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Be Prepared Not Scared

Emergency Preparedness Starts With You

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*Cette brochure est également disponible en français. Elle s'intitule **Se préparer non s'inquiéter --Vous aussi pouvez vous préparer à affronter les urgences.***

BE PREPARED PLAN FOR EMERGENCIES

In your day-to-day living, disasters may seem a distant possibility. Yet natural disasters, such as floods or tornadoes; technological or environmental accidents, such as chemical spills; or service disruptions, such as power failures during the winter, can strike any community, including yours, at any time.

If you're unprepared for a disaster, it can shatter your life.

Expect the unexpected and plan for it... Knowing what to do when a disaster strikes will help you better control the situation and be in a position to recover more quickly.

No community is equipped to handle all the demands of a catastrophe. Help your community by preparing yourself.

Make sure everyone in your family knows what to do before, during and after an emergency.

Set up a family meeting this week to discuss how you can best prepare for an emergency.
Have your own plan.

KNOW WHAT TO DO BEFORE A DISASTER STRIKES

Will your whole family think clearly and logically in a crisis? Not many of us can. So do your clear, logical thinking now X when you have the time to be thorough.

PREPARE NOW

Your best protection in any emergency is knowing what to do. Read this brochure, and act on its suggestions.

KNOW YOUR ENEMY

Find out what natural and technological disasters could happen in your community. Know what to expect during each disaster.

LOOK AT YOUR OWN SITUATION

Hazard-proof your home

Anticipate what could go wrong in your home and take corrective action.

If you live in an earthquake zone, move or secure objects that could fall and injure you: books, plants, mirrors, lamps, china. Secure objects that could tip and start a fire: water heater, gas appliances.

If you live in a tornado zone, secure anything that might be blown around or torn loose, both indoors and outdoors.

If you live in a flood-prone area, remove all chemical products from the basement. Move irreplaceable belongings to upper floors.

You can install a non-electric stand-by-heating unit that is not dependent on a motor, fan, or any other electrical device to function. Vent the stove or heater adequately with the type of chimney flue specified for it. Never connect two heating units to the same chimney flue at the same time.

Post emergency numbers

Keep a list of key telephone numbers and addresses near the phone. (If there's been a major disaster, use the phone only if it's absolutely necessary. Emergency crews will need all available lines.)

Check your insurance

Make sure you have adequate insurance coverage for the range of risks in your community.

PREPARE AN EMERGENCY SURVIVAL KIT

Aim to have an emergency survival kit that will keep you and your family self-sufficient in your home for at least three days.

If you've got a flashlight, battery-operated or a crank radio, food, water and blankets, you already have part of an emergency survival kit. All you have to do is assemble the supplies in an easy-to-carry container (in case you have to evacuate).

Keep a smaller survival kit in your car

A blanket, extra clothing, a candle in a deep can and matches can save your life.

See emergency checklists

OTHER PROCEDURES

Here are some other steps that can make your life more tolerable in the event of a disaster.

Choose an out-of-province family contact

Choose someone in another province to be your family's contact. After the disaster, it is often easier to call out of the region as the local phone lines might be tied up. Make sure everyone memorises this person's name and telephone number and knows to call your family contact if they get separated from the family.

Have a show and tell

If you live in a house

Teach members of your family where and how to shut off the water, electricity and gas supply. Make big easy-to-see signs saying Breaker Panel (or main circuit breaker), Gas and Main water supply. Put these signs near the breaker panel, gas valve and main water valve.

If you live in an apartment

Show everyone in your family where the emergency exit is. Show them where the fire alarm is, and explain when and how to use it. In a fire or other emergency, don't use the elevators. You'll be trapped in the elevator if the power goes out.

Learn about other community emergency plans

Your kids' school and your work place might have their own emergency plans. Find out what they are and how they apply to you. You may be separated from your family and need to know how to get reunited. You can assist in educating your children about school plans, etc.

Avoid potential emergency situations

Heed weather warnings and avoid driving and other activities in hazardous weather conditions.

KNOW WHAT TO DO *DURING* A DISASTER

Here are some basic procedures for specific disasters. (For more information on these and other disasters, contact Emergency Preparedness Canada, your provincial or territorial emergency measures organization or your local Red Cross.)

DURING AN EARTHQUAKE

If you are in a building

Stay inside. Stay away from windows. Get under a heavy desk or table and hang on. If you can't get under something strong, flatten yourself against an interior wall, protect your head and neck.

If you are outside

Go to an open area. Move away from buildings or any structure that could collapse. Stay away from power lines and downed electrical wires.

If you are in a car

Stop the car and stay in it. Avoid bridges, overpasses or underpasses, buildings or anything that could collapse on you and your car.

DURING A TORNADO

If you are in a building

Go to the basement immediately. If there isn't one, crouch or lie flat (under heavy furniture) in an inner hallway or small inner room or stairwell away from windows.

Stay away from large halls, arenas, shopping malls, and so on (their roofs could collapse).

If you are caught outside

If there is no shelter, lie down in a ditch or ravine, protecting your head.

If you are driving

Get out of and away from the car. It could be blown through the air, or roll over on you. Lie down as above.

DURING A SEVERE LIGHTNING STORM

If you are in a building

Stay inside. Stay away from windows, doors, fireplaces, radiators, stoves, metal pipes, sinks or other electrical charge conductors. Unplug TVs, radios, toasters and other electrical appliances. Don't use the phone or other electrical equipment.

If you are outside

Seek shelter in a building, cave or depressed area. If you're caught in the open, crouch down with your feet close together and your head down (the "leap-frog" position). Don't lie flat X by minimizing your contact with the ground you reduce the risk of being electrocuted by a ground charge. Keep away from telephone and power lines, fences, trees and hilltops. Get off bicycles, motorcycles, and tractors.

If you are in a car

Stop the car and stay in it. Don't stop near trees or power lines that could fall.

DURING A FLOOD

Turn off basement furnaces and the outside gas valve. Shut off the electricity. If the area around the fuse box or circuit breaker is wet, stand on a dry board and shut off the power with a dry wooden stick.

Never try to cross a flood area on foot. The fast water could sweep you away.

If you are in a car

Try not to drive through flood waters. Fast water could sweep your car away. However, if you are caught in fast rising waters and your car stalls, leave it and save yourself and your passengers.

DURING A WINTER POWER FAILURE

Turn the thermostat(s) down to minimum and turn off all appliances, electronic equipment and tools to prevent injury, damage to equipment and fire. Power can also be restored more easily when the system is not overloaded.

Use proper candleholders. Never leave lit candles unattended.

Don't use charcoal or gas barbecues, camping heating equipment, or home generators indoors.

Home generators are handy for backup electricity in case of an outage, but there are hazards to be aware of.

To operate a generator safely, follow the manufacturer's instructions and always:

- ensure that the generator operates outdoors in well-ventilated conditions, well away from doors or windows.
- connect lights and appliances directly to the generator. If extension cords must be

used, ensure they are properly rated, CSA (Canadian Standard Association) approved cords.

- Direct installation of a generator to an existing electrical system should only be done by a qualified technician.

KNOW WHAT TO DO *AFTER* A DISASTER

Right after the emergency, you may be confused or disoriented. Stay calm and remember the following procedures.

HELP THE INJURED

Help anyone who is injured. Get your emergency survival kit (the first-aid kit should be with it).

LISTEN TO THE RADIO

Listen to your local radio station on your battery-operated radio for instructions.

DON'T USE THE TELEPHONE

Don't use the telephone unless it is absolutely necessary. Emergency crews will need all available lines.

CHECK YOUR HOME

Check for damage to your home. Remember the following points:

- ☒ Use a flashlight X don't light matches or turn on the electrical switches if you suspect damage.
- ☒ Check for fires, fire hazards or other household hazards.
- ☒ Sniff for gas leaks, starting at the water heater. If you smell gas, turn off the main gas valve, open windows and get everyone outside quickly.

**IF YOU TURN OFF THE GAS, IT SHOULD
ONLY BE TURNED BACK ON BY A
PROFESSIONAL FROM THE GAS COMPANY.**

- ☒ Shut off any other damaged utilities.
- ☒ Clean up spilled medicines, bleaches, gasoline and other flammable liquids immediately. Wear protective clothing. For major spills or leaks, call in professional help.
- ☒ Confine or secure your pets.
- ☒ Check on your neighbours, especially the elderly or people with disabilities.

WATCH FOR HAZARDS

Think about the hazards you should watch for after a major disaster.

<p>POST EARTHQUAKE HAZARD</p> <p>Damaged buildings</p> <p>Aftershocks</p> <p>Water gets cut off</p> <p>Power can go off</p> <p>Tsunamis (huge ocean waves)</p>	<p>WHAT TO DO</p> <p>Stay out of damaged buildings, even if they look okay</p> <p>Stay put</p> <p>Use emergency water from water heater, toilet tank, melted ice cubes.</p> <p>If you live in an apartment, don't use the elevator. You'll get stuck in it.</p> <p>If you live near the ocean, stay away from the waterfront.</p>
<p>POST-FLOOD HAZARDS</p> <p>Contaminated drinking water</p> <p>Contaminated dishes and utensils</p> <p>Basement full of water</p> <p>Contaminated flood water in the basement</p> <p>Watch for mould</p>	<p>WHAT TO DO</p> <p>Use bottled water or bring water to a rolling boil for five minutes, or add two drops of non-perfumed chlorine bleach to one litre of contaminated water. Stir and wait 30 minutes before drinking. (Water should still have a slight chlorine smell.)</p> <p>Wash and sterilize dishes and utensils. Use hot water, detergent and a disinfectant rinse (approximately one teaspoon of household bleach in a sink of water).</p> <p>Drain the water in stages, about a third of the volume of water per day. (Draining the water too quickly can structurally damage your home.)</p> <p>Disinfect every three days if the flood is severe and the house is occupied for an extended period. For the average home, mix two litres of liquid bleach into the flood water.</p> <p>Mould is a health hazard. If mould is present wear a face mask and disposable gloves. Anything that stays wet long enough will grow mould. Dry everything quickly to avoid future health problems.</p>
<p>OTHER HAZARDS</p> <p>Food poisoning</p>	<p>WHAT TO DO</p> <p>Check food supplies in refrigerator, freezers and cupboards for signs of spoilage. When frozen food begins to defrost it should be cooked, otherwise it should be disposed of in</p>

<p>Loose or dangling electrical wires</p> <p>Broken sewer and water mains</p>	<p>accordance with the instructions from local health authorities.</p> <p>Stay away. Advise the authorities if you can.</p> <p>Advise the authorities if you can.</p>
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BE READY TO EVACUATE

If the emergency is serious enough, you may be asked to leave your home and go to a nearby evacuation centre, like a school gym or a community hall.

If you have to evacuate

- ∃ Leave immediately.
- ∃ Take your emergency survival kit with you.
- ∃ Listen to the radio and follow instructions from local emergency officials.
- ∃ If you are instructed to do so, shut off water, gas and electricity.
- ∃ Make arrangements for pets.
- ∃ Wear clothes and shoes appropriate to conditions.
- ∃ Lock the house.
- ∃ Follow the routes specified by the officials. Don't take shortcuts. A shortcut could take you to a blocked or dangerous area.
- ∃ If you have time, leave a note telling others when you left and where you went. If you have a mailbox you could leave the note there.
- ∃ If you are evacuated, sign up with the registration centre so you can be contacted or reunited with your family and loved ones.
- ∃ If you have to evacuate your home for a prolonged period during a winter power failure, drain the water from the plumbing system. Starting at the top of the house, open all taps and flush toilets several times, and open the drain valve in the basement. Drain your hot water tank by attaching a hose to the tank drain valve and running it to the basement floor drain. **(If you drain a gas-fired water tank, the pilot light should be turned out - the local gas supplier should be called to re-light it!).** Unhook washing machine hoses and drain.

EXPECT EMOTIONAL REACTIONS

You won't "act like yourself" for a while

Most people caught in a disaster usually feel confused. They may tremble, feel numb, vomit or faint. Immediately after the disaster they often feel bewildered, shocked, and relieved to be alive. These feelings and reactions are perfectly normal.

Later many survivors sleep poorly, have no appetite, are angry with those around them, or panic at the slightest hint of a storm. Children might start thumb sucking or bed wetting. These feelings and reactions are perfectly normal too.

How to get back on track

Here are some suggestions to help get yourself and your family back on track after the disaster.

- ☒ Talk about your feelings. Talk about what's happened.
- ☒ Encourage your children to express their feelings. They may want to do this by drawing or playing instead of talking. Understand that their feelings are real. Recognize that when you suffer a loss, you may grieve. (Yes, you can grieve the loss of a wedding photo or your grandfather's favourite ring.) You may feel apathetic or angry. You may not sleep or eat well. These are normal grief reactions. Do give yourself and family permission to grieve and time to heal.

How to help your children

Children exposed to a disaster can experience a variety of intense emotional reactions such as anxiety, fear, nervousness, stomachaches, loss of appetite and other reactions. These are **normal** and **temporary** reactions to danger. Parents can help relieve such reactions by taking their children's fears seriously, by reassuring them, giving them additional attention and hugging them.

A CHILD WHO FEELS AFRAID IS REALLY AFRAID.

After a disaster, children are most afraid that

- ☒ the event will happen again
- ☒ someone will get hurt or injured
- ☒ they will be separated from the family
- ☒ they will be left alone.

So comfort and reassure them. Tell them what you know about the situation. Be honest but gentle.

Encourage them to talk about the disaster. Encourage them to ask questions about the disaster.

Give them a real task to do, something that gets the family back on its feet.

Keep them with you, even if it seems easier to look for housing or help on your own. At a time like this it's important for the whole family to stay together.

CHECKLISTS

EMERGENCY FOOD AND WATER KIT

Have at least a three-day supply of food and water on hand.

Choose ready-to-eat foods that your family likes. And choose food that doesn't need refrigeration.

DRINKING WATER

Γ at least one litre per person per day

FOOD

Γ Canned food: soups, stews, baked beans, pasta, meat, poultry, fish, vegetables, fruits

Γ Crackers and biscuits

Γ Honey, peanut butter, syrup, jam, salt and pepper, sugar, instant coffee, tea

Think of any special needs that someone in your family might have. Include any other items that your family would need. Here are some suggestions.

Babies/toddlers

diapers, bottled milk, toys, crayons and paper

Other family members

prescription medication, extra eye glasses (keep at least one week supply of medication in your emergency kit and include copies of prescriptions for your medicine and glasses.)

Pets

dog/cat food

REPLACE CANNED FOOD AND DRY GOODS ONCE A YEAR.

EQUIPMENT

Γ Knives, forks, spoons

Γ Disposable cups and plates

Γ Manual can opener, bottle opener

Γ Fuel stove and fuel (follow manufacturer's instructions. Don't use a barbecue indoors.)

Γ Waterproof matches and plastic garbage bags

KEEP THESE SUPPLIES IN AN EASY-TO-FIND SPOT

EMERGENCY SURVIVAL KIT

- Γ Flashlight and batteries (in case the lights go out)
- Γ Radio and batteries or crank radio (so you can listen to news bulletins)
- Γ Spare batteries (for radio and flashlight)
- Γ First-aid kit
- Γ Candles and matches/lighter
- Γ Extra car keys and cash (including coins for telephone)
- Γ Important papers (identification for everyone, personal documents)
- Γ Food and bottled water (See "Food list")
- Γ Clothing and footwear (one change of clothes per person)
- Γ Blankets or sleeping bags (one blanket or sleeping bag per person)
- Γ Toilet paper and other personal supplies
- Γ Medication
- Γ Backpack/duffel bag (or something else to carry the emergency survival kit in, in case you have to evacuate)
- Γ Whistle (in case you need to attract someone's attention)
- Γ Playing cards, games

LARGE ORANGE GARBAGE BAGS MAKE GREAT RAIN PONCHOS.

CAR KIT

- Γ Shovel
- Γ Sand, salt or kitty litter
- Γ Traction mats
- Γ Tow chain
- Γ Compass
- Γ Cloth or roll of paper towels
- Γ Warning light or road flares
- Γ Extra clothing and footwear
- Γ Emergency food pack
- Γ Axe or hatchet
- Γ Booster cables
- Γ Ice scraper and brush
- Γ Road maps
- Γ Matches and a 'survival' candle in a deep can (to warm hands, heat a drink or use as an emergency light)
- Γ Fire extinguisher
- Γ Methyl hydrate (for fuel line and windshield de-icing)
- Γ Flashlight
- Γ First-aid kit with seatbelt cutter
- Γ Blanket (special 'survival' blankets are best)

**REMEMBER TO KEEP YOUR CAR GAS TANK AT
LEAST HALF-FULL AT ALL TIMES.**

PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL
EMERGENCY MEASURES ORGANIZATIONS

PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL EMERGENCY MEASURES ORGANIZATIONS

British Columbia

Provincial Emergency Program (PEP)

Phone: (250) 952-4913

Fax: (250) 952-4888

Yukon

Emergency Measures Organization

Phone: (867) 667-5220

Fax: (867) 393-6266

Alberta

Disaster Services Branch

Alberta Municipal Affairs

Phone: (780) 422-9000

Fax: (780) 422-1549

Call free long-distance in Alberta, dial 310-0000

Northwest Territories

Emergency Measures Organization

Phone: (867) 873-7083

Fax: (867) 873-8193

Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan Emergency Planning

Phone: (306)787-9563

Fax: (306) 787-1694

Manitoba

MEMO (Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization)

Phone: (204) 945-4772

FAX (204) 945-4620

Ontario

Emergency Measures Ontario

Phone: (416) 314-3723

Fax: (416) 314-3758

Quebec

Direction générale de la sécurité civile et de la sécurité incendie

Phone: (418) 646-7950

Fax: (418) 646-5427

Or one of the *Direction générale de la sécurité civile et de la sécurité incendie* regional offices in:

Hull : (819) 772-3737

Montreal: (514) 873-1300

Rimouski: (418) 727-3589

Sillery (Québec) (418) 643-3244

Trois Rivières: (819) 371-6703

or your municipality

New Brunswick

Emergency Measures Organization

Phone: 1-800-561-4034

Fax: (506) 453-5513

Nova Scotia

Emergency Measures Organization

Phone: (902) 424-5620

Fax: (902) 424-5376

Prince Edward Island

Emergency Measures Organization

Phone: (902) 888-8050

Fax: (902) 888-8054

Newfoundland

Emergency Measures Organization

Phone: (709) 729-3703

Fax: (709) 729-3857

For more information on emergency preparedness, please contact your provincial/territorial emergency measures organization.

To obtain copies of this or other booklets in the self-help advice series: *Floods – What to do before and after; Prepared for the Woods; Prepare to Survive a Major Earthquake; Severe Storms; Winter Driving – you, your car and winter storms, and Winter Power Failures*, contact:

SAFE GUARD SECRETARIAT
1-800-830-3118
Internet: <http://www.safeguard.ca>

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS CANADA or
Communications Directorate
122 Bank Street, 2nd Floor
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0W6
Phone: (613) 991-7035
Fax: (613) 998-9589
E-mail: Communications@epc-pcc.gc.ca
Internet: <http://www.epc-pcc.gc.ca>

Your LOCAL RED CROSS Office
E-mail: feedback@redcross.ca
Internet: www.redcross.ca

This booklet is available from the SAFE GUARD Secretariat through partnership agreements.

An electronic version of this booklet is available on the Internet.

It is also available in alternate formats (audio cassette, large print, computer diskette and braille) through InfoTouch by calling toll-free 1-800-788-8282. Use the same number for teletypewriter (TTY).

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