

**The City
of Camrose**



How to prepare your family and home for any emergency



Canadian Red Cross

Alberta
MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS
Disaster Services

Why You Need a Plan

Emergencies and disasters can occur anytime, anywhere. Some are seasonal and allow time for preparations; others occur swiftly and without warning. Communications, transportation, utilities and other essential services could be disrupted by disasters, forcing you to rely initially on your own resources for food, water, first aid, transportation and shelter.

The individual's response comes first. Individuals and families need to be prepared to cope with interruptions in essential services from any cause at any time. The next level of response comes from municipalities. They work closely with other essential service organizations in developing and carrying out emergency plans. Alberta government assistance is brought in when needed. The Alberta government may also request help from the federal government if necessary.

Organizations prepare for emergencies with thorough planning. Individuals and families should do the same, based on the kinds of emergencies that can occur in their region and community. Although the emergency incident may vary, the elements of an effective response are often the same. Natural events can include winter storms, fires, floods or tornadoes. Other potential emergencies such as dangerous goods spills are caused by technological or human failures.

Be Informed

The most common emergencies that occur in Alberta are winter storms, fires (home, forest and grass fires), floods, thunderstorms and tornadoes. You can lessen the impact of an emergency or disaster by knowing what to do before, during, and after an incident. Contact your municipal Director of Disaster Services or municipal government office to find out what emergencies or disasters could occur in your area. Ask what you should do to prepare for them. This brochure contains an example of an emergency contact list that you can fill in with the appropriate numbers for your area.

No matter where you live, the following basic preparedness actions can help you in any emergency.

- Learn the warning systems your municipal government uses and what actions to take when you hear them.
- Listen to local radio, television and cable stations for forecasts and emergency instructions. Post the dial/channel listings of these stations for quick access.
- Arrange with neighbours to advise one another of an emergency notification.
- Post emergency numbers by every phone.
- Learn your community's evacuation routes.
- Be familiar with the emergency plans in your workplace and in your children's school or day care.
- Leave written backup care arrangements with the school or day care in case you can't get there right away in an emergency.
- Learn first aid and CPR.

Check Your Insurance

Insurance for most perils is readily available for homes and their contents; businesses, stock and equipment; farm buildings, livestock and equipment; and vehicles of all types. Check regularly with your insurance agent or broker to ensure you have appropriate and adequate insurance coverage, including any extensions in coverage that may be available.

- Coverage is available for most major disasters such as fire, lightning strikes, windstorms, hail, tornadoes and others. Overland flood coverage can be added to business policies, but is not generally available for homeowners.
- Most policies can include coverage for damage caused by sewer back-up. Make sure your policy includes sewer back-up insurance.
- Keep a detailed paper and/or photographic/video inventory of your residence or business. Keep it in your emergency kit. It will be invaluable in the event of loss.
- Make sure your insurance policies and related records are in a safe location and easily available after an emergency or disaster.
- The Insurance Bureau of Canada has information on all aspects of insurance. Their toll free number for Alberta is 1-800-377-6378.
- Know what your insurance company requires, should you need to make a claim.
- Be aware that government disaster recovery programs will not compensate for damage and loss for which insurance was readily and reasonably available before the disaster occurred.

Develop a Family Emergency Plan

Base your plan on the kind of emergencies that can occur in your region and community. Have a family meeting to discuss potential emergency situations. Talk about what each family member should do to prepare and respond in each situation. Ensure that elderly family members, who may not live with you, are included in your emergency plan.

- Include individuals with special needs in your planning.
- Maintain a list of the family's required medications, prescribed dosages and the names and telephone numbers of family doctors.
- If you use a pacemaker or other medical equipment, keep the make and model, serial number and other pertinent information with you at all times.
- Keep irreplaceable items such as family photo albums where they can quickly be accessed if you must leave home in a hurry.
- If important family papers are kept at home, store them in a portable, fireproof and waterproof container.
- Contact your municipal administration to ensure that your plan is consistent with planned municipal actions.
- If your family owns pets, determine your municipality's policy for pets in an evacuation. Contact your municipal Director of Disaster Services or veterinarian for information.
- Plan how your family will stay in contact if separated by a disaster or emergency. Pick

two meeting places: (1) a location at a safe distance from your home in case of fire; and, (2) a place outside your neighbourhood in case you cannot return home. Meet with your neighbours and plan how you would work together.

Audit Your Home

A hazard audit of your home can not only increase your safety but can also help you respond more effectively to an emergency or disaster.

- Review fire safety features such as smoke detectors and how to monitor them.
- Make sure that no flammable materials are kept near electrical equipment or your furnace.
- Check for frayed electrical cords or overloaded circuits.
- Identify all potential exits.
- Learn how to turn off your water and electricity safely.
- Locate the safe areas (interior bathrooms, closets, interior stairwells, lowest floor level) in your home in case of a tornado.

Maintain a Supply of Food and Emergency Items

A major emergency or disaster could isolate you in your home for several days. Gas or electricity for cooking, heating and refrigeration may not be available. Be prepared with a stock of items for emergency use.

- Medications required by family members.
- Foods required for special diets or baby foods.
- Battery-powered radio and flashlight in working order, with extra batteries. (Solar and hand-cranked radios and flashlights are also available.)
- A first aid kit and manual.
- All-purpose fire extinguisher (rated A-B-C).
- Waterproof matches.
- Candles and tin can. Ensure that candles are used safely.
- A three-day supply of canned, packaged, or non-perishable food items for each member of the family. Include a manual can-opener.
- A three-day supply of drinking water for each member of the family, sealed in unbreakable containers (replace stored tap water every few months). Adults need at least 1 litre of drinking water a day.
- An alternative heat source and an adequate supply of fuel. Follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully. Make sure there is adequate ventilation to prevent the build-up of hazardous fumes.

Contacts for More Information

Your municipal Director of Disaster Services

Each municipality has a designated Director of Disaster Services. Check with your local municipal government office for the phone number of this individual. You can also obtain this number by calling Disaster Services as listed below.

Disaster Services

Alberta Municipal Affairs

Telephone: (780) 422-9000

Outside Edmonton, call toll free to 310-0000 and ask to be connected to 422-9000.

<http://www.gov.ab.ca/ma/>

Canadian Red Cross

Northern Alberta

Telephone: (780) 423-2680

Outside Edmonton, call toll free to 1-800-565-4483.

Southern Alberta

Telephone: (403) 541-6100

<http://www.redcross.ca>

Your List of Important Emergency Numbers

(Create a table like this one at home and fill in the blanks)

Police	
Fire	
Doctor	
Ambulance	
Children's schools	
Utility companies	
Neighbours	
Other	
Name, address and phone number of an out-of-town relative or friend who can act as a point-of-contact.	