



EMERGENCY DISASTER PREPAREDNESS



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Being Prepared for Disasters

Do Edmontonians need to be prepared for disasters? Before you answer that question, look at these interesting facts:

- The Edmonton region is the 2nd largest petro-chemical industry in North America.
- The Edmonton region has five major refineries and over 20 chemical producers.
- The Edmonton region is connected to major roadways and railways that carry chemical products daily.
- International, municipal, and military airports are located in or close to Edmonton.
- Major oil and gas pipelines run through the Edmonton region.
- Edmonton is situated in what is known as *Tornado Alley*.
- The Edmonton region is a major terminus for natural gas and oil for the United States.

Based on these points, the possibility of disaster striking, though small, does exist.

Let's look at some disasters that have happened in the Edmonton region over the years.

1903 The Great Prairies Blizzard left thousands stranded. Bright sunlight reflecting off the snow caused snow blindness for humans and animals.

1915 The North Saskatchewan River overflowed its banks leaving thousands of people without a home.

1918 The Spanish Flu pandemic strikes. Hundreds die and thousands of people were ill.

1944 Flood

1952 Flood

1953 Flood

- 1972** Flood
- 1979** Major liquid propane pipeline ruptures. 17,000 people were evacuated. Another major pipeline rupture spewed crude oil into the river.
- 1980** A twin engine plane crashes into the Royal Alexandra Hospital leaking 100 gallons of fuel into the hospital.
- 1985** Two Canadian Forces planes collide in mid-air just north of the city. The planes crash into a building and flames shot up 300 metres. 10 people were killed.
- 1986** Worst flood in years: 900 evacuated and over \$4 million in damages.
- 1987** A tornado hits the city and region. The worst disaster to hit Alberta. Numerous deaths and injuries. Damages were estimated over \$350 million.
- 1988** A tornado hits the west-end of the city: two sent to the hospital; \$500,000 in damages.
- 1999** River-view home slides into the bank of the North Saskatchewan River. Seven other homes threatened to slide into the river

If we look at the disasters that have happened in Alberta over the years, we will find that hundreds of Albertans have lost their lives, homes, and businesses. Property damage and cost of recovery has been in the billions of dollars.

There is no doubt we, as Edmontonians, need to prepare our families, homes, communities and businesses for disasters.

Disaster can strike at any time. **Planning will reduce the harsh impact of hazards.**

Following a disaster, emergency response officials will be on the scene, but they cannot reach everyone immediately. Therefore, it is important you create a disaster preparedness plan. This plan will be a powerful tool during an emergency – it will provide you with greater control, and thus reduce the stress of the situation, while saving lives and reducing the cost related to disasters.

The following information will assist all Edmontonians prepare for disasters.



Alberta Emergency Public Warning System

The **Emergency Public Warning System (EPWS)** provides the public with immediate messages that affect life and property before, during or after a disaster. The system allows for information to be issued to the public by means of radio, television and cable facilities. An EPWS may be issued for only a few city blocks, a large section of a city, town, county, region, or the province.

If Disaster Strikes Nearby

- Remain calm and be patient.
- Follow the advice of local emergency officials.
- **Listen to your radio and television for news and instructions.**
- Check for injuries.
- Give first aid and get help for seriously injured people.
- Check for damage using a flashlight. **Do not use candles or turn on electrical switches.**
- Check for fire and other potential hazards.
- Sniff for gas leaks starting at the water heater. If you smell gas or suspect a leak, turn off the main valve, open windows and get outside quickly.
- Shut off any damaged utilities.
- Confine or secure your pets.
- If you have to leave your home or work, call your family contact to tell them where you are going and when you expect to arrive. Do not use the telephone again unless it is a life-threatening emergency.
- Check on your neighbours, especially those who are elderly or disabled.

Listen to Local Authorities

In the event of an emergency, your local authorities will provide you with the most accurate information that is specific to an event in your area. Staying tuned to local radio and television and following their instructions is your safest choice.

If you lose electrical power in an emergency situation and find yourself without a battery-operated radio (and if it is safe to do so), you can use your vehicle radio to receive information and instructions.



[Emergency Public Warning System Demonstration](#) (external link)



How to Prepare for Disasters at Home

Being prepared for an emergency before disaster strikes involves learning as much as you can about disasters that could occur in your area and making plans to act. Reading this article and following the tips you will receive is a good start. Continue to educate yourself by keeping up with current events.

Do not assume emergency services are going to be available to help you during a disaster. They may have to deal with the severely injured, elderly or trapped individuals first. It may take several hours for emergency services to implement their emergency plans. Power, water and phones may be out, roads could be flooded and 911 lines jammed with thousands of calls. What can you do? BE PREPARED.

General Emergency Preparedness

Phone Numbers

Make a list of local emergency numbers, work numbers, doctors' numbers, and family numbers. Keep a copy by the phone and in each family member's wallet.

After, during or just before an emergency, whom do your children contact to get help or directions from? **Do not use 911 as a general inquiry line.** The 911 line will be jammed with life and death calls at a time of a disaster.

Make a Neighbourhood Directory and Plan

Which neighbours could your children or elderly parents go to for assistance? Where do they go if this neighbour isn't home? Which neighbours could you help after a disaster hits?

Get together with your neighbours and make plans: who helps your children if you are not home and which children will you help when their parents are not home.

Make sure your children know the phone numbers and addresses for these neighbours. Don't forget to help the elderly or sick who may be living in your neighbourhood.

Make Your House Easy to Find

Make sure your street address number is large and well-lit so emergency personnel can find your home quickly. Consider posting your address on the back of your home as well.

Develop and Practice a Home Evacuation Plan

Every member of your family should know at least two ways (if possible) to get out of your home in case of fire or other emergency.

Agree on a place nearby to meet once everyone gets out. This way you will know if everyone got out.

No one should go back into the house unless an emergency response person has approved it.

If you live in an apartment, know the evacuation plan and different routes out of the building.

Check on the Emergency Plan of Your Children's School or Day-Care

You need to know if your children will be kept at school until you or a designated adult can pick them up or whether they will be sent home on their own. Be sure the school has updated information about how to reach parents and responsible caregivers to arrange for pick up.

Keep in mind that during times of emergency, school telephone lines may be overwhelmed with calls. Find out ahead of time what type of authorization the school requires to release a child to a designate should you not be able to collect your children yourself.

Plan how to Take Care of Your Pets

Who in the home will make sure the pets get out in an emergency evacuation of your home? Remember that with the exception of guide dogs, shelters usually do not allow pets.

Utilities

Make sure every capable person in your home knows how to shut off utilities such as electricity, water and natural gas/propane. If children are home alone, do they know how to shut off these services in case of a disaster in your community?

Know First Aid

Knowing basic first aid is a useful preparedness measure. First aid training will help you to help yourself and those around you.

Don't assume an ambulance is only minutes away during a disaster. They may have been damaged by the disaster, or they may be busy dealing with the severely injured. During any major disaster, hospitals may only accept severely injured people who are hanging onto life. This means you may need to look after your family and neighbours.

In an emergency, remember you should always tend to your own well-being first.

Home Disaster Supply Kit

Be prepared to be able to live in your home or outside of your home for 72 hours without outside assistance. Understand that in a disaster situation, it's not always possible for emergency crews to get to you immediately. The severely injured, sick, elderly, and the walking wounded will be cared for first.

Essential services, such as water, natural gas, and electricity, may not be reconnected to your home for days.

REMEMBER: No power, no water, no phones, and no emergency help for hours or days.

Make sure your first aid kit is well stocked. You may be required to deal with smaller medical emergencies in your home or community.

- Most important: A **battery-operated** radio, flashlight, and extra batteries. You will be given instructions on what to do via radio or TV.
- Medications and toiletry items.
 - Three-five day supply of water (one gallon per person per day).
 - Food that will not spoil and does not require cooking.
 - A non-electric can opener.
 - Personal items such as toilet tissue and plastic trash bags.
 - Extra clothing, rain gear and sturdy shoes.
 - Blankets or sleeping bag.
 - An extra pair of glasses.
 - An extra set of keys.
 - Candles and lighters (caution using candles during a gas leak)
 - Special items for infants, elderly and disabled.
 - List of family physicians and emergency contacts.
 - Have credit cards and **cash**. (bank and credit card machines may not be working)
 - Games for children to play
 - Basic tools (hammer, pliers/wrench, screwdriver set, assortment of fasteners, work gloves)
 - Tape (duct)
 - **Photocopies** of personal documents, including insurance policy
 - Recent photos of your family

A tornado warning may give you only 10 minutes before it hits your community. Have the majority of these items in a waterproof container ready to go. It should only take a couple minutes at the most to have these items put together to evacuate your home.



If You Are Caught at the Scene of a Hazardous Material Incident

A hazardous material (HAZMAT) is any substance capable of causing harm to people, animals, property or the environment. A HAZMAT incident is an accidental or purposeful release of a hazardous material. Communities located near chemical manufacturing plants are particularly at risk for HAZMAT incidents. However,

hazardous materials are transported on our roads, rails and waterways daily, so any area is considered vulnerable to an accident.

If You See an Incident, Call 9-1-1

- Move uphill, upwind and upstream of the incident.
- Do not walk in or touch any spilled substance.
- Avoid inhaling gases, fumes or smoke.
- If possible, cover your mouth with a cloth when leaving the area
- Have the fire department decontaminate you (if you are exposed) before you leave.

If You Are Advised to *Shelter in Place*

Local officials may advise you to remain in your home (*Shelter in Place*) and protect yourself there. If this happens:

- Bring pets inside.
- Close and lock all windows and exterior doors.
- Turn off all fans, heating and air conditioning systems.
- Close the fireplace damper.
- Locate your home disaster supply kit. Make sure the radio is working.
- Go to an interior room that is above ground level and has the fewest windows/doors.
- In a chemical emergency, wet towels and jam them in the crack under the doors. Use painting drop cloths or plastic garbage bags to cover windows, outlets and heat registers.
- Stay away from the windows.

CAUTION must be used when sealing your family in a room. If you do a good job of sealing the doors, windows, heating vents with plastic and duct tape etc., you may be sealing all replacement oxygen out. This is a temporary solution only.

Special Concerns When Dealing With Children

Disasters are traumatic for children – even if they know what to do. During a disaster, your family may have to leave your home and daily routine. Children may become anxious, confused and/or frightened. It is important to give children guidance that will help them reduce their fears. In a disaster, children will look to you and other adults for help. How you react to an emergency gives them clues on how to act. You must stay as calm as possible.

If you react with alarm, a child may become more scared. They will see your fear as proof that the danger is real. If you seem overcome with a sense of loss, a child may feel their losses more strongly.

Raw footage of disasters and people's reactions to the events can be very upsetting to children. It is not generally recommended that children watch television news reports about such events, especially if the images are shown over and over.

Immediately after a disaster, try to reduce your child's fear and anxiety. Keep the family together. Calmly and firmly explain the situation. Encourage children to talk and include them in the recovery activities.

Other Sites

[Emergency Management Alberta \(EMA\)](#)

[Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction](#)

[The Weather Network](#)

[Canadian Red Cross Society](#)

[Insurance Bureau of Canada](#)

[Institute for Business and Home Safety](#)

[Meteorological Service of Canada](#)

[Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Preparedness](#)



How to Prepare for Disasters at Work

General Emergency Preparedness

An emergency can happen any time. You and your co-workers should know what to do if an emergency happens at work. Even if you think you are not in a disaster-prone area, something such as a chemical tanker truck overturning or a flood can prevent you from getting to or from work. No business should operate without a disaster plan. As many as **40% of small businesses never reopen after a major disaster.**

If you are a business owner developing a business disaster plan, consider how the disaster could affect your employees, customers and the workplace. Consider how you could continue doing business if the area around your facility is closed or streets are impassable. Consider what you would need to serve your customers if your facility is closed.

Important Steps for Employees to Know

- Learn and practice emergency plans.
- Know at least two exits from each room (if possible).
- Be able to escape in the dark by knowing, for instance, how many desks or cubicles are between your workstation and two of the nearest exits.
- Know the post-evacuation meeting location.
- Know the location of fire extinguishers and how to use them.
- Keep a copy of co-workers phone numbers at home.
- Make a list of important personal numbers. Keep a printed list at your desk or near other phones. Do not rely on electronic lists, direct-dial phone numbers or computer organizers that may not work in an emergency.
- Report safety system damage or malfunctions.
- Never lock or block fire exits or doorways.
- Never use elevators in any type of disaster to exit your building.
- Make specific plans to help each other. Determine how you will help each other in the event that public transportation is shut down or throughways are impassable. Offer to temporarily house, transport or feed your co-workers in case of emergency.

High-rise Buildings

- Gather personal emergency supplies in a desk drawer: include a flashlight, walking shoes (walking down thirty floors in a pair of high heels is not sensible), dust mask, whistle and water bottle. Walk down the emergency stairwell.

- Be prepared to help the injured and handicapped. You may need to stop and rest every couple of floors – refresh yourselves with a drink of water then continue.
- A dust mask may help protect your lungs if there is major damage done to the building.

Important Steps Employers Should Take

- Ensure an emergency plan is developed and practiced at least every six months.
- Make specific plans for employees who are disabled or who may require assistance during an emergency.
- Put together an office phone tree. Develop a list of everyone's home phone numbers and who is responsible for making each contact. Provide a copy to each employee.
- Keep a phone list of all key employees with you at all times.
- If you have a voice mail system, designate one remote number on which you can record messages for employees. Make sure everyone knows the number.
- Arrange for programmable call forwarding for your main business lines.
- Leave keys and the alarm codes with a trusted employee or friend in case you cannot get to your facility.
- Backup computer data frequently.
- Purchase a Weather Radio with a tone alert system.

If You Are Trapped in the Building and the Phones Are Out

- Stay calm.
- Go to a room with outside windows.
- Wave a light-coloured cloth.
- Stay where rescuers can see you.
- Provide assistance to others.
- Blowing a whistle comes in handy if you are injured and rescuers are searching a damaged building.

Review the *Home Preparedness Section* . Use those suggestions that may be useful to your business in time of disasters.

Other Sites

[The Weather Network](#)

[Canadian Red Cross Society](#)

[Insurance Bureau of Canada](#)

[Institute for Business and Home Safety](#)

[Meteorological Service of Canada](#)

[Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Preparedness](#)



Natural Disasters

The city of Edmonton is not immune to natural disasters. Although not common, you may encounter some form of a natural disaster.

Floods

Floods are caused when a river overflows its banks because of an excessive rise in the water level. This rise in water level can result from heavy rains, the rapid thawing of snow or ice, or when dams or levees break. Flooding can occur at any time of the year but is most common in late spring when melting snow combines with rain.

Given the proper conditions, the North Saskatchewan River has the potential to flood.

Flash Floods

Flash floods are more abrupt than floods and are caused primarily by intense thunderstorms and normally result in the sewer systems not being able to handle the excessive amount of water. Creeks, ponds, and small neighbourhood lakes can be a concern during these flash floods. Flash floods are extreme and short-lived and can result in heavy damage.

Perhaps the biggest cause of flood-related deaths and injuries is the lack of public understanding of the severity and danger involved in floods and flash floods. During a flash flood, water can rise so quickly that there is little or no time for a warning to be issued and you may have only seconds to escape. Many people are killed while trying to drive or walk on roads and bridges that are covered by water. Even though the water might look only inches deep, it could be much deeper and have very strong currents. It takes only two feet of water to carry a car away, and six inches of swiftly moving water to sweep a person off his/her feet. Other dangers are sewer manhole covers washing away and parts of a roadway collapsing. Under a few inches of water, these dangers are not easily noticed.

In the Event of a Flood

- Go quickly to the upper floors of your home.
- Turn on a battery-operated radio or television and listen for the latest emergency information.
- Shut off the electricity and outside gas valve.
- If told to leave, grab your pre-assembled disaster safety kit and go immediately to the designated shelter. Be sure to follow the recommended evacuation routes – never take shortcuts.

- If on foot, do not attempt to walk through floodwaters. Turn around and go directly to higher ground.
- Never let children or pets play near floodwaters, storm drains, ponds, creeks, washes, and small neighbourhood lakes.
- If you come to a flooded area while driving, turn around and head for elevated ground.
- Never try to drive through flooded areas. Even though vehicles in front of you have passed through the high water, you may not be so lucky. Listen to your radio for directions.



Tornadoes

Severe tornadoes are the most violent storms on earth. They have the highest wind speeds of any weather phenomenon, exceeding 600 km/h. Tornadoes destroy property – since 1916, they have caused more than 12,000 fatalities in North America.

Canada ranks second in the world in terms of the frequency of tornadoes, with an average of 80 tornadoes each year. In the United States, a thousand tornadoes are reported each year. Any tornado can cause injury or property damage, but two percent of tornadoes cause more than 90 percent of the fatalities.

Canada's *Tornado Alleys* are found in a band through Alberta, southern Saskatchewan and Manitoba through to Thunder Bay, southern Ontario, and southeastern Quebec.

Tornado **watches** are issued when weather conditions could lead to the formation of tornadoes.

Tornado **warnings** are issued when Doppler radar or a visual sighting has identified a tornado.

F0 – Winds of 65-115 km/h	Light Damage
F1 – Winds of 116-180 km/h	Moderate Damage
F2 – Winds of 181-250 km/h	Considerable Damage
F3 – Winds of 251-330 km/h	Severe Damage
F4 – Winds of 331-420 km/h	Devastating Damage

If You Are Indoors

- Go immediately to the basement, storm cellar or the lowest level of the home.
- If there is no basement, go to a closet, a bathroom or under a staircase.
- Stay away from windows and doors.
- Get under a sturdy piece of furniture, such as a workbench or a heavy table. Hold onto the furniture with one hand and use the other arm to protect your head and neck from falling or flying objects.
- Avoid being in the corners of the room because they attract debris.
- Have a **portable battery operated radio** with you and listen for instructions
- If in a mobile home, get out and seek shelter elsewhere.

If You Are Outdoors

- If possible, get inside a building.
- If there is no shelter, lie down in a ditch or ravine.

- Use your arms to protect your head and neck.
- Stay away from bridges and overpasses.

If You Are in a Vehicle

- Never try to out drive a tornado. Tornadoes can change direction suddenly and could lift up the car and toss it through the air.
- Immediately stop the car and turn off the engine.
- Get out of the car and seek shelter in a building, ditch or ravine.



Severe Thunder and Hail Storms

Lightning and hail can occur in any thunderstorm. Although death resulting from hail is rare, injuries are common. Hail destroys crops, shreds roof coverings, and damages vehicles. Lightning kills and injures dozens of people in North America each year and is the leading cause of damaging wildfires.

React immediately when you first see lightning, hear thunder or are given some other warning. There are a few simple precautions you can take to protect yourself and your home.

These storms usually do not last more than a couple of hours. Do not panic, stay calm, and listen to your portable radio for any weather updates or emergency broadcasts.

If You Are Indoors

- Stay indoors when a thunderstorm strikes.
- **Do not travel unless it is urgent.** (Roads may wash out or flood, vehicle windshields may shatter, and traffic lights may not be working.)
- Large hailstones can shatter windows, so stay away from windows, skylights and doors.
- Do not use the phone during the storm, and do not contact metal objects such as radiators, stoves, metal pipes, sinks or other potential conductors of electricity.
- If the storm is a safe distance away, close your drapes, blinds or window shades to prevent the wind from blowing broken glass inside. Consider unplugging televisions and other electrical appliances that do not have surge protectors.
- Windows covered with protective film will prevent glass from shattering if they are broken.
- Surge arrestors and suppressors can protect your electronic equipment should lightning strike power lines.
- Watch out for large trees in your yard – they may fall on your house during a severe storm.

If You Are Outdoors

- Move immediately to shelter – a building or vehicle. Large enclosed structures tend to be much safer than smaller, open structures.
- Avoid water, high ground, isolated trees, and picnic shelters in open spaces.
- If lightning is about to strike you, you will normally feel staticky (your hair will stand up). The best thing to do is crouch down and put your feet together. Minimize your contact with the ground, and do not lie down. Cover your ears to reduce the threat of hearing damage from thunder.

If You Are in a Vehicle

- Stop the car safely – preferably where there is shelter such as under a bridge, overpass, etc.
- Be cautious and watch for a flash flood if you are in a low-lying area.
- Wait for the storm to subside. Proceed only if safe to do so.



Severe Winter Storms

Severe winter storms can cause widespread damage and disruption. Heavy snow often results in paralyzed transportation systems, automobile accidents due to slippery roads, and stranded vehicles. When accompanied by intense winds and extreme cold, snow can isolate entire communities. Bitter cold and severe winter storms kill more than 100 people in Canada every year. That is more than the number of Canadians killed by tornadoes, thunderstorms, lightning, floods, hurricanes and heat waves combined.

Snowstorms happen when a mass of very cold air moves away from the Polar Regions. When it collides with a warm air mass, the warm air rises quickly causing clouds to form, and the cold air cuts underneath it. As long as the air below the clouds is cold, the precipitation will remain as snow as it falls to the ground.

Strong winds and blinding snow can disorient anyone outside and makes travel almost impossible. During a blizzard, piercing winds blow snow into drifts that can bury people, animals and possessions. The snow loads can also cause the collapse of structures. In the later stages of a blizzard, whiteout conditions can be formed. During a whiteout, the snowfall is so dense that it is hard to tell the earth from the sky.

If You Are Indoors

- Stay there!
- Listen for radio and television broadcasts regarding the storm and any emergency information. Have a battery-operated radio – the electricity may go out.
- **Do no travel unless it is urgent.**
- Electricity may go out – have an alternate, safe way of heating your home, cooking your meals and lighting your home. Remember if you use an alternative source of heat, you must make sure it is properly ventilated, and it does not use up the oxygen in your home.
- Telephone lines may go down so listen to your battery-operated radio for any important information.
- To help prevent water pipes from freezing, keep cabinet doors open to allow warm air to circulate around pipes (particularly in the kitchen and bathroom).
- Keeping a slow trickle of water flowing through faucets connected to pipes that run through an unheated or unprotected space. Or drain the water system, especially if your house will be unoccupied during the winter months.

If You Are Outdoors

If you must go outdoors, prepare yourself against the cold and find shelter as soon as possible.

- Several lightweight layers give more warmth than a single heavy coat. Try thermal underwear, a turtleneck, a medium sweater and a jacket.
- Wear a hat to prevent heat loss. Cover your mouth to protect your lungs. Wear gloves and hiking or snow boots.
- Always tell someone where you are going, what route you will be taking, and when you think you will arrive. This way, someone will know where you might be if you are stranded.

If You Are in a Vehicle

Travel can be dangerous during a severe storm.

- If you hear news of a blizzard warning, find shelter as soon as possible.
- If you are stuck in your car, stay with the vehicle.
- Provide a signal to rescuers such as a bright cloth tied onto the vehicle or a flashing light operated by batteries other than your car battery
- Keep the window open a crack for fresh air.
- Stay warm by moving your arms and legs, keeping the blood flowing.
- Start the car engine once every hour, and use the heater for ten minutes (this will depend on how much gas is in your vehicle; you can let your vehicle run longer if you have plenty of gas).
- When the engine is running, leave the dome light on.
- Keep the exhaust pipe clear so fumes can escape.
- Always tell someone where you are going, what route you are taking, and when you think you will arrive.
- Carry an emergency kit in your vehicle.

Emergency Car Kit

- Ice scraper
- Shovel
- Booster cables
- Tow chain
- Fuel line antifreeze
- First aid kit
- Flashlight (extra batteries)
- Roadmaps
- Compass
- Roll paper towels
- Warning flashing lights
- Extra clothing and footwear
- Energy bars
- Fire extinguisher
- Candles in a deep dish/can and matches (will keep you warm in your vehicle)
- Blanket (special survival blankets are best)



Chemical Spills

Hazardous material spills can seriously threaten the lives of anyone within the spill area. If local officials advise you to "shelter-in-place," you must remain inside your home or office and take the following steps to maximize your protection:

- Close and lock all outside doors and windows.
- Turn off all fans, heating and air-conditioning systems (Examples: kitchen, bathroom and dryer vents).
- Close the fireplace damper.
- Get your disaster supply kit and make sure the radio is working.
- Go to an interior room that is **above ground level**, preferably, one without windows. An above ground location is best because some chemicals are heavier than air and may seep into basements, even if the windows are closed.
- Seal all cracks around the door and any vents into the room.
- Continue to monitor your radio or television until you are told it is safe or advised to evacuate. Local officials may later call for the evacuation of specific areas that are at greatest risk in your community. Responders will advise when it's safe to leave the premises.
- If you suspect contamination, take shallow breaths through a cloth or towel. If medical help is not immediately available, shower, place exposed clothing in a tightly sealed container and wait for emergency assistance. REMEMBER TO HAVE SOMONE CALL 911.

CAUTION must be used when sealing your family or employees in a room. If you do a good job of sealing the doors, windows, and heating vents with plastic and duct tape, you may be sealing all replacement oxygen out. This is a temporary solution only.

Other Sites

- [Weather forecasts](#)
- [Severe Weather Awareness and Safety](#)
- [Weatheradio Canada](#)



Bomb Threats by Phone

- Listen, be calm, courteous, and sympathetic.
- Try to write down his/her exact words regarding the threat.
- Try to keep the person talking and obtain as much information as you can.
- Note the time/date of call.

Try and Obtain the Following Information

- When is the bomb expected to explode?
- Where is it?
- What does it look like? (in a box, bag, briefcase)
- Why did you place the bomb?
- Where are you calling from?
- What is your name?

Try to Determine the Following

- Is the person calling male or female?
- Does the person sound young or older?
- Does the caller have an accent?
- Is there any background noise?
- How is the person's speech? (Example. slurred, hurried, slow)
- How does the caller sound? (Example. mad, calm, emotional, vulgar)

After Receiving the Threat

- Trace the call (the recordings will guide you through).
 - Switchboard use *957
 - Single line phones *57
- Notify your company security people or supervisor (if applicable).
- Notify police (911).
- Take directions from your company security personal, police or emergency response persons. Larger businesses will have policy regarding the handling of bomb threats.
- Prior to any bomb threats check with Telus Security for assistance in determining trace capabilities of your telephone system.

Finding the Bomb

If someone was to find the bomb (package) before emergency personnel are on scene, **DO NOT TOUCH IT IN ANY WAY**. In a very calm manner, evacuate the immediate area and wait for directions from emergency response units. Make sure someone is available to show police where this package is.

Who Makes Bomb Threats?

In the majority of cases, people who are in some way upset with the business, company, etc. will give bomb threats. It may be from a customer who is upset with the service they received or an ex -employee that was recently let go. **Treat them seriously but don't panic**. A high percentage of bomb threats are not real but should be treated as genuine until proven otherwise.



Fallen Power Lines

A Fallen Power Line may Still be Alive

- Stay clear of the area.
- Don't try to free someone in contact with a line; call 911 instead.
- Stay clear of anything that is or may be in contact with the line, such as a tree or fence.
- If a power line falls on the vehicle you are in, stay inside until help comes and advises you it is safe to get out.
- If it is absolutely necessary for you to leave the vehicle (because it's on fire), jump out of it with both feet together and make sure no part of your body is touching the vehicle when you hit the ground. This is difficult and caution must be used.
- **Do not return to the vehicle to get anything out of it until you are sure the power is out.**



Terrorist Threats

The potential threat of terrorism can be loosely categorized as Weapons of Mass Destruction (bombings and/or the use of biological, chemical or radiological agents) with the ultimate goal of disrupting the infrastructure and/or the economy and instilling fear in the targeted community.

Certain potential targets lend themselves towards the accomplishment of these goals. They include, for example, atomic energy and other public utility facilities, international airports and other transportation systems, major international events and high-profile landmarks.

At this time, **there is no identified threat to Alberta or the rest of Canada.** Federal intelligence sources will advise Alberta immediately should the status change.

Presently Alberta has five Threat Levels:

- **No Threat** No threat indicated
- **Low** Unconfirmed general threat
- **Medium** There is an unconfirmed threat. No known presence of attacker(s) in Alberta.
- **High** Confirmed threat, no specific indication of an imminent attack. Presence of attacker(s) known to be in Alberta.
- **Imminent** Confirmed threat, attack could occur immediately or in near future. Capability and presence of attacker(s) have been confirmed.

Recommended Advisory System Actions for a Low Threat

- Review family or work emergency plan.
- Check your work and home disaster safety kit.
- Check your batteries/water supplies.

Recommended Advisory System Actions for a Medium Threat

- All the above in low threat.
- Establish alternate family meeting place.
- Be alert to suspicious behaviour at work and home.

Recommended Advisory System Actions for a High Threat

- All the above in medium threat.
- Have your disaster kits out ready to go or be used.
- Know alternative routes home from work and schools.

- Know your children's school emergency plan.
- Practice home evacuation plan.
- Your vehicle should be gassed and ready to go.
- Check emergency phone numbers for police, fire, ambulance, gas and electrical.
- Have maps of area in your vehicle.

Recommended Advisory System Actions for an Imminent Threat

- All the above in high threat.
- Remain calm.
- Listen to radio/TV for current information.
- Follow instructions of local authorities.
- Be prepared to shelter in place or evacuate.
- Contact work to determine status for the day.
- Check schools to see if they are open or closed.
- Discuss children's fears with them.



Influenza

What is an influenza pandemic?

People are exposed to different strains of the influenza virus many times during their lives. Even though the virus changes, their previous bouts of influenza may offer some protection against infection caused by a similar strain of the virus. However, three to four times each century, for unknown reasons, a radical change takes place in the influenza A virus causing a new strain to emerge. Since people have no protection against the new strain, it can spread rapidly around the world, causing what is known as a pandemic. Frequently, the pandemic influenza virus causes severe complications, such as pneumonia and death in previously healthy individuals. The last three pandemics occurred in 1918-19, 1957-58 and 1968-69. Pandemics are unpredictable, but most experts agree that another is likely to occur in the next five to 10 years.

How Flu Spreads

The flu virus spreads easily and quickly through droplets that are coughed or sneezed into the air by someone who has flu. The flu virus is also found on the hands of people with flu and on surfaces they touch. You can get the flu if:

- you breathe in these droplets through your nose or mouth
- the droplets land directly on your eyes
- you shake hands with infected people or touch contaminated surfaces and transfer the virus to your nose, mouth or eyes

Health Effects of Flu

Those who get the flu will experience some symptoms but some groups are at greater risk for serious health effects, including pneumonia. Those at greater risk include:

- very young children
- people over 65
- anyone with a medical condition such as chronic respiratory disease (e.g., asthma), heart or kidney disease, diabetes, or a depressed immune system

Reducing Risks

The best protection against flu is an influenza vaccination (flu shot) every year. You should discuss the possibility of getting an influenza vaccine with your health care provider. Flu shots do not protect you against SARS or other respiratory infections.

What can you do to protect yourself and your family?

Prevention is the best defence against influenza. Canadians should protect themselves and each other by:

- Getting a flu shot
- Washing their hands frequently; and
- Staying home if they are sick.

**** Hand washing is the single most important factor in preventing the spread of viruses. Regular hand washing helps reduce the spread of many infections, including flu and SARS. Wash your hands often. Use lots of soap and warm running water, and rub your hands together briskly for at least 20 seconds. Alcohol-based hand rubs are also effective and convenient

Advice for Travellers

Do not travel if you feel sick. If you start feeling sick while on an airplane, tell a member of the flight crew right away. Monitor your health while travelling. If you develop a fever and think you have the symptoms of SARS, call ahead to a doctor, medical clinic or public health authority as soon as possible for medical advice. Be sure to tell them about your travel history.

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/english/diseases/flu/pandemic.html>

http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/english/media/releases/2003/2003_87bk2.htm

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/gen-info/pandemics.htm>



Helping Persons With Disabilities During Disasters

People with disabilities who are self-sufficient under normal circumstances may have to rely on the help of others in a disaster. If a disaster warning is issued, check with neighbours or co-workers who are disabled and offer assistance whenever possible.

- People with disabilities often need more time than others to make necessary preparations in an emergency.
- The needs of older people often are similar to those of persons with disabilities.
- Because disaster warnings are often given by audible means, such as sirens and radio announcements, people who are deaf or hard of hearing may not receive early disaster warnings and emergency instructions. Be their source of emergency information as it comes over the radio or television.
- Some people, who are blind or visually impaired, especially older people may be extremely reluctant to leave familiar surroundings when the request for evacuation comes from a stranger. Reassuring these people that they will not be left alone in unfamiliar surroundings will help in evacuating visually impaired persons.
- A guide dog could become confused or disoriented in a disaster. People who are blind or partially sighted may have to depend on others to lead them, as well as their dog, to safety during a disaster.
- People with impaired mobility are often concerned about being dropped when being lifted or carried. Learn the proper way to transfer or move someone in a wheelchair and what exit routes are best.
- Some people who are mentally challenged may be unable to understand the emergency and could become disoriented or confused about the proper way to react.
- Many respiratory illnesses can be aggravated by stress. In an emergency, oxygen and respiratory equipment may not be readily available. Hopefully the person will have a portable oxygen tank. If not, seek medical advice as soon as possible.

- Individuals suffering from illnesses or disease may need special medications. Make sure they have their medications if they have to be evacuated.



Preparing Your Pets for Disasters

It's important to keep in mind that emergency shelters may not allow pets - even if they are crated. You should have an alternate plan.

The Edmonton Police Service does not recommend pets be left behind under any circumstances. If you have no alternative but to do so, ensure they have plenty of food and water available and post your evacuation destination in a prominent place (such as the refrigerator door). Post a visible advisory on your front door as well so emergency workers will know there is a pet inside waiting to be rescued.

It is recommended you pack at least a three-day supply of essentials for each of your pets. They can be packed in a box or kept nearby for quick packing. Make sure it includes the following:

- Pet's normal food (and can-opener if needed)
- Plenty of water
- Medications
- Food and water bowls
- Blankets and towels
- Favorite toys
- Plastic "pick-up" bags
- Any unique needs
- Leash and collar with identification tag attached
- Rabies vaccination certificate and tag
- Shots record
- Veterinarian's name, address and phone number
- First aid kit containing:
 - Insect sting stop pads
 - Elastic cling bandage
 - Penlight with batteries
 - Cotton swabs
 - Antiseptic solution
 - Eyewash solution
 - Safety pins
 - Tweezers
 - Anti-microbial handwipes
 - Magnifying glass
 - Rescue sheet
 - Latex gloves
 - Hydrogen peroxide
 - Antibacterial topical ointment

Instant cold pack
Adhesive tape
Sterile gauze pads
Sterile gauze (roll)
Tongue depressors
Scissors
First aid booklet



Home Disaster Safety Kit

Hazards can strike quickly and without warning. Act now to prepare for at least the first 72 hours following a major disaster. The following items should be included in your disaster safety kit. We recommend:

1. Basic Safety Equipment

- flashlight with spare batteries
- radio with spare batteries or crank radio
- emergency candles and water proof matches (**do not use if there are gas leaks**)
- well supplied first aid kit
- all purpose pocket knife and basic tools

2. Food and Water Supplies

- three day supply of bottled water (4 litres per person/day)
- purification tablets
- three day supply of non-perishable food (per person)
- manual can opener
- disposable plates, cutlery, cups

3. Ready-to-go Bag

- one change of clothing for each person
- special items for infants, elderly and disabled
- extra keys for the car or building
- Some cash (automatic banking machines may not be working)
- personal medication and prescriptions for medication/eyeglasses
- whistle

4. Personal Hygiene Kit

- toothbrush and toothpaste (per person)
- shampoo and hairbrush
- sanitary napkins
- towel and facecloth (per person)

5. Other Essential Items

- blankets for each person
- **photocopies** of personal documents – including insurance policy
- recent photos of each person

- three day supply of food and water for pets
- activity items such as books and playing cards

Place these items in a waterproof container. Store your disaster safety kit in a convenient place so it is accessible when disaster strikes.

Check your kit every six months to ensure it meets your changing needs, the water and food supply are fresh, and batteries are in working order.



Winter Driving Car Survival Kit

If you become stranded in your vehicle, **STAY WITH THE VEHICLE**. Numerous people die every year because they misjudged the effect of cold temperatures. The safest bet is to stay with your vehicle. It will keep you warm and dry and can be easily spotted by police or highway maintenance crews.

With a properly equipped emergency kit, you could survive in your vehicle for days if necessary. Only leave your vehicle once the weather clears and you have proper clothing. If your vehicle is operational and the storm is over, continue to your destination if safe to do so.

Before leaving on a road trip, call Alberta Motor Associations' recorded road reports. In Edmonton, dial 471-6056.

Standard Equipment - Driving in the City

- Ice scrapper/brush
- Shovel
- Booster cables
- Fuel line de-icer (Methylhydrate)
- Map of city
- Tools

Highway Driving - Driving Outside the City or in Remote Areas

- All the above (Driving in the City)
- Compass
- Tow chain
- Warning light (flashing)
- Road maps (provincial)
- Fire extinguisher
- Extra clothing (winter, rain, boots)
- First aid kit
- Flashlight
- Blankets (special survival blankets are the best)
- Matches and candles in a deep can (used to help keep warm)
- Food and water (if driving in remote areas)
- Roll of paper towels

If You get Stuck in a Snowstorm and Must Stop

- Stay in your car and be aware of the following:
 - Exhaust fumes (is your exhaust pipe clear of snow?)
 - Keep fresh air in your car (window should be cracked open at least two cm)
 - If you pull your car off the roadway and onto the roadside, pull off the road as far as you can or pull into a rest area.

CAUTION: Other cars frequently strike parked vehicles if they are not safely pulled off the road.



Workplace Disaster Safety Kit

- First aid kit
- Bottled water (could also be used to wash eyes out or dampen your dust mask)
- Survival blanket
- Heavy gloves
- Hard hat (helmets of some kind)
- Whistles
- Flashlights
- AM/FM radio
- Flashlight
- Extra batteries/bulbs
- Waterproof matches/candles
- Dust masks
- Eye protection
- Ear protection (plugs)
- Sledge hammer
- Pry bar
- Each person working in a high-rise building should have some walking shoes in his/her desk, so if needed, he/she would be able to walk down several flights of stairs in comfort and with ease.

Question:

If you were trapped on the 20th floor of a building and had to stay overnight in your place of business without running water, heat, or electricity, could you do it?

Other Items to Consider

- Non-perishable food, such as granola, beef jerky, nuts, dried items
- Toilet paper
- Medications (headache medication, etc.)
- Feminine hygiene supplies
- Entertainment items, such as a deck of playing cards



Family Emergency Contact Information

Fill in important family contact information and keep a copy by the phone. It's advisable to carry this information with you at all times in case of an emergency. Keep a copy in your car, motor home, cottage, children's knapsack or lunch kit. Another suggestion is to have this information carried in your wallet in a smaller format.

FAMILY EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Your Name _____

DOB _____

Local Contact

Name _____

Telephone (Day) _____ Evening _____

Nearest Relative

Name _____

City _____ Province _____

Telephone (Day) _____ Evening _____

Family Work Numbers

Number _____ Relationship _____

Number _____ Relationship _____

Out-of Province Contact

Name _____

City _____ Province _____

Telephone (Day) _____ Evening _____

Family Physician

Name _____ Phone _____

Alberta Health Care Number _____

Medical alerts/conditions _____

Evacuation and Reunion Location

Outside, near your home _____

Away from the neighbourhood _____

Alternate telephone number _____

Other

Information



Information Links

[Natural Hazards](#)

[The Weather Network](#)

[Canadian Red Cross Society](#)

[Insurance Bureau of Canada](#)

[Institute for Business and Home Safety](#)

[Meteorological Service of Canada](#)

[Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Preparedness](#)

[Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety](#)

Other

www.gov.ab.ca

[Environment Canada - Weather Office](#)

[Canadian Automobile Association](#)

[American Automobile Association](#)