



ABBOTSFORD EMERGENCY PROGRAM

Communication Planning

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ABBOTSFORD EMERGENCY PROGRAM
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Know the Risks

The following are things you can do to protect yourself, your family and your property in the event of an emergency.

BEFORE AN EMERGENCY

- Draft a **Family Communication Plan** that details how you'll connect. This should include what methods you'll use and in what order. Always include an out-of-province contact in your plan. Long distance calls may get through when local lines are congested.
- Program family contacts into your mobile phone. Keep hard-copy lists in home, work and vehicle emergency kits.
- Keep mobile devices fully charged. Add extra chargers/batteries to all emergency kits.
- Teach everyone in your family to text. Texts may get through when phone calls won't
- Consider social media options, like creating a closed Facebook group for family to check in before and during disasters.
- Think twice before pulling the plug on your analog phone. It doesn't require batteries and will work during extended power outages. Ask your service provider for details.
- Identify how your local authorities will share information during disasters. Subscribe to alerts where available.
- Research social media channels and mobile apps that provide critical information for your area, e.g. road closures and weather updates.
- If you don't have a mobile phone, keep pre-paid phone cards in your home, car and vehicle emergency kits.
- Have a hand-crank or battery-operated radio to monitor news reports.
- Consider purchasing Satellite Emergency Notification Devices (SEND) for key family members.
- Just in case communication is not possible. Determine meeting places ahead of time for your family. Determine locations outside of your neighbourhood, and outside of your city.

DURING AN EMERGENCY

- Text, email and social media are best. Data-based services are less likely to experience major interruptions and require less battery power than a phone call.
- Keep calls and texts short and sweet to reduce network congestion.
- Don't call 9-1-1 unless a life is at stake
- Don't waste battery life on mobile games, apps and videos. Dim your screen to preserve power for critical communication.
- Forward your home phone to your mobile phone if you're forced to evacuate.
- If you have an answering service or machine, update your message with your status and location.
- Expect communication gaps. Depending on the size of the disaster, even texts will be delayed. Trust that everyone is following your plan.

FAMILY COMMUNICATION PLAN CHECKLIST

- OUT-OF-TOWN CONTACT:** Pick the same person for each family member to contact. Include their **name, home address, primary and secondary phone numbers, email address, and social media account names** if available.
- WORK INFORMATION:** Include your **workplace name, address, primary phone number, social media account names** if available and **evacuation location**.
- SCHOOL INFORMATION:** Include the **school name, address, primary phone number, social media account names** if available, and **evacuation location**.
- Neighbourhood Meeting Place
- Municipal Meeting Place

The likelihood that you and your family will recover from an emergency tomorrow often depends on the planning and preparation done today.

While each person's abilities and needs are unique, every individual can take steps to prepare for all kinds of emergencies from fires and floods to earthquakes. By evaluating your own personal needs and making an emergency plan that fits those needs, you and your loved ones can be better prepared.

Get Ready Now.



Abbotsford Emergency Program

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