

EVACUATION CHECKLIST

KEEP CALM AND GET PREPARED



PREPARING FOR AN EVACUATION

When emergencies or evacuations happen, there is often little time to think about what to pack for you and your family. An evacuation checklist can be useful, offering you a comforting sense of control amidst the overwhelming chaos these situations often bring.

Through careful planning and consideration of your family's needs, you not only enhance your safety and that of your loved ones but also reduce the anxiety and stress that can arise from the uncertainty of evacuation scenarios.

EMERGENCY KIT SUPPLIES:

1. Water and Non-Perishable Food:

- Store at least 7 days' worth of water (1 gallon per person daily).
- Pack non-perishable, easy-to-open foods like canned goods, energy bars, and dried fruits.

2. Clothing and Personal Items:

- Pack a change of clothing for each family member.
- Include sturdy shoes, gloves, and extra socks.
- Bring personal hygiene items like toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, and hand sanitizer.
- Consider sleeping masks and earplugs.

3. First Aid Kit & Medical Equipment:

- Include adhesive bandages, antiseptic wipes, sterile gauze, tweezers, and medical tape.
- Include any prescription medications and basic over-the-counter medications. Also, write a list of each prescription for future refills as needed.

- If you use any medical equipment such as a CPAC machine, oxygen, or mobility aids, pack and take them. It is unlikely that an evacuation centre will have this type of medical equipment available for you.

4. Important Documents:

- Place these in a waterproof container or sealable plastic bags.
- Identification (IDs, passports, driver's licenses).
- Birth certificates, marriage certificates, and other legal documents.
- Insurance policies (health, home, auto).
- Medical records and medication lists.
- Property deeds and mortgage documents.
- Financial information (bank statements, credit cards).
- Contact list with family and friends' phone numbers or address book.

5. Communication Devices:

- Fully charged cell phones and portable chargers.
- Bring a small power bar to support multiple devices being charged simultaneously.
- Battery-powered or hand-crank emergency radio.

6. Cash:

- Have small denominations of cash in case ATMs are unavailable.

7. Flashlights and Batteries:

- Pack multiple flashlights and extra batteries.
- Consider battery and solar-operated camping lanterns and lights as well.

8. Multi-tool or Swiss Army Knife:

- Useful for various tasks during an emergency.

9. Sanitation Supplies:

- Toilet paper, garbage bags, and personal hygiene items.

10. Face Masks:

- Include masks to protect against smoke and dust inhalation.

11. Packing for Children:

- Consider allowing children to pack a few “comfort items” of their own choosing. This could be a stuffed animal, a favourite toy, a bedtime storybook, a photograph or something important to them.

12. Activities:

- Pack board games (cribs, checkers, Scrabble) and playing cards.
- Bring colouring books and crayons.
- Consider bringing a notebook and encourage journaling their experience.

13. Photographs:

- It's a good idea to keep precious photo memories on a USB and take them with you or, snap photos on your phone of your framed photos to have a copy of them.
- Take photos or videos of high-value items with a time stamp if needed for future insurance purposes to prove ownership of items.

Additional Items for Families with Pets:

• Pet Carriers:

- Have carriers for each pet that are easily transportable.

• Pet Supplies:

- Pack at least a week's worth of pet food and water.
- Include collapsible food and water bowls.
- Leashes, harnesses, and any required medications.

• Pet Identification and Immunizations:

- Make sure your pets wear identification tags with your current contact information.
- Have photos of you and your pet available to prove ownership as required.
- Have all paperwork for pet immunizations copied on your person or snap photos to keep in your phone. This paperwork will be needed if you need to kennel your pet for any reason.

• Comfort Items:

- Familiar toys, blankets, or bedding to help pets feel more secure.

• Litter Box and Litter:

- For cat owners, pack a portable litter box and litter.

• Exotic Pets:

- Many exotic pets (snakes and spiders) will not be permitted in evacuation shelters. Discuss with your local veterinarian or emergency management personnel your options.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

1. Emergency Evacuation Plan:

- Establish a clear evacuation plan and meeting point for your family.

- Include a communications plan that supports knowing where people are and if they need assistance.
- Familiarize yourself with evacuation routes and local emergency shelters.

1. Vehicle Preparedness:

- Keep your vehicle fueled up and ready for evacuation.
- Load emergency supplies in your vehicle beforehand if possible.

2. Home Preparation

- Close windows and doors to prevent ember entry.
- Turn off gas, water, and electricity if advised.
- Remove woodpiles near your home.
- Detach BBQ propane tanks and move them 10 metres from your home, garage or shed or shed.
- Remove lawn furniture (combustible materials) off your deck and patios.
- Re-locate hanging plants and baskets away from your home.

3. Weather and News Updates:

- Stay informed about the wildfire situation through weather alerts and local news.
- Download trusted sources immediately (local municipality, government, RCMP, Emergency Management and community websites and apps to keep updated with current, verified information.) Here are a few:

Drive BC Mobile Traveller Information – drivebc.ca/mobile/

Central Okanagan Emergency Operations – cordemergency.ca

BC Wildfire Service – wildfiresituation.nrs.gov.bc.ca/map

EmergencyInfoBC – emergencyinfobc.gov.bc.ca

Emergency Support Services – ess.gov.bc.ca

4. Neighbour Checks:

- Help neighbours who may need assistance, especially the elderly or disabled.

Remember, this checklist is a guideline, and you should tailor it to your family's specific needs and circumstances. Be proactive and prepare to keep you and your family safe and ready for a possible emergency or evacuation.

MENTAL HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS

1. Limit Social Media Exposure: While it's natural to seek updates, constant exposure to distressing images and information on social media can amplify anxiety. Take breaks from social media to maintain emotional well-being.

2. Stay Informed from Trusted Sources and Verify Information: Before sharing or acting upon information, ensure it's from reliable, official sources such as official government agencies or reputable news outlets. Avoid spreading rumours or unverified details that can cause unnecessary panic.

3. Manage News Intake: Stay informed but set specific times to catch up on news updates. Overexposure to crisis coverage can heighten stress. Also, shield yourself and others, especially children, from distressing images that can increase emotional distress. Balancing information consumption is vital for mental well-being.

4. Stay Connected with Loved Ones: Reach out to friends and family for support and reassurance. Sharing concerns and feelings can alleviate distress and provide a sense of togetherness.

5. Talk to Children Thoughtfully: Address children's questions honestly and age-appropriately. Offer reassurance, emphasizing the safety measures and your family's emergency plans that are in place. Listen actively and create an open space for them to express their emotions.

6. Assist Others: Helping others, even in small ways, can provide a sense of purpose and control during emergencies. Acts of kindness foster a sense of community and resilience.

7. Seek Professional Help When Needed: Don't hesitate to contact mental health professionals if distress becomes overwhelming. They can provide guidance and strategies to cope with emotions effectively.

8. Focus on What You Can Control: You can't control Mother Nature. Concentrate on actions you can take to ensure the safety and well-being of you and your family. This helps redirect attention away from feelings of helplessness.

Remember, everyone's coping mechanisms are unique. Prioritize self-compassion and choose strategies that best suit your emotional needs during emergencies.