said it was a priority to get them funds to be able to purchase items that were immediately needed. Additionally, she was able to find them temporary housing at Arrowwood Resort and Conference Center.

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AMY CHRISTOPHERSON

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Christopherson said she was so impressed with the family, who she said have handled everything so well. She also said she was talking to another State Farm agent, Amy Roers from Glenwood who has been in the business for more than 35 years. Christopherson said Roers told her that this storm was the worst she has seen in her career.

Over this next week, Christopherson said insurance agents and claims adjusters will be out and about surveying and estimating the dam-

age. At this point, she said it is hard to tell how much damage in terms of dollars was done.

She also shared some tips for homeowners, such as making sure if they have holes in their roofs to get them tarped as soon as possible to keep from more damage occurring inside the home if more storms or rain were to occur.

Another important tip, she said, is for homeowners to annually or biannually review their homeowners insurance policy with their agent to make sure the policy will cover what needs to be covered.

"We don't want there to be any surprises," she said.

And lastly, she said her office has had a lot of calls about water in basements because of electricity going out and sump pumps not working.

"People should check their renters/condo/homeowners policy for optional back-up sewer and drain coverage," she said.

She said ServPro in Alexandria was an integral part of the help for this for many people.

Christopherson said her clients have been understanding in the aftermath of the storm and realize that it's going to take awhile for everything to get figured out. In the meantime, she strongly urges people to check out their policies. "You don't want any future surprises," she said.

Email reporter Celeste Edenloff at cedenloff@echopress.com.

National Safe Boating Week

May 21-27

As the summer approaches, Minnesotans are getting ready to pull out their boats and take to the water. National Safe Boating Week, May 21-27, seeks to remind people about the importance of being safe while on the water.



Wear a life jacket. No matter what activity you have planned, always remember to wear a life jacket every time you are on the water. Accidents on the water can happen much too fast to reach and put on a stowed life jacket. Make sure your life jacket is U.S. Coast Guard approved, appropriate for your water activity and fits properly.



Always follow navigation rules. Know the "Rules of the Road" such as operator's responsibility, maintaining a proper lookout, safe speed, crossing, meeting head-on and overtaking situations.



Don't drink while you boat. A BUI (boating under the influence) is involved in one-third of all recreational boating fatalities.



Keep in touch. Be sure to have at least two communication devices that work when wet, such as satellite phones, emergency position indicating radio beacons, VHF radios and personal locator beacons. Cell phones are not reliable in an emergency situation.



Take a boating safety course. Learn valuable tips that can help save your life in unexpected situations by taking a National Association of Boating Law Administrators approved boating safety course. Many courses are online, and will save you money on your boat insurance.



Always file a float plan. File a float plan with someone you trust that includes details about the trip, boat, persons, towing or trailer vehicle, communication equipment and emergency contacts. Find out more at www.floatplancentral.org.

AGENDA

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she was saying. Carlson paused and said, "This is an example. We're being laughed at while we are discussing this. It's disrespectful that we can't have a conversation without people making smears and laughing in the audience."

School Board Member Alan Zeithamer, who originally made the motion to allow the public comment period again, spoke up and said that maybe there would be an appropriate amendment that would state that if things spiraled out of control, the board would just move back to what they have been doing the past couple of months.

Maureen Eigen, another school board member, said she thought it would be more appropriate for the board to review it and then vote on whether or not to discontinue or continue to have the public comment period to which a member of the audience applauded at her.

She said most people who talk to her in person want the public comment period back again.

So, the board's final approval was to allow a public comment period at the end of the school board meetings with the following rules - people must sign up ahead of time, they must submit their comments in writing to the school district by the previous Wednesday, they get three minutes maximum to speak, they must meet poli-

cy guidelines regarding expectations on civil discourse and, if a situation develops, it would come under immediate review by the whole board and the board would make a decision.

Prior to the board approving the motion, Superintendent Rick Sansted said that earlier, when the meetings had gotten out of hand, the district heard that the board just needed to enforce the rules and that some people said to "smash the gavel" if needed.

"I think that today's point, if it's at the end of the meeting and disruption or whatever incivility breaks out, then move on and be done," said Sansted.

Email reporter Celeste Edenloff at cedenloff@echopress.com.

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