

If people or property are at risk:

CALL 9-1-1

News and updates during an emergency

Updates, warnings, instructions and other information will be broadcast on local radio and television stations.

City of Toronto

- **City of Toronto website:** www.toronto.ca
- **Access Toronto:** www.toronto.ca/accesstoronto

As of June 2009, Toronto residents may also call 3-1-1 to access information about City programs and services.

Weather Warnings and Updates

- **Weather Warnings for Canada:** www.weatheroffice.gc.ca/warnings/warnings_e.html
- **Environment Canada:** www.weatheroffice.gc.ca/canada_e.html
- **The Weather Network:** www.theweathernetwork.com/

Current Road Conditions

- **Ontario Ministry of Transportation:** www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/traveller

Travel Health Information and Services

- **Travel Health Advisories:** www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/tmp-pmv/pub-eng.php
- **Public Health Agency of Canada:** www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/index-eng.php

Non-Emergency Phone Numbers

- **Fire:** 416-338-9050
- **Police:** 416-808-2222

DO NOT call 9-1-1 to:

- Locate relatives
- Find the location of shelters and other services
- Find the non-emergency phone numbers for Fire, Police or Emergency Medical Services.



Get Emergency Ready ...

Your Personal Preparedness Guide



Office of Emergency Management
www.toronto.ca/oem



Toronto's Emergency Management Program

The City of Toronto's Emergency Management Program coordinates the efforts of various City organizations to ensure a comprehensive approach for responding to and reducing the impacts of a public emergency.

The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) oversees activities on behalf of the Toronto Emergency Management Program Committee to improve the safety and protection of Toronto residents and essential services during an emergency.

In the event of an emergency, the Toronto Emergency Management Control Group, chaired by the Mayor, provides strategic direction to City services responding to the emergency and coordinates assistance from and to neighbouring municipalities and other levels of government.

Emergency 9-1-1

Get Emergency Ready is produced by the City of Toronto, Office of Emergency Management.

Additional copies are available from:
City of Toronto, Office of Emergency Management
Phone: 416-392-4554 Email: oem@toronto.ca

For more information and an electronic version of this guide:

www.toronto.ca/oem



Get Emergency Ready

Emergency Meeting Place (Outside the home):

School(s)/Daycare:

Insurance Company:

Other:

During significant emergencies, a telephone information line will be set up. Be sure to record that phone number.

Get Emergency Ready

Personal Emergency Contacts

Local Contacts:

Nearest Relatives:

Out-of-Area Relatives:

Medical:

Get Emergency Ready

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Get Emergency Ready

Preparing for an Emergency

Emergencies are a fact of life. They occur in communities and cities around the world, and they have the potential to put your health, safety and security at risk.

There are simple steps you can take to help protect yourself and your loved ones during an emergency.

This guide is designed to help you prepare for an emergency and know what to do when one strikes.

What does it mean to be “Emergency Ready?”

Being emergency ready means that:

- You have a plan so that you and your family know what to do in an emergency.
- You have an Emergency Kit — at home, work and in your vehicle — with food, water and supplies to last at least 72 hours.
- You have insurance to help protect your home and family.

Why is it important to be “Emergency Ready?”

Depending on the nature of the emergency:

- You may need to look after your own needs and those of your family for up to 72 hours after an emergency occurs. Emergency services personnel may not be able to reach you immediately, or they may have to focus their initial efforts elsewhere.
- You may need to evacuate your home with little or no notice.
- You may have to “shelter in place” with little or no access to external sources of food, water and other supplies.

Get Emergency Ready

After an Emergency

- Check in and around your home for damage.
- Dispose of any spoiled or contaminated foods, especially after a power outage. If you're not sure, throw it out.
- Encourage family members to talk about their experience and their feelings, especially children.
- Contact other family members to let them know that you are safe.

Check for damaged utilities

Gas

Natural gas is colourless, odourless and non-poisonous. A smell, like rotten eggs, is added to it for your safety. If you smell gas:

- Open doors and windows.
- Call your natural gas provider immediately.
- Don't use your telephone or cellular phone. Call from a neighbour's phone.
- Don't turn any electrical switches, appliances or computers on or off.
- Don't smoke or use lighters or matches, or start any motors near the leak.

Electrical

Check for damage such as frayed wires, sparks or the smell of hot insulation:

- Do not operate electrical switches or appliances.
- Turn off the system at the main fuse box/breaker panel.

Water

Check for leaks:

- Shut off water at the main valve, where the water pipe enters your home.

Do not turn on the gas, electricity or water until your utility provider has investigated and confirmed that it is safe to do so.

Get Emergency Ready

Clean Water

- Make sure you have at least a three day supply of water for each member of your family in your Emergency Kit.
- If your water supply is disrupted, you may have to find other sources of water. Other sources include hot water tanks, toilet flush tanks, rainwater and ice cubes.
- Do not use chemically-treated toilet water or water from the toilet bowl.

Three Ways to Purify Water

Purify all water before drinking. Don't take chances on the safety of your water. Drinking unsafe water may cause typhoid fever, dysentery, infectious hepatitis and other diseases.

Begin by straining water through a clean cloth to remove any sediment and floating matter. Then:

- Boil water vigorously for 5 to 10 minutes; or
- add liquid household bleach at a ratio of 7 drops per 2.5 litres of water, mix well and let stand 30 minutes; or
- add household tincture of iodine (2%) at a ratio of about 20 drops per 2.5 litres of water.

Note: If water lines are damaged, do not flush your toilets. Turn your off water at the main valve so polluted water does not enter your water system.

Human Waste

- A portable camp toilet, sturdy bucket or trash can with a tight-fitting lid may be used as an emergency toilet. Keep a supply of plastic bags, twist ties, toilet paper and household disinfectant on hand.
- Bury human waste matter in trenches 60-76 cm. (24"-36") deep and cover it with a thin layer of lime.

Get Emergency Ready

Your Emergency Plan

Being prepared for an emergency starts with having a plan. Make sure everyone in your family knows what to do during and after an emergency.

Your plan should include:

- Where and how to exit your home safely (doors, windows, and stairways).
- A location, outside your home, where you will meet.
- The location of your Emergency Kit(s).
- The name of a person who will act as your family's out-of-area contact if you get separated during an emergency. Make sure that everyone knows this person's name, address and telephone number.
- A list of key telephone numbers and addresses.

Review and update your plan at least once each year.

72 hours is a long time without food and water. Being prepared for an emergency can significantly reduce the hardship you may experience during a local or city-wide emergency.

Get Emergency Ready

Your 72-Hour Emergency Kit

Your Emergency Kit should include enough food, water and supplies to meet your needs for at least three days.

Food and water:

- At least three litres of bottled water per person, per day
- Canned foods, dried goods and staples
- Comfort foods
- Food for infants, seniors and special diets

Medications:

- Make copies of all your prescriptions and keep a minimum one-week supply of medications in your kit

Important documents:

- Extra keys, money, cheque books
- Bank account numbers, wills, insurance policies
- Credit card account numbers
- Health Card and Social Insurance Numbers
- Passports, immunization records
- Family records, such as birth, marriage and death certificates
- Important telephone numbers
- Inventory of valuable household goods
- Photos of family members in case you get separated

**Keep copies of your important documents in a waterproof container*

Sanitation supplies:

- Sturdy bucket or trash can to use as an emergency toilet
- Powdered chlorinated lime, household disinfectant, deodorant and insecticide
- Resealable plastic bags

Get Emergency Ready

Coping with Emergencies

Evacuation

If you must evacuate your home:

- Follow the directions of emergency personnel.
- Take your Emergency Kit with you.
- Let someone know that you've left and where you can be found or leave a note behind.
- Turn off your lights and appliances (except your refrigerator and freezer).
- Turn off or reduce your heat or air conditioning.
- Lock your doors.

Do not leave your pets behind:

- Pets may become lost and/or not survive on their own.
- Take your pets to a relative or friend's house or to a pet-friendly motel/hotel.
- Bring plenty of food and water for your pets.
- Emergency shelters will not accept pets, other than guide dogs, for health reasons.

What every child should know...

- How and when to call 9-1-1.
- Their home address and telephone number.
- How to exit their home quickly and safely.
- Family contact information.
- How to identify the smell of gas. And if they smell it, to tell a grown-up and leave the building immediately.
- Never touch wires lying on the ground or hanging from poles.

Get Emergency Ready

Hazardous Materials Accidents

Hazardous materials, such as chemicals, fuels and solvents, are harmful to people and the environment. Many chemicals cannot be seen or smelled, but they can be deadly.

Accidents are more likely to occur in areas where hazardous materials are stored, used and transported such as industrial parks, and along highways or railways.

In the event of an accident or spill, you may have to evacuate your home:

- Stay away, and upwind, from the accident area.
- If emergency personnel issue an order to evacuate, leave the area immediately.
- Do not re-enter the area until emergency personnel tell you it is safe to do so.



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Did you know?
The Mississauga train derailment in 1979 prompted the biggest evacuation in Canadian history. A quarter of a million people were evacuated from their homes.

Stay calm.

Get Emergency Ready

Basic supplies and tools:

- Disposable plates and glasses, cooking and eating utensils
- Plastic garbage bags, duct tape and paper towels
- Aluminum foil, zip-lock bags
- Crank or battery-operated radio
- Matches or lighter in a waterproof container
- Flashlights and batteries
- Utility knife, can and bottle opener
- Pliers, screw driver and wrench
- Needle and thread
- Paper, pens, pencils
- Shovel, signal flares and whistle
- Fire extinguisher
- Road maps

Clothing and miscellaneous items:

- Basic toiletries
- At least one complete change of clothing
- Sturdy shoes or boots
- Hats and gloves
- Rain gear
- Thermal underwear
- Bedding: blankets and sleeping bags
- Sunglasses

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Listen to the radio and television for instructions from officials on what to do in the event of an emergency.

Get Emergency Ready

For Baby:

- Formula
- Bottles
- Diapers
- Medications

For Children:

- Favourite books, games, toys

For Pets:

- Food, water and bowls
- Leash/harness and muzzle
- ID tags and licences
- Medications, and vaccination/medical records
- Blanket and favourite toy(s)
- Local animal shelter phone numbers

TIPS

- Consider preparing a kit for each member of your family, and a larger kit containing common items such as food, water and other equipment. Consider storing your kit(s) in backpacks so they're easy to carry.
- Check your kit twice each year to ensure the freshness of food, water and medications and add new items as needed. An easy way to remember is to do it when you change your clocks and smoke alarm batteries.
- If you choose to purchase an Emergency Kit or First Aid Kit, make sure you add items that reflect your own needs and preferences.

Get Emergency Ready

Extreme Heat and Cold

Children and seniors, people with chronic health problems and special needs, people who work outdoors, and people who exercise vigorously are especially vulnerable to extreme heat and cold.

Heat

Prolonged exposure to high summer temperatures and heat waves may be harmful to your health:

- Drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration, and avoid alcoholic and caffeinated drinks.
- Wear lightweight and loose-fitting clothing.
- Take a cool shower or bath.
- Avoid strenuous exercise.
- Do not leave children or pets alone in a parked car.
- Visit air conditioned buildings, such as libraries, malls and City cooling centres.

For more information, visit: toronto.ca/health

Cold

Improper use of heating equipment in your home may cause burns and fires. To minimize the risk of injury or fire:

- Use space heaters with caution and ensure they are approved for indoor use.
- Keep combustible materials at least three feet away from sources of heat.
- Do not leave heating equipment unattended.

Get Emergency Ready

Nuclear Power Accidents

Toronto's neighbouring municipality of Pickering is home to the Pickering Nuclear Generating station. Authorities will provide detailed instructions regarding what to do in the event of a nuclear power accident.

Terrorism: Bomb Threats and Biological Agents/Anthrax

Terrorists pose a threat to communities and cities throughout the world.

If you see or hear anything suspicious:

- Notify authorities immediately.
- Do not move or open suspicious packages.
- In the event of a bomb threat, leave the premises and call 9-1-1 immediately.

For more information, contact the Explosive Disposal Unit of Toronto Police Services at 416-808-3800.

Get Emergency Ready

Your Vehicle Emergency Kit:

- Shovel, scraper and snow brush
- Sand, salt and/or cat litter for traction, antifreeze
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Spare clothing, shoes and blankets
- Tow rope, jumper cables and windshield-washer fluid
- Warning light or road flares, shovel and fire extinguisher
- First aid kit with seatbelt cutter
- Water and food (such as energy bars)
- Roadmaps, whistle and flashlight

TIP

Keep your gas tank at least half full, especially in the winter.

Your Work Emergency Kit:

- Drinking water and food (such as energy bars)
- Medications
- Change of clothing/shoes
- Basic toiletries
- Flashlight and whistle

Get Emergency Ready

People with Disabilities and Special Needs

If you have special needs, require personal attendant care or use life-sustaining equipment:

- Arrange in advance for someone to check on you in the event of an emergency.
- Know the location of evacuation shelters that are wheelchair accessible.
- Wear a MedicAlert bracelet or carry an identification card.
- Carry a personal alarm that emits a loud noise to draw attention to your whereabouts.
- Label your equipment and attach instructions on how to use and transport it.

Your Emergency Kit should also include:

- **Prescription drugs, medical supplies and special equipment.**
- **An information sheet about your special needs or disability.**
- **Foods that meet your dietary needs.**
- **A detailed list of all prescriptions and medications.**

Assisting People with Disabilities or Special Needs

- Always ask if a person wants or needs your help. Do not touch the person, their service animal or their assistive devices without their permission.
- Ask if they are injured or have any loss of movement and/or sensation.
- Do not try to lift, support or assist in moving a person unless you know how to do it safely.
- Follow instructions posted on special needs equipment and assistive devices.

Get Emergency Ready

Power Failures and Utility Disruptions

Power failures and utility disruptions can be caused by failures in the system or external events such as severe weather. A power outage may last from a few minutes to a few days. Prolonged power outages in cold weather may put your health and safety at risk.

- Unplug electrical appliances to prevent damage caused by power surges. Power can be restored more easily when the electrical system is not overloaded.
- Use home generators with caution and only outdoors in well-ventilated areas. Follow manufacturers' instructions.
- Do not use charcoal or gas barbecues or camping/heating equipment indoors.

Did you know?

In August 2003, the most widespread electrical blackout in history left an estimated 10 million people in Ontario without power for several days.

In 1998, three weeks after an ice storm hit Eastern Canada thousands of people were still without electricity.

Get Emergency Ready

Fire

In the event of fire:

- Sound fire alarm and alert others.
- Call 9-1-1.
- Leave the building via the nearest exit.
- If you cannot leave the building, stay close to the floor and cover your mouth and nose to avoid inhaling smoke – smoke and heat rise, so the air is clearer and cooler near the floor.
- If your clothes catch fire, stop, drop and roll to smother the flames.

Preventative Measures:

- Install smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors throughout your home and outside all bedrooms.
- Regularly check the batteries and replace twice each year.
- Prepare and practise your escape plan. Identify all exits, and a place outside your home for family members to meet if you have to evacuate.

Get Emergency Ready

Potential Risks in Toronto

Over the years, City of Toronto residents have experienced various emergency situations including hurricanes, flooding, blackouts, disease outbreaks, and hazardous materials spills and accidents.

Emergencies fall into three main categories:

- **Natural Events** such as severe weather, major storms, flooding and disease outbreaks.
- **Technological or Environmental Accidents** such as chemical spills, building collapse, utility disruptions and power failures.
- **Human-Caused Incidents** such as acts of terrorism and nuclear power accidents.

Check your insurance

As a homeowner or renter, help protect yourself by having adequate insurance coverage. Insurance can help you replace what's lost, and help cover your expenses if you are forced to leave your home during an emergency. Discuss your needs with an agent, broker or insurance representative.

Get Emergency Ready

Earthquakes

Earthquakes can be very powerful and destructive. No location in the world is immune from earthquakes.

If you are indoors:

- Stay inside and away from windows.
- Take cover under a desk, table or other sturdy furniture.
- Protect yourself, especially your head and neck.
- Do not use elevators.

If you are outdoors:

- Stay away from damaged and/or unstable buildings, trees and other structures.

If you are in your car:

- Pull off the road, stop driving and turn on your emergency flashers.
- Avoid bridges, overpasses and other structures which may be damaged and/or unstable.

Did you know?

Over the past 30 years, on average, two to three magnitude 2.5 or larger earthquakes have been recorded in the southern Great Lakes region.

Source: Environment Canada

Get Emergency Ready

Building Collapse

Buildings may collapse as a result of structural damage or explosions.

Stay away from damaged or collapsed buildings and other structures.

If you are in the building:

- Do not use the elevators.
- Find the nearest exit and leave immediately.
- If you cannot leave the building, protect yourself from falling debris by taking cover under a desk, table or other sturdy furniture.
- Cover your nose and mouth to minimize dust and fume inhalation.
- If you are trapped by debris, make noise (e.g., tap on a pipe or wall) to help rescuers locate you.

Get Emergency Ready

Health Emergencies

Health emergencies may be caused by the spread of communicable diseases and contaminants in air, food or water.

- Contact your family doctor immediately if you suspect that you or any member of your family has been exposed to a communicable disease.
- Follow quarantine instructions issued by public health officials.

Preventative Measures:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water.
- Cover your nose and mouth when you sneeze or cough.
- If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your sleeve.
- Vaccinations may be available to help prevent the spread of disease.

For more information related to health, visit:

www.toronto.ca/health

Did you know?

According to the World Health Organization, a total of 8,098 people worldwide became sick with SARS during the 2003 outbreak. Of these, 774 died.

In 1918, the "Spanish Flu" pandemic claimed more than 30,000 Canadian lives in just five months. It ranks as Canada's worst disaster in terms of loss of life.

Do not tie up telephone lines; keep the lines open for emergency personnel.



Get Emergency Ready

Floods

Major rain storms can cause flooding, especially in low-lying areas. Flash floods may occur without warning as streams and rivers overflow their banks. Heavy rain may also cause sewers to back up.

If you are indoors:

- Stay inside and do not travel unless absolutely necessary.
- Keep children and pets indoors.

If you are outdoors:

- Seek shelter immediately.
- Keep children and pets away from lakes, rivers, creeks and low-lying areas which may be prone to flooding.

If you are in a vehicle:

- Get out of your vehicle and sit on the hood if you cannot walk or swim away safely.
- Do not drive in low-lying areas where flooding may occur.

If flooding is imminent:

- Remove furniture and other valuables from your basement to prevent water damage.
- Turn off your furnace, gas and electricity.

For more information what to do if your basement floods and actions you can take to help prevent it, visit:

www.toronto.ca/water

Keep streets clear for emergency vehicles.

Did you know?

A single storm in August 2005 dropped 103mm of rain on the city in just over one hour. Streams and waterways overflowed, and a flash flood destroyed a portion of Finch Avenue. City staff responded to more than 1,700 emergency calls for assistance.

Get Emergency Ready

Tornadoes and High-Speed Winds

Tornadoes and high-speed winds can cause death, injury and millions of dollars in property damage. Tornadoes are usually preceded by a severe thunderstorm, black skies and heavy rain.

If you are indoors:

- Take shelter immediately, preferably in the basement of a sturdy building.
- If there isn't a basement, take cover on the ground floor in a small room in the centre of the house. Smaller rooms are more structurally sound.
- Crouch or lie flat, and take cover under sturdy furniture.
- Stay away from windows, doors, exterior walls and glass objects.
- Protect your head and neck.

If you are outdoors:

- Lie flat in a ditch, ravine or other low-lying area and protect your head and neck.
- Stay away from trees and other large and/or damaged structures.

If you are in a vehicle:

- Get out of your vehicle. Find shelter or lie flat and protect your head and neck.
- Stay away from your vehicle and other objects which may be blown or roll over in high winds.

Preventative measures:

- When a wind or tornado warning is issued, bring indoors all unsecured objects, including patio furniture. Small objects may become projectiles in high-speed winds.
- Regularly maintain trees and remove damaged and/or diseased limbs.

Did you know?
Ontario averages 20 tornadoes each year.

Source: Environment Canada

Check on your neighbours and help them if you are able.

Get Emergency Ready

Winter Storms

Winter storms such as blizzards, ice storms and heavy snowfalls may create hazardous conditions and cause power disruptions. Being prepared for severe weather can help minimize your risk of injury.

- Do not travel unless absolutely necessary.
- Keep children and pets indoors.
- If you must go outside, dress for the weather.

Preventative measures:

- Prepare your vehicle for winter driving conditions.
- Keep an Emergency Kit in your vehicle. For details on what to include, see page 6.
- Keep your gas tank at least half full at all times.



Call 9-1-1 for assistance if you need to move someone immediately but are unable to do so.