



Pocket Guide to Emergencies

Government of Canada

<http://www.getprepared.gc.ca/cnt/rsrscs/pblctns/pcktgdtmrgnccs/index-eng.aspx>

Know the Risks

Across Canada, we face a number of natural hazards, which can vary from region to region. Knowing what to do during an emergency is an important part of being prepared. Find out more about risks in your region and how to prepare by visiting [GetPrepared.ca](http://www.getprepared.ca). Then use this guide for information on what to do in different situations. Make your family plan (see below).

Get a Kit

In an emergency you will need some basic supplies. You may need to get by without power or tap water. Be prepared to be self-sufficient for at least 72 hours. Make sure your kit is easy to carry and everyone in the household knows where it is. (separate document)

During an emergency

The following steps should be taken in emergency situations:

1. Make sure you are safe before assisting others.
2. Follow your emergency plan.
3. Get your emergency kit.
4. Monitor radio, television and online for information from authorities. Follow their instructions.
5. Stay put until it is safe or you are ordered to evacuate.
6. Limit phone calls to urgent messages only. Keep the lines free for emergency responders.

Severe Storms

During severe storms

- If possible, take shelter in a building and stay indoors.
- Monitor radio, television and online for weather warnings and instructions from authorities.
- If you have time, secure items that might be blown around or torn loose, such as lawn furniture.
- Stay away from windows, doors, and fireplaces.
- If you are driving, stop your car away from trees or power lines.



Blizzards

If you are inside:

- Have your emergency kit ready.
- If you have time, string a rope between your house and any outbuildings you may have to go to during the storm.

If you must go outside:

- Be aware that you can become quickly disoriented and may get frostbite and hypothermia.
- Wear a hooded jacket, hat, mittens and warm footwear.
- Do not try to walk to another building in low visibility without something to guide you.
- If you must travel, do so in daylight and let someone know your plans.

If your vehicle becomes stuck:

- Stay in your vehicle. Open the window slightly for fresh air. Run the engine for 10 minutes every half hour unless the exhaust pipe is blocked.
- To keep warm, exercise your hands and feet periodically.
- If shovelling, avoid overexerting yourself. Overexertion in the bitter cold can cause death as a result of a heart attack or hypothermia from sweating.
- Keep a lookout for traffic or searchers.

Ice Storms

If you are inside:

- Stay indoors unless you are told to evacuate.

If you must go outside:

- Pay attention to high branches or wires that could break and fall.
- Stay well away from power lines, as hanging wires may be charged (live).
- Avoid driving. Wait several hours after freezing rain ends to allow for road maintenance.



Thunder and Lightning Storms

If you are inside:

- Unplug radios, TVs, and appliances. Use a battery-operated or wind-up radio to listen for weather warnings and instructions from authorities.
- Avoid using a corded phone and stay away from items that conduct electricity.
- If there is hail, stay away from windows, glass doors, and skylights.

If you are outside:

- If caught in the open, crouch in the “leap frog” position to minimize ground contact. Do not go under a tree.
- If you are driving, stop your vehicle away from trees or power lines.
- If you are on the water, head for the shore immediately.

Tornadoes

If you are inside:

- If you are in a high-rise, do not use elevators.
- Go to the basement or small interior ground floor room. Take shelter under a table or desk.
- Stay away from windows, outside walls, fireplaces and doors.
- Avoid using a corded phone and stay away from items that conduct electricity.
- Limit phone calls to urgent messages only.

If you are outside:

- If time permits, go to the nearest solid shelter. If not, take cover in a low lying area such as a ditch and protect your head. Beware of flooding and downpours and be prepared to move.
- Do not shelter under a bridge as winds can accelerate.
- Do not shelter in a mobile home that does not have a solid foundation.



Floods

If flooding is imminent:

- Turn off basement furnace and main gas valves. Unplug appliances and electronics.
- Shut off electricity only if flooding has not yet begun and area around electrical panel is dry.
- Move furniture and important belongings above ground level.
- Plug basement sewer drains and shut off toilet connections.

If flooding has already begun:

- If you have not already shut off electricity, do not attempt to do so once water has entered your home.
- Do not enter a flooded basement that may contain live wires or appliances.

After a flood:

- Do not return home until authorities advise it is safe.
- If the main power switch was not turned off prior to flooding, do not re-enter your home until a qualified electrician has determined it is safe.
- Use extreme caution when returning to your home after a flood.

Power Outages

- Check if the power outage is limited to your home. If your neighbours have power, check your circuit breakers.
- If your neighbours' power is also out, contact your electrical supply company.
 - Outside Winnipeg 1-888-624-9376 your account number is on your bill
- Turn off all tools, appliances, electronics, and all but one light inside and outside.
- Use your thermostat to turn off heating or air conditioning.
- Avoid opening your freezer or fridge.
- Do not use barbecues, camping heating equipment, or home generators indoors. They can produce dangerous levels of carbon monoxide.
- Monitor a crank or battery-powered radio and online for weather warnings and instructions from authorities.
- If possible, use a battery or crank-powered light source. If you must use candles, use proper candle holders. Never leave lit candles unattended. Always extinguish candles before going to bed.

When the power returns:

- In cold weather, turn heating back on first, then wait 10 minutes before reconnecting everything else.
- Check food supplies. If a freezer door has been kept closed, food should stay frozen for 24-36 hours. Food contaminated with bacteria does not necessarily smell or look spoiled. When in doubt, throw it out.



Make a Plan

Every household needs an emergency plan. It will help you and your families know what to do in an emergency – and it only takes 20 minutes. Make the plan part of your emergency kit.

Visit [GetPrepared.ca](http://www.getprepared.ca) to complete an emergency plan online.
<http://www.getprepared.gc.ca/serv/plan/mrgnc-pln-eng.aspx>
Then, fill in key information in this booklet and print for quick access.

Emergency Numbers:

Ambulance, Police, Fire → dial: **911**

During an emergency monitor radio, television and online for information from authorities. Call 9-1-1 to report a fire, a crime, or to save a life. For non-emergency calls, use the 10-digit number in your local phone directory:

Family Contact Information

Name:
Phone:

Name:
Phone:

Name:
Phone:

Out-of-Town Emergency Contact

Name:
Home:
Work:
Cell:
Email:
Street address:

Other Emergency Contacts

Doctor:

Veterinarian:

Pharmacy:



Emergency Preparedness for Children

Helping kids prepare for emergencies

- Teach them about natural hazards like earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, severe thunderstorms, ice storms, and blizzards --and what to do when they occur.
- Make a family emergency plan, and preparing an emergency kit together.
- Teach your kids what to do in case of a fire.
- Make sure your kids know what to do at school if an emergency happens.

Helping kids cope

Children in particular can feel the stress deeply -- and may react in different ways. The key to helping your children cope is simply by being there and making them feel safe.

- Take their fears seriously and tell them that it's okay to be scared.
- Explain the events as best you can and acknowledge what's frightening about what happened.
- Tell your kids what you think and feel. Doing so helps them feel less alone if they know that their feelings are similar to yours.
- Maintain familiar routines, like mealtimes and regular bedtime hours.
- While parents can play a huge role in helping children deal with anxiety, it may be helpful to talk to a professional such as a psychologist or social worker, who can help children understand and cope with their emotions.

Did You Know...

Younger children may cry, whine or wet the bed in emergency situations. Older children may experience an intense fear of injury or separation anxiety. Other common reactions include a fear of the dark, physical pain and eating or sleeping problems.



Pets and Service Animals

Preparing for emergencies

The following steps will help keep pets safe.

- **Identify your pet.** If you become separated from your pet during an emergency, their identification may be the only way to find them. Make sure each animal wears a collar and identification tag at all times.
- **Pet emergency kit**
 - A sturdy crate or carrier
 - A strong leash or harness
 - ID tag and collar
 - Food and water for at least 72 hours (4L/day per average dog, 1L/day per average cat)
 - Bowls and can opener for food
 - Newspaper, paper towels, plastic bags, litter, and/or litter box
 - Special medications, dosage, and veterinarian's contact information
 - Pet file (including recent photos of the animal, your emergency numbers, contact information for friends who could house your pet, copies of any licenses, and vaccination records)
 - A pet first-aid kit
 - Blanket and toy
- **Plan for evacuations.** The best way to protect your pet in an emergency is to bring it with you. Most evacuation shelters will only accept service animals. Make a list of where your pet can be taken in case you need to evacuate. This list can include:
 - Hotels that accept animals even during emergencies
 - Boarding centres and animal shelters
 - Animal clinics
 - Family members and friends
- Include your pet in your family emergency plan exercises.

During an emergency

- **Keep your pet inside during severe weather.** Animals are very sensitive to sudden changes in temperature and often isolate themselves when scared. Never leave a pet outside or tethered during a storm.
- **Separate cats and dogs.** Keep smaller pets such as hamsters away from larger animals. Stress can lead to unusual behaviour.
- Keep newspaper inside for hygiene purposes and feed your pet wet food in order to reduce the amount of water it may need.
- **If ordered to evacuate,** try to take your pet with you. If you must leave your pets in the house, do not tether or cage them. Leave a sign in the window and a note on the door indicating what animals are inside. Provide water and food in timed dispensers. Leave toilet seats up.



Keeping in Touch in Emergencies

Being able to communicate with family, friends and emergency responders during an emergency is critical. However, keep in mind that everyday communication devices may not work properly during an emergency.

- If possible, use non-voice channels like text messaging, email or social media, as these use less bandwidth than voice communications and may work even when phone service has been disrupted.
- If you must use a phone, keep your conversation brief and convey only vital information. Keeping your calls short also saves the battery life of your mobile phone.
- If you are unable to complete a call, wait 10 seconds before redialing to help reduce network congestion.
- Keep extra batteries or a charger for your mobile device in your emergency kit. Consider getting a solar-powered, crank, or vehicle phone charger, or if you do not have a cell phone, keep a prepaid phone card in your kit.
- If you have been evacuated and have call-forwarding on your home phone, use it to forward calls to your cell phone.
- Keep your contacts up to date on your phone, email and other channels.
- Note, cordless phones rely on electricity and will not work during a power outage. If you have a landline, keep at least one corded phone in your home.

Additional tips for smartphones

- Save your safe meeting location(s) on your phone's mapping application.
- Conserve your battery by reducing the screen's brightness and closing apps you are not using.
- To reduce network congestion immediately after an emergency, avoid using your mobile device to stream videos, download entertainment, or play video games.

Side tip (Technology in emergencies)

- Sign up for Direct Deposit and electronic banking through your financial institution so you can access your funds and make electronic payments from wherever you are. For more information on how to stay safe online, visit GetCyberSafe.ca.



Information Sources

- Opt-in to a notification system if offered by your local emergency management offices. To find out if your community offers such services, contact your local emergency management organization.
- Include these sites in your emergency plan and bookmark them for quick access:
- **Public Safety Canada's** website on emergency preparedness, www.GetPrepared.ca and the mobile version, m.GetPrepared.ca
- **Canadian Red Cross:** www.redcross.ca
- **Environment Canada:** www.ec.gc.ca
- **St. John Ambulance:** www.sja.ca
- **The Salvation Army:** www.salvationarmy.ca
- **The Canadian Hurricane Center:** www.ec.gc.ca/ouragans-hurricanes
- Your local emergency management agency
- Sign up to receive regular safety tips from GetPrepared.ca.
- Follow Public Safety Canada and GetPrepared on Twitter:
 - **Public Safety Canada:** @Safety_Canada
 - **GetPrepared:** @Get_Prepared
 - **Local emergency:** @SwanRiverFire