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EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS GUIDE




York Region

IS YOUR FAMILY READY?



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City of Markham



Regional Councillor
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City of Vaughan

A Message from York Regional Council

The first 72 hours are the most critical in any emergency situation. The York Region Emergency Preparedness Guide provides you and your family some of the steps to be better prepared for the different kinds of emergencies that can impact York Region.



Regional Councillor
Brenda Hogg
Town of Richmond Hill



Regional Councillor
Mario Ferri
City of Vaughan

The guide contains useful information on what to do before, during and after an emergency.

It was developed in partnership with emergency preparedness and management professionals from across York Region and our nine municipalities.



Mayor
Tony Van Bynen
Town of Newmarket



Regional Councillor
Gino Rosati
City of Vaughan

We encourage our residents to be prepared. We know from recent events in and around the Region that disasters can strike anywhere and at any time.

Please take a moment to review this guide with your family, friends and neighbours.



Regional Councillor
John Taylor
Town of Newmarket



Mayor
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Town of Georgina



Regional Councillor
Danny Wheeler
Town of Georgina



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Township of King



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Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Emergency Response Phone Numbers.....5

Types of emergencies that could occur in York Region

- Hazardous materials incidents..... 6
- Severe weather..... 10
- Power outage 21
- Health emergencies 24
- Floods 25

What to do before an emergency

- Expect the unexpected — plan for it..... 32
- Make a plan..... 33
- Make a home escape plan 36
- Make a kit..... 38
- Car kit 45
- Preparing an emergency food supply 47
- Preparing an emergency water supply..... 54
- Pets and disasters 57



Accessible formats or communications supports are available upon request.

What to do during an emergency

- Shelter-in-place 62
- Evacuation..... 63
- Returning home 65

What to do after an emergency

- Coping with disaster 68
- How you can help..... 70
- Know your insurance 71

Tips for people with disabilities and/or special needs

- Mobility 78
- Vision 80
- Hearing..... 82
- Non-visible disabilities 85
- Seniors with special needs 88
- Highrise safety..... 90
- Travel considerations..... 92
- For more information 95

RESOURCES 101





Proper use of the 9-1-1 emergency telephone number and non-emergency numbers

The **9-1-1** emergency number provides instant access to emergency services and should be used only for immediate police, fire and ambulance response.

When should you call 9-1-1?

When a situation requires the immediate response of police, firefighting and/or ambulance personnel, call **9-1-1**. Some examples:

- **downed power lines**
- **injuries and life-threatening emergencies**
- **criminal activity**
- **fire**

In a situation such as a power outage where there is no immediate danger to human health or property, non-emergency numbers can be used.

Please use **9-1-1** correctly. If **9-1-1** is flooded with non-emergency calls, then true emergency calls will have more difficulty getting through.

Do not call 9-1-1 to:

- locate relatives
- ask about the availability of gas at local pumps
- find out the location or availability of shelters and other services

These calls, though important, can be handled through the non-emergency numbers listed below. Using the non-emergency numbers leaves the 9-1-1 service available to handle emergency calls.

Non-Emergency Numbers

York Region Access York..... **1-877-464-9675**

Public Health

Health Connection..... **1-800-361-5653**
 TTY **1-866-252-9933**

Police

York Regional Police **1-866-876-5423**
 **905-895-1221**

Fire

Aurora **905-895-9222**
 East Gwillimbury **905-853-8842**
 Georgina **905-476-5167**
 King City **905-833-2800**
 Markham **905-477-2011**
 Newmarket **905-895-9222**
 Nobleton **905-833-2800**
 Richmond Hill **905-883-5444**
 Schomberg **905-833-2800**
 Vaughan **905-832-8506**
 Whitchurch-Stouffville **905-640-9595**

Hospitals

Mackenzie (Richmond Hill)..... **905-883-1212**
 Southlake Regional Health Centre
 (Newmarket)..... **905-895-4521**
 Markham/Stouffville (Markham) . **905-472-7000**

TYPES OF EMERGENCIES

that could occur in York Region

Hazardous materials incidents

Hazardous materials are substances that, because of their nature, pose a potential risk to life, health or property if they are released.

Hazardous materials are part of our everyday lives – everything from chemicals used in industry to household cleaners can be hazardous when not handled or contained in a safe manner.

Hazards can exist during production, storage, transportation, use or disposal. Hazardous materials incidents can range from a chemical spill or fire on transportation routes or at industrial sites to a household chemical spill.

The following suggestions can help you stay informed about the potential dangers in your area:

1. Check with your municipality to find out if reportable quantities of hazardous substances are stored and used in your community.
2. Determine how close you are to major highways, rail lines, pipelines or factories that may produce or transport hazardous materials.



Hazardous spill

When a hazardous spill occurs

- If you witness (or smell) a hazardous materials accident, call 9-1-1 and report it
- Move away from the incident site to minimize the risk of contamination
- If you are outside during the incident, remember that gases and mists are generally heavier than air. Try to stay upstream, uphill and upwind, if possible
- If you are in a motor vehicle, stop and seek shelter in a permanent building if possible — If that is not possible, remain in your vehicle, keep windows and vents closed and shut off the air conditioner and heater
- If you are in a building, remain indoors. Turn on and monitor radio or television for updates and instructions from emergency responders on the incident
- Close all windows and doors; shut down air conditioners, fans, etc., which bring in outside air. Close all interior doors so you can “compartmentalize” your house. Placing wet towels under the doors help prevent the entry of smoke and/or fumes into your home

If inside:

- If you are in a building, remain indoors
- Bring pets inside
- Turn on and monitor radio or television for updates and instructions from emergency responders on the incident
- Close all windows and doors; shut down air conditioners, fans, etc., which bring in outside air
- Close all interior doors so you can “compartmentalize” your house
- Have materials available to seal-off your home from airborne contamination
- Go into a pre-selected shelter room. This room should be above ground and have the fewest openings to the outside
- Seal gaps under doorways and windows with wet towels or plastic sheeting and duct tape

- In large buildings, set ventilation systems to 100 per cent recirculation so that no outside air is drawn into the building. If this is not possible, ventilation systems should be turned off
- Shut off all vents; close fireplace dampers
- Place wet towels under the doors to prevent the entry of smoke and/or fumes into your home
- Avoid eating or drinking any food or water that may be contaminated

If outside:

- If outside, move upstream, upwind and uphill as hazardous fumes and mists are generally heavier than air
- Try to go at least one kilometre (usually 8 to 10 city blocks) from the danger area
- Do not walk into or touch any spilled liquids, airborne mists, or condensed solid chemical deposits. Try not to inhale gases, fumes and smoke
- If possible, cover mouth with a cloth while leaving the area
- Stay away from accident victims until the hazardous material has been identified

If in a vehicle:

- If you are in a motor vehicle, stop and seek shelter in a permanent building if possible
- If that is not possible, remain in your vehicle, keep windows and vents closed and shut off the air conditioner and heater

If fumes threaten you personally

- If you are instructed to evacuate the area, do so immediately
- Only evacuate if directed to do so by local authorities. In the short term, staying indoors with the building sealed is the most effective action you can take
- If time permits, close all windows, shut vents, and shut off attic, heating and air conditioning fans to minimize contamination
- Close your car windows and air vents, and turn off the heater or air conditioner
- Seek medical attention if you are experiencing health symptoms



Severe weather

Watches and warnings

A **“Watch”** is an advisory that indicates an area is at risk of experiencing a storm over the next 36 hours. A watch does not mean the storm is definitely going to strike. It is issued simply to serve notice that the probability is high enough to warrant paying special attention. Everyone in an area covered by a “watch” should watch more carefully for the storm and be prepared to act quickly if warnings are issued.

A **“Warning”** is designed to alert people to weather conditions that have already developed, or are forecasted to develop, either locally or throughout the entire area under the warning. When a warning is issued, it is time to put your emergency plan into action and people should maintain vigilant and monitor the local forecasts for further updates or warnings.

Thunderstorms

A thunderstorm develops in an unstable atmosphere when warm moist air near the earth’s surface rises quickly and cools. These storms are often accompanied by hail, lightning, high winds, heavy rain and tornadoes. Thunderstorms are usually over in an hour, although a series of thunderstorms can last for several hours.

Lightning

- If you can hear thunder, you are within striking distance of lightning
- Take shelter immediately, preferably in a house or all-metal automobile (not convertible top)
- If caught outside far from a safe shelter, stay away from tall objects, such as trees, poles, wires and fences. Take shelter in a low-lying area and avoid open water
- Once indoors, stay away from electrical appliances and equipment, doors, windows, fireplaces, and anything else that will conduct electricity, such as sinks, tubs and showers. Avoid using a telephone that is connected to a landline

Tornados

- If you are in your car during lightning, do not park under tall objects that could topple, and do not get out if there are downed power lines nearby
- If caught on the water in a small boat with no cabin during thunder and lightning, quickly get to shore. Boats with cabins offer a safer environment, but it's still not ideal
- Remember, there is no safe place outdoors during a thunderstorm. Once in a safe location, remain there for 30 minutes after the last rumble of thunder is heard before resuming your outdoor activities

Tornados

Warning signs a tornado may be near:

- A severe thunderstorm is the driving force behind a tornado
- Hot, humid weather combined with a cold front can generate tornadoes
- A funnel cloud hanging from a dark cloud may be visible before the tornado actually occurs
- If you are indoors, stay tuned to your local television and radio stations for updated storm information especially when weather conditions are right for generating a tornado
- In Canada, tornado season typically runs between March and October, with activity peaking in late June or early July
- A tornado may be accompanied by thunder, lightning and high winds, these dangerous storms leave a path of destruction in their wake – the average tornado causes a damage swath of about six kilometres in length
- Know the favourable weather conditions for tornadoes: a dark, greenish sky, large hail often with little rain, an approaching cloud of debris or cloud rotation and a rumbling or whistling sound

If you are indoors:

- The safest places to be is your basement, a cold cellar or take shelter in a small interior, ground-floor room such as a bathroom, closet or hallway

- If you don't have a basement, go to a room on the lowest level of your house — away from windows, doors and outside walls. Find a room with as many walls as possible between you and the outside
- Get under a sturdy piece of furniture — use your arms to protect your head and neck
- In all cases, stay away from windows and outside walls and doors
- Don't open windows

If you are at the office or in an apartment building:

- Take shelter in an inner hallway or room, ideally in the basement or the ground floor
- Do not use the elevator and stay away from windows
- Avoid buildings such as gymnasiums, churches and auditoriums with free span roofs (these roofs do not have supports in the middle and may collapse if a tornado hits them)
- Take cover under a sturdy structure

If you are outside:

- Seek shelter immediately if a warning has been issued
- Don't wait until you see the tornado to get inside
- If you can't get inside, lie flat in a ditch or low level and cover your head with your hands
- Don't go under an overpass or bridge. You're safer in a low, flat area
- Watch out for flying debris
- Go to the nearest sturdy building or shelter immediately. Mobile homes do not offer much protection from tornadoes (more than 50 per cent of all deaths from tornadoes happen in mobile homes)
- Take shelter elsewhere - such as a building with a strong foundation
- If no shelter is available, then lie down in a ditch, away from the automobile or mobile home

- If you are driving and spot a tornado in the distance, try to get to a nearby shelter
- In all cases, get as close to the ground as possible, protect your head and watch out for flying debris. Small objects such as sticks can become lethal weapons when driven by a tornado's winds

After the tornado...

If your home or family is affected by the tornado, you should:

- Monitor local media reports for advice and to find out where assistance is available
- Check for gas leaks in your home

If you smell gas:

- Move as far away from the leak as possible (a safe position upwind of the potential leak site)
- Extinguish cigarettes or any other lit material
- Immediately open windows and doors
- Leave the house. Call 9-1-1
- Turn off your car or any gas/diesel powered equipment
- Call the toll-free, 24-hour, local gas company emergency number you see on a gas line marker
- Follow instructions provided to you by your local gas company and local emergency responders

Before re-entering your home:

- Check for blown fuses and look for short-circuits in your home wiring and equipment — If a problem exists, call your utility company
- Drive carefully and watch for debris, damaged bridges/roads and dangling wires
- Report any emergency situations to the local police or fire department

Winter storms

- Notify your insurance agent or broker if your property is damaged
- Check with your local government for counselling information to help cope with the emotional trauma associated with disasters
- Trained emergency response crews will arrive to deal with any leaked material and repair the gas line

What you shouldn't do:

- Do not touch any liquid or vapour cloud that might have come from a gas line leak
- Do not start your car or any equipment that could be a potential ignition source
- Do not smoke or light a match
- Do not turn on or off anything that may create a spark, including cell phones, pagers, flashlights, keyless entry remotes, vehicle alarms, and light switches

Winter storms

Winter storms kill more than 100 people every year in Canada. That is more than the total number of people killed by hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, lightning and extreme heat.

At home

- When a winter storm is forecast, check for weather updates from your radio, TV, or Environment Canada website: weather.gc.ca/canada



On a farm

- If you are on a farm with livestock, bring the animals into the barn. Make sure they have plenty of water and food
- You may also want to string a lifeline between your house and any outbuildings which you may have to go to during the storm
- Ensure that fireplaces are in good working order and sufficient fuel is on hand
- When a winter storm hits, stay indoors. If you must go to the outbuildings, dress for the weather (outer clothing should be tightly woven, water-repellent; jackets should have hoods; wear mittens)

Fireplace and woodstove safety

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for proper use
- Inspect and clean your chimney regularly
- Check stovepipes and connections, ensure that all screws are in place and look for dark staining or white powder at every joint – this could be a sign of chimney trouble
- Check for creosote and soot build up
- Check walls for excessive heat
- Check seals on gas fireplaces for leakage
- Install a rain cap on metal and masonry chimneys
- Watch for smoke coming into the room
- Protect floors and walls from heat and sparks – always use a properly fitting screen
Keep combustibles away from fireplaces. Handle hot ashes with care
- Regularly check your appliance for corrosion or rust stains on the outer shell of a metal chimney, bulges or corrosion in its liner, loose bricks, crumbling mortar, broken liners, and dark stains or white powder



In your car

Before:

- Have an emergency kit in your car
- Keep your gas tank almost full during the winter and have extra windshield washer fluid and gas line anti-freeze on hand
- If you do not already have a cellphone, you may want to have one in your car for emergencies. If you must travel during a snowstorm, do so during the day and let someone know your route, departure, and estimated arrival time

During:

- If your car is stuck in a winter storm, remain calm and stay in your car
- Keep fresh air in your car by opening the window slightly on the sheltered side, away from the wind
- You can run the car engine about 10 minutes every half-hour if the exhaust system is working well. Beware of exhaust fumes and check the exhaust pipe periodically to make sure it is not blocked with snow (remember, you cannot smell potentially fatal carbon monoxide fumes)
- To keep your hands and feet warm exercise them periodically
- In general, it is a good idea to keep moving to avoid falling asleep. If you do try to shovel the snow from around your car avoid over-exerting yourself as shovelling and bitter cold can kill
- Keep watch for traffic or searchers

Road safety:

- Drivers are often confused and frustrated when approaching and waiting at non-functioning traffic light intersections

Extreme heat

Rules of a four-way stop:

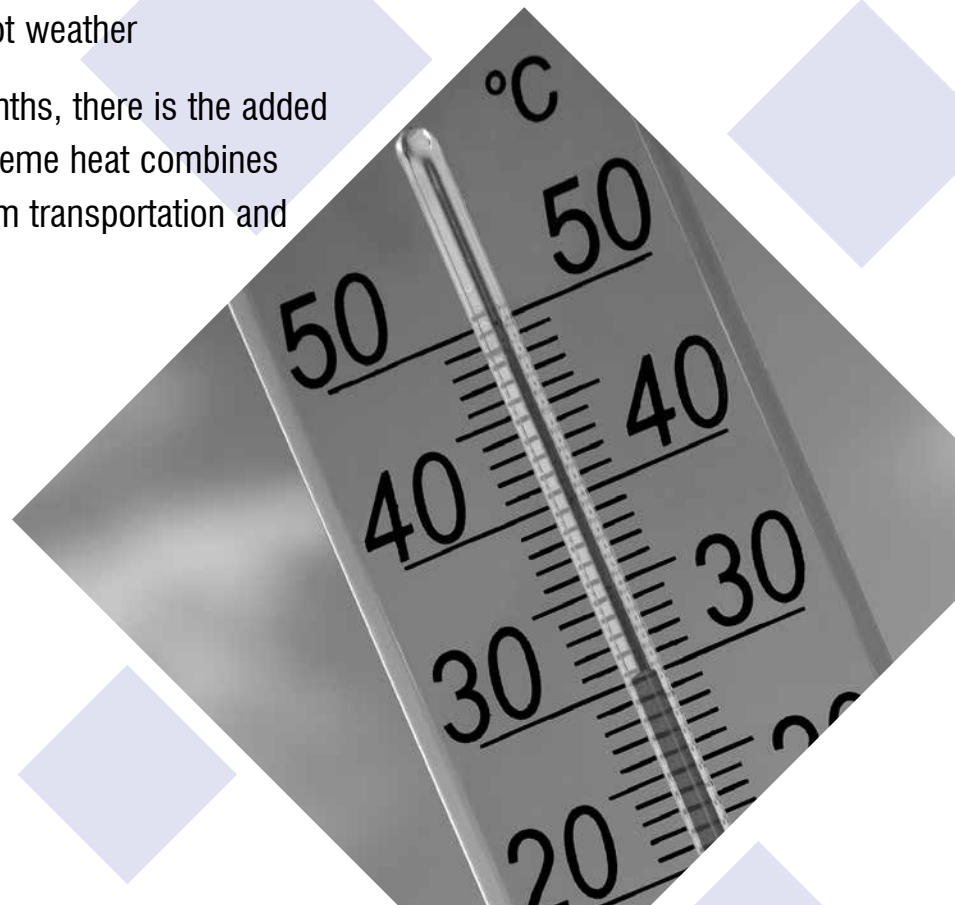
- A traffic light intersection becomes a four-way stop when the lights are not working
- The first vehicle to arrive and stop has the right of way
- If two or more vehicles stop at the same time then the vehicle on the right has the right of way
- Shortly after a power outage, stop signs may be temporarily placed at many designated traffic light intersections

Extreme heat

Heat can harm by pushing the human body beyond its limits. Under normal conditions, the body's internal thermostat produces perspiration that evaporates and cools the body. In extreme heat and high humidity, evaporation is slowed and the body must work harder to maintain a normal core temperature

Extreme heat or heat waves can be particularly dangerous for children, seniors, people with chronic diseases or medical conditions and pets. A heat wave is defined as a prolonged period of excessively hot weather

In Ontario, during the summer months, there is the added threat of poor air quality when extreme heat combines with high levels of air pollution from transportation and industrial sources



During the summer months, Environment Canada issues heat warnings:

A heat warning is issued when the temperature is expected to reach 30°C or more and the humidex value is expected to reach 40°C or more. The humidex combines temperature and humidity into one number to describe how hot, humid weather feels to the average person. The higher the humidex, the harder it is for perspiration to evaporate and cool the body

- York Region issues heat advisories when Environment Canada issues a heat warning for the area
- In addition, the Ministry of the Environment & Climate Change provides current air quality information and issues Smog Alerts for affected areas of the province when elevated smog levels are forecast to occur
- Most “smog days” in Ontario occur between May and September

Smog Alerts

When a Smog Alert is issued, tailor your activities accordingly:

- Avoid or reduce strenuous physical outdoor activities
- Avoid exercising near areas of heavy traffic
- If you have a heart or lung condition, talk to your physician about additional ways to protect your health

The Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) helps people plan ahead by letting them know the best time of day to be physically active and when to reduce or reschedule strenuous outdoor activity. AQHI forecasts are posted at airhealth.ca

Preparing for extreme heat:

Some measures you can take in your home to prepare for extreme heat include:

- Cover windows that receive morning or afternoon sun with drapes, shades, awnings or blinds, which can reduce the heat that enters a home
- Install window air conditioners snugly; insulate if necessary

- Check air conditioning ducts for proper insulation
- Install temporary reflectors, such as aluminum covered cardboard, to reflect heat back outside
- Weather-strip doors and windows to keep cool air inside

What you can do during an extreme heat or heat wave emergency:

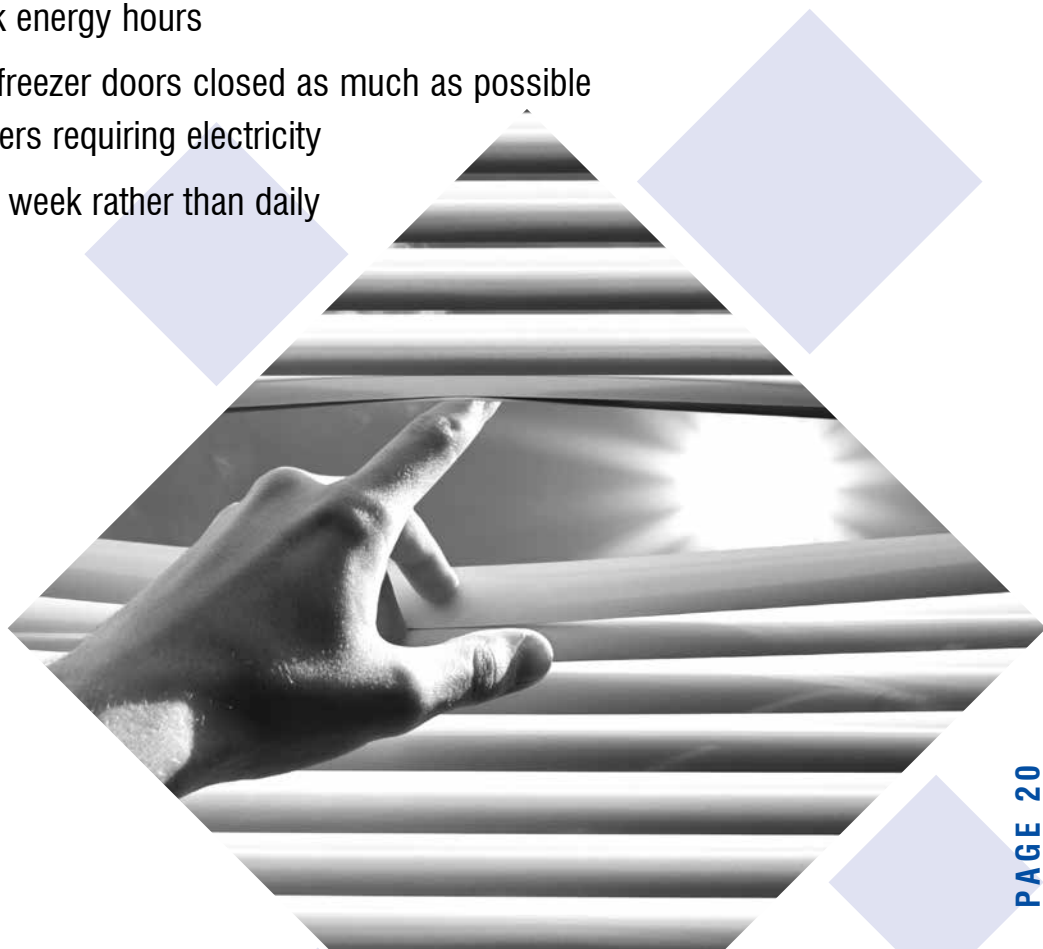
- Stay indoors as much as possible. If air conditioning is not available, stay on the lowest floor, out of the sun
- Frequently visit neighbours, family and older family members, especially those who are chronically ill or do not have air conditioning to make sure they are cool and hydrated
- Drink plenty of cool liquids, especially water, before you feel thirsty to decrease your risk of dehydration
- Wear loose-fitting, light-coloured and lightweight clothing made of breathable fabrics
- If your home is not air conditioned, consider spending the warmest part of the day in air conditioned public buildings such as libraries, movie theatres, shopping malls, and other community facilities
- Take cool showers or baths until you feel refreshed
- Eat well-balanced, light and regular meals that don't need to be cooked in an oven or on the stove

Potential power supply emergency in extreme heat and humidity

During periods of extreme heat and humidity the demand on our power grid can increase significantly. The increased demand could potentially exceed the supply of electricity available, creating the risk of rotating blackouts or large scale power outages. The Independent Electricity System Operator may issue a conservation appeal to decrease the risk to our power grid.

Energy conservation during a heat wave:

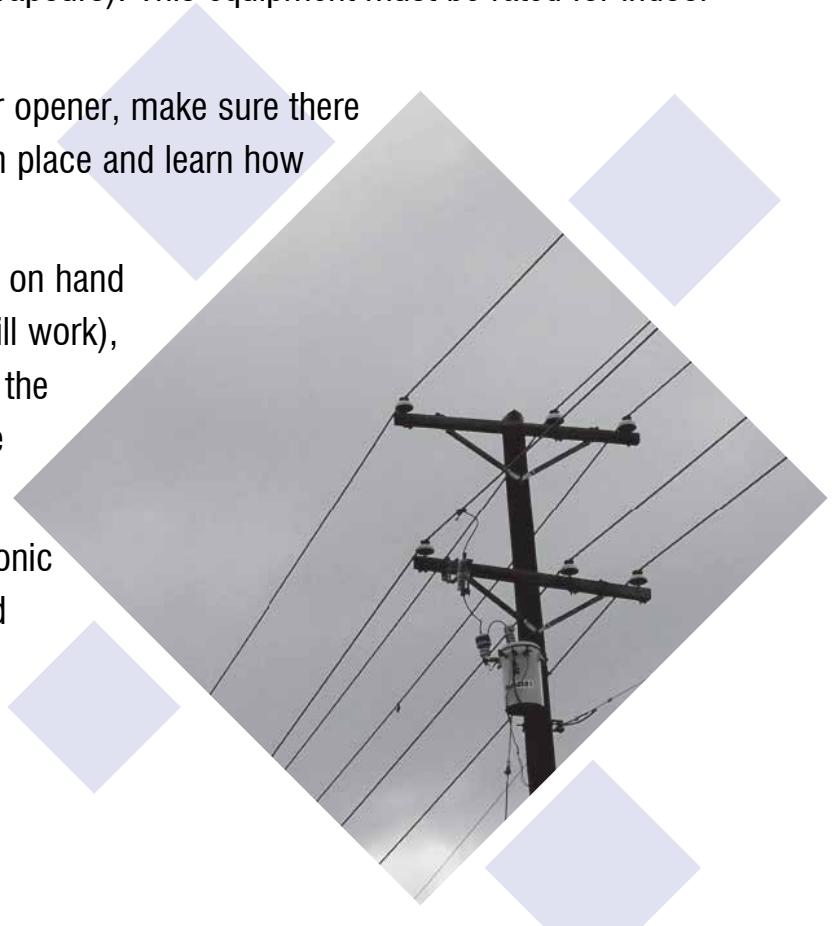
- Adjust or turn off your air conditioner when you are not home
- Use a programmable thermostat to adjust the temperature of your home
- Set your central air conditioning to a higher temperature during conservation appeals
- Use ceiling fans or fans instead of air conditioners only in, or next to an open window so heat can exhaust to the outside
- Close blinds and curtains during the day to help keep heat out
- Replace incandescent lighting with fluorescent lights
- Turn off lights, computers, stereos, televisions etc. when not being used
- Prepare meals that do not require you to use the stove or oven
- Shower, run dishwasher, washer and dryer during off-peak energy hours
- Dry wet clothes outdoors
- Avoid using heat producing small appliances (toasters, hair dryers) during the day especially during peak energy hours
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible
Avoid using pool heaters requiring electricity
- Vacuum pools once a week rather than daily



POWER OUTAGE

Before the power goes out:

- Have emergency light sources (flashlights, batteries, rechargeable flashlights) in all major rooms of your house such as the kitchen, hallways, family rooms, and bedrooms
- Some rechargeable flashlights will automatically turn on when there is a power failure (an excellent resource for hallways and children's rooms)
- "Glow sticks" are another safe alternative light source for children
- Have at least one traditional (corded) telephone in your home, as most cordless models will not work during a power outage
- Outdoor and charcoal barbecues should NEVER be used indoors, as they are a fire and safety hazard, and can release deadly carbon monoxide. PLEASE HANDLE THESE CAREFULLY and according to manufacturer's instructions
- Portable stoves, lamps, and other camping equipment can be useful. BUT, it is important to store them and their fuels in a shed or garage separate from your house. (Liquid fuels release combustible vapours). This equipment must be rated for indoor use such as a chafing dish
- If you have an electric garage door opener, make sure there is an emergency, release handle in place and learn how to operate the door without power
- Have several coolers or ice chests on hand (inexpensive Styrofoam coolers will work), a supply of ice for food storage in the event of a long-term power outage
- Install surge protectors in your home to safeguard valuable electronic equipment such as computers and home entertainment systems



- Know where to find each utility shut off – electricity, water and gas. Know how to turn each utility off, and make sure you have the proper tools to do so close at hand
- If you are on home oxygen or have any other life-sustaining equipment in your home, contact the service provider (vendor) to learn the details of their emergency contingency plan in the event of a power outage
- Make sure you have at least one vehicle with no less than half a tank of fuel; gas pumps are electrically operated and gas stations will shut down during a power outage

During a power outage:

First check to see if your neighbours have power. If you are the only home without electricity, check the main fuse in your electric service panel or fuse box to see if the main circuit breaker has been tripped or if a fuse has blown. If your neighbours don't have electricity either, then you know there has been a power outage in your area

- Turn off all major non-essential appliances such as your electric range and washer/dryer. Appliances and tools left switched on will start up automatically when your power is restored; turning them off prevents injury or fire
- If you leave your home during the outage, ensure your oven, stove, and all other heat-producing appliances are unplugged. This minimizes the risk of fire when power is restored
- If you light candles, use candle holders and NEVER leave burning candles unattended

When power is restored:

- Turn on only the most essential appliances first to give the electrical system a chance to stabilize. Wait 10 to 15 minutes before reconnecting other appliances
- Check your fridge and freezer to ensure they are back on; discard any spoiled food
- Don't forget to reset your clocks, timers and alarms
- Replace any items from your Emergency Kit which you may have used so you are prepared for future emergencies

Generator safety:

There are several safety considerations for anyone using a generator when powering home appliances.

- Always read the owner's manual before operating your portable generator for back-up power
- Never operate an internal combustion engine inside your home, basement, garage or any other enclosed area. A generator needs a minimum of three to four feet of spacing on all sides (including the top)
- A generator needs an unlimited supply of fresh air for proper cooling during operation
- Properly locate the generator outdoors **away** from doors and windows
- An open door or window will allow dangerous exhaust fumes to enter the building
Since combustion engines create carbon monoxide, which can be lethal, good ventilation is critical
- Keep the generator dry and always operate it on a level surface
- NEVER add fuel to your generator when it is running and always store additional fuel in approved gasoline containers
- NEVER feed power from your portable generator into a wall outlet. This causes a very dangerous situation when power is restored, as it can feed directly into your generator causing severe damage to your portable generator
- The safe application of power to your home is achieved simply by using a quality extension cord and surge protected power strip from the generator directly to the appliance that you want to power

HEALTH EMERGENCIES

Health emergencies may be caused by the spread of communicable diseases and contaminants in the air, food or water.

In case of a health emergency:

- Follow directions provided by Public Health and the Chief Medical Officer of Health
- These directions are usually announced through the media and posted on York Region's website at york.ca
- Continue to visit york.ca for up-to-date information
- Contact your health care provider if you feel you may have been exposed to the infectious disease or contaminant of concern and are not feeling well

General prevention:

- Keep up with your immunizations
- Stay home if you are ill to prevent spreading disease to others
- Wash hands frequently and thoroughly with liquid soap and water
- If soap and water are unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue if you sneeze or cough
- Regularly clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces

Eating well, getting enough rest and exercise, and managing your stress will help you maintain overall good health.

Limiting alcoholic drinks and being tobacco-free will also help keep your immune system strong.

For more information call:

- York Region Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653
- TTY 1-866-252-9933
- Visit york.ca



FLOODS

People who live in low-lying areas are at a greater risk of flooding. Changing rainfall patterns, more extreme storms, and rapid snow melt due to climate change can increase the risk of flooding. Flood-contaminated water can carry diseases that can impact human health. Items that have been in contact with the floodwaters need to be handled and/or properly discarded.

Flood damage costs Canadians millions of dollars annually, to say nothing of the cost in terms of human lives and suffering. All governments work to reduce the impacts of flooding, but the first line of defence is the individual. Each of us has a responsibility to protect our homes and families to the greatest extent possible.

By planning ahead and taking sensible precautions, you can do your part to minimize flood damage.

Be prepared for flooding

Homeowners, renters and businesses can take the following precautions to help prevent or lessen the effects of flooding:

- Check your sump pump to see if it's working; have a back-up pump
- Check to see if your eaves troughs, culverts and drainage ditches are clear
- Review your insurance policy to ensure you are adequately covered. Make sure you have sewer back-up insurance
- Assemble a 72 - Hour Emergency Kit

If you are at risk

When authorities have advised you flooding is imminent, take precautions to ensure you, your family and property are protected. Be prepared to follow the advice and instructions of emergency response authorities if a flood warning has been issued for your area:

- Have emergency food, water and medical supplies on hand
- Move furniture, electrical appliances, livestock, equipment and other belongings to higher levels

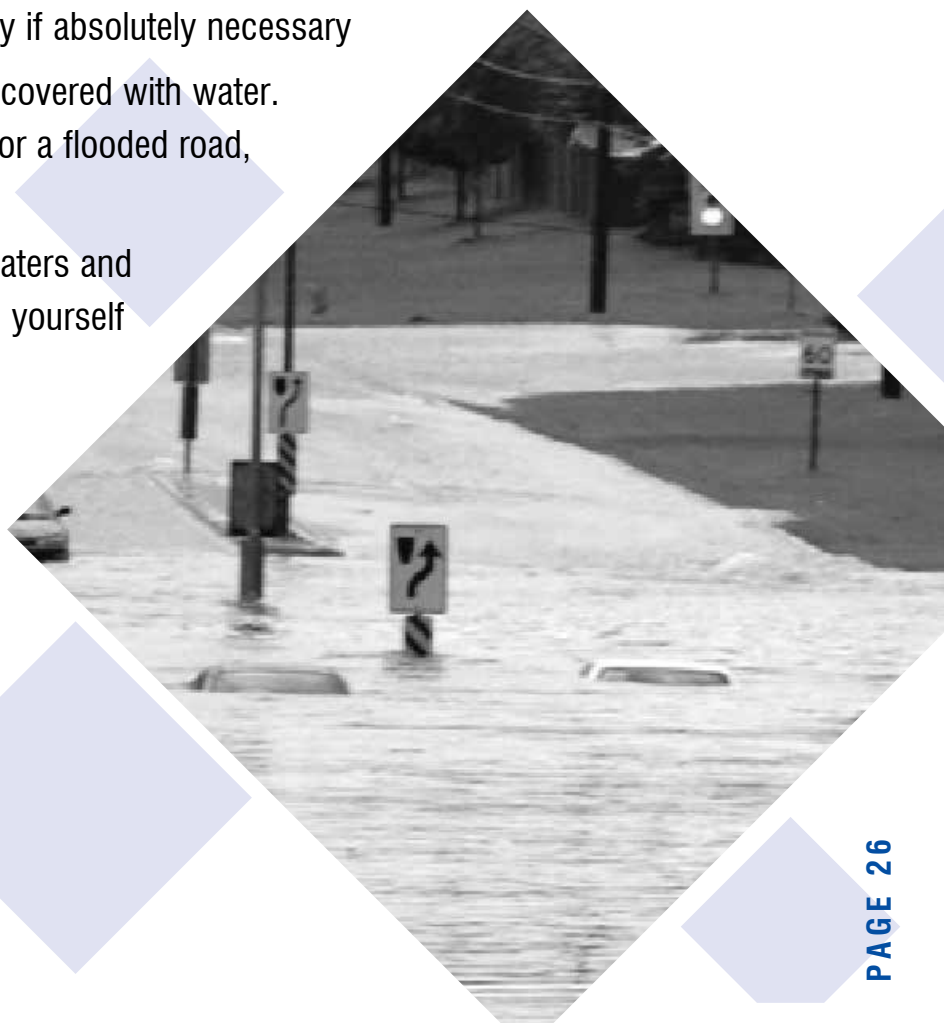
- Remove or seal hazardous products like insecticides
- Remove toilet bowl water and plug basement sewer drains and toilet connection
- Have sandbags ready to use
- Follow evacuation directives immediately

Evacuation

If you are advised by the authorities to evacuate your home, then do so. Ignoring the warning could jeopardize the safety of your family or those that might have to rescue you.

On the road...

- Follow the routes specified by officials. Don't take short cuts. They could lead you to a blocked or dangerous area
- Travel through flooded areas only if absolutely necessary
- Roads may be washed away or covered with water. If you come across a barricade or a flooded road, take a different route
- If you are caught in fast rising waters and your car stalls, leave it and save yourself and your passengers



Returning home

Care should be taken when re-entering your home after a flood. Flood water may be heavily contaminated with sewage and other pollutants that can pose a serious health hazard. Do not return home after a flood until local authorities have deemed it safe. Take the following precautions:

- Before entering a flooded building, check for foundation damage and make sure all porch roofs and overhangs are supported
- Use a flashlight to inspect for damage inside your house. Do not strike a match or use an open flame
- If your basement is full of water, drain in stages, about a third of the volume of water per day (draining too quickly can structurally damage your home)
- Using a dry piece of wood, turn off the electricity at the main breaker or fuse box
- Wear rubber gloves, rubber boots and protective eyewear when cleaning up
- Do not use wet appliances or motors unless they have been serviced by a qualified electrician
- Do not enter your home until municipal authorities state it is safe to do so
- Contact your local heating repair company to inspect your furnace and chimney
- Dispose of all contaminated food
- For instructions on how to disinfect wells and cisterns, contact the York Region Community and Health Services Department (Health Connection 1-800-361-5653)
- Check your newspaper or listen to your radio or television for information about help that may be provided

Do's and don'ts

Emergency clean-up tips for water damage

DO...

- Ventilate wet areas
- Avoid contact with flood waters to reduce your exposure to pollutants. If you are going to be in contact with flood waters, wear boots, a face mask and rubber gloves
- Clean open cuts exposed to flood water with liquid soap, potable water and apply antibiotic ointment. See medical attention as required
- Discard any medications that have come in contact with flood waters
- Remove standing water from flat surfaces by sponging and blotting
- Remove saturated rugs and carpets when hardwood floors
- Stay out of rooms where ceilings are sagging from retained water
- Transport computers to a dry environment, remove cases and blow dry with low-pressure air
- Remove lamps, telephones and decorative items from wet furniture tops
- Open drawers and cabinet doors for interior drying, but do not force open stuck drawers or doors
- Freeze valuable books and documents to retard mildew growth until drying can be performed
- Any materials left on your yard or property from the floodwater should be removed as soon as possible
- Wash and wipe/scrub all affected or flooded surfaces with unscented detergent and water. Rinse and repeat process as required

- Soiled carpeting or upholstery should be thoroughly cleaned and dried within two days, or thrown away
- Articles such as insulation materials, particle board furniture, mattresses, box springs, stuffed toys and pillows that have been water damaged, should be discarded
- Flooding can pose a potential health risk to homeowners because bacteria, mould and other micro-organisms may be present
- It is extremely important to clean, disinfect and possibility replace materials that have been damaged by flooding

DO NOT...

- Operate televisions, vacuums or other appliances while standing on wet carpets or floors, especially not on wet concrete floors. Serious injury may result
- Leave wet fabrics in place; space them apart and dry as soon as possible
- Use faulty extension cords in poor condition
- Use heat to dry closed building interiors: mildew and expanded moisture damage may result

Drinking water supply

- Wells that have been flooded should be tested for bacteria and found to be safe before water from the well is consumed
- It is recommended that wells used for drinking water, which have been flooded, be disinfected and tested after floodwaters recede
- Water sample bottles and instructions for disinfecting your well by contacting York Region's Health Connection to obtain water sample bottles and instructions for disinfecting wells



WHAT TO DO *BEFORE* AN EMERGENCY

EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED – PLAN FOR IT

An emergency or disaster is an event(s) that affects a large number of people and can overwhelm normal emergency services.

In everyday life, a large-scale emergency or disaster seems like a remote possibility.

But experience tells us that here in York Region we could experience:

- Power outages
- Severe weather
- Hazardous chemical spills or releases
- Human health emergencies or heat emergencies

An emergency can occur without warning, leaving little or no time for you to plan what to do next. It can confine you to your home or workplace or force you to evacuate your neighbourhood.

When an emergency occurs in our community, local government and non-government disaster-relief organizations will be there to assist you – but it's important to remember that the local responders may not be able to reach you immediately or in the initial stages of the event when they may need to focus their efforts elsewhere.

Every resident of York Region has a responsibility when it comes to emergency preparedness. Plan to be self-sufficient for at least 72 hours. It is important you are prepared and understand your responsibilities during an emergency.

When you are prepared, you become part of the solution.

MAKE A PLAN

Knowing what to do when disaster strikes will help you better control the situation and put you in a position to recover more quickly. That is why it is extremely important for you to have a household emergency plan. Being prepared and understanding what to do when faced with an emergency can reduce fear, anxiety and losses.

Before creating a household emergency plan, use this guide to learn about the types of emergencies that may affect the communities in York Region, how you'll be notified of an event, and plans that may already be in place to deal with these events.

Each municipality in York Region has an Emergency Response Plan in place that details the roles and responsibilities of municipal officials and first responders before, during and after an emergency. Contact your local municipal office, or visit your municipality's website for more information on the emergency plan for your area. Numbers and website addresses are listed in the Resources section of this guide.

Notification and updates of emergencies that occur anywhere in York Region will be posted on municipal and regional websites and broadcast on GTA radio and television stations. Some municipalities also have emergency hotline phone numbers in place during a declared emergency where you can access information.

Emergencies may occur when you are away from home, so find out about emergency plans at your workplace, school or anywhere else you and your family spend time.

After creating a household emergency plan you should take the time to review it with your family every six months.



Steps to take in creating a household emergency plan include:

- Meet with household members and discuss the dangers of possible emergency events in your community
- Discuss how you and your family will respond to each possible emergency
- Draw a floor plan of your home and mark two escape routes from each room (if possible) and identify a meeting place
- Plan how your family would stay in contact if separated by identifying an out-of-town contact such as a family friend, aunt etc
- Learn how to turn off the water, gas and electricity at main switches
(Note: if for any reason you do turn off natural gas service to your home, call your local gas utility to restore service. NEVER attempt to restore gas service yourself)
- Post emergency contact numbers near all telephones
- If there's been a major disaster, use the phone only if it's absolutely necessary. Emergency responders will need all available lines
- Every family member should know how and when to dial 9-1-1 to get emergency assistance
- Choose a friend or relative that all family members will call if separated (it is often easier to call out-of-province during an emergency than within the affected area)
- Take a Basic First Aid and CPR class. These are often available through your local municipal recreation department, or through organizations such as the York Region branches of the Canadian Red Cross or St. Johns Ambulance
- Review property insurance policies to make sure they are current and meet your needs (type of coverage, amount of coverage, hazards covered)
- Keep a small amount of cash at home in a safe place where you can quickly gain access to it in case of an evacuation

- If any members of your household have disabilities or special health considerations, you may have to take additional steps to ensure their comfort and safety in an emergency
- Make arrangements for pets. Pets are not always permitted in emergency shelters. Service animals for those who depend on them are allowed
- Keep family records (passports, birth certificates, etc.) in a water and fireproof safe and/or scan and save important documents on a flash drive



Develop a Home Escape Plan

Practice it!

In a fire or other emergency, you may need to evacuate on a moment's notice. You should be ready to get out fast.

Develop an escape plan:

- Draw a floor plan of your residence. Using a black or blue pen and the grid on the following page, show the location of doors, windows, stairways, and large furniture
- Indicate the location of emergency supplies (72 Hour-Emergency Preparedness Kit), fire extinguishers, smoke alarms, collapsible ladders, first aid kits and utility shut off points
- Next, use a different, coloured pen to draw a broken line charting at least two escape routes from each room
- Mark a place outside of the home where household members should meet in case of fire
- Be sure to include important points outside such as garages, patios, stairways, elevators, driveways and porches
- If your home has more than two floors, use an additional sheet of paper
- Practice emergency evacuation drills with all household members at least twice a year when you change your clocks and batteries in battery powered smoke alarms

MAKE A KIT

Emergencies or disasters can sometimes make it unsafe for people to leave their homes for extended periods. Severe weather or long-term power outages may make it necessary for each household to take care of its own needs until the disaster abates, or until local officials and/or relief workers are able to help.

Prepare for a disaster before it strikes. Assemble a 72-hour Emergency Kit to keep in your home to survive on your own for at least three days without utilities and outside sources of food and water.

To prepare your kit:

- Review the suggested checklist on the following pages and determine which tools and supplies your family would need to survive without power and outside sources of food and water for three days
- As each family has different needs, use the following checklist as a guide, revising or adding to it as necessary to meet the needs of your family
- Most of the items you will need are already in your home
- Gather and store the supplies that are listed in an easily accessible area on the main living floor of your home
- Assemble your emergency kit

Emergency kit supplies:

There are six basics you should stock in your home: water, food, first aid supplies, tools and supplies, clothing and bedding, and special items. Keep the items that you would most likely need during an evacuation in an easy-to-carry container.

Checklist

Possible containers include:

- A large, covered storage container
- A backpack
- A duffel bag

Water (Also see [Preparing an emergency water supply](#)):

- Store 4 litres of water per person/per day (2 litres for drinking, 2 litres for food preparation/sanitation)
- Keep at least a 3 day supply of water for each person in your household
- Store purification tablets or chlorine bleach and an eyedropper to disinfect water

Food (also see [Preparing an Emergency Food Supply](#)):

- Store at least a 3 day supply of non-perishable food
- Select foods that require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking and little or no water
- If you must heat food, pack canned fuel or other heat source. Select food items that are compact and lightweight

Include a selection of the following foods:

- Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits and vegetables
- Canned juices, milk, soup (if powdered, store extra water)
- Staples such as: sugar, salt, pepper, spices, coffee, tea and cereal
- High energy foods (peanut or nut butter, jelly, crackers, granola bars, trail mix)
- Foods for infants, elderly persons or persons on special diets

First Aid Kit may include:

- First Aid Manual
- Sterile, adhesive bandages in assorted sizes
- 4 inch sterile, gauze pads (4 to 6)
- 4 inch sterile, gauze pads (4 to 6)
- Hypoallergenic adhesive tape
- Triangular bandages (3)
- 2 inch sterile, roller bandages (3 rolls)
- 3 inch sterile, roller bandages (3 rolls)
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Heat Packs
- Rubbing Alcohol
- Moistened towelettes
- Antiseptic towelettes
- Thermometer
- Tongue depressor (2)
- Tube of petroleum jelly or other lubricant
- Assorted sizes of safety pins
- Cleansing agent/soap
- Vinyl gloves (2 pair)
- Small (hand) clean towels sealed in a plastic bag
- Non-prescription drugs (i.e. pain relievers, anti-diarrhoea medication, antacid laxative, antihistamines for allergic reactions)



Personal care items

- Toothbrush, toothpaste and dental floss
- Feminine napkins
- Soap and shampoo
- Cotton swabs
- Deodorant
- Toilet paper, towelettes
- Razor, shaving cream
- Lip balm, sunscreen, insect repellent

Tools and supplies

- Paper cups, plates and plastic utensils
- Battery operated radio, extra batteries and/or crank radio
- Flashlight, extra batteries and/or crank flashlight
- Cash, credit cards
- Manual can opener, utility knife
- Fire Extinguisher (small canister, ABC type)
- Duct tape
- Pliers
- Compass
- Matches (waterproof container) or a lighter
- Aluminum foil
- Plastic storage containers
- Paper, pencil

- Sewing kit
- Medicine dropper for water disinfectant drops
- Shut-off wrench to turn off household gas and water
- Whistle
- Plastic sheeting
- Map of your community
- Liquid detergent
- Plastic garbage bags, ties (for personal sanitation use)
- Plastic bucket with tight lid
- Household chlorine bleach, unscented
- Hammer and nails; crowbar
- Lantern and fuel, candles
- Emergency blanket
- Corded telephone
- Emergency heat source
- Camp stove
- An extra set of car and house keys

Clothing and bedding

- Include at least one complete change of clothing and footwear per person (pants, shirts, underwear, socks)
- Sturdy shoes or work boots (could be broken glass, downed trees, water etc.)
- Rain gear
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Warm clothing; jacket, hat, gloves and scarves

Special items

Remember family members with special needs, such as infants, elderly, and/or persons with disabilities or chronic illnesses.

For baby

If your baby is under 9 months old and is not breast fed it is important to have infant formula in your emergency kit.

For infants under 4 months of age the risk of illness is increased if bottles and nipples cannot be sterilized. Powdered infant and liquid concentrate formulas need to be made with water that has been boiled. If the child is old enough, it may be safer to use an open cup to give infant formula as they are easier than sterilizing bottles.

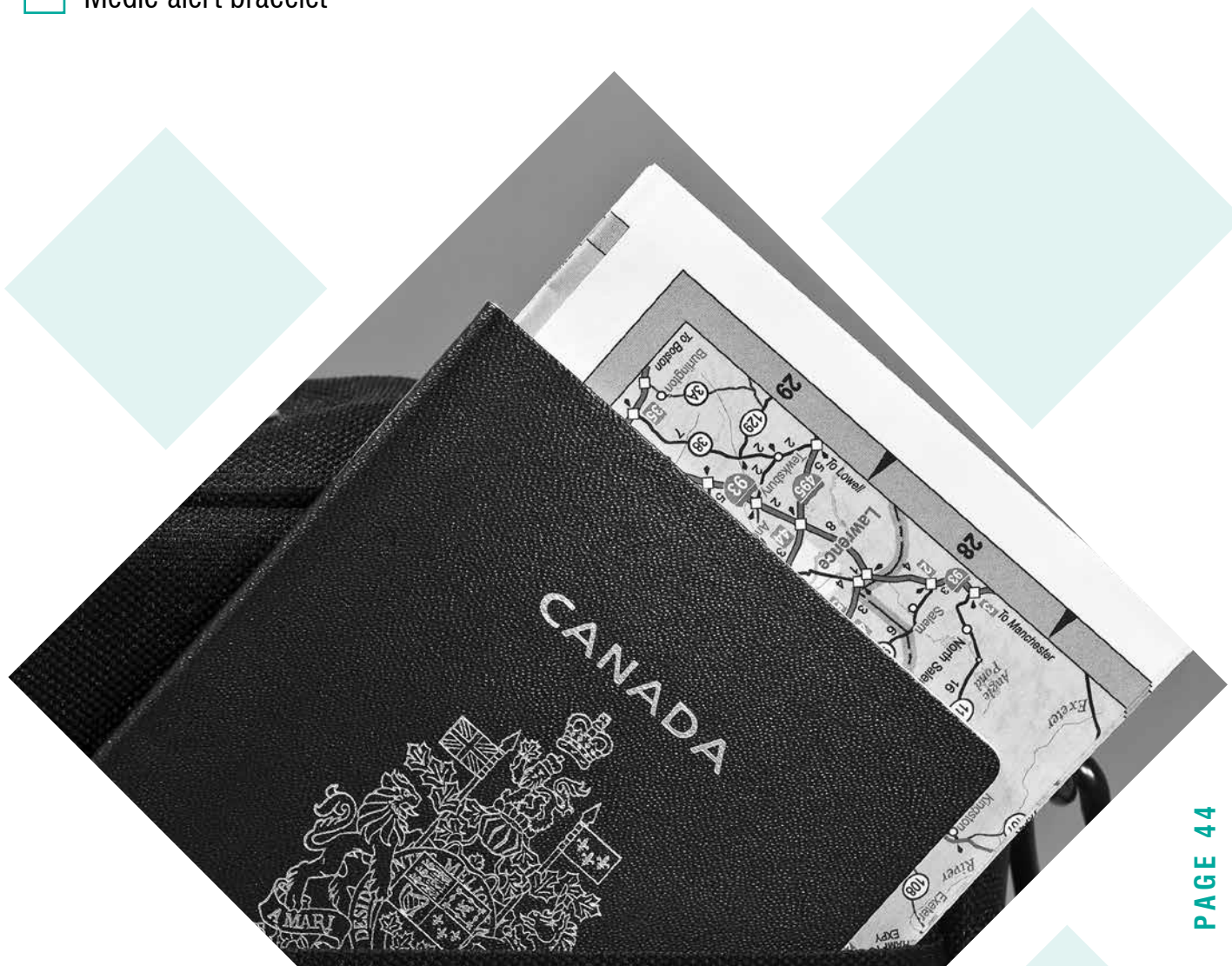
- Baby food
- Diapers
- Diaper wipes
- Hand sanitizer
- Baby clothes with extra layers of clothing for warmth depending on season
- Medications (prescription, non-prescription, seven day supply)
- Toys

For children and adults

- Medication (prescription, non-prescription, seven day supply)
- Contact lenses and supplies
- Denture needs
- Extra eye glasses
- Hearing aids and batteries
- Entertainment – games and books

Important family documents

- Keep family records (passports, birth certificates, etc.) in a water and fireproof safe and/or scan and save important documents on a flash drive.
- Wills, insurance policies, contracts, deeds, stocks and bonds
- Passport, social insurance cards, health cards, immunization records
- Bank account numbers
- Credit card account numbers and companies
- Inventory of valuable household goods, important telephone numbers
- Family records (birth, marriage, death certificates)
- Current photos of family members in case you are separated in an emergency
- Medic alert bracelet



Car Kit

Every driver should carry a survival kit in their vehicle. Here are some important items to consider:

- Cell phone
- Booster cables
- Vehicle fluids (i.e. windshield washer fluid, gas-line antifreeze, motor oil, transmission oil, power steering fuel, brake fluid, anti-freeze)
- Rags for wiping dipsticks so fluid levels can be checked properly
- An approved container (empty) able to hold up to 4 litres of gasoline
- Emergency flares and/or emergency triangles (follow manufacturer's directions when using)
- Sand, salt or kitty litter during winter. This comes in handy when stuck and wheels are spinning on ice
- Emergency food pack (non-perishable food, bottled of water)
- Shovel and axe or hatchet
- A plug-in air compressor and/or puncture seal gels
- A tire gauge for checking the air pressure in your tires
- Spare fuses. Carry an assortment that your vehicle requires
- A flashlight and spare batteries
- Tool kit, including a good quality screwdriver set with a flat head, Philips () head, Robertson head (□), and a Torx head (*), pliers, small hammer, utility knife, ratchet socket set, adjustable corench, Vice-Grip pliers, rolls of electrical and duct tape
- First aid kit

- A blanket; emergency foil blankets are best
- An emergency candle and camping matches
- Road maps
- Ice scraper and brush
- Fire extinguisher (ABC type, 2 lbs)

Always remember to keep your vehicle serviced regularly.

Keep your gas tank at least half full.

Drive carefully.



Preparing an emergency food supply

Short-term food supplies

There is a possibility that during an emergency, access to food supply sources may be disrupted temporarily. You should prepare a food supply that will last at least three days.

The easiest way to develop a three-day stockpile is to increase the amount of basic foods you normally keep on your shelves.

Special considerations

- As you stock food, take into account your family's unique needs and taste. Try to include foods that they will enjoy and that are also high in calories and nutrition. Foods that require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking are best
- Individuals with special diets and allergies will need particular attention, as will babies, toddlers and the elderly

Storage tips

- Keep food in a dry, cool spot in the house, in a dark area if possible
- Keep food covered at all times
- Open food boxes or cans carefully so that you can close them tightly after each use
- Wrap cookies and crackers in plastic bags, and keep them in airtight containers
- Empty opened packages of sugar, dried fruits and nuts into screw-top jars or airtight cans to protect them from pests
- Inspect all food for signs of spoilage before use
- Use foods before they go bad, and replace them with fresh supplies, dated with ink or marker. Place new items at the back of the storage area and older ones in front

Shelf life of stored food

Here are some general guidelines for rotating emergency foods:

Don't store longer than six months:

- Powdered milk (boxed)
- Dried fruit (in sealed container)
- Dry, crisp crackers (in sealed container)
- Potatoes

Don't store longer than one year:

- Canned meat and condensed vegetable soups
- Canned fruits, fruit juices and vegetables
- Ready-to-eat cereals and uncooked instant cereals (in containers)
- Peanut or nut butters and jams (if seal unbroken)
- Hard candy, chocolate bars and canned nuts

Longer term storage (in proper containers and conditions):

- Wheat
- Salt
- White rice
- Dried corn
- Non-carbonated drinks
- Vegetable oil
- Soybeans
- Bouillon products
- Powdered milk



-
- Dry pasta
 - Baking powder
 - Instant coffee, tea and hot chocolate

Power disruption and food supply

- First, use perishable food and foods from the refrigerator
- Then use foods from the freezer. To minimize the number of times you open the freezer door, post a list of freezer contents on it. In a well-filled, well- insulated freezer, foods will usually still have ice crystals in their centres (meaning the foods are safe to eat) for possibly up to two days
- Finally, begin to use non-perishable foods and staples

How to cook if the power goes out

For emergency cooking:

- Barbeque, charcoal grill or camp stove are for outdoor use only
- You can also heat food indoors using candle warmers, chafing dishes and fondue pots

Caution! The cooking area should be safely vented to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning. Canned foods can be eaten right out of the can. If you heat it in the can, be sure to open the can and remove the label first

Nutrition tips

During and immediately after a disaster, it will be vital that you maintain your strength. So remember:

- Eat at least one well-balanced meal each day and snack regularly on foods that are high in energy
- Drink enough liquid to enable your body to function properly (two litres a day)
- Eat sufficient amounts of food to maintain your strength
- Limit your intake of foods and drinks containing caffeine and/or alcohol

When food supplies are low

- Use canned foods, dry mixes and other staples in your cupboard. Most of these foods are easy to open and prepare. Familiar foods are also important. They can lift morale and give a feeling of security in times of stress
- If activity is reduced, healthy people can survive on half their usual food intake for an extended period and without any food for many days. Food, unlike water may be rationed safely, except for children, and pregnant women, diabetics and those with special needs
- If your water supply is limited, try to avoid foods high in fat and protein, and don't stock salty foods, since they will make you thirsty. Try to eat salt-free crackers, whole-grain cereals and canned foods with high liquid content

Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding protects babies and toddlers during emergencies by providing food, water and anti-bodies to prevent illness.

Breastfeeding is important to the mother's health too and creates a special relationship between mother and baby. Try to find a quiet place where you can spend time cuddling skin to skin with your baby. It also helps if the people around you support your efforts to breastfeed by bringing you food and drinks so that you can nourish your baby.

Breastfeeding also releases hormones to help you cope with stress.

If you are separated from your baby, you can express or pump (if available) your breast milk to maintain your supply. Breast milk can be kept at room temperature for about four hours and in an insulated cooler with ice packs for about 24 hours.

It may be safer to use an open cup than a bottle to feed an infant expressed breast milk as it is easier to clean. Keep track of your baby's diapers to be sure they are getting enough to eat.

If mothers who are not breastfeeding are faced with an emergency situation in which they are unable to obtain a steady supply of infant formula, or there is a lack of clean water to prepare formula and wash equipment, it may be possible to still make breastmilk. Put your baby to your breast, or express breastmilk at least 10 to 12 times a day. In general, the younger your baby, the sooner your breastmilk will increase. Even small amounts of breastmilk will help keep your child healthier during an emergency. Your child will need to be fed in another safe manner while breastmilk supply is increasing.

Rationale: the message for relactation is always present in any international document re infant feeding in emergencies.

For more information contact: york.ca

Preventing food poisoning

Food poisoning can be easily prevented by following some guidelines on the storage and preparation of food. Foods that do not require refrigeration are:

- Fresh vegetables
- Fruit
- Bread



- Dried pasta
- Flour
- Canned foods

Meat products (i.e. beef, poultry, fish and pork) and dairy products (cream, milk, cheese, and eggs) are safe, if stored properly and kept at the following temperatures:

- 4°C (40°F) or lower, or
- frozen at -18°C (0°F) or lower

Storing foods properly without refrigeration

- Any meat or dairy foods kept at room temperature (4°C or 40°F) for more than two hours must be thrown out
- Bacteria grows best at temperatures between 5°C and 60°C
- Food can be stored in coolers if individually wrapped. To keep cooler at required temperature, fill with ice or ice packs and keep covered to help insulate
- Avoid food prepared with mayonnaise or foods that have been cooked and kept without refrigeration
- Keep raw foods separate from prepared foods
- Prevent meats from dripping on other foods by placing them on the bottom of the cooler (drippings can cause contamination)
- If a power outage occurs, cover freezers with blankets for extra insulation
- Do not refreeze thawed foods
- Do not eat foods that have come in contact with flood water, sewage water or are smoke-damaged from a fire
- A good rule when dealing with food is “when in doubt, throw it out”



Without power, a full upright or chest freezer will keep food frozen for about two days. A half-full freezer will keep food frozen for one day. Keep the door shut as much as possible.

The refrigerator will keep food cool for four hours, depending on the kitchen temperature and keeping the door closed as much as possible. Ice can keep food on the refrigerator shelves cooler. Check the temperature of the food to ensure that it is 4°C (39.2°F) or lower.

Washing hands properly before handling food is important in the prevention of food poisoning. Although it may seem basic, proper hand washing is not always practiced. Washing hands should take a minimum of 15 seconds.

Please follow these steps:

- Wet hands with running water
- Apply liquid soap in the middle of wet hands
- Lather well, using vigorous friction by rubbing your hands together
- Pay attention to your nails and between fingers and thumbs
- Rinse hands thoroughly with running water
- Pat hands dry with a paper towel
- Turn taps off with paper towel

If a water source of any kind is not available, alcohol hand sanitizer is recommended — if hands are visibly soiled, use a moistened towelette to clean hands before using the alcohol hand sanitizer.



Preparing an emergency water supply

Preparing an emergency water supply

In a disaster, you might be unable to get food, water and the electricity supply could be interrupted for days.

Water: the absolute necessity

Stocking water reserves and learning how to purify contaminated water should be your top priority in preparing for an emergency. You should store at least a three-day supply of water for each member of your family. Everyone's needs will differ, depending upon age, physical condition, activity, diet and climate. A normally active person needs to drink at least two litres of water each day. Hot environments can double that amount. Children, nursing mothers and people who are ill will need more. You will need additional water for food preparation and hygiene. Store at least four litres per person per day.

If supplies begin to run low, remember:

- Never ration water
- Drink the amount you need today, and try to find more for tomorrow
- You can minimize the amount of water your body needs by reducing activity and staying cool

Hidden water sources in your home

If a disaster catches you without a stored supply of clean water, you can use water in your hot water tank (may be discoloured but safe), in your plumbing and in ice cubes. As a last resort, you can use water in the reservoir tank of your toilet (not the bowl), but purify it first.

To use the water in your pipes, let air into the plumbing by turning on the highest faucet in your home and draining the water from the lowest faucet in your home.

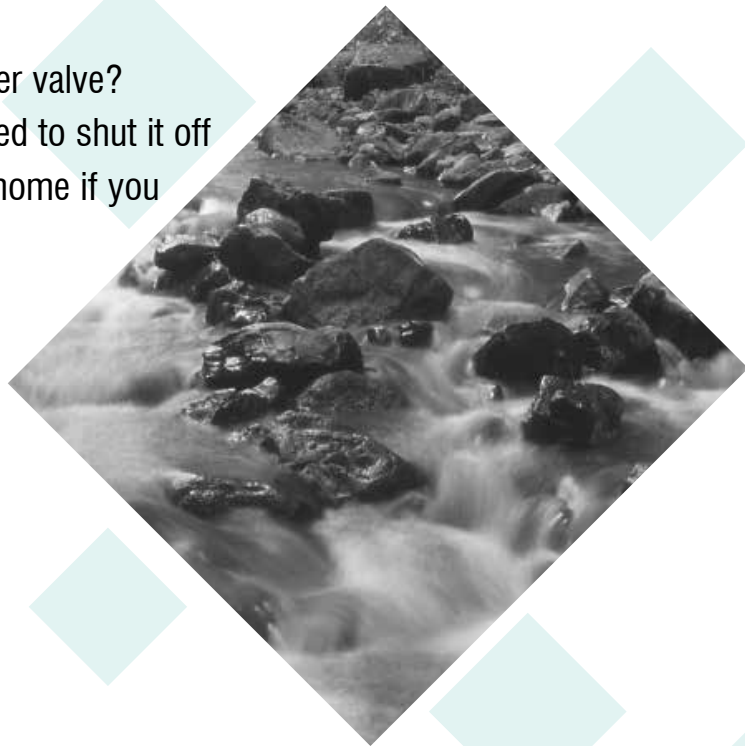
To use the water in your hot-water tank, be sure the electricity or gas is off, and open the drain at the bottom of the tank. Start the water flowing by turning off the water intake valve and turning on a hot-water faucet. Do not turn on the gas or electricity when the tank is empty.

Do you know the location of your incoming water valve?
It is normally located in the basement. You'll need to shut it off to stop contaminated water from entering your home if you hear reports of broken water or sewage lines.

Emergency outdoor water sources

You can use these outdoor sources:

- Rainwater
- Streams, rivers
- Ponds and lakes
- Natural springs



The water should be treated by boiling the water for at least one minute before drinking or using it for food. Boiling the water will kill any parasites, bacteria or viruses in the water. Water that has been exposed to flooding should not be used as it may have been contaminated with chemicals. Boiling water will not remove any chemicals from the water.

Avoid water with floating material, an odour or dark colour.

How to store emergency water supplies

Store your water in thoroughly washed plastic, glass, fibreglass or enamel-lined metal containers. Never use a container that has held toxic substances, because tiny amounts may remain in the container's pores. Hard plastic containers, such as soft drink bottles, are best. You can also purchase food-grade plastic buckets or drums.

Before storing your water, treat it with a disinfectant, such as chlorine bleach, to prevent the growth of micro-organisms. Use liquid bleach that contains 5.25 per cent sodium hypochlorite. Do not use scented bleaches, colour-safe bleaches or bleaches with added cleaners. When using bleach to purify water, use household bleach that contains hypochlorite as the only active ingredient and use only the small quantities in the instructions that follow.

Bottled water should be cycled periodically taking into account best before dates.

Four easy ways to purify water

Contaminated water can contain micro-organisms that cause diseases such as dysentery, cholera, typhoid and hepatitis. You must purify all water of uncertain purity before using it for drinking, food preparation or hygiene.

There are many ways to purify water. None are perfect. Often the best solution is a combination of methods. Before purifying, let any suspended particles settle to the bottom, or strain them through layers of paper towel or clean cloth.

These measures will kill microbes but will not remove other contaminants such as heavy metals, salts, and most other chemicals.

1. Boiling is the safest method of purifying water. Bring water to a rolling boil for one minute, keeping in mind that some water will evaporate. Let the water cool before drinking. Boiled water will taste better if you put oxygen back into it by pouring it back and forth between two containers. This will also improve the taste of stored waters.
2. Chlorination uses liquid chlorine bleach to kill micro-organisms. Add 1.25 ml (¼ teaspoon) of bleach per 4 litres of water, stir and let stand for 30 minutes.
3. Purification tablets release chlorine or iodine. They are inexpensive and available at most sporting goods stores and some drugstores. Follow the package directions.
4. Water Purification Devices. Several water purification devices can be purchased that filter many impurities from water. Follow the instruction manual for use and maintenance of these devices.

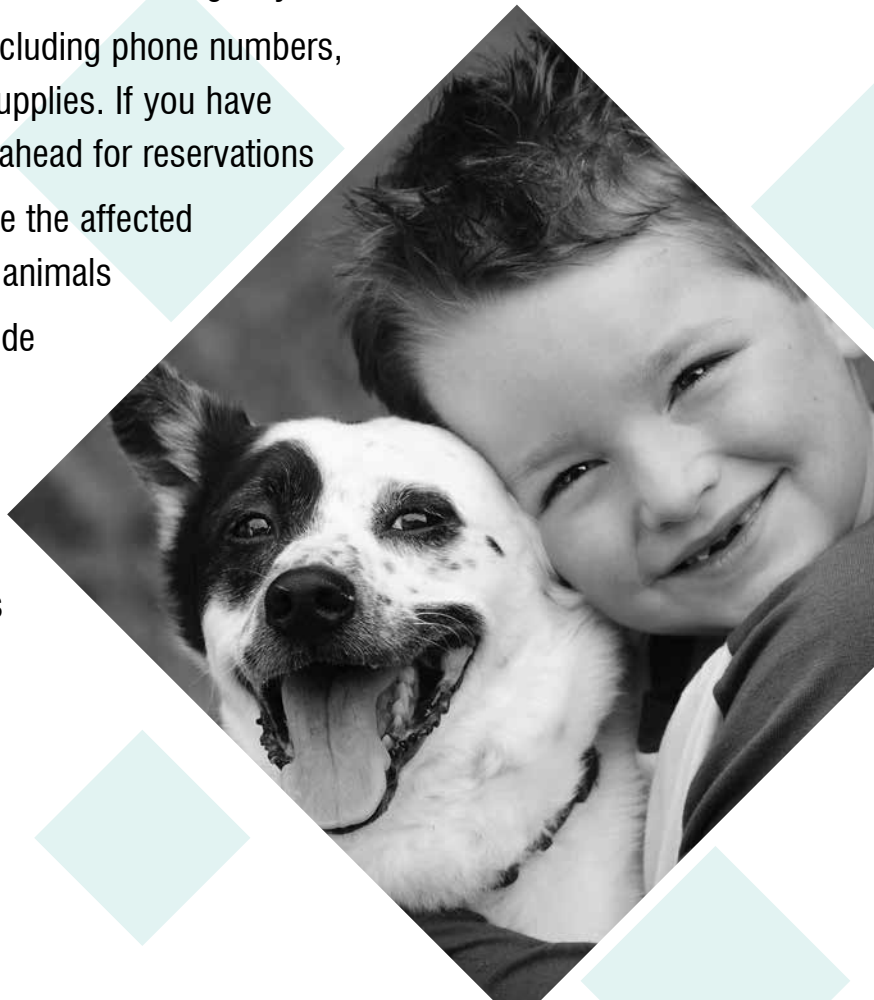
Pets and Disasters

If you are a pet owner, your household emergency plan must include your pets. Being prepared can save their lives.

Different emergencies require different responses. Should the disaster be a tornado or a hazardous spill, you may have to evacuate your home. If you must evacuate, the most important thing you can do to protect your pets is to evacuate them, too. Leaving pets behind, even if you try to create a safe place for them, is likely to result in their being injured, lost, or worse. So prepare now for the day when you and your pets may have to leave your home.

It may be difficult, if not impossible, to find shelter for your animals in the midst of an emergency, so plan ahead:

- Contact hotels and motels outside your immediate area to check policies on accepting pets and restrictions on number, size and species
- Ask if “No Pet” policies could be waived in an emergency
- Keep a list of “pet friendly” places, including phone numbers, with other disaster information and supplies. If you have notice of an impending disaster, call ahead for reservations
- Ask friends, relatives or others outside the affected area whether they could shelter your animals
- Ask local animal shelters if they provide emergency shelter or foster care for pets in a disaster. Animal shelters may be overburdened caring for the animals they already have as well as those displaced by a disaster, so this should be your last resort



Make a pet emergency kit

Whether you are away from home for a day or a week, you will need essential supplies.

Keep items in an accessible place and store them in sturdy containers that can be carried easily (duffel bags, pet carrier, etc.).

Have your pet micro-chipped and/or collars with tags.

Your pet disaster supplies kit should include:

- Medications and medical records including a Rabies Vaccination Certificate (stored in waterproof container) and a first aid kit
- Current photos of your pets in case they get lost
- Sturdy leashes, harnesses and /or carriers to transport pet safely and ensure that your animals can't escape
- Food, potable water, bowls, cat litter/pan, and can opener
- Information on feeding schedules, medical conditions, behavior problems, and the name and number of your veterinarian in case you have to foster or board your pets
- Pet beds and toys, if easily transportable

If you must evacuate

Planning and preparation will enable you to evacuate with your pets quickly and safely. But bear in mind that animals react differently under stress.

Outside your home and in the car, keep dogs securely leashed. Transport cats in carriers.

Don't leave animals unattended anywhere they can run off. The most trustworthy pets may panic, hide, and try to escape or even bite or scratch. And, when you return home, give your pets time to settle back into their routines. Consult your veterinarian if any behaviour problems persist.

If you must leave your pet behind, alert municipal authorities and leave a Pet Record such as this sample.

PET RECORD

If your pet is left behind during an emergency, complete this form and give it to Animal Services Staff at an Emergency Shelter or tape to inside of door/window.

Fill in the information about your pet and provide a photo or description.

Type of Pet: _____

Pet's Name: _____

Temperament of Animal:

Friendly

Timid

Aggressive

Vicious

Contact Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number(s): _____

Location of Animal in Home: _____

Feeding or Special Instructions: _____

To be Completed by Emergency Worker only:

Dates Animal Checked:				
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Animal remains in Home: _____

Animal Removed to Shelter: _____

Owner Notified by: _____

Name/Address of Shelter:

Date: _____

WHAT TO DO DURING AN EMERGENCY

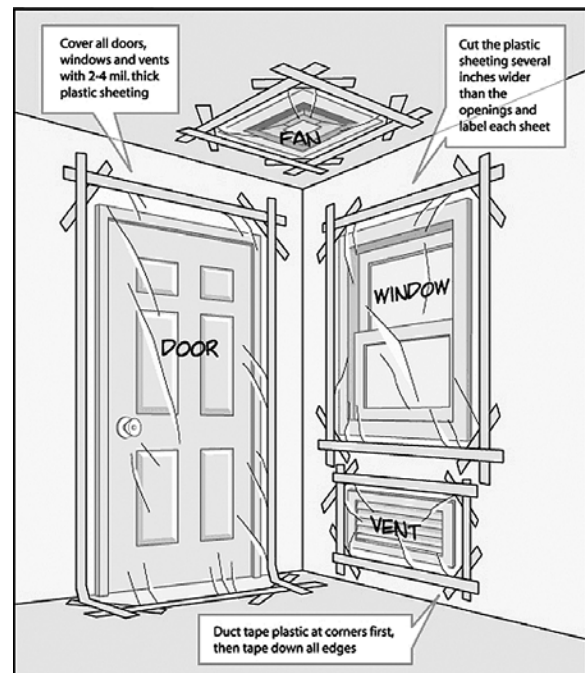
Shelter-in-place

Any time you are required to stay indoors because of an emergency situation, you are sheltering in place. Shelter in place may be short-term, such as going to a safe room for a short period of time while a tornado warning is in effect. It may also be longer term, such as when you stay in your home for several days without electricity or water services following a severe storm.

The appropriate steps to take in preparing for short-term, in-place sheltering will depend on the particular emergency you are facing.

To shelter in place and seal the room

- Bring your family and pets inside
- Lock doors, close windows, air vents and fireplace dampers
- Turn off fans, air conditioning and forced air heating systems
- Take your emergency kit unless you have reason to believe it has been contaminated
- Go into an interior room with few/no windows, if possible
- Seal all windows, doors and air vents with plastic sheeting and duct tape. Consider measuring and cutting the sheeting in advance to save time



- Place a damp towel or clothe along the base of the door
- Be prepared to improvise and use what you have on hand to seal gaps so that you create a barrier between yourself and any contamination
- Local authorities may not immediately be able to provide information on what is happening and what you should do. However, you should watch TV, listen to the radio or check the Internet often for official news and instructions as they become available

Evacuation

If a flood, fire, hazardous materials spill or another emergency poses a threat or potential threat to your safety or that of your property, local authorities may advise you to evacuate.

General evacuation guidelines:

- Try to seek shelter with friends or relatives outside of the affected area
- Emergency shelters can be set up in locations such as schools, municipal buildings, community centres. At the time you are advised to evacuate, you will also be advised of the location of the nearest emergency shelter

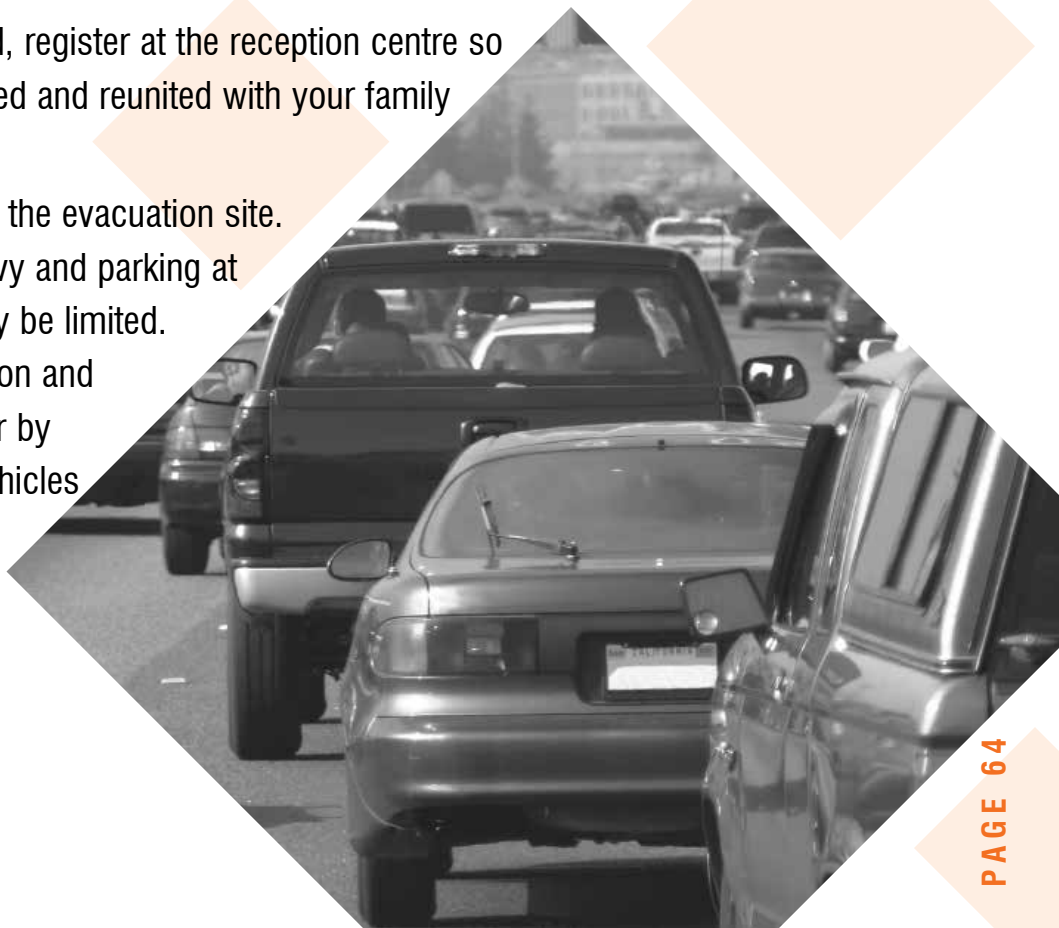
Evacuation instructions may come with little warning, so it is important to include plans for evacuation as part of family, business, and neighbourhood preparedness plan. Should an evacuation be necessary, law enforcement officers, fire department personnel or other local officials will notify you directly through established emergency communication systems.

When evacuation instructions are issued, listen to your radio to make sure the evacuation instructions apply to you, and to understand if you should evacuate immediately or if you have time to pack some essentials.

It is important to stay calm, listen carefully and follow all instructions.

Before you leave, turn off power, water, and gas (if instructed to do so by local officials).

- Take your pets
- Should time allow, leave a note affixed to your door informing others when you left and where you went
- Close and lock your windows and doors
- Take your Emergency Kit
- Follow the route authorities recommend. Don't take shortcuts on the way to the shelter, they may be blocked or expose you to dangerous hazards
- If you need a ride, ask a neighbour or check with local municipal transportation
- Check on neighbours to make sure they have been notified and offer help to those with disabilities or other special needs. Seniors, people with disabilities, care givers and large families may require additional assistance in emergency situations
- When you are evacuated, register at the reception centre so that you can be contacted and reunited with your family and loved ones
- Take only one vehicle to the evacuation site. Traffic may be very heavy and parking at the reception centre may be limited. Reduce further congestion and keep you family together by eliminating additional vehicles



Returning Home

Care should be taken when re-entering your home.

Remain safely sheltered, outside the evacuation area, until told by authorities it is safe to return.

- Keep tuned to local radio and TV stations for advice and instructions from municipal officials about medical help, emergency housing, clothing and food assistance, ways to help yourself and your community
- Drive only when necessary and be especially careful. Streets may be filled with debris and downed power line
- Avoid loose or dangling power wires and report them immediately to the local power company
- Report broken gas, sewer or water mains to the municipality
- Prevent fires! Don't use candles. Municipal water pressure and availability of personnel may be low, which will make fire-fighting even more difficult
- Check refrigerated food for spoilage. Don't risk eating spoiled food
- Stay away from danger areas. Debris, broken bottles, and boards with nails will be everywhere. Watch your step

WHAT TO DO *AFTER* AN EMERGENCY

Coping with a Disaster... what you might experience

It is not unusual to have physical and emotional reactions to a traumatic event.

Physical

- Rapid heart beat
- Difficulty breathing
- Chills or sweating
- Nausea or vomiting
- Wakefulness or fatigue
- Change in appetite
- Difficulty in sleeping
- Headaches

Emotional

- Denial, disbelief
- Anger, guilt, suspicion
- Difficulty making decisions
- Need for information
- Rejection of outside help



How do families cope with disasters

- Recognize the way you react to the event is not unusual
- Try not to make big life changes
- Talk to family members and friends
- Listen to one another
- Help each other with daily tasks
- Try to achieve a balance between rest and activity

Emotional problems: after a disaster

Emotional problems following a disaster are a result of problems in daily life and not from personal reactions or poor coping skills. Problems can include:

- Dealing with the emotional reactions of family members
- Family and marital problems including domestic violence
- Uncertainty about insurance coverage or the need to borrow money because of insurance shortfall
- Reconstruction strains and delays
- The discomfort and lack of privacy of having to live in shelters, damaged homes, motels or with relatives

How you can help

The tips in this guide are designed to help you and your family prepare for and survive an emergency. If you are interested in helping your community recover from an emergency, here are some suggestions:

Make a donation

- Making a financial contribution to a volunteer agency involved in disaster relief is often the most sensible and efficient way of helping people in need after a disaster
- Before donating any goods, including food or clothing, wait for instructions from local officials or check with a specific organization. Unneeded items overwhelm the recovery effort and may go to waste

Become a volunteer

- Volunteer with a recognized disaster response organizations such as the Red Cross or St. John Ambulance before a disaster happens
- Do not go directly to volunteer at a relief organization, hospital or disaster site during or immediately following an emergency
- Wait for instructions from local officials, or check with specific organizations as to their needs
- Be prepared to provide information on what skills and training you have to offer
- Be patient. Immediately following a disaster, there are often many people waiting to volunteer. But remember there may be a greater need for volunteers in the weeks and months following a disaster

During or immediately after an emergency, residents should contact their local municipality for information on the need for volunteers.

Know your insurance

Damage from most storms, including hurricanes, tornadoes, wind and hail, is generally covered by insurance. Also, water damage caused by water coming through storm damaged roof and windows, broken pipes or overflowing appliances is usually covered.

Other water damage such as sewer backup may, or may not, be covered.

Insurance covers more than damage to your home and contents. Additional living expenses are an example. It pays for the increase in living expenses, including moving expenses, if your home is unfit to live in or you have to move out while repairs are being made.

If a generator is hardwired into your electrical panel, notify your insurance representative and ensure the work was done by a qualified professional.

Be prepared. Protect your financial assets. Discuss your insurance needs with an agent, broker or insurance representative.

What should you do if damage occurs?

Take steps immediately to protect your property from further damage. Board up holes or shut off water supplies to ensure your belongings are not damaged more than they already have been. If possible, get your car under cover. Save receipts for materials you use. Any reasonable costs incurred to protect your property will be covered by your insurance company. Advise your insurance representative about your loss as soon as possible.

For free information on car and home insurance, call Insurance Bureau of Canada Consumer Information Centre at 1-800-387-2880 or visit their website at ibc.ca

TIPS FOR PEOPLE *WITH* DISABILITIES and/or SPECIAL NEEDS

Important planning considerations

- The Emergency Preparedness Kit items listed in this guide are only a suggestion and may or may not apply to every emergency situation and/or a person's special needs
- You should decide which essential items to include for yourself and your family members. If possible, have a seven day supply of all medications in your 72 - Hour Emergency Kit
- During an emergency you may have no electrical power
- During an emergency you may need to go to an emergency evacuation shelter. It is recommended that you and your family have a designated contact person that resides outside of your immediate community. This way, in the event of an evacuation, family members can easily notify each other by calling their designated contact person
- Pack and store all emergency preparedness items (including medications, medical supplies and/or assistive devices) in an easy-to-access and easy-to transport container should you need to evacuate
- Select a network of individuals at work and at home that will be able to assist you during an emergency. (Make sure you inform your network of where you keep your Emergency Preparedness Kit)
- Prepare a list of any food or drug allergies you might have and all the medications you are taking. You may want to provide this list to your designated network and also keep a copy in your Emergency Preparedness Kit, on your person, at home, your workplace and in your car (if applicable)

Plan

- On your list of medications, specify the reason for each medicine that you are taking (e.g. medical condition being treated) including the generic name, dosage, frequency, and the name and contact information of the prescribing physician
- Special equipment and supplies; e.g. batteries for medical equipment or things like hearing aids, assistive devices, enteral feeding supplies, catheters, inner tubes for your wheelchair tires

Plan

- If you have children with a disability or special needs, prepare a similar list for each of your children and provide it to their caregiver, school, emergency contact members, etc
- If you have an allergy, chronic medical condition, or special medical need you may want to consider owning and wearing a MedicAlert® bracelet or identification as part of your emergency preparedness plan. For more information visit: medicalert.ca
- Regularly check expiration dates on all medications, bottled water, and canned/ packaged food in your Emergency preparedness kit. It is best to replace food and bottled water at least once a year
- Prepare a contact information list of all your emergency contact persons and provide a copy to your designated network at work and/or home. Also keep a copy in your preparedness kit, on your person, at home, at your workplace and in your car (if applicable)
- Provide written instructions for your network on how best to assist you and your service animal (if applicable) during an emergency
- Label all of your special needs equipment and attach laminated instruction cards on how to use, retrieve and/or move each assistive device during an emergency
- Since your medications, assistive devices, etc. may change over time, it is advisable for you to regularly assess your needs and incorporate any changes to your Emergency Preparedness Kit supplies and your family emergency plan

- If your personal needs require regular attendant care and/or life sustaining apparatus, arrange with your network to check on you immediately if an emergency occurs or if local officials issue evacuation instructions
- Carry a personal alarm that emits a loud noise to draw attention to your whereabouts
- Keep a whistle and flashlight near you as this will help others find you in an emergency situation. The international signal for help is three short blasts
- If you rely on any life sustaining equipment/apparatus, develop an emergency back-up plan that will ensure the equipment/apparatus works in the event of a power outage
- If a member of the household is bedridden and requires constant medical care, or has electrical life support equipment at home, discuss this **NOW** with the primary care physician
- Install working smoke alarms on every floor of your home and outside all sleeping areas
- Test smoke alarms on a monthly basis by pushing the test button. Replace smoke alarm batteries every six months and whenever the low-battery warning sounds
- Develop and practise a home fire escape plan or refer to your building's fire safety plan so that everyone in your home knows what to do in the event of a fire
- Practise your emergency plan with your network at least twice a year. If during an emergency your support network cannot assist you for whatever reason, ask other individuals around you to help you. Remember to inform them of your special needs and how they can best offer any assistance to you
- Keep your walking aids near you at all times, and, if possible, an extra cane or walking aid in different rooms and at work
- If you have a service dog, keep a cane handy in case your dog is injured or too frightened to help you during a major crisis
- Persons who receive home health care services should discuss emergency plans with their caregiver or home care agency
- Individuals should check with their physician to establish whether prior arrangements would be necessary for evacuation to a hospital

Tips on helping a person with a disability

- “Ask First” if the person needs or wants your help – do not just assume that they do
- Allow the person to identify how best to assist them
- Do not touch the person, their service animal and/or their assistive device/equipment without their permission
- Follow instructions posted on special needs equipment and/or assistive device during an emergency
- Avoid attempts to lift, support or assist in moving someone unless you are familiar with safe techniques
- Never administer any food or liquids to an unconscious or unresponsive person
- Be aware that some people who have disabilities may request that you use latex-free gloves to reduce spread of viral infection to them
- Ask the person with special needs if areas of their body have reduced sensation and if they need you to check those areas for injuries following a disaster



Mobility

Mobility limitations may make it difficult for a person to use stairs or to move quickly over long distances. These can include reliance on mobility devices such as a wheelchair, scooter, walker, crutches or a walking cane. In addition, people with a heart condition or various respiratory difficulties can experience certain levels of mobility limitations.

Your emergency plan:

- Ask your network to practise moving your special needs equipment during your emergency practise plan. This will help your network become more comfortable handling or using your special needs equipment during an emergency
- If you use a wheelchair or scooter, request that an emergency evacuation chair be stored near a stairwell on the same floor that you work or live on, so that your network can readily use it to help you safely evacuate the building
- In your instruction list for your network, identify areas of your body that have reduced sensation so these areas can be checked for injuries after an emergency, if you cannot check them yourself
- Check with your local municipal office to find out if emergency evacuation shelters in your area are wheelchair accessible

Assisting people with mobility limitations

DO...

- Use latex-free gloves when providing personal care whenever possible. (People with spinal cord injury have a greater risk of developing an infectious disease during an emergency. Gloves help control secondary medical conditions that can easily arise if personal care is disrupted during an emergency)
- Bring the person's mobility device when they evacuate

DO NOT...

- Push or pull a person's wheelchair without their permission

Additional items

Emergency preparedness kit

- Tire patch kit
- Can of seal-in-air product (to repair flat tires on your wheelchair or scooter)
- Supply of inner tubes
- Pair of heavy gloves (to protect your hands while wheeling or making way over glass or other sharp debris)
- Latex-free gloves (for anyone providing personal care to you)
- Spare deep-cycle battery for motorized wheelchair or scooter
- A lightweight manual wheelchair for backup to a motorized wheelchair (if feasible)
- Spare catheters (if applicable)
- An emergency back-up plan that will ensure any life sustaining equipment/apparatus is operable in the event of a power outage
- Any other contingency supplies unique to your special needs

Vision

Vision loss can include a broad range of conditions ranging from complete blindness to partial or low vision that cannot be corrected with lenses or surgery. A person's ability to read signs or move through unfamiliar environments during an emergency may be challenged, creating a feeling of being lost and/or being dependent on others for guidance.

Your emergency plan:

- Have a long cane available to readily manoeuvre around debris on the floor or furniture that may have shifted after an emergency
- Mark all emergency supplies in advance with fluorescent tape, large print or in braille
- Mark gas, water and electric shutoff valves in advance with fluorescent tape, large print or in braille
- Familiarize yourself in advance with all escape routes and locations of emergency doors/exits on each floor of any building where you work, live and/or visit

Assisting people with vision disabilities

DO...

- Always ask first if you can be of any assistance to them. For people who are deaf-blind, use your finger to draw an "X" on their back to let them know you are there to help during an emergency
- To communicate with a person who has a vision disability and a hearing impairment, try tracing letters with your finger on the palm of their hand
- To guide a person with visual disabilities offer them your arm instead of taking theirs and walk at their pace. Keep ½ a step ahead of them
- If the person has a service dog, ask them where you should walk to avoid distracting the animal

-
- Provide advance warning of upcoming stairs, curbs, major obstacles, or changes in direction
 - Watch for overhangs or protrusions the person could walk into

DO NOT...

- Assume the person cannot see you, or that they need your help
- Grab or touch a person with vision loss
- Touch, make eye contact or distract the person's service dog as this can seriously endanger the owner
- Shout at a person with vision loss. Speak clearly and provide specific and precise directions
- Gesture "over there". Instead, describe locating positions such as, "to your right/left/straight ahead/ behind you", or by relaying clock face positions. (For example: 12 o'clock)

Additional items

Emergency preparedness kit

- Extra white cane, preferably a cane that is longer in length
- Talking or braille clock
- Large-print timepiece with extra batteries
- Extra vision aids such as an electronic travel aid, monocular, binocular or magnifier
- Extra pair of prescription glasses – if you wear them
- Any reading devices/assistive technology to access information/ portable closed circuit television devices
- Any other contingency supplies unique to your special needs

Hearing

A person can be deaf, deafened or hard of hearing. The distinction between these terms is based on the individual's language and means of communicating rather than the degree of hearing loss.

In an emergency, the method in which emergency warnings are issued becomes critical to how a person with hearing loss is able to respond and follow instructions to safety.

Your emergency plan:

- If your network is unavailable during an emergency, seek the assistance of others to whom you can communicate your hearing loss by spoken language, moving your lips without making a sound, pointing to your ear, using a gesture, or if applicable, pointing to your hearing aid
- Keep a pencil and paper handy for written communication
- Obtain a pager that is connected to an emergency paging system at your workplace and/or the building that you live in
- Install a smoke detection system that includes smoke alarms and accessory flashing strobe lights or vibrators to gain your attention if the alarms sound
- Test smoke alarms on a monthly basis by pushing the test button
- Replace batteries in battery-operated smoke alarms every six months and whenever the low-battery warning sounds
- Keep a laminated card on your person and in your preparedness kit that identifies you as deaf or hard of hearing and explains how to communicate with you

Assisting people with hearing disabilities

DO...

- Get the person's attention via a visual cue or a gentle touch on their arm before speaking to them
- Face the person and make eye contact when speaking to them as they may rely on speech reading
- Communicate in close proximity
- Speak clearly and naturally
- Use gestures to help explain the meaning of what you are trying to communicate to the person
- Write a message if there is time and keep a pencil and paper handy

DO NOT...

- Approach the person from behind
- Refrain from shouting or speaking unnaturally slowly
- Do not make loud noises as hearing aids amplify sounds and can create a physical shock to the user

Additional items:

Emergency preparedness kit

- Extra writing pads and pencils for communication
- Flashlight, whistle or noisemaker
- Pre-printed key phrases you would use during an emergency
- Assistive devices - unique to your needs (e.g., hearing aid, pager, personal amplifier, etc.)

- Portable visual notification devices that allow you to know if a person is knocking on the door, ringing the doorbell, or calling on the telephone
- Extra batteries for assistive devices
- A CommuniCard (produced by The Canadian Hearing Society) that explains your hearing loss and also helps identify how rescuers or assisters can communicate with you during an emergency
- Any other contingency supplies unique to your special needs

Note: Typically people who are deafened or hard of hearing will need information presented in a text format.



Non-Visible Disabilities

Non-visible disabilities can include communication, cognitive, sensory, mental health, learning or intellectual disabilities in which an individual's ability to respond to an emergency is restricted. They can also range from allergies, epilepsy, hemophilia, diabetes, thyroid condition, multiple sclerosis, pulmonary or heart disease and/or dependency on dialysis, sanitary or urinary supplies.

Individuals with non-visible disabilities may have difficulty performing some tasks without appearing to have a disability.

Your emergency plan:

- Prepare an easy-to-understand list of instructions or information for yourself that you think you may need in an emergency
- Keep an emergency contact list on your person of key people that are aware of your special needs
- Inform your designated support network of where you store your medication
- Keep a pencil and paper or portable electronic recording device handy to write down or record any new instructions provided to you in an emergency
- Consider owning and wearing a MedicAlert® bracelet or identification because it will help notify emergency responders about your non-visible disabilities. For more information visit: medicalert.ca
- Request a panic pushbutton to be installed in the building you work and/or live in, so that in the event of an emergency you can notify others of your whereabouts and that you need special assistance

People with Multiple Sclerosis: Symptoms are often made worse by heat and humidity. Be prepared to keep cool and dry.

People with Diabetes: Keep frozen water bottles or ice packs in your freezer. Have an insulated bag or cooled thermos ready to store your insulin, should there be a power outage or you need to evacuate.

Assisting people with non-visible disabilities

DO...

- Allow the person to describe what help they need from you
- Find effective means of communication (e.g., provide drawn or written instructions
When giving directions use landmarks instead of terms “go left” or “turn right”)
- Be patient, flexible and maintain eye contact when speaking to the person
- Repeat instructions (if needed)
- Ask the person about their medication and if they need any help taking it. (Never offer medicines not prescribed by their physician)
- Keep people with multiple sclerosis cool and dry to avoid making their symptoms worse

DO NOT...

- Shout or speak quickly. Instead, speak clearly but not so slowly as to offend the person
- Restrain a person having a convulsion. Instead, roll them on their side to keep their airway clear and place something soft (e.g. your jacket) under their head to protect it from injury. Once the convulsion passes and they become conscious, help them into a resting position

Additional items

Emergency preparedness kit

- Supply of food items appropriate to your disability or dietary restrictions
- List of instructions that you can easily follow in an emergency
- Personal list and minimum three days supply of all needed medications, medical supplies and special equipment (e.g. ventilator for asthma, nitrolingual spray for heart condition, Epinephrine pen against allergic reaction/anaphylactic shock, etc.)
- Detailed list of all prescription medication
- MedicAlert® identification
- Any other contingency supplies unique to your special needs

People with diabetes

- Extra supply of insulin or oral agent
- Extra supply of syringes, needles and insulin pens (if used)
- Small container for storing used syringes/needles (if applicable)
- Blood glucose testing kit, spare batteries and record book
- Supply of blood glucose and urine ketone testing strips
- Fast-acting insulin for high blood glucose (if applicable)
- Fast-acting sugar for low blood glucose
- Extra food to cover delayed meals
- Ice packs and thermal bag to store insulin (if applicable)

Seniors with Special Needs

Since an emergency situation or an evacuation can be a frightening and confusing time, it is important that seniors, especially those with special needs, know the steps to take in an emergency. This includes seniors contacting their local municipal office to find out about programs and services available in their community that will help them during an emergency and assist them to return to their regular routine.

Your emergency plan:

- Create an emergency contact list with names and telephone numbers of your physicians, case worker, contact for your seniors group, neighbours, building superintendent, etc. Keep a copy of this list in your preparedness kit and on your person
- Write down the names and phone numbers of on-site doctors, nurses, social workers, etc., at your place of residence (if applicable), including the hours they keep
- Familiarize yourself with all escape routes and location of emergency doors/exits in your home
- Know the location of emergency buttons. (Many seniors' buildings have emergency buttons located in bedrooms and washrooms that have a direct link to 9-1-1 or the building's superintendent.)
- If asked to evacuate, bring with you any equipment or assistive devices you may need immediately
- Always wear your MedicAlert® identification

Assisting seniors with special needs

DO...

- Check on neighbours who are seniors with special needs to find out if they need your help during an emergency or evacuation
- Allow the person to describe what help they need and how it can be provided to them



- Be patient, listen actively
- If the person appears anxious or agitated, speak calmly and provide assurance that you are there to help
- If evacuation is necessary, offer a ride to seniors who do not have access to a vehicle
- If time permits, offer to carry the person's emergency preparedness kit to your car, along with any equipment or assistive devices they will need
- Follow instructions posted on special needs equipment and/or assistive devices during an emergency

DO NOT...

- Shout or speak unnaturally slowly
- Be dismissive of the person's concerns or requests your special needs

Additional items

Emergency preparedness kit

- Supply of food items appropriate to your disability or dietary restrictions
- Assistive devices needed such as canes, walkers, lightweight manual wheelchair, hearing aids, breathing apparatus, blood glucose monitoring device, etc
- Prescription eyewear and footwear (if required)
- Extra supply of medications and vitamin supplements equipment
- Copies of all medication prescriptions
- Extra dentures (if required) and cleaner
- Latex-free gloves (to give to anyone providing personal care to you)
- Any other contingency supplies unique to your special needs

For seniors with diabetes:

Please refer to previous "Other Non-Visible Disabilities" category

High Rise Safety

High-rise buildings present unique challenges when evacuation is necessary during an emergency. Residents should make themselves aware of:

- Building superintendent's name and phone number
- Who sits on the Building Safety Committee
- Who the floor monitors are
- Who conducts evacuation drills, and how often
- Location of fire extinguishers, automated external defibrillator units, and oxygen tank
- Location of emergency evacuation device(s)

Your emergency plan:

- Advise your building manager superintendent of your special needs and/or requirements during an emergency
- Familiarize yourself with your building's evacuation plan
- Know where all escape routes and location of emergency doors/exits are on each floor
- Know the location of emergency buttons in the building and exits that are wheelchair accessible (if applicable)
- Request that an emergency evacuation chair be installed on the floor you live or work on, preferably close to the stairwell (if applicable)
- If you live in a highrise building, create a 'buddy' system with your neighbours and regularly practise your emergency response plan with them
- If you rely on any life sustaining equipment/ apparatus, develop an emergency back-up plan that will ensure the equipment/ apparatus is operable in the event of a power outage
- Obtain large printed signs from the building manager that you can place in your window in the event of an emergency, indicating that you need assistance



DO

Assisting people with disabilities in high rise buildings

- Check on neighbours and/or co-workers with special needs to find out if they need your help during an emergency or evacuation
- Listen actively to what the individual with special needs is saying
- During an emergency evacuation (if time permits), offer to carry the person's Emergency preparedness kit for them along with any special equipment or assistive devices they will need
- Review previous categories in this guide on how to assist people with specific disabilities and/or special needs

DO NOT...

In general, avoid attempts to lift, support or assist in moving a person down the stairs, unless you are familiar with safe techniques.

Additional items

Emergency preparedness kit

- Personal alarm that emits a loud noise to draw attention to your whereabouts
- Supply of food items appropriate to your dietary restrictions
- Supply of medications and assistive devices appropriate to your disability
- Supply of plastic bags for storing garbage/personal waste
- Names and contact information of your neighbours, superintendent and property/building manager
- Laminated copy of your building's evacuation plan and diagram of escape routes and location of emergency doors/exits on each floor
- Any other contingency supplies unique to your special needs

Travel Considerations

Whether travelling locally or internationally, people with disabilities and seniors with special needs should take extra time to research and plan their trip to make their travel experience safe and enjoyable. This includes preparing in advance, an emergency plan and “Ready-Go-Bag” with emergency preparedness items.

Your emergency plan

- Before travelling, visit the Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada website at voyage.gc.ca where you can register and find other helpful travel information safety tips
- Discuss your particular accommodation needs with your travel agent
- Discuss your trip with your doctor to prepare contingency plans in case of illness
- Obtain necessary travel medical insurance
- Carry a copy of the booklet “Bon Voyage, But...,” that contains contact information for your destination’s Canadian office and Emergency Operations Centre
You can order it free of charge at voyage.gc.ca
- Divide your medications and medical supplies between your carry-on and check-in baggage, keeping them in their original labelled containers. Bring copies of your prescriptions with you
- Always wear your MedicAlert® bracelet
- Inform your travel companion(s) on how to assist you in an emergency
- If travelling alone, establish a network (e.g., hotel staff) that can assist you during an emergency
- If you have difficulty using stairs request a room on a lower floor
- Review the hotel emergency exit plan
- If needing to evacuate, bring your emergency “Ready-Go-Bag” and any assistive devices

Assisting people with disabilities while travelling

DO...

- Check on fellow travellers with visible disabilities or special needs to find out if they need your help during an emergency or evacuation
- Listen actively to what the individual with special needs is saying and how they might need your help
- If they speak in a foreign language that you do not understand, try to communicate using gestures
- During an emergency evacuation (if time permits), offer to carry the person's Emergency preparedness kit for them along with any special equipment or assistive devices they will need
- Review previous categories in this guide on how to assist people with specific disabilities or special needs

DO NOT...

Let the person be separated from their wheelchair, mobility aids or service animals.

Additional items

Emergency preparedness kit

- Supply of food items appropriate to your dietary restrictions
- Supply of medications/assistive devices appropriate to your disability (e.g. Glucagen injection if you manage your diabetes with insulin and you are travelling to a remote location that does not have ambulance service)

- Laminated personal information card that you keep on your person at all times when travelling. (Card identifies your special needs, lists all medications you are taking, any food/ drug allergies you might have, your treating physician's name and contact information, and your next of kin)
- Copy of your travel medical insurance and other important travel documents
- A personal alarm that emits a loud noise to draw attention to your whereabouts
- Small container that can store or disintegrate syringes or needles safely (if applicable)
- Anti-nausea and anti-diarrhea pills and pain medication
- Sunblock
- Insect repellent
- Dictionary to help you communicate in a foreign language
- Supplies (food, water/food bowl) for your service animal
- Any other contingency supplies unique to your disability or special needs



For More Information

Specific Disabilities and Special Needs

Canadian Diabetes Association

Tel: 416-363-3373
Toll-free Phone: 1-800-226-8464
Fax: 416-408-7117
diabetes.ca

Canadian Paraplegic Association Ontario

Tel: 416-422-5644
Toll-free Phone: 1-877-422-1112
Fax: 416-422-5943
Email: info@cpaont.org
cpaont.org

Canadian Red Cross

Tel: 905-890-1000
Fax: 905-890-1008
redcross.ca

Centre for Independent Living in Toronto (CILT) Inc.

Tel: 416-599-2458
TTY: 416-599-5077
24hr Newsline: 416-599-4898
Fax: 416-599-3555
Email: cilt@cilt.ca
cilt.ca

CNIB

Tel: 416-486-2500
Toll-free Phone: 1-800-563-2642
TTY: 416-480-8645
Fax: 416-480-7700
cnib.ca

Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario

Tel: 416-929-4311
Fax: 416-929-3905
ldao.ca

Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada – Toronto Chapter and Ontario Division

Tel: 416-922-6065
Toll-free Phone: 1-866-922-6065
Fax: 416-922-7538
mssociety.ca

Ontario March of Dimes

Tel: 416-425-3463
Toll-free Phone: 1-800-263-3463
Fax: 416-425-1920
marchofdimes.ca

Ontario SPCA (Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals)

Tel: 905-898-7122
Toll-free Phone: 1-888-ONT-SPCA (668-7722)
Fax: 905-853-8643
E-mail: info@ospca.on.ca
ontariospca.ca

The Canadian Hearing Society

Tel: 416-928-2535
Toll-free Phone: 1-877-347-3427
Toll-free TTY: 1-877-216-7310
Fax: 416-928-2506
chs.ca

Toronto Rehabilitation Institute

Tel: 416-597-3422

Fax: 416-597-1977

torontorehab.com

Accessibility Initiatives**Accessibility For Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)**

Toll-free Phone: 1-866-515-2025

TTY: 416-325-3408

Toll-free TTY: 1-800-268-7095

Fax: 416-325-3407

accessON.ca

Ontario Seniors' Secretariat

Tel: 416-326-7076 (Seniors' INFOline)

Toll-free Phone: 1-888-910-1999

Toll-free TTY: 1-800-387-5559

Fax: 416-326-7078

ontarioseniors.ca

Emergency Preparedness**Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management**

Tel: 416-314-3723

Toll-free Phone: 1-866-517-0571

TTY: 1-866-517-0572

Fax: 416-326-0498

ontario.ca/emo

mcscsijus.gov.on.ca

For Information on MedicAlert® Bracelets or Identification**Canadian MedicAlert® Foundation**

Tel: 416-696-0142

Toll-free Phone: 1-800-668-1507

Toll-free Fax: 1-800-392-8422

medicalert.ca

For Travel Advice and Registration Service when Travelling Abroad**Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada**

Tel: 613-944-6788

TTY: 613-944-1310

In Canada and USA:

Toll-free Phone: 1-800-267-6788

Toll-free TTY: 1-800-394-3472

voyage.gc.ca

York Catholic District School Board

Administrative Centre
320 Bloomington Road West
Aurora, ON L4G 0M1
905-713-1211 • 416-221-5051
Fax: 905-713-1272
www.ycdsb.ca

No matter how we may plan, many things in our world can and do go wrong. While we may not be able to avoid the unexpected, at least we can be prepared for them.

Every school and location in the York Catholic School Board has an Emergency Response Manual on site, which details actions to be taken in the event of emergencies like:

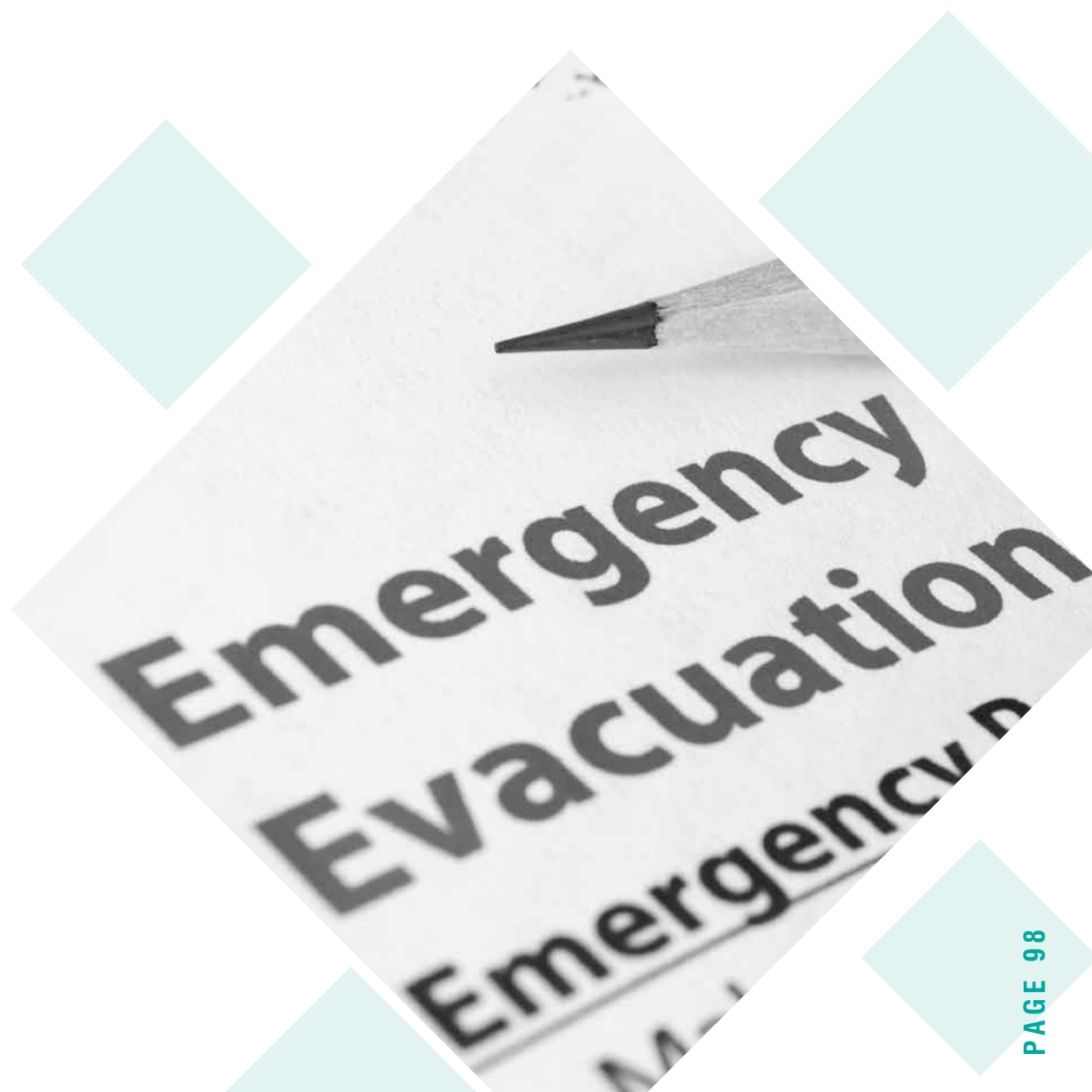
- Student accidents
- Fire
- Bomb threats
- Trespassers or intruders
- Severe weather conditions
- Protocol for dealing with child abuse

The Board's Emergency Response Manual was developed with the assistance of representatives from the fire department, police, and Children's Aid Society.

School principals have emergency plans and procedures in place to address the above mentioned situations. Principals also ensure that staff and students are trained in the plans and procedures and hold regular drills to practice and evaluate their plan.

In case of a school evacuation, depending on the emergency, parents or guardians could be notified to pick up their children, or parents or guardians could be notified once their children are safe in an alternate location.

If parents or guardians cannot be reached, the emergency contact (noted on the form filled out by parents at the start of the school year) would be notified. If the school were unable to reach the parent or emergency contact, then students would be supervised at the alternate location until parents can be reached.



York Region District School Board

The Education Centre
60 Wellington St. West
Aurora, ON L4G 3H2
905-727-3141 • 905-895-7216
Fax: 905-727-1931
www.yrdsb.ca

Are school staff trained to deal with emergencies that may arise in schools?

The York Region District School Board staff in public elementary and secondary schools and education centres offices are trained to deal with emergencies that may arise.

Plans are in place to deal with emergencies such as:

- Fire
- Bomb threats
- Armed intruders
- Severe weather conditions
- Regional chemical spills

Each school administrator has an EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS GUIDE and a FIRE PLAN in his/her location which outlines actions to be taken in such emergencies. Administrators ensure staff are trained in policies and procedures that are in place to deal with emergencies that may arise.

These plans have been developed in co-operation with the York Regional Police and local fire departments.

School Evacuation

Should it be necessary to evacuate the school, a plan is in place to safely move students and staff to alternate locations.

Parents or guardians would be notified once the children are safe in the alternate location.

If the parent or guardian cannot be reached, the emergency contact would be notified. This is the person who is designated by the parent (on the school's emergency form) to be notified in an emergency when parents are unable to be contacted.

Should the school be unable to reach the parent or the emergency contact, the child(ren) would be supervised at the "alternate location" until the parents or guardians could be reached.

For more information on the school's emergency plan, parents are asked to talk to their school's administrator.



Resources

Canadian Red Cross

www.redcross.ca
905-890-1000
905-890-1008

The Centre for Excellence in Emergency Preparedness

ceep.ca, admin@ceep.ca

Enbridge

enbridge.com

Environment Canada

ec.gc.ca

Emergency Management Ontario

www.emergencymanagementontario.ca
416-314-3723

FEMA Web Site 2014

ready.gov/hazardous-materials-incident

Government of Ontario

ontario.ca

Insurance Bureau of Canada Web Site 2014

ibc.ca

National Organization on Disability (U.S.)

nod.org
646-505-1191 ext.122

Public Safety Canada

publicsafetycanada.gc.ca

For Emergency Support Contact Form please visit:

york.ca

**For more information about
Emergency Preparedness
in your community, contact:**

Town of Aurora

Community Emergency Management
Co-ordinator Central York Fire Services
905-895-9222
aurora.ca

Town of East Gwillimbury

Community Emergency Management
Co-ordinator East Gwillimbury
Emergency Services
905-853-8842
eastgwillimbury.ca

Town of Georgina

Community Emergency Management
Co-ordinator Georgina Fire Department
905-476-5167
georgina.ca

Township of King

Community Emergency Management
Co-ordinator King Township Fire
& Emergency Services
905-833-2800
king.ca

City of Markham

Community Emergency Management
Co-ordinator Community and Fire Services
Commission
905-477-7000
markham.ca

Town of Newmarket

Community Emergency
Management Co-ordinator
Central York Fire Services
905-895-9222
newmarket.ca

Town of Richmond Hill

Community Emergency Management
Co-ordinator
Richmond Hill Fire and Emergency Services
905-883-5444

Emergency Preparedness
Public Education/Awareness
Richmond Hill Fire and Emergency Services
905-763-8778, or 905-883-5444
richmondhill.ca

City of Vaughan

Manager of Emergency Planning
Vaughan Fire and Rescue Service
905-832-2281
E-mail: PrepE@vaughan.ca
vaughan.ca

Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville

Community Emergency Management
Co-ordinator
Whitchurch-Stouffville Fire
and Emergency Services
905-640-9595
townofws.ca

The Regional Municipality of York

Emergency Management
1-877-464-9675 ext. 71219
E-mail: emergency.management@york.ca
york.ca





Your Important Telephone Numbers

Out of province contact:

Name: _____ City: _____

Telephone (Day/Evening): _____

Local contact:

Name: _____ City: _____

Telephone (Day/Evening): _____

Nearest relative:

Name: _____ City: _____

Telephone (Day/Evening): _____

Family work numbers:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Emergency Telephone Numbers

In a life-threatening emergency, dial **9-1-1**.

Non-emergency Police Department: _____

Local non-emergency Fire Department: _____

Local Hospital: _____

Family Physician: _____

Poison Information: **1-800-268-9017**

Reunion Locations

1. Outside your home: _____
2. Away from the neighbourhood, in case you cannot return home, please meet at:
Address: _____ Telephone: _____
Route to try first: _____

Thank you to our contributing partners:



Town of
East Gwillimbury



KING

MARKHAM



Richmond Hill



W TOWN OF
WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE

York Region

This guidebook is available online at york.ca/emergencypreparedness

Aurora - East Gwillimbury - Georgina - King - Markham - Newmarket
Whitchurch-Stouffville - Aurora - East Gwillimbury - Georgina - King
Markham - Newmarket - Richmond Hill - Vaughan - Whitchurch-Sto
Aurora - East Gwillimbury - Georgina - King - Markham - Newmarket



Know the Risks



Make a Plan



Get an Emergency Kit

Spring 2015