

Evacuation Stages and Legislation 2005

Local governments and regional districts currently must declare a State of Local Emergency to issue an evacuation order in an affected community. The evacuation process has **three key stages**. *This approach is consistent for all types of emergencies throughout the province.*

Section 12 of the Emergency Program Act provides local government with the authority and the steps to be taken in order to issue a State of Local Emergency.

Evacuation Alert: A warning is issued about an imminent threat to life and property, and people are asked to be ready to leave on short notice. When people choose to leave an area before or during the issuing of an alert this is referred to as a voluntary evacuation.

(A community may choose to issue an *Evacuation Advisory* or *Fire Notice*, for public information purposes only, in advance of an evacuation alert.)

Evacuation Order: When the population is determined to be at imminent risk, an evacuation order is issued and people must leave the area immediately. Local police or RCMP enforce evacuation orders.

Evacuation Rescind: An evacuation order or alert is rescinded when it is determined to be safe for residents to return home. An evacuation order may be reinstated if a threat returns.

(A community may choose to issue an *All-Clear* public information document, when all threats to an area have passed.)

Evacuations Legislation

There are a number of pieces of legislation, as well as the Emergency Program Act, which authorize various types of evacuations. Other Acts have some powers concerning evacuations including: the Wildfire Act, Fire Services Act, Health Act, Mines Act, Waste Management Act, Workers' Compensation Act, Child Protection Act and Petroleum and Natural Gas Act. Information is also available about the Local Government Act under the Community Charter.

The Office of the Fire Commissioner may issue an evacuation order to the public under section 25 of the Fire Services Act as a transitional tool that can be replaced by a local government evacuation order issued under a declaration of a State of Local Emergency.

Ministry of Forests has the authority to conduct a *tactical evacuation* to get people out of an area quickly due to operational requirements if necessary. These tools are especially valuable in areas where there is no local authority, provincial or federal properties and First Nations requests.