



Extreme Weather Tool Kit for GTA Faith Communities

Adapted by Faith & the Common Good



Faith & the
Common Good

La foi et le
bien commun

Acknowledgements

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Faith & the Common Good is a national, interfaith network founded on the belief that our diverse faith congregations and spiritual communities can be powerful role models for the common good.

This toolkit has been reviewed by the Canadian Red Cross. The mission of the Canadian Red Cross is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity in Canada and around the world.

Faith & the Common Good team contributing to the development of this toolkit include: Catherine Lang and Donna Lang.

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Foreword

The potential for an extreme weather emergency has increased. Churches, mosques, temples, and synagogues are now being called upon to join the wider efforts to prepare people for all types of extreme weather emergencies. In Canada, over 2/3 of the population claim a religious affiliation. By strengthening the capacity of faith communities to respond, we are strengthening the capacity of our entire communities to respond to emergencies and enhance resiliency.

Community organizations also provide a direct link to the local communities and vulnerable populations. Community engagement and collaboration can achieve the level of training, communication and coordination that is needed, if the outcome is going to be truly inclusive.

Comprehensive preparedness is possible through the integration of knowledge and skills of governmental and local public service providers, community-based organizations, faith communities, civic organizations; all collaboratively towards a common goal of enhancing communication, response, and recovery efforts. This level of community engagement and collaboration can strengthen preparedness and response efforts, not just for vulnerable population groups, but for the general population as well.

However, no matter how much government agencies are charged to assist communities in crises, it has been proven that non-profits and faith groups seem to make the biggest difference. They're the "first in" and the "last out". In general, they are able to raise the largest amount of relief funds and assure that those funds are distributed as needed. Non-profits and faith groups quite literally have their fingers on the pulses of our communities. These organizations also have extensive knowledge about the needs of the vulnerable populations which they serve and it is common for new Canadians to rely on them.

Faith communities have expertise in outreach, information sharing and dissemination, volunteer management, and special services, and offer the opportunity for collaborating or contracting for specific disaster services. These entities are often the places people trust most to provide for their needs. They maintain close relationships with ethnic communities and vulnerable people and provide a bridge for communication, service provision and problem solving. As well, they offer community connections and local resources to enhance response and recovery effectiveness.

As part of the community, faith congregations have the opportunity and responsibility to respond to emergencies. Putting lives back together after an emergency requires care, hope and love. Counseling, understanding and direction enable people to cope with their anger, guilt, tests of faith, loneliness and turmoil. It is essential that these organizations plan and prepare now for how they will respond in an emergency.

This toolkit was created to assist congregations in preparing for extreme weather emergencies. It asks questions such as: What is an emergency plan? Is your facility ready? What can your congregation do to prepare to care for members and others in your community in response to an emergency? A variety of resources and information about emergency planning has been collected and should be used based on the needs and capacity of each individual congregation.

Section 1: Introduction

Definition of an Extreme Weather Emergency

An extreme weather emergency is an unforeseen combination of unusual, severe or unseasonal weather that results in a state that calls for immediate action or an urgent need for assistance or relief. Large-scale extreme weather emergencies are usually considered disasters. An extreme weather emergency can result in a temporary disruption of services due to a short power outage, or a longer-term situation, causing an organization to relocate due to substantial building damage or even a larger scale, city-wide or regional disaster. Depending on the magnitude of the event, services may be provided as usual, services may need to be altered temporarily, or in extreme situations, services may even be relocated or discontinued.

Why Develop an Emergency Plan?

In any type of event, a plan is a guide for your organization to:

1. Protect property
2. Continue services
3. Care for members and citizens
4. Allow for self-sufficiency for at least 72 hours
5. Communicate information

A plan is relevant and useful if it is:

1. Developed by people who are concerned
2. Tailored to the geographical situation and needs of its clients
3. Implemented and tested, to the extent possible, before emergency strikes
4. Developed to include training for persons responsible during an emergency
5. Reviewed and updated regularly
6. Evaluated according to SMART criteria (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, timely)

The planning process is more important than a document on a shelf. During the group planning process, individual concerns are expressed, priorities are set, and values assigned to peoples' needs and capabilities. As part of this process, planners will learn about each others' strengths, capabilities, or deficiencies and how to plan appropriately for their organization's response.

Before getting started, it is important to be aware of basic emergency management. Emergency management is made up of four basic activities:

1. **Mitigation** – any activity that is undertaken before an emergency strikes to eliminate or reduce the possibility of an emergency or the impact an emergency may have on a community or facility (e.g. if subject to frequent power outages, installing a generator)
2. **Preparedness** – planning and getting ready to handle an emergency when it strikes (e.g. stockpiling resources for evacuation and sheltering-in-place)

3. **Response** – all activities undertaken at the time of an emergency to save lives and property and reduce injuries (e.g. evacuation)
4. **Recovery**– activities undertaken to return things back to normal after response activities have subsided (e.g. repairing a damaged building)

Using this Toolkit

This toolkit covers topics such as:

- What is an All Hazards Emergency plan? Is your facility ready?
- Does your organization have an evacuation plan?
- What can your organization do to prepare to care for members and others in your community in response to an emergency?

Symbols Used



This symbol represents a **TOOL** to modify and use in your Emergency Planning.



This symbol represents an **ACTIVITY** to use to engage your organization and its members in Emergency Planning.

Section 2: How to Start

Emergency preparedness is a group process. Organizations have unique individuals with a variety of knowledge and skills. Support for your emergency planning needs to start at the top of the organization. Bring the leaders of your organization into the planning process from the very beginning to identify and agree upon the best course of action for your facility, staff, and clients. It is also important to discuss the financial implications of the various proposed response strategies.



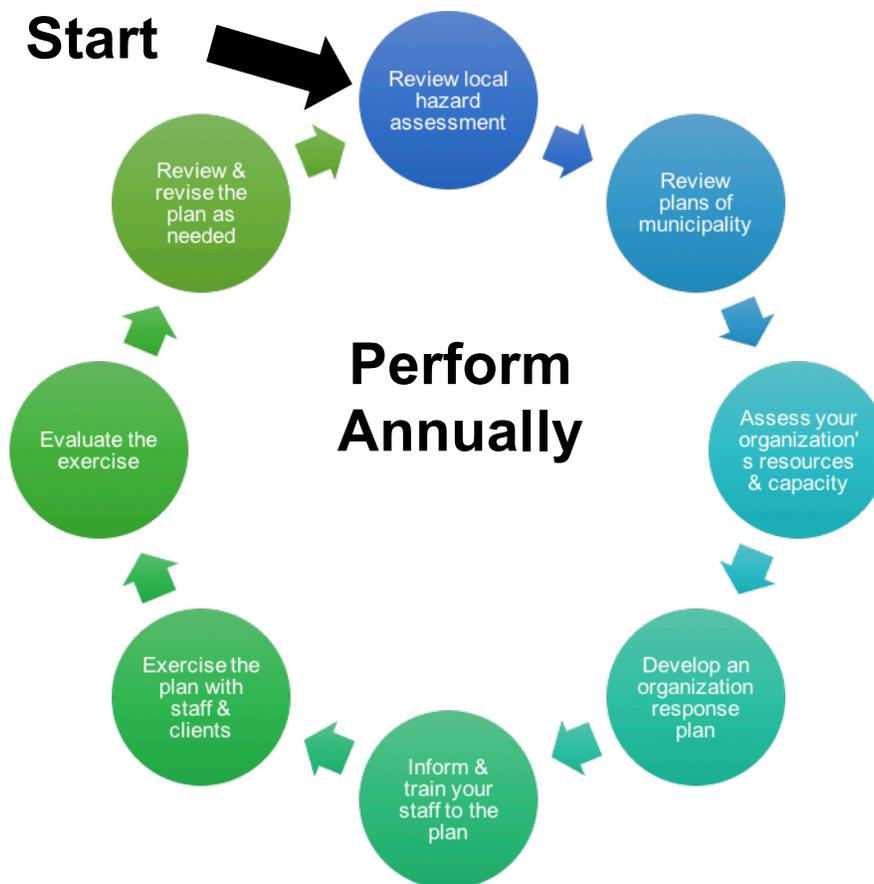
Tools in this section:

- Letter to Increase Interest from Your Organization's Leadership
- PowerPoint Presentation, "Ready, Set, Go: Preparing is Caring"
- Risk Assessment Form
- Organizational Facility Safety Checklist and Maintenance Calendar



Activities in this section:

- Demonstrating the Importance of Planning and Stockpiling



The Emergency Planning Cycle

Organize an Emergency Preparedness Committee

Take the first steps in emergency preparedness:

1. **Establish an Emergency Preparedness Committee:** An Emergency Preparedness Committee should be established by the organization leadership or board of directors (see Letter to Increase Interest from Your Organization's Leadership on p.11). The committee or group can be new to the organization or its functions can be attached to an existing group or committee. The leadership of the Committee should be selected from within its organization. If applicable to your organization, a Volunteer Coordinator should be established as soon as possible because of the importance of volunteers in an emergency.
2. **Membership of the Emergency Preparedness Committee may include but should not be limited to the:**
 - Board of Directors
 - Managers/leadership
 - Maintenance staff and other staff members
 - Outreach and building/property committee members
 - Youth leaders
 - Volunteers or clients with experience in engineering, plumbing, construction, informational technologies, education, finance, and health professionals
3. **Help your organization and clients recognize the importance of the Emergency Preparedness Committee, emergency preparedness and the benefit to the individual, family, and organization by:**
 1. Conducting a meeting for the Emergency Preparedness Committee
 2. Publishing the Emergency Preparedness Committee meeting minutes
 3. Providing education on emergency preparedness and posting materials in your facility
 4. Publishing articles in a bulletin or newsletter on emergency preparedness
 5. Conducting an informational session using the Ready, Set, Go: Preparing is Caring presentation on p.12
 6. Using interactive demonstrations (see Activities on p.16)
4. **Get organized by:**
 - Checking your organization's websites or talking to staff at the national, provincial, and local level to see if emergency plans or guidance is provided
 - Getting acquainted with the emergency preparedness process
 - Assessing types of emergencies that may be experienced by your organization (see Risk Assessment Form on p.14).
 - Reviewing difficult events previously experienced by the organization and their response
 - Identifying existing plans, activities and/or committees that may be in place and can be incorporated into the emergency plan

- Identifying programs and outreach activities that could assist the surrounding community during emergencies
- Seek out 'Best Practice' examples from organizations that resemble yours and replicate what has worked in the past

Identification of Potential Hazards

Once your Emergency Preparedness Committee is established, it is time to think ahead and determine what could go wrong. While it is impossible to plan for every possible event, it is important to look at what the probability is of a specific event happening, and the hazards that it would cause. In thinking about potential events, consider the following:

- Historical information: Has it happened before? How often does it happen?
- Geographic location: Is your area prone to a certain type of emergency?
- Human error: What emergencies could be caused by employees or clients?
- Physical facility: What needs to be maintained regularly?

Upon completion of identifying your potential hazards (see the Risk Assessment Form on p.14 and the Organizational Facility Safety Checklist and Maintenance Calendar on p.15), you may find there are things you can do now to reduce the risk of an emergency or minimize the damage.



Tool: Letter to Increase Interest from Your Organization's Leadership

Dear [Insert Faith Leader],

I am writing to request that we develop an organizational extreme weather preparedness plan and engage our members in preparedness, to help in the event of further extreme weather events. In the wake of Alberta's devastating flooding and severe fires in Canada's Northwest Territories and British Columbia, emergency preparedness continues to be a significant issue nationwide. Toronto is not exempt from these situations, as we remember the 2013 December ice storm and past years' flooding.

Preparedness is possible with the collaboration of a congregational team, other community partners, and local government to work toward a common goal of enhancing communication, response, and recovery efforts in the event of an emergency. By having a plan, we can minimize damage to our facility, care for our members and the community, and remain self-sufficient when others may not be able. Below is "Ten Reasons Faith Communities Partner in Community Emergency Response":

1. Our faith leaders have experience, training and influence for ethical decision-making – during times when ethical decisions are critical to the public interest.
2. By definition, faith communities offer hope, especially in overwhelming circumstances.
3. A mission of our faith is to care for vulnerable people.
4. Our building(s) and meeting groups are highly visible and integral to the social infrastructure of the community. When people are fearful and overwhelmed, they turn to us with expectations of help.
5. Our congregation is a cross-section of the community. There is no other place where a variety of generations, mixture of backgrounds, interests, professions, work, educational experiences and economics congregate regularly.
6. Faith communities have relationships and resources that connect with others outside of the community.
7. Faith communities have organizational and decision-making structures in place for effective community leadership. We have experience to deliver services and manage business decisions to help the community get through crises.
8. We provide spiritual support in a variety of ways – through words, through actions, through art, through music, through relationships.
9. We are adept at offering ways for many people to serve others.
10. Historically, faith communities have given the community at large a legacy of effective emergency response. 21st century threats call for renewed collaboration and solutions.

Extreme weather planning involves getting informed, being prepared, and helping at local and community levels to get others prepared. I would like to see our congregation take greater steps towards planning and preparing and suggest that we participate in Faith & the Common Good's pilot study on "Faith Communities as Neighborhood Resilience Hubs" to explore how to do so. The faith sector as a whole needs to be prepared and ready to respond to such events when they impact our community.

Together, we can prepare to serve our congregation and the community.

Sincerely,

Name

Title

Contact Method



Tool: PowerPoint Presentation "Ready, Set, Go: Preparing is Caring"

Ready, Set, Go!

Preparing is Caring!



Every year, Toronto experiences extreme weather emergencies



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Questions to Think About...

Is Your Organization Prepared for Disaster?

- How resilient is your congregation to extreme weather emergencies?
 - Would your staff and volunteers be willing and able to return to help after checking on loved ones?
 - How would your building or facility perform during and after a disaster?
 - Do you have a plan outlining how to continue your operations?
 - Do you have arrangements with partners to collaborate with to continue services?

3

Questions to answer...

- What is an emergency or disaster?
- Why do people need to prepare?
- What does "preparing" mean for individuals?
- Why bother to prepare now?
- Why develop an emergency plan?
- What are we asking our faith communities to do?

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What is an emergency or disaster?

- Emergency = unforeseen circumstances that result in immediate action or an urgent need for assistance/relief
- Disaster = larger-scale emergency
- Range from local (one building), city-wide, county-wide, state-wide, national, or global
- May be temporary disruption or long-term situation
- Services may be unaltered, temporarily altered, re-located, or discontinued

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Natural (??) Disasters in Our Area



- Tornadoes
- Winter Storms
- Power Outage
- Floods
- Fires
- Heat waves

6

Why do people need to prepare?

- Disasters are relatively unexpected
- Emergency personnel may be overwhelmed
- Lives, health, and environment are endangered
- Preparing now can reduce negative impact on individuals, society and economy

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“Any community that fails to prepare – with the expectation that the federal government can offer a life line – will be tragically wrong.”

-Comments regarding a potential pandemic flu outbreak from Michael Leavitt, former U.S. Secretary of the Department of Health & Human Services



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What does “preparing” mean for individuals?

- Stocking up on food, medicines, and supplies makes it easier to stay at home for extended periods of time
- Planning for situations when:
 - schools close
 - you can not go to work
 - you or a family member becomes sick/injured

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Why bother to prepare now?

- To increase your organization’s chance of withstanding and recovering from an extreme weather disaster
- As people begin to prepare, they feel increasingly empowered and decreases their anxiety about an event
- We must be prepared first in order to help others!
 - Experience shows that unprepared people are less likely to help others during a disaster
 - Unless we are prepared and feel that our loved ones are safe, we will not be **willing or able** to help others

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Why develop an emergency plan?

- A plan is a guide for your organization to:
 - Protect property
 - Continue services
 - Care for members
 - Allow for self-sufficiency for at least 72 hours
 - Communicate information

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What are we asking you, as a faith community, to do?

- Make a plan
- Share info about how to prepare for an emergency
- Ask your team, staff, and members to prepare
- Work with local officials and partner organizations to get ready and prepare
- Look specifically at your ‘vulnerable populations’ and help plan for their safety in an emergency

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Climate Preparedness

- Preparedness involves activities:
 - **Preventing** extreme weather vulnerability
 - **Planning** to ensure an adequate response



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Facility Safety Checklist

- Exits
 - Marked and lighted?
 - Free from obstructions?
 - Any doors or passages locked?
 - Any obstructions that may impede evacuation?
 - Plans existing for upper floor evacuation?
 - Contingency plans for persons with mobility issues?
 - Maps in strategic locations showing exits?

- Electrical and Gas Equipment
 - Where are breaker switches or fuse boxes? Are all breakers marked?
 - Are there clear, legible instructions on how to shut-off water and gas valves?
 - Are switches and outlet boxes covered?
 - Are electrical units grounded?
 - Any circuits overloaded?
 - Any equipment in use after hours? Where?
 - Where is gas main or meter shut-off valve?
 - Where is gas wrench located?

- Miscellaneous
 - Location of keys for all doors and buildings?
 - Location of first-aid kit and AED (Automated External Defibrillator)? Is it fully stocked? Who is responsible for maintaining it?
 - Location of wheelchair and/or stretcher? Who is responsible for maintaining it?
 - Location of battery operated radio? Who is responsible for maintaining it?
 - Location of emergency water and food supply? Who is responsible for maintaining it?

- Firefighting Equipment
 - Extinguishers fully charged, inspected, and tagged?
 - Extinguishers appropriate for type of use?
 - Members and/or staff trained on using extinguishers?
 - Are fire alarms maintained and checked regularly?
 - Are smoke detectors maintained and checked regularly?

- Chemicals
 - Are there any combustible, toxic, or corrosive materials stored in the facility? (i.e. paint, solvents, cleaning fluids, toner, propane)
 - Where? Are they stored correctly?

- Emergency Phone Numbers
 - Is the list current and posted visible from outside?
 - Does the EMS and Fire Department know your facility to enable them to quick access?

Preparation & Maintenance Calendar

Create a preparation and maintenance calendar to assist you with keeping your facility safe and prepared for emergencies. The following are some sample items which should be checked on regularly. You can modify this list to meet the needs of your faith community.



Activity: Demonstrating the Importance of Planning and Stockpiling

Items Needed

Month	Item	Responsible Party	Date Completed
January - March	<i>Sample: Review Emergency Plan and hold a communications exercise drill.</i>	<i>Emergency Preparedness Committee</i>	
	<i>Sample: Review list of members trained in using AEDs (Automated External Defibrillators) and CPR.</i>	<i>Faith Community Nurse/Health Committee</i>	
April - June	<i>Sample: Check smoke detectors</i>	<i>Facilities Staff</i>	
	<i>Sample: Inventory your Emergency Kit and replace outdated items.</i>	<i>Emergency Preparedness Committee</i>	
July - September	<i>Sample: Ensure that members are aware of hot weather precautions and have adequate sun protection during outdoor events.</i>	<i>Faith Community Nurse/Health Committee</i>	
	<i>Sample: Hold child safety training for new volunteers.</i>	<i>Education Committee</i>	
October - December	<i>Sample: Check smoke detectors</i>	<i>Facilities staff</i>	
	<i>Sample: Ensure that snow and ice removal methods and materials are in place</i>	<i>Facilities staff</i>	
	<i>Sample: Ensure that members are aware of cold weather precautions and have adequate frost bite protection during outdoor events.</i>	<i>Faith Community Nurse/Health Committee</i>	

- An audience
- Chalkboard, whiteboard, or flipchart (optional)

Preparation Work: None

Transcript

Consider you are meeting with a group of people in a building. The weather turns foul and travel becomes very dangerous. The authorities are recommending that everyone stays put until the weather situation improves. They are saying that no one should go out. You'll have to survive on what you have with you at this time.

I am going to give you a couple of minutes to look through your belongings to see what you have.

Wait 3-5 minutes.

Ok, does anyone want to go first and talk about the items that they have? *(If not, the presenter should go first.) Discuss what everyone has (if they want to) and write the items on your board so everyone can see.*

Ok, so let's look at what we have to meet our basic needs.
Review list.

What are we missing? Food? Water? Bathroom supplies? Entertainment? Anything else?

Now, let's think about our chronic conditions or medications that we need. What are people going to do who need medication daily and don't have it with them such as asthmatics or diabetics? What if we had a pregnant woman? Children? Others?

This exercise is designed to show you the impact of being confined in your home for days at a time due to a weather-related disaster. In the event of an emergency, it may take at least three days for the government and other organizations to be able to help us. We have to prepare and be ready to respond and live on our own.

What are some of the items that we can have available to be ready to respond to an emergency?

Do you see your faith community as a 'life-line' during an emergency? Is your congregation prepared to help families and individuals who did not prepare?

These are things to think about. Get yourself prepared and help to prepare your community through your faith community.

Section 3: Preparation

To be prepared means having plans and resources in place so that your organization can continue to offer services, support, and hope – even under unusual circumstances. This section of the toolkit will give your organization a guideline to prepare for an emergency. There is a great deal of information in this section of the toolkit, but start small and move to bigger preparation areas as time and personnel become available.

This section includes:

- Preparing the Facility
- Preparing Leadership and Staff
- Preparing for Continuing Operations
- Preparing with Neighboring Congregations and Organizations
- Preparing the Members of your Congregation



Tools in this section:

- Fill-In Incident Command System Chart
- Phone Call Tree
- Connecting Members
- Survey of Members to Assist During Emergencies
- Letter of Intent with Local Government
- Care Buddies
- Sample Letter to Partner with a Neighbouring Faith Community
- List of Supplies

Preparing the Facility

Routine facility maintenance is a good business practice. Completing routine maintenance can also minimize greater damage during an emergency. In addition to routine maintenance, there are suggested tasks listed below that will reduce the damage, cost and frustration related to an emergency (*Organizational Facility Safety Checklist and Maintenance Calendar* on p.15 can help with this process):

- Complete a facility assessment for safety compliance with electricity, plumbing and water systems, as well as for the building's structural soundness
- Clearly mark gas and water shut-off valves with legible instructions how to shut off each
- HVAC system preventive maintenance (functions and control options)
- Assess and inventory all information technology, equipment and furniture, noting the condition
- Complete repairs as needs are identified
- Discuss the adequacy of insurance coverage with the insurance agent
- Maintain records of all inventories and assessments
- Post clearly visible emergency numbers by every phone, including 911, poison control center, law enforcement and fire department
- Identify a storm shelter and procedures

- Take photographs of buildings for insurance purposes (include all sides of the building and the roof, if possible)
- Store records, insurance policies, recent blueprints and other documents in a safe place with back-up copies off-site
- Provide safe storage for valuable items
- Develop a clean-up committee

Review insurance policies annually.

- Does your insurance policy meet the minimum requirements of your mortgage holder?
- When was the last estimate on the value of property? How accurate are the figures?
- Does your insurance policy cover the cost of any recent additions or high value items?
- Does your insurance policy cover the cost of temporary rental of another facility in the event your facility is severely damaged or destroyed?

Determine **financial arrangements** during a time of emergency, such as:

- Accessing savings accounts
- On-line donations
- Payroll
- Acquisition of supplies and equipment to continue operations during an emergency

Preparing the Leadership and Staff

Preparing employees and making work accommodations are important parts of an organization's emergency preparedness. Organization employees and volunteers will be on the front line of emergency response for communications, maintaining the essential functions of the organization, and providing emotional support for the clients. Consider the following when preparing employees/volunteers:

- Ensure that key leaders have emergency plans in place to protect their own families as a precondition of taking on a leadership role for the organization.
- Orient and provide on-going training on the organization's emergency plan to help reduce anxiety and allow staff/volunteers to function in an emergency
- Post the communication plan and emergency numbers in appropriate locations to facilitate communication between organization staff, clients, volunteers, emergency management and public health
- Provide cross-training of staff to maintain essential functions
- Plan for changes in work space and location that may be necessary depending on the type and extent of the emergency
- Consider how to protect employees and their families if the employee is required to be exposed to dangerous situations (i.e. provide personal protective equipment, extend sick leave benefits etc.)

Command Structure

In any emergency response, it is critical that clear lines of authority exist within the organization to make sure there is timely and efficient decision-making. It is important that you define your command structure and the authority for decision-making. Before an event, you must identify the organization's incident commander and identify who is in charge if the

incident commander is not available. This is an important aspect of your emergency plan because it will help you run efficiently in an emergency and allow other organizations to communicate with you effectively.

Incident Command Structure (ICS) is a universally used structure for emergency response – but it takes planning to be able to use it. It can be used for organizations both large and small. If you have a small organization, the same person may fill multiple spots on the ICS organizational chart. Just be sure that one person is not disproportionately overburdened with their roles in an emergency. It is important to use this command structure and job function system because all other organizations (including police, fire, and government) will be using it. If we are all on the same page, communication and collaboration will be much more efficient.

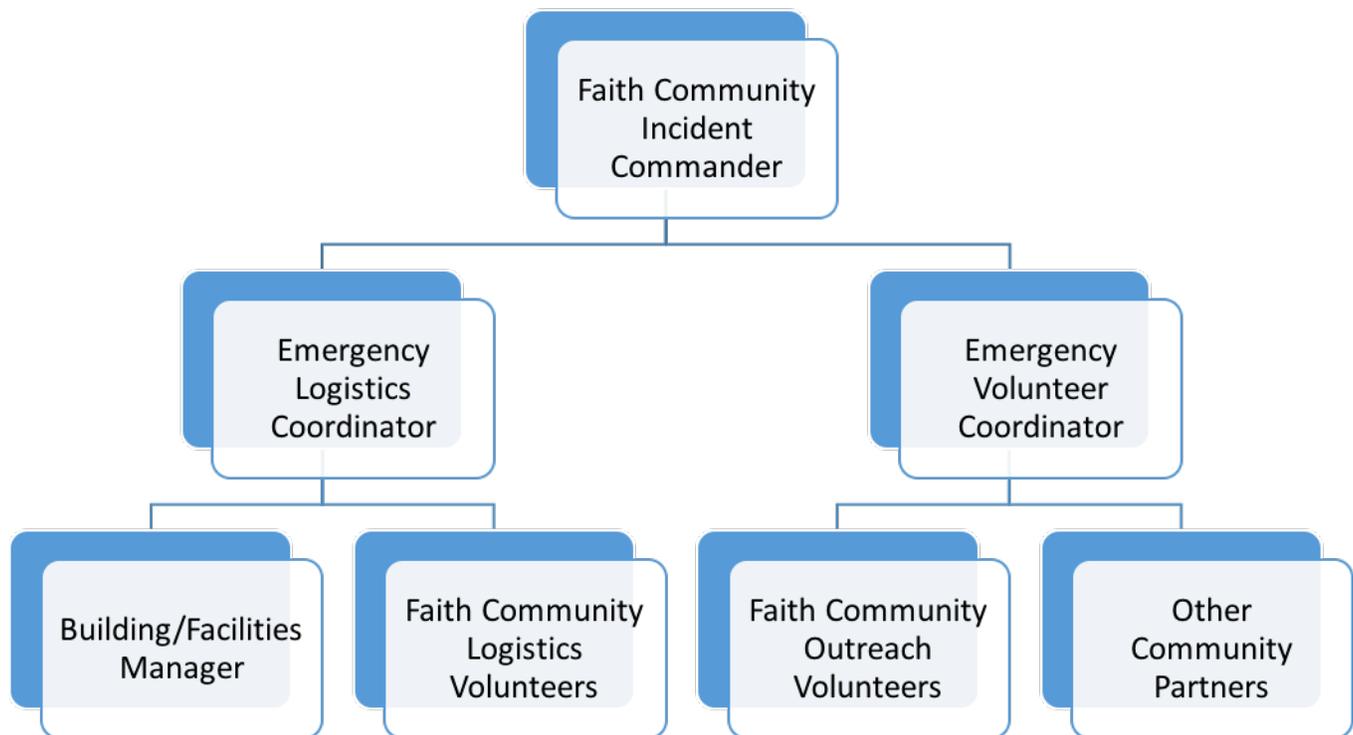
Basic ICS Job Functions:

- **Faith Community Incident Commander:** Assembles and chairs the Emergency Response Committee, appoints Faith Community Logistics and Volunteer Coordinators, schedules meetings, training sessions, approves plans and makes key decisions and directs both Logistics and Volunteer coordinators both before and during an emergency)
- **Faith Community Emergency Logistics Coordinator:** Conduct an inventory of building facilities, equipment and supplies, ensure proper maintenance, assist in training facilities/building managers and all volunteers, to be able to use these resources, should they be required during an emergency.
- **Faith Community Emergency Volunteer Coordinator:** Develops a database of volunteers and skills, recruits the Volunteer outreach team, establishes a Volunteer Emergency contact list for notifying volunteers when response is necessary, identify vulnerable members and provide a “Phone Call Tree” for the vulnerable members of the congregation and the community at large, arrange for orientation and readiness training, and liaises with other community partner groups.
- **Building/Facility Managers:** If this person is a paid employee, they may also be asked to be the Emergency Logistics Coordinator; at the very least, they will be asked to assist the Emergency Logistics Coordinator with their duties.
- **Logistics Volunteers:** Assists Emergency Logistics Coordinator with duties. In some cases, these volunteers may be part of the existing faith community property or building committees. They could also be engineers, architects or building maintenance experts.
- **Outreach Volunteers:** Assists the Emergency Volunteer Coordinator with duties. Many of these volunteers are likely to be members of existing programs, such as Out of the Cold and Food Bank; however, some may also be paid leaders of the faith community.
- **Other Community Partners:** There could be many possible community partners; other neighbourhood faith communities, food banks, libraries, community reception centres, health and family resource centres, food service and corporate partners.

Depending on the size of the facility, one person may occupy multiple positions. You do not need to activate all positions – only activate what you need for the incident. This is your basic Incident Command Structure.

Faith Community Incident Command Structure Chart Example

(See *Fill-In ICS Chart on p.26*)



Training

Make sure your volunteers are mentally, physically, and emotionally prepared to respond. In an emergency, their first concern will be the safety and welfare of their family members. Your staff is more likely to be available to respond in emergency situations if they know that their family members are safe. Encourage staff to develop their own personal emergency preparedness plan. A useful guide to get your family prepared for an emergency is “Your 72 Hour Emergency Kit”, created by the City of Toronto and can be downloaded via this link: <http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentonly?vgnextoid=9851fe1b5950d410VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD&vgnnextchannel=e0d36cbd2b95a410VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD>.

A **training plan** should be developed and implemented for your staff, and address the following:

1. Conducting exercises and unannounced drills of all aspects of the Emergency Operations Plan at least annually
2. Scheduling employee/volunteer orientation training and in-service training on the content of the Emergency Plan
3. Ensuring employees/volunteers know their individual responsibilities and roles during an event:
 - a. Train all staff and volunteers in basic emergency preparedness regularly
 - b. Hold first-aid and CPR classes
 - c. Include school or childcare staff in emergency/disaster training

- d. Prepare alternative staff who could lead in the absence of administrative or leadership staff
 - e. Encourage and support staff and key volunteers to have family or home emergency plans
 - f. Ensure all staff members have an opportunity to check on their homes and family members as soon as possible following an emergency
4. Document all training and testing
 5. Develop procedures for correcting deficiencies noted during exercises
 6. Understand that not all staff will be able to be present during an emergency (expect for staff levels to be reduced by 20 to 40%)

Training and preparing staff to be a part of your emergency plans can feel a bit overwhelming. However, there are a number of basic and advanced trainings that are available for free online.

Communication

Emergencies can happen on any day and at any time. Make sure that you have the ability to contact your staff and leadership in the event of an emergency. Maintain a contact list for your essential personnel. On your contact list be sure to have all possible phone numbers, emails, and home addresses (see *Phone Call Tree* on p.27).

What is a Call Down Procedure and Why is it Useful?

A call down is a series of telephone calls from one person to the next used to relay specific information. An established and exercised call down protocol can be used during emergency situations to deliver urgent information and for communication among members. The sample call-down procedure (see *Phone Call Tree* on p.27) is intended to be adapted for use by individual organizations.

- Using the phone tree system can spread a message quickly and efficiently to a large number of people.
- Hold message drills regularly to test your phone tree for effectiveness and identify areas for improvement. The drills also helps update phone numbers.
- Develop a contingency plan that works for your faith community if your phones are not working.

When Calling:

- The person at the top will start the tree. It may be helpful to have a brief script complete with the specific action.
- Ask the person to get paper and pencils to write specifics.
- Give facts about the event.
- Ensure that you have alternative phone numbers, such as work and cell phone numbers, in case the message needs immediate action.
- If nobody answers, leave a message and call the next person. This should ensure that everyone gets the information in a timely fashion.
- Confirm they will be making the next call on the list.
- Prearrange with staff at the end of the list to contact the person at the top once they receive the message. The LAST person(s) on the phone tree should CALL THE FIRST person to ensure that the tree is complete and that the message was accurate.

Preparing for Continuing Operations

Preparing an organization and facility for emergency takes time and discussion. The Emergency Preparedness Committee can prepare and plan for your organization to offer services during an emergency or disaster (see Section 2: How to Start on p.8 for more information on developing this committee). Your planned response to an emergency should emulate your organization's mission, goals, or objectives.

1. Prepare to Serve Your Members (see the "Preparing your Organization's Clients and Members" section on p.25):
 - a. Help your members learn what to do in an emergency and how to help one another
 - b. Collect emergency/disaster preparedness items such as flashlights, first-aid kits, blankets, etc.
 - c. Before an emergency establish a "Vulnerable Persons Registry", a list of members who would be considered "at-risk" due to disabilities, age (very young or elderly), transportation disadvantages, chronic medical disorders, or non-English speaking. Designate a group to call individuals on this list before a storm/disaster and to follow up afterward. In the event of an evacuation, this group could also call local emergency management to inform them of these individuals or help these individuals get to safety (see *Survey of Members to Assist during Emergencies* on p.29 and *Connecting Members* on p.28).
 - d. Become familiar with skill sets and material resources within your organization and within your community; identify functions, and know how to use them (see *Survey of Members to Assist during Emergencies* on p.29)
2. Plan to Resume Services as Soon as Possible:
 - a. Consider providing supportive services through a number of alternative communication vehicles (internet, telephone, email, etc.)
 - b. Prepare to resume essential services immediately, even in temporary or damaged facilities
 - c. Determine how you will publicize when essential services and crisis care will be offered
 - d. Determine a suitable alternative facility site, if required, for day to day functions, and get an estimate of what it would cost to rent/use. If possible, get an informal arrangement that would allow your services to relocate quickly. This might be a reciprocal agreement with another local community organization (see *Sample Letter to Partner with a Neighboring Community-based Organization* on p.34)
3. Prepare to Serve Your Community: Below are ideas on ways you can serve your community in the event of an emergency. These are simply options to think about. It is best to stick with a function that you may already perform or focus on one function and plan for it. Also, use the *Letter of Intent with Local Government* on p.30 to let others know about your plans and capabilities.
 - a. Develop a process for helping to raise funds for emergency response and for receiving funds from outside sources.

- b. Determine if your facility can be used to house volunteers. Make the decision prior to a disaster/emergency. Plans should be made to care totally for these individuals – thus lessening their impact on the broader systems of food, shelter, water, etc. Inform other communities of your willingness to house volunteers.
- c. Develop a plan to receive, organize, and distribute food and other needed items including cleaning supplies, hygiene supplies, and baby supplies.
- d. Organize workers. Organize volunteer work crews to help in your area in times of disaster/emergency.
- e. Develop a list of essential supplies before an emergency for use during an emergency (see List of Supplies tool on p.35).
- f. Identify and write down your organization's resources (including human resources) and update this list annually (see *Survey of Volunteers to Assist During Emergencies* on p.29 and *Letter of Intent with Local Government* on p.30).
- g. Develop a plan to work with local first responder agencies (i.e. police, fire, EMS) to "adopt" their station to provide collective aide to the station (meals, blankets, clean clothes) or to the first responder's families.

Preparing with Neighbouring Organizations

Agreements with Close Neighbours

Arrange a reciprocal agreement with another community partner, as a place to provide client services if your facility sustains major damage or is destroyed (see *Sample Letter to Partner with a Neighbouring Community-based Organization* on p.34). Develop a plan and coordinate with other organizations in time of emergency to reach out to the most vulnerable people in the community. Develop a plan to receive, organize and distribute food and other needed items including cleaning supplies, hygiene supplies, and baby supplies. You may desire to form an agreement with other community organizations that offer similar services to yours. In the event your organization wants to develop a working relationship with a neighboring organization, try holding events together like a food drive or a holiday gathering. Also, you may try pairing with another organization that provides different services.

Establish Partnerships with Distant Neighbours

Establishing partnerships and planning with distant neighbors is often called a companion organization plan. Designate contact persons in each neighbouring organization. The companion organization may provide assistance such as temporary housing or evacuation sites in the event that an emergency affects your organization or geographic area. It is also a source of volunteers and a link to other organization's sites. It is best to establish these relationships before an emergency strikes (see *Sample Letter to Partner with a Neighbouring Community-based Organization* on p.34).

Working with your Local Officials

Keep in contact with your local emergency preparedness team – they will be deeply involved in response efforts. Your local government agency may be able to help you get the resources you need or publicize resources that you are offering. It is imperative that you plan to keep in contact, so you will have a way to communicate with them during a disaster or emergency (see the *Letter of Intent with Local Government* on p.30).

Preparing Members of Your Organization

Preparing an organization and facility for emergencies takes time and discussion. While the Emergency Preparedness Committee is studying and discussing emergency preparedness plans, it is possible to start educating on basic emergency preparedness. The information about individual and family emergency preparedness is the foundation of all the emergency planning. By providing this education, you will assist your clients in taking some control and function in an emergency. It will also help to reduce stress and worry during an emergency.

Be Informed

- Find out what your community is doing to prepare for an emergency
- Become trained as a volunteer in programs such as the Canadian Red Cross (<http://www.redcross.ca/>.)
- Promote the 72 preparedness message among your own volunteers. It's hard for them to help if they may have their own uncertainties at home.

Meeting the Needs of the People You Serve

Determine the special needs of people in your organization to help prepare (see Section 4: At-Risk and Vulnerable Populations on p.36). Encourage others to help those who cannot fully prepare by making extra emergency kits for a neighbor or an entire group of people.

Ethical Issues

Two ethical issues should be addressed with volunteers who will be providing emotional and spiritual care:

- **Confidentiality** – Information between emergency affected person and volunteer must be held in confidence unless the survivor gives permission to the volunteer to share information with others.
- **Proselytizing** – Refrain from all forms of proselytizing which means attempting to convert people to another opinion.

In general, an ethical emergency response would strive as much as possible to assure that:

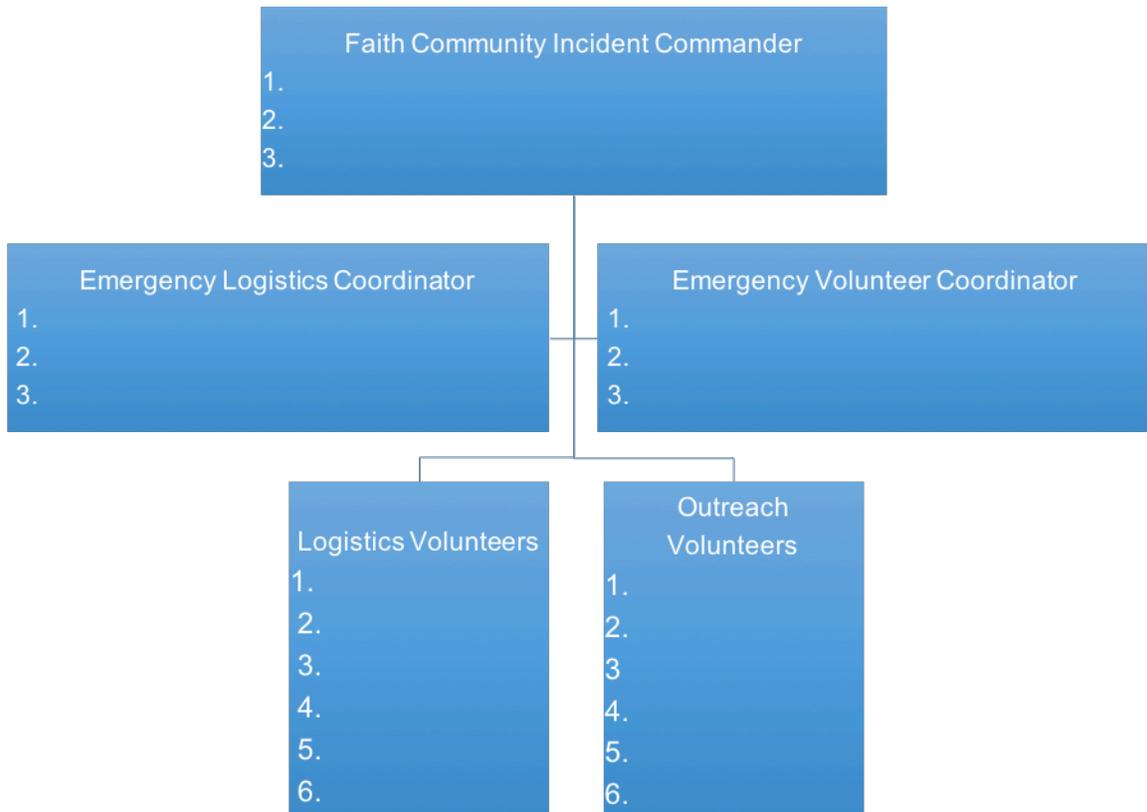
- No one person or group is made to bear a disproportionate share of the harm.
- Personnel in socially vital roles are given priority to resources that allow them to fulfill these roles.
- Individual holistic needs, including psychological, social and spiritual needs are being met.
- Community-based organization staff members are valued resources in leading their individual organizations in ethical discussions. Topics that would be pertinent to discuss include:
 - Community-based principles for ethical decision making

- Determining the “essential services” the organization offers that can be postponed or canceled
- Organizational care for the special needs clients of the organization
- Loss and grief



Tool: Fill-In Incident Command System Chart

Fill in the chart with individuals who may take on these specific roles during an emergency response. It is best to have three potential candidates for each position. Add phone numbers on this sheet to help with the communication process. You may not need all of the jobs for an emergency. Remind people that filling this out completely is for “just in case” purposes.





Tool: Phone Call Tree





Tool: Connecting Members

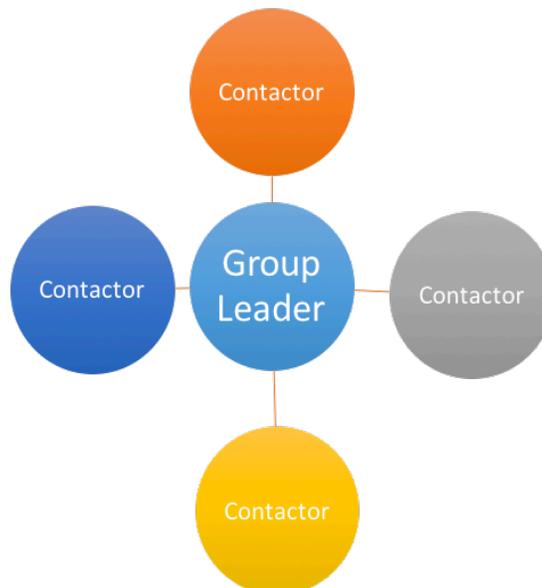
This tool is a guideline and offers some tips on how to connect members to one another to help maintain contact with your congregation's vulnerable or at-risk populations. There are many reasons to connect members on this basis. For example, have a member contact (phone call or visit) a member who may be unable to leave their home because of sickness, age, or injury. It can also be more in-depth by having members provide help to vulnerable or at-risk members during or after an emergency (ex. helping retrieve medication, food, or water).

Keys to Making Member Connections for Emergency Preparedness:

1. Establish Group Leaders to help coordinate the 'connected members' so the program moves smoothly.
2. Organize the 'connected members' by geographical location. Try to group members together who live close to one another so they can get to one another's homes easily if they are unable to drive, or to provide help quickly following an emergency.
3. Don't forget anyone. Include everyone and anyone who wants to be connected to others. Many may simply need a call; others may need help getting medications, food, water or alternative sheltering arrangements.
4. Make short but frequent contact. The contacts don't have to be long letters, visits or phone calls. Shorter and more frequent 'touching base' are probably more productive than long infrequent visits.
5. Get new members involved in this program as soon as they feel comfortable.

What do the Group Leaders do?

The Group Leader is responsible for checking in with the connected members following an emergency or to pass along useful information. They should keep a list of the connected members' contact information available at home and at their organization's office so others can access it if necessary. All the connected members should also have the Group Leader's contact information so they can provide updates as necessary. Group Leaders may also want to make calls or touch base with connected members if there is an unexpected absence among them.





Tool: Survey of Members to Assist During Emergencies

Local governments are encouraging community-based organizations to prepare for all types of emergencies. Community-based organizations will play a critical role in a successful response effort to emergencies and disasters alike. They are often one of the first places community members turn to for support during a time of crisis. In addition, community-based organizations already know who the more vulnerable members of their community are and have the skills required to provide emotional support to those in need. Together, you and your organization can partner to successfully prepare and respond to those in need during an emergency.

This questionnaire is intended to capture your capabilities/willingness to help during an emergency with vulnerable or at-risk individuals. Please keep in mind that there are a number of emergencies we may be impacted by including tornados, flooding, and severe cold and hot weather. Nothing on this document commits you to do this work. This is not a binding agreement, but rather a listing of what you would be willing to try to do to prepare and respond during a local emergency, given your available resources at the time.

Your Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Province/Postal Code: _____

Phone Number (home): _____ (cell): _____

Email: _____

In Case of Emergency Contact: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ (Cell or Work): _____

Please list any skills or abilities you possess that you would be willing to use to help [Fill in Community-Based Organization's Name] during the event of an emergency (i.e. medical training, counseling experience, foreign language fluency, tool/equipment operation, military experience):



Tool: Letter of Intent with Local Government

(Adapted from a tool created by the Hennepin County HSPHD Pandemic Influenza Planning Team)

Local government is encouraging faith communities to prepare for all types of emergencies. Faith organizations will play a critical role in a successful response effort to emergencies and disasters alike. They are often the first place community members turn to for support during a time of crisis. In addition, faith communities already know who the more vulnerable members of their community are and have the skills required to provide emotional and spiritual support to those in need. Together, local government and faith communities can partner to successfully prepare and respond to our community during an emergency.

To ensure that both local governments and faith communities have documented information about potential roles the community could play during an emergency, this document is intended to capture information that could be accessed during an emergency. Nothing on this document commits the organization to do this work.

This is not a binding agreement, but rather a listing of what your organization would be willing to try to do during a significant local emergency, given the available resources of your organization at the time. When you turn this in to your local government, they may elect to place data from this document into a summary document of all faith community preparedness partners for ease of access during an emergency. Information in this document will be considered private and non-public.

Faith Community Information

Organization Name _____

Address _____

City / State / Zip _____

Phone Number _____ Fax _____

Organization website (if applicable) _____

Approximate size of congregation _____

Name of person responsible for emergency planning _____

Contact information to reach this person _____

24/7 Contacts

Please list 3 contacts that could be reached 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in the event that the Local Public Health needed to reach your organization during a significant emergency.

Name & Position	Daytime phone numbers	Evenings & Weekends	Email(s)
1.	Office: Cell:	Phone: Cell:	
2.	Office: Cell:	Phone: Cell:	
3.	Office: Cell:	Phone: Cell:	

Potential support faith organizations could provide assistance prior to and during an emergency

Please read through the list of possible emergency preparedness and response action steps below. Consider whether your organization would be willing to assist other local emergency response efforts. Place a check mark in the appropriate box that represents your organization’s potential assistance. If your organization does not plan to assist in a particular area, leave the box blank.

Emergency Preparedness Action Steps	For our organization staff	For our congregation members	For the greater community
Provide education on Personal & Family Preparedness (prior to an emergency)			
Provide CPR/First-Aid trainings (prior to an emergency)			
Stockpile medical equipment/medications (to care for disabled & elderly)			
Provide familial support for first responders (ex. adopting a station)			
Store other emergency supplies (food, water, first-aid supplies, batteries, diapers, etc.)			
Emergency Response Action Steps			
Offer use of your facility as space for emergency operations			
Operate a food shelf out of your organization			
Cook and distribute meals out of your kitchen			
Check on vulnerable people			
Nurse commits to check on people’s health (assist with keeping unnecessary people out of the healthcare system)			
Link available members willing to provide daycare to those in need (during an emergency daycares may close)			
Assist with people who are in Isolation & Quarantine: check on people confined to their homes			
Educate and provide accurate emergency information			
Provide spiritual and emotional support			
Provide grief and loss support			

Use your facility as a shelter (temporary housing)			
Utilize your bus/vehicle for transportation or delivery			
Other (please specify)			
Nothing (Our plan is to close during such an emergency)			

Please note: Each of the agreed upon action steps will require further delineation by your organization. For example, if your organization agrees to provide transportation/make deliveries, which vehicle(s) will you use, who will be the drivers, do you have the addresses and contact information of those you will support (if not, where will you get it), for what purposes are you willing to transport, how far are you willing to travel, how will you ensure safe practices and infection control measures are taken, what if there's a gas shortage, do you have someone that could fix your vehicle if it should break down, etc.

Confidentiality

XXX (Local Government) will not share any identifiable data provided by your organization with other organizations.

Acceptance

The return of one signed copy of this Letter of Understanding constitutes intent by your organization to assist our public health emergency response effort accordingly. Please retain a copy of this Letter of Intent for your records.

Print Name _____ Title/Position _____

Signature _____ Date _____



Tool: Care Buddies

A Care Buddy is at least one friend, relative, or neighbor who will assist you in the event that you need help. For example, a Care Buddy will help retrieve medications, food, and other supplies you may need when you are sick and should not go out. A Care Buddy can help monitor the extent of your illness, call for help if needed, and attend to your immediate needs.



A Care Buddy is imperative for single parents or sole adult caregivers who need help in an emergency or become ill. A Care Buddy will be able to assist them by taking care of children or incapacitated adults. In offering this help, the risk of a child or incapacitated adult becoming hurt during the emergency or sick with the flu lessens.

A Care Buddy does not have to be a trained ‘first responder’ or health care professional. A Care Buddy is just a person who is willing to help another. Many people are uncomfortable with the idea of coming in contact with someone who is sick for fear of spreading the virus to themselves or their own families, as well as other reasons. Many people have their own families to care for during an emergency and may not have the resources to be a very involved Care Buddy. However, a Care Buddy can have a limited role (picking up/dropping off medications, food, etc) or a comprehensive role (taking care of the family, helping inside the home, etc). In fact there are some individuals who should only have a limited role as a Care Buddy and nothing more such as those who are pregnant (in the case of the flu), frail elderly, have asthma, have young children, or have a chronic life-threatening health condition. For these individuals, responding to the emergency could put them in serious danger.

Close to one in three Canadian lives alone. Add that to the number of households with one adult as the responsible caregiver and the number drastically increases. The need for Care Buddies is apparent when you consider the vast number of people who will need help if they get sick or are in an emergency and will not have someone readily available to do so. In the event of a mild emergency or pandemic flu our hospitals will reach or exceed their capacity abilities – leaving many without help. A Care Buddy can help.

How do you make a Care Buddy? Ask at least one close friend, relative, or neighbor that you trust to be your Care Buddy and offer to be theirs in return. Explain the concept and commit to it. It is better to have as many Care Buddies as you can and to be a Care Buddy to as many people as you can. This old-fashioned concept of watching out for the safety and well-being of family, friends, and neighbors is something we should continue to do in this modern era, and is especially important in emergencies like a pandemic flu.

Care Buddy Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Home Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Care Buddy's Emergency Contact Information

Name: _____
Address: _____
Email: _____
Home Phone: _____
Cell Phone: _____

Care Buddy Medical Needs

Doctor's Name & Specialty (i.e. primary care, cardiologist): _____

Doctor's Location & Phone #: _____
Medical Equipment: _____
Medications: _____
Pharmacy Name: _____
Pharmacy Location & Phone #: _____
Other: _____



Tool: Sample Letter to Partner with a Neighbouring Faith Community

Dear [Neighbouring Congregation Name] Board of Directors,

At [Your Faith Organization Name], we are working to develop an organizational emergency preparedness plan to be able to help in the event of a major disaster. Emergency preparedness continues to be a significant issue nationwide. Toronto is not exempt from these situations, as we remember previous year's winter ice storm and summer flooding.

We feel it is imperative that emergency planning be done with our neighboring faith organizations to work toward a common goal of enhancing communication, response, and recovery efforts in the event of an emergency. We would like to establish a reciprocal partnership with your organization to support one another in the event of an emergency. By having a joint plan to help one another we can minimize damage to our facilities, care for our members and the community, and remain self-sufficient when others may not be able to.

Good emergency planning involves working together before and after an emergency to be able to provide our congregations with spiritual care and compassion they will desperately require following a disaster. I would like to see our congregations take greater steps together towards planning and preparing for emergencies. The faith community as a whole needs to be prepared and ready to respond to such events when they impact our community.

Please contact me at [phone #] or [email] so we can further discuss this partnership.

Together, we can prepare to serve our congregation and the community.

Sincerely,

Name

Title

Faith Community Name

Contact Method



Tool: List of Supplies

The following is a list of supplies that a faith community may wish to have on hand.

Equipment

- Submersible pump/Shot Vacuum
- Generator (Commercial or industrial, with needed electrical cords etc)
- Commercial Air Compressor
- Basic Sanitation Equipment (Gloves, hairnets etc)
- Personal Vehicles (Vans, trucks, 4-wheel drive vehicles)

Supplies

- Cleaning and sanitation supplies (Basic toiletries)
- Basic Hand and Power Tools
- Basic implements (Shovels, Mops, Brooms)
- Cots, mattresses and bedding
- Portable First Aid Kits
- Card board/ Board for basic repairs

Kitchen Equipment and Supplies

- Portable Stoves/Barbeque
- Ice chests/Coolers/Refrigerators (If there is access to a generator)
- Basic Cooking Utensils, Cutlery and Plates and Cups (quantity based on the size of group supported)

Section 4: At-Risk and Vulnerable Population Preparation

This section of the toolkit is designed to help your organization understand the varying needs of individuals who may be at a greater risk of harm during an emergency event.

This section includes:

- Identifying & Reaching At-Risk and Vulnerable Populations
- Unique Needs of At-Risk and Vulnerable Populations:
 - Persons with Limited English Proficiency
 - Persons with Children and Single-Parent Households
 - Persons with Pets (to include Service Animals)
 - Persons who are elderly or homebound Elderly, Homebound, and Medically Fragile Persons
 - Persons with Disabilities
 - Persons Living in with limited means
 - Persons who are Homeless, Marginally Housed or Shelter-Dependent



Tools in this section:

- Survey for Members with Special Needs
- PowerPoint Presentation, “Emergency Preparedness for At-Risk Populations”
- Pet Readiness Guide
- At-Risk and Vulnerable Populations Resource Guide

Identifying and Reaching At-Risk and Vulnerable Populations

Some individuals may have greater difficulty accessing the public health and medical services they require following a disaster or emergency. At-risk individuals have needs in one or more of the following functional areas: communication, medical care, maintaining independence, supervision, and transportation (C-MIST). At-risk groups may include children, senior citizens, and pregnant women as well as people who have disabilities, live in institutionalized settings, are from diverse cultures, have limited English proficiency or are non-English speaking, are transportation disadvantaged, have chronic medical disorders, or have pharmacological dependency.

Communication – Individuals who have limitations that interfere with the receipt of and response to information will need that information provided in methods they can understand and use. They may not be able to hear verbal announcements, see directional signs, or understand how to get assistance due to hearing, vision, speech, cognitive, or intellectual limitations, and/or limited English proficiency.

Medical Care – Individuals who are not self-sufficient or who do not have adequate support from caregivers, family, or friends may need assistance with: managing unstable, terminal or contagious conditions that require observation and ongoing treatment; managing intravenous therapy, tube feeding, and vital signs; receiving dialysis, oxygen, and suction administration; managing wounds; and operating power-dependent equipment to sustain life. These individuals require the support of trained medical professionals.

Independence – Individuals requiring support to be independent in daily activities may lose this support during an emergency or a disaster. Such support may include consumable medical supplies (diapers, formula, bandages, etc.), durable medical equipment (wheelchairs, walkers, scooters, etc.), service animals, and/or attendants or caregivers. Supplying needed support to these individuals will enable them to maintain their pre-disaster level of independence.

Supervision – Before, during, and after an emergency individuals may lose the support of caregivers, family, or friends or may be unable to cope in a new environment (particularly if they have dementia, Alzheimer’s disease, or psychiatric conditions). If separated from their caregivers, young children may be unable to identify themselves; and when in danger, they may lack the cognitive ability to assess the situation and react appropriately.

Transportation – Individuals who cannot drive or who do not have a vehicle may require transportation support for successful evacuation. This support may include accessible vehicles (e.g. lift-equipped or vehicles suitable for transporting individuals who use oxygen) or information about how and where to access mass transportation during an evacuation.

Community-based organizations may want to consider the following recommended preparedness activities:

- Conducting a survey of vulnerable clients and identifying their needs (see *Survey for Members with Special Needs* on p.40).
- Maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers for vulnerable members and their caregivers.
- Educate and train your staff, leadership, and volunteers about the barriers that individuals with special needs face so they may help respond (see *PowerPoint Presentation, “Emergency Preparedness for At-Risk Populations”* on p.41).
- Including vulnerable clients on your telephone tree.
- Pairing vulnerable members with volunteers or family for on-going communication and monitoring (see *Connecting Members* tool on p.28).
- Provide training for at-risk individuals in developing a communication and emergency plan as well as preparing them for what changes an emergency may cause and how they can successfully cope with these changes

Unique Needs of At-Risk and Vulnerable Populations

Persons with Limited English Proficiency

This may include people who are in the country without documentation. This group may fear involvement with governmental agencies and choose to turn to community-based organizations for help.

- Stock emergency resource information in a variety of languages.
- Identify coaches, interpreters or advocates to help non-English speaking persons express their needs in an emergency.

Persons with Children and Single-Parent Households

Consider the following with respect to a family's response to an emergency:

- Daycare support and family support services will need to be available.
- Parents may be separated from children when emergency strikes – reconnection will need to occur. Think about how this would occur at your facility.
- Some children have special need considerations. Is your organization aware of them? Can you plan for them in advance?
- Transportation issues.

Persons with Pets and Service Animals (see *Pet Readiness Guide* tool on p.46)

Pets and service animals may become confused, panicked, frightened or disoriented during and after a disaster. Keep them confined or securely leashed or harnessed. A leash (or harness) is an important item for managing a nervous or upset animal. Be prepared to use alternative ways to negotiate your environment.

- Have pet identification tags - Make sure tags are up to date and securely fastened to the pet's collar.
- Create an emergency Supply Kit for Pets containing:
 - Pet food and water (for at least three days for each pet)
 - Can opener and food dishes
 - Medications, veterinary records, information on medical conditions, and first aid kit
 - Cat litter and litter box
 - Sturdy leashes, harnesses and carriers to transport pets safely and to ensure pets cannot escape
 - Blankets or towels for bedding and warmth
 - Current photos and descriptions of pets in case of separation
 - Pet beds and toys to reduce stress
 - Other useful items may include grooming items, trash bags, paper towels
- Evacuation - Pets should never be left behind and it is recommended to evacuate early. Be prepared to function without assistance from your service animal. Practice emergency drills using alternative mobility cues.
- Identify appropriate shelters before emergency strikes.

Elderly, Homebound, and Medically Fragile Persons

Special considerations must be made for this population:

- Those dependent on any medical device may require electricity or oxygen refills.
- Some receive home healthcare services that may not continue during an emergency.
- Assistance with evacuation.
- Encouragement to have at least a month supply of medications.
- Encouragement to label mobility aids, have lists of medications and health care provider and/or friends/family phone numbers who should be notified.

Persons with Disabilities

- **Mobility Disabilities** – People who use wheelchairs and other mobility aids will require special consideration:
 - Shelters must be physically accessible.
 - Evacuating a chair and/or other equipment. Equipment that is damaged may need immediate replacement and may be unavailable.

- Consider keeping an Emergency Evacuation Stair Stretcher if your organization is located in a multi-story building.
- Accessible transportation in evacuation or to get to sites for emergency assistance.
- **Visual Disabilities**
 - Providing assistance (guides) to help with navigation at service locations.
 - Keeping service animals or guide dogs with the person at all times.
 - Finding shelter that will accommodate service animals or guide dogs.
- **Deaf and Hard of Hearing**
 - American Sign Language interpreters at emergency service locations.
 - TTY/TDD equipment with trained personnel at locations where emergency assistance is provided.
 - Assistive listening devices may need batteries and/or electricity.
 - If holding a meeting or communicating information, allow members of this population to sit up front, and try to have an interpreter present and at the front of a well-lit room.
 - Use hand gestures to communicate.
 - Have pre-made signs available - workers should have paper and pens on them at all times if allowed.
- **Environmental Illness or Multiple Chemical Sensitivities**
 - Alternative scent-free shelter environments and additive-free foods.

Persons with Mental Illness

You may not be aware of those with mental health issues.

- If a person begins to exhibit unusual behaviour, ask if they have any mental health issues you need to be aware of. However, be aware that they may not tell you. They may be offended or embarrassed that you asked. This is also a confidentiality issue.
- Know how to contact mental health and substance abuse support services.
- It may help if the individual has a person or object accompany them that they are familiar with to maintain a sense of consistency during an emergency.

Persons Living in Poverty

- The population will experience long-term recovery needs that will increase over time due to lack of personal resources and displacement
- Help by finding post-disaster emergency, temporary, or subsidized housing. Toronto has a lot of community services in place that can help you do this.

Persons who are Homeless, Marginally House or Shelter-Dependent

This could include homeless individuals in or out of shelters, homeless families, and women in shelter programs for domestic abuse reasons.

- Know how to contact mental health and substance abuse support services.
- Runaway youth or women who are victims of abuse may be forced to find alternate community-based shelters if evacuation is necessary.
- Help by finding post-disaster emergency, temporary, or subsidized housing for the homeless. Call Central Intake in Toronto at 416-338-4766. (see *At-Risk and Vulnerable Populations Resource Guide* tool on p.47)



Tool: Survey for Members with Special Needs

Member Information (Please print)

Name (First & Last)

Address

City

State

Zip

Phone

Cell Phone

E-Mail

Do you live alone?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
If you live alone and are chronically home-bound, is there someone who checks in on you regularly?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Do you have a chronic medical condition?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Do you need help getting around?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Can you cook for yourself?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Do you have an emergency plan?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Do you have a place to go in the event of an emergency?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Do you have enough food, water, and prescription medication supplies at home to last you five days in the event of an emergency?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Would you like help from another congregation member in the event of an emergency?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A

Do you have any other special needs? Please explain.

Emergency Contact Information

Name (First & Last)

Address

City

Province

Postal Code

Phone

Cell Phone

E-Mail



Tool: PowerPoint Presentation "Emergency Preparedness for At-Risk Populations"

At-Risk Populations in an Emergency

[Enter your Organization Name, Logo, and your name here]

Objectives

Identify groups of individuals who are considered at-risk populations during an emergency

Identify barriers and challenges for these groups during an emergency

Identify communication methods with at-risk populations

Identify ways you can help with preparedness activities for at-risk populations

*Definition of At-Risk Populations

At-risk individuals have needs in one or more of the following functional areas: communication, medical care, maintaining independence, supervision, and transportation.

At-risk groups may include children, senior citizens, and pregnant women as well as people who have disabilities, live in institutionalized settings, are from diverse cultures, have limited English proficiency or are non-English speaking, are transportation disadvantaged, have chronic medical disorders, or have pharmacological dependency.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
*Note: This is one of many similar definitions of At-Risk Populations

Potential At-Risk Populations



Potential At-Risk Population Groups

- ▶ Elderly, frail
- ▶ Children/Infants
- ▶ Homeless
- ▶ Limited English speakers
- ▶ Poverty stricken
- ▶ Pregnant women
- ▶ Undocumented individuals
- ▶ Intellectual disabilities
- ▶ Deaf
- ▶ Blind/Visual impairments
- ▶ Non-English readers
- ▶ Morbidly obese
- ▶ Wheelchair bound/Limited mobility
- ▶ Culturally isolated
- ▶ Immunocompromised
- ▶ Individuals w/o personal transportation

Some Languages in the GTA

Over 140 languages and dialects are spoken here, and just over 30 per cent of Toronto residents speak a language other than English or French at home.

- ▶ Chinese
- ▶ Italian
- ▶ Punjabi
- ▶ Tagalog/Filipino
- ▶ Portuguese
- ▶ Tamil
- ▶ Spanish



Scenario: Identify At-Risk Populations

- ▶ A violent windstorm hits the east side of Toronto, tearing a path through a ethnically diverse neighborhood.
- ▶ An assisted living center and senior apartment complex were damaged.
- ▶ School was still in session when the storm hit and there are reports of light to moderate damage to the school building.



Challenges and Barriers for At-Risk Populations



Challenges Affecting the Ability to Respond

- ▶ **Language:** Over 140 different languages spoken in the homes of residents in the GTA.
- ▶ **Mobility:** Some people have disabilities that limit their mobility. They may rely on wheelchairs, canes, walkers, or scooters.
- ▶ **Developmental:** Some people have disabilities which can hinder their ability to comprehend oral/written communication.

Ways to address and limit challenges

- ▶ Prepare for emergencies by seeking out potential at-risk groups, and encouraging their participation in drills (i.e. speak at cultural centers/senior center)
- ▶ When practicing our emergency plan, always consider if this plan will work for **ALL** groups of people
- ▶ Encourage members from different racial and ethnic groups to become involved with our Emergency Preparedness planning

Factors influencing reactions in at-risk populations

- ▶ Low Income
- ▶ Customs
- ▶ Age
- ▶ Values and Norms
- ▶ Immigration Status - fear of deportation



Low income challenges

- ▶ Limited or no transportation to evacuate and reach a shelter
- ▶ Limited or no means to stockpile food and water
- ▶ Limited or no means for purchasing medical supplies
- ▶ Limited time/access for involvement in preparedness planning



How to Address these Factors

- ▶ Empower individuals from different backgrounds/ages/income levels by involving them in emergency preparedness planning
- ▶ Become involved with other local community organizations serving these populations to become more familiar with the factors which may hinder their response

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How to Address these Factors

- ▶ Engage the community and organizational leaders who may have great influence with at-risk populations
- ▶ Constant communication and involvement with at-risk populations will build trust and awareness

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Working with the community...

Work with families to:

- ▶ develop personal emergency preparedness plans
- ▶ introduce them to resources needed to learn more about personal emergency plans



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Considerations for Specific Disabilities and At-Risk Populations During an Emergency Response

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General Recommendations

- ▶ Ask if they need help
- ▶ Ask how you can assist them best
- ▶ Listen to what they say to help them most efficiently and effectively



General recommendations continued..

- ▶ Always identify yourself and show identification
- ▶ Maintain eye contact
- ▶ Speak clearly and slowly, use gestures/other visual cues if needed
- ▶ Be patient and calm
- ▶ Unless time is a factor, give time to respond to questions and to move about
- ▶ Do not make assumptions about their ability to respond – ask how best to help

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Emergency Health Information Cards

- › Communicates to rescuers what they need to know about the person if that person is unable
- › May be located in purse or wallet, on the refrigerator, in an emergency kit, or on the person



What is on a Health Information Card?

Front:

- › Name
- › Address
- › Phone numbers
- › Birth date
- › Blood Type
- › Health insurance provider
- › Physicians

Back:

- › Emergency contacts
- › Conditions, disabilities
- › Medications
- › Assistance needed
- › Allergies
- › Immunization dates
- › Communication/ Equipment /Other needs

Source: NC Office on Disability and Health, NCDivision of Public Health

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Specific Disabilities and Needs Considerations

Vision loss considerations

- › Announce your presence and identify yourself
- › Offer your arm for guidance if requested
- › Provide audio cues such as “turn right” and tell them the path you are taking
- › Do not leave them alone once reaching a safe area as the area may be unfamiliar or altered due to damage
- › Bring service animal with you (if present)

Source: NC Office on Disability and Health, NCDivision of Public Health

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Hearing Loss Considerations

- › Flick lights when entering a room
- › Do not chew gum when talking and talk slowly
- › Keep face uncovered while talking
- › Use a flashlight if area is dark to light your face
- › Have a paper and pencil, if needed



Source: NC Office on Disability and Health, NCDivision of Public Health

Intellectual disability considerations

- › Cognitive abilities, processing of direction capabilities, language may be limited
- › Simplify directions, break into steps, use brief language, and hand signals
- › Be calm and patient
- › Treat adults as adults

Source: NC Office on Disability and Health, NCDivision of Public Health

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Limited mobility

- ▶ Ask if they need assistance, as it may actually hinder them
- ▶ Offer to carry their crutch, walker, or cane if they are using a side rail for stability
- ▶ If in a wheelchair, ask if help is needed
- ▶ Avoid putting pressure on their extremities, ask how best to move them
- ▶ An evacuation chair/device may be needed

Source: NC Office on Disability and Health, NC Division of Public Health

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Language barrier considerations

- ▶ Have common, useful phrases translated in numerous languages (or at least the most popular: Spanish, Somali, Hmong, Vietnamese) on pre-printed laminated sheets
- ▶ Try to plan for translators to be on the scene of emergencies or on call

Source: Guidelines on Cultural Diversity and Disaster Management, Solis G.Y., 1997

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Language Aid Examples

There's Been an Accident!

KEY WORDS

car	of accident	of car	of accident
motorcycle	of accident	of car	of accident
truck	of accident	of car	of accident
van	of accident	of car	of accident
truck (large)	of accident	of car	of accident
trailer	of accident	of car	of accident
company van	of accident	of car	of accident
taxi	of accident	of car	of accident
ambulance	of accident	of car	of accident
fire	of accident	of car	of accident
fire engine	of accident	of car	of accident
gas	of accident	of car	of accident
oil	of accident	of car	of accident
air	of accident	of car	of accident
water	of accident	of car	of accident
fire	of accident	of car	of accident
fire engine	of accident	of car	of accident
gas	of accident	of car	of accident
oil	of accident	of car	of accident
air	of accident	of car	of accident
water	of accident	of car	of accident

There's been an Accident!

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Language Barriers continued

- ▶ Create flashcards with common words/phrases represented by symbols; use universal symbols
- ▶ If they speak limited English, speak slowly and articulate your words
- ▶ Have patience, be calm



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At-Risk Populations Summary

- ▶ Many individuals will have challenges when responding to an emergency
- ▶ Work with local government agencies to identify at-risk populations
- ▶ Engage and empower at-risk populations to be able to respond quickly in an emergency
- ▶ Follow the general recommendations when assisting at-risk populations

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Tool: *Pet Readiness Guide*



**When You Go – They Go
Don't Leave Home Without Them!**

When a disaster or emergency occurs and you have to leave, **ALWAYS take your pets with you.**

People think they will be able to return shortly to care for their animals, but too often the situation worsens and people cannot make it back to rescue their pets. Do not put your pets' lives, your life, or other rescuers' lives at risk. **When You Go – They Go.**

If you go to a public emergency shelter, your pets may not be allowed inside. Think ahead. **Have a plan in place.**

- Where can you and your pet go for safety?
- A friend or family members' home?
- A pet friendly hotel?

Make a back-up emergency plan in case you cannot care for your pets yourself.



- Develop a buddy system with neighbors, friends and relatives to make sure that someone is available to care for or evacuate your pets if you are unable to do so.
- Talk to your veterinarian.
- Get involved with your Local Government Emergency Planning Team.
- Help with the pet friendly sheltering plan in your community.
- Check with your Animal Control Officer or local town hall for ways that you can help.

Pet Emergency Information

Pet's first and last name: _____

Breed and age: _____

General description: _____

Discrete physical traits: _____

Behavioral concerns: _____

Owner's name: _____



Address and telephone #: _____

Out of region emergency contact #: _____

Pet's medical condition: _____

Medication/ dosage: _____

Microchip ID #: _____

License/Rabies Tag #: _____

Tattoo location and #: _____

Vet's name and telephone #: _____

Pet Kit Items

- Towel/blanket with your smell on it
- Basic pet first-aid kit
- Can opener
- Fresh water and canned food (or dry food)
- Any medication that you pet may need
- Current vaccination records
- Small garbage bags or other sanitary items
- Litter box and litter (as appropriate)



Tool: At-Risk and Vulnerable Populations Resource Guide

N.B. This is an updated base of all community service agencies in Ontario and should be consulted first.

Website: www.211ontario.ca

Deafblind Resources

DeafBlind Ontario Services 17665 Leslie Street, Unit 15 Newmarket, ON L3Y 3E3	Tel: 905-853-2862 (V) Toll Free Tel: 1-855-340-DBOS (3267) Fax: 905-853-3407 Email: execasst@deafblindontario.com Website: http://www.deafblindontario.com
Canadian Deafblind Association 1860 Appleby Line, Unit 14, Box 421 Burlington, ON L7L 7H7	Toll Free Tel: 1-866-229-5832 Fax: 905-319-2027 Email: info@cdbanational.com Website: http://www.cdbanational.com
Canadian National Society for the Deaf-Blind 405-422 Willowdale Avenue North York, ON M2N 5B1	Fax: 416-730-1350 Website: http://www.deafblindcanada.ca
The Canadian Helen Keller Centre 210 Empress Avenue North York, ON M2N 3T9	Tel/TTY: 416-225-8989 Fax: 416-225-4871 Email: deafblindinfo@onramp.ca Website: www.chk.org

Blind and Visually Impaired Resources

Canadian National Institute for the Blind
1929 Bayview Avenue
Toronto, ON
M4G 0A1

Tel: 416-486-2500
Toll Free Tel: 1-800-563-2642
Fax: 416-480-7700
Email: info@cnib.ca
Website: www.cnib.ca

VIEWES (support for families of children with vision loss)

Email: contact@viewson.ca
Website: www.viewson.ca

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

Tel: 416-314-5518
Toll Free Tel: 1-800-268-1154
Toll Free TTY: 1-800-387-5559
Email: info@health.gov.on.ca
Website: www.health.gov.on.ca

Alliance for Equality for Blind Canadians

Website: www.blindcanadians.ca

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Resources

Canadian Association of the Deaf
251 Bank Street, Suite 606
Ottawa, ON
K2P 1X3

Tel/TTY: 613-565-2882
Email: info@cad.ca
Website: www.cad.ca

Ontario Association of the Deaf
2395 Bayview Avenue
Toronto, ON
M2L 1A2

Tel: 416-413-9191
TTY: 416-513-1893
Fax: 416-413-4811
Email: office@deafontario.ca
Website: www.deafontario.ca

Canadian Hearing Society
271 Spadina Road
Toronto, ON
M5R 2V3

Tel: 416-928-2535
Toll Free Tel: 1-877-347-3427
Toll Free TTY: 1-877-216-7310
Fax: 416-928-2506
Email: info@chs.ca
Website: www.chs.ca

Housing Resources

Housing Help Association of Ontario
947 Queen Street East
Toronto, ON
M4M 1J9

Tel: 416-686-3390

1-855-620-8945
Email: info@hhao.ca
Website: www.hhao.ca

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
777 Bay Street, 17th Floor
Toronto, ON
M5G 2E5

Tel: 416-585-7041
TTY: 416-585-6691
Toll Free TTY: 1-866-220-2290
Fax: 416-585-6470
Email: mininfo.mah@ontario.ca
Website: www.mah.gov.on.ca

Food Resources

Daily Bread Food Bank
191 New Toronto Street
Toronto, ON
M8V 2E7

Tel: 416-203-0050
Fax: 416-203-0049
Email: info@dailybread.ca
Website: www.dailybread.ca

Food Banks Canada
5025 Orbitor Drive, #400
Mississauga, ON
L4W 4Y5

Tel: 905-602-5234
Toll Free Tel: 1-877-535-0958
Fax: 905-602-5614
Website: www.foodbanksCanada.ca

Ontario Association of Food Banks
555 Richmond Street West, Suite 501
Toronto, ON
M5V 3B1

Tel: 416-656-4100
Fax: 416-656-4104
Email: info@oafb.ca
Website: www.oafb.ca

Aging Resources

Government of Ontario Seniors' INFO line

Tel: 1-888-910-1999
TTY: 1-800-387-5559

Community Care Access Centre (CCAC)
250 Dundas Street West, Suite 305
Toronto, ON
M5T 2Z5

Tel: 416-506-9888
Toll Free: 1-866-243-0061
Fax: 416-506-0374
Email: feedback@toronto.ccac-ont.ca
Website: www.healthcareathome.ca

Telehealth Ontario

Toll Free Tel: 1-866-532-3161
TTY: 416-327-4282
Toll Free TTY: 1-800-387-5559
Website: www.ontario.ca/ru2

Alzheimer Society of Ontario
20 Eglinton Avenue West, 16th Floor
Toronto, ON
M4R 1K8

Tel: 416-967-5900
Toll Free Tel: 1-800-879-4226
Fax: 416-967-3826
Website: www.alzheimer.ca/ON

General Disabilities Resources

Persons with Disabilities Online

Website: www.pwd-online.gc.ca

Ontario Disability Support Program
385 Yonge Street, 2nd Floor
Toronto, ON
M5B 1S1

Tel: 416-314-5700
TTY: 416-314-3393
Fax: 416-314-3843
Website:
<http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/en/mcass/programs/social/odsp/>

Mental Health Resources

ConnexOntario Mental Health Helpline

Tel: 519-439-0174
Toll Free Tel: 1-866-531-2600
Fax: 519-439-0455
Email: administration@connexontario.ca

Canadian Mental Health Association – Ontario Division
2301-180 Dundas Street West

Tel: 416-977-5580
Fax: 416-977-2813
Email: info@ontario.cmha.ca

Toronto, ON M5G 1Z8	Website: www.cmha.ca
Mental Health Commission of Canada 100 Sparks Street, Suite 600 Ottawa, ON K1P 5B7	Tel: 613-683-3755 Fax: 613-798-2989 Email: info@mentalhealthcommission.ca Website: www.mentalhealthcommission.ca
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health 250 College Street Toronto, ON M5T 1R8	Tel: 416-535-8501 Toll Free Tel: 1-800-463-2338 Email: info@camh.ca Website: www.camh.ca

Developmental & Learning Disabilities Resources

Developmental Services Ontario 2 Surrey Place Toronto, ON M5S 2C2	Tel: 416-925-4930 Toll Free Tel: 1-855-DS-ADULT (372-3858) Email: DSOTR@surreyplace.on.ca Website: www.dsontario.ca
Ontario Association on Developmental Disabilities 2 Surrey Place Toronto, ON M5S 2C2	Tel: 416-429-3720 Fax: 416-925-6508 Email: oadd@oadd.org Website: www.oadd.org
Community Living Ontario 240 Duncan Mill Road, Suite 403 Toronto, ON M3B 3S6	Tel: 416-447-4348 Toll Free Tel: 1-800-278-8025 Fax: 416-447-8974 Website: www.communitylivingontario.ca
Learning Disabilities Association of Canada 20-2420 Bank Street Ottawa, ON K1V 8S1	Tel: 613-238-5721 Email: info@ldac-acta.ca Website: www.ldac-acta.ca
Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario 365 Evans Avenue, Suite 202 Toronto, ON M8Z 1K2	Tel: 416-929-4311 Fax: 416-929-3905 Email: dianew@ldao.ca Website: www.ldao.ca

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