Pocket guide to emergencies

Your guide to:
• Knowing the Risks
• Making a Plan
• Getting a Kit

What to do during:
• Severe storms
• Earthquakes
• Floods
• Power outages
• Wildfires
And more...

IS YOUR FAMILY PREPARED?

Public Safety Canada
Sécurité publique Canada
Know the Risks

Across Canada, we face a number of natural hazards, which can vary from region to region. Knowing what to do during an emergency is an important part of being prepared. Find out more about risks in your region and how to prepare by visiting GetPrepared.ca. Then use this guide for information on what to do in different situations.

During an emergency

The following steps should be taken in emergency situations:
1. Make sure you are safe before assisting others.
2. Follow your emergency plan.
4. Monitor radio, television and online for information from authorities. Follow their instructions.
5. Stay put until it is safe or you are ordered to evacuate.
6. Limit phone calls to urgent messages only. Keep the lines free for emergency responders.

Chemical, Biological, Radiological or Nuclear (CBRN) Incident

CBRN substances are a health risk if they are inhaled, ingested or come into contact with skin.

In all cases, consider the following:
- Take any exposure to a CBRN substance seriously.
- Distance is as far away as possible.
- Shielding: protect yourself from the substance.

If you are in an enclosed, affected area:
- Cover exposed skin and protect your airways (e.g. by using a damp cloth) and minimize contact with the substance.
- Turn off or move away from internal air conditioning or heating vents.
- Immediately contact emergency services.
- If you experience symptoms of exposure to CBRN substances (e.g. diarrhea, paralysis, vomiting, confusion, change in breathing rate or skin tone), seek immediate medical attention.
- If you are in an affected area:
  - Follow the same steps as for an enclosed area.
  - Move away from the release site as quickly as possible.

If you are in your vehicle:
- Keep your vehicle vents and windows closed.
- Do not turn on the heating or air conditioning.
- Drive away from the release site.

In all situations, monitor radio, television or online for information. In the event of a CBRN incident, do you know whether you need to shelter in place or evacuate?

Shelter-in-place

If you are told to shelter-in-place due to a CBRN incident:
- Close and lock all windows and exterior doors.
- Turn off all fans, heating and A/C systems to avoid drawing in outside air.
- Get your emergency kit ready.
- Check all exterior doors and windows without above ground level.
- Gather clothing to use as a barrier around doors and vents.
- Limit phone calls to urgent messages only.

If you are outside:
- Do not go near the shore to watch a tsunami if it is warning level.
- Do not stand close to higher ground.
- If you can’t get to higher ground, stay inside on the side of the building, away from windows.
- If you are in a safe place when a tsunami hits, stay put.

Power Outages

- Check if the power outage is limited to your home. If your neighbour’s power is also off, call your electrical supply company.
- Turn off or move away from appliances, electronics, and all but one light inside and outside the home.
- Use your thermostat to turn off heating or air conditioning.
- Avoid opening your freezer or fridge.
- Do not use appliances, camping heating equipment, or home generators indoors. They may produce dangerous levels of carbon monoxide.

After a tsunami hits:
- You may encounter flood waters. Before going anywhere, pay attention to radio, television or online for information or evacuation instructions.
- Be aware that you may get hypothermia from being in cold water.

Evacuation Order

If ordered to evacuate:
- Follow instructions from authorities.
  - Take your emergency kit, plan, medications, wallet, identification, and cell phone.
  - Shut off electricity, gas and water if instructed to do so.
  -Notify your local town or city to let them know you are going (if time permits).
  - Leave your home. Don’t return home.
  - Use specified routes and pay attention to road closures. Stay away from any identified “disaster response routes” which are for emergency responders only.
  - Do not cross a flooded area by foot or in a vehicle. If your vehicle stalls in fast-rising water, abandon it.
  - Register with a local reception centre in person or by phone.
  - Do not return home until authorities advise it is safe.

Floods

If flooding has already begun:
- If you have not already shut off electricity, do not attempt to do so once water has entered your home.
- Do not enter a flooded basement that may contain live wires or appliances.

After a flood:
- Do not return home until authorities advise it is safe.
  - If the main power switch was not turned off prior to flooding, do not re-enter your home until a qualified electrician has determined it is safe.
  - Use extreme caution when returning to your home after a flood.

Wildfires

- Turn on the lights in the house, porch, garage and yard to aid visibility.
- Turn off propane or natural gas.
- Move all combustibles outside away from the house, including firewood.
- Monitor hydro and/or irrigation equipment.
- Cover vents, windows, and other openings of the house with duct tape and/or precut pieces of plywood.
- Park your vehicle positioned forward out of the driveway. Keep windows closed and move all fires and your emergency kit in the vehicle.

Tsunamis

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- Do not stand close to higher ground.
- If you can’t get to higher ground, stay inside on the side of the building, away from windows.
- If you are in a safe place when a tsunami hits, stay put.

Ice Storms

- Stay indoors unless you are told to evacuate.
- Pay attention to high branches or wires that could fall.
- Stay well away from power lines, as hanging wires may be live.
- Do not attempt to clear ice from electrical wires.
- Avoid driving. Wait several hours after freezing rain ends to allow for road maintenance.

Blizzards

- Be aware that you can become quickly disoriented and may be unable to find your way.
- Wear a hooded jacket, hat, mittens and warm footwear.
- Do not enter automobiles or other buildings in low visibility without something to guide you.
- Do not attempt to clean snow from your windows.
- Do not go out in daylight and let someone know your plans.
- If your vehicle becomes stuck:
  - Stay in your vehicle. Open the window slightly for fresh air. Run the engine for 10 minutes every half hour unless the exhaust pipe is blocked.
  - To keep warm, exercise your hands and feet periodically.
  - If shoveling, avoid overexerting yourself. Overexertion can result in hypothermia from being in cold water.

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**Make a Plan**

Every household needs an emergency plan. It will help you and your family know what to do in an emergency – and it only takes 20 minutes. Make the plan part of your emergency kit.

Visit GetPrepared.ca to complete an emergency plan online. Then, fill in key information in this booklet for quick access.

### Emergency Numbers

During an emergency monitor radio, television and online for information from authorities. Call 9-1-1 (where available) for a crime, or to save a life. For non-emergency calls, use the 10-digit number in your local phone directory:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ambulance:</th>
<th>Phone:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Police:</td>
<td>Phone:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire:</td>
<td>Phone:</td>
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</tbody>
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### Family Contact Information

- Name:  
- Phone:  

### Out-of-Town Emergency Contact

- Name:  
- Phone:  
- Street address:  
- Email:  

### Other Emergency Contacts

- Department:  
- Email:  
- Phone:  
- Phoney:  
- Poison control:  
- Veterinarian:  

### Emergency Preparedness for Children

Helping kids prepare for emergencies:

- Teach them about natural hazards like earthquakes, hurricanes, tornados, severe thunderstorms, ice storms, and fires – and what to do when they occur.
- Make a family emergency plan, and prepare an emergency kit together.
- Teach your kids what to do in case of a fire.
- Make sure your kids know what to do at school if an emergency happens.

Helping kids cope:

Children in particular can feel the stress deeply – and may react in different ways. The key to helping your children cope is simply by being there and making them feel safe.

- Take their fears seriously and tell them that it’s okay to be scared.
- Explain the events as best you can and acknowledge what’s frightening about what happened.

Tell your kids what you think and feel. Doing so helps them feel less alone if they know that their feelings are shared by others.

- Maintain familiar routines, like mealtimes and regular bedtime hours.
- While parents can play a huge role in helping children deal with anxiety, it may be helpful to talk to a professional such as a psychologist or social worker, who can help children understand and cope with their emotions.

**Did You Know?**

- Younger children may cry, whine or wet the bed in emergency situations. Older children may experience an intense fear of injury or separation anxiety. Other common reactions include a fear of darkness, eating or sleeping problems.

**Pets and Service Animals**

**Preparation for emergencies**

The following steps will help keep pets safe:

- Identify your pet. If you become separated from your pet during an emergency, their identification may be the only way to find them. Make sure each animal wears a collar and identification tag at all times.

**Pet emergency kit**

- A sturdy crate or carrier
- A strong leash or harness
- Food and water for at least 72 hours (4L/day per average dog, 1L/day per average cat)
- Bowls and can open for food
- Newspaper, paper towels, plastic bags, litter, and/or litter box
- Special medications, dosage, and veterinarian’s contact information
- Pet file including recent photos of the animal, your emergency numbers, contact information for friends who could house your pet, copies of any licenses, and vaccination records
- A pet first-aid kit
- Blanket and toy

**Plan for evacuations.** The best way to protect your pet in an emergency is to bring it with you. Most evacuation shelters will not accept service animals. Make a list of where your pet can be taken in case you need to evacuate. This list can include:

- Hotels that accept animals even during emergencies
- Boarding centres and animal shelters
- Animal clinics
- Family members and friends
- Include your pet in your family emergency plan exercises.

**During an emergency**

- Keep your pet inside during severe weather. Animals are very sensitive to temperature and often isolate themselves when scared. Never leave a pet outdoors or tethered during a storm.
- Separate cats and dogs. Keep smaller pets such as hamsters away from larger animals. Stress can lead to unusual behaviour.
- Keep newspaper inside for hygiene purposes and feed your pet wet food in order to reduce the amount of water it may need.

**If ordered to evacuate, try to take your pet with you. If you must leave your pets in the house, do not tether or cage them. Leave a sign in the window and a note on the door indicating what animals are inside. Provide water and food in timed dispensers. Leave toilet seats up.**

**Get a Kit**

In an emergency you will need some basic supplies. You may need to get by without power or tap water. Be prepared to be self-sufficient for at least 72 hours. Make sure your kit has everything you need to carry and everyone in the household knows where it is.

### Emergency Kit List

- Water – at least 2 litres per person per day
- Food that won’t spoil, such as canned food, energy bars and dried foods
- Manual can opener
- Crank or battery-powered flashlight (and extra batteries)
- Crank or battery-powered radio (and extra batteries)
- First aid kit
- Extra keys (vehicle and home)
- Cash in smaller bills, and change for payphones
- A copy of your emergency plan and contact information
- Medication, infant formula, and equipment for people with disabilities/conditions

**Keep in Touch in Emergencies**

Being able to communicate with family, friends and emergency responders during an emergency is critical. However, keep in mind that everyday communication devices may not work properly during an emergency.

- If possible, use non-voice channels like text messaging, email, or social media, if these use less bandwidth than voice communications. If your phone service has been disrupted.
- If you must use a phone, keep your conversation brief and convey only vital information. Keep your calls short and also save battery life of your mobile device.
- If you are unable to complete a call, wait 10 seconds before redialing to help reduce network congestion.

**Additional tips for smartphones**

- Save your safe meeting location(s) on your phone’s mapping application.
- Conserve your battery by reducing the screen’s brightness and closing apps you are not using.
- To reduce network congestion immediately after an emergency, avoid using your mobile device to stream videos, download entertainment, or play video games.

Sign up for Direct Deposit and electronic banking through your financial institution so you can access your funds and make electronic payments from wherever you are. For more information on how to stay safe online, visit GetSafeOnline.ca.

### Information Sources

- The Salvation Army: www.salvationarmy.ca
- The Canadian Hurricane Centre: www.ec.gc.ca/ouragans-hurricanes
- The Canadian Red Cross: www.redcross.ca
- The Salvation Army: www.salvationarmy.ca
- Your local emergency management agency
- Get Prepared: @GetPrepared.ca
- Get Prepared: @GetPrepared

- Follow Public Safety Canada and GetPrepared on Twitter: @PublicSafetyCanada
- Follow Public Safety Canada and GetPrepared on Twitter: @GetPrepared
- Your local emergency management organization may also use Twitter

- The Canadian Red Cross: www.redcross.ca
- Environment Canada: www.ec.gc.ca
- Canadian Red Cross: www.redcross.ca
- Environment Canada: www.ec.gc.ca
- St. John Ambulance: www.sja.ca
Emergency preparedness is a shared responsibility.

Public Safety Canada works with the provinces and territories, public and private sector to help Canadians prepare for emergencies.

Do your part. Find out more:

Call 1 800 O-CANADA
Follow us on Twitter @Get_Prepared

Mobile website: m.GetPrepared.ca
Scan this with a mobile device for what to do in an emergency.