

BE PREPARED

Emergency Preparedness Information

for

The United Counties of Leeds & Grenville

On August 24, 2006, Counties' Council adopted the updated Emergency Response Plan by By-Law 06-42. The Plan identifies the following hazards as having the greatest potential for significant risk to the community:

- Severe Weather emergencies, particularly blizzards, ice storms, tornados, floods and high winds
- Human Health emergencies such as Pandemic Influenza or SARS
- Power Outages
- Food & Agriculture emergencies

The United Counties' Emergency Management Program Committee continues to prepare response plans for these and other hazards. As these plans are produced, more detailed information about what you can do to respond to such an emergency will be communicated through Public Education initiatives.

Should an emergency situation arise in the United Counties, a special public inquiry telephone line will be activated. Members of the public may call in during an emergency to receive updates and public service announcements. The Public Inquiry line numbers are:

(613) 341-3855 or toll free 1-866-363-8838

Radio and TV stations will also be utilized to broadcast public service announcements.

A copy of the United Counties of Leeds & Grenville's Emergency Response Plan is posted on the Counties' website.

http://www.uclg.ca/en/government/emergency_management_program.asp

Severe Weather

In recent years, The United Counties of Leeds & Grenville have experienced several severe weather incidents. The ice storm of 1998, tornadoes, and flooding in parts of the Counties are reminders that severe weather can and does occur. Other weather phenomena include thunderstorms with heavy rain and damaging winds, hail and fog. While there is not much we can do to affect the weather on any given day, with sufficient advance notice we can prepare ourselves and our families for bad weather and try to mitigate or offset some of the negative effects. During the winter season, lead times for predicting conditions can range from hours to days. During the summer, lead times are reduced and we may only have minutes or hours to react. Having good information will help you to better prepare.

Weather Watches, Warning and Advisories:

Environment Canada monitors weather systems throughout the country. In the event of severe weather, Environment Canada will issue weather watches, warnings and advisories for purposes of public safety.

The following descriptions (extracted from Environment Canada, Weather Watches, Warnings and Advisories, Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1995) summarize what a warning, watch and advisory mean.

Advisory:

Actual or expected weather conditions may cause general inconvenience or concern but are not expected to pose a serious enough threat to warrant a warning. May also be issued when conditions show signs of becoming favourable for severe weather.

Watch:

Conditions are favourable for the development of severe weather. Caution should be taken. Watch the skies and listen for updates.

Warning:

Severe weather condition is occurring or hazardous weather is highly probable. Severe thunderstorms or tornado warnings may be issued less than one hour in advance of the actual event. Other weather warnings may be issued six to twelve hours in advance.

Local radio or TV stations are a good source for up-to-date weather warnings. The following warnings are provided to give you an understanding of what they could mean, and some possible precautions:

Severe Thunderstorm Warning – Severe storms, within the area specified, are occurring with one or more of the following conditions: heavy rain, damaging winds, hail at least 20 mm in diameter or intense lightning. A severe thunderstorm can produce tornadoes. You should take precautions including sheltering indoors, preferably in an interior room away from windows and doors.

Tornado Warning - One or more tornadoes have occurred or are occurring in the area specified. Take appropriate precautions. Go inside to the basement, if you have one; an interior room away from potential crumbling walls and flying debris with no doors and windows is preferable. A closet or bathtub area can be used for safe spots too. If outside, lie flat, in a ditch or low area; be aware of the potential for flash flooding in these areas.

Freezing Rain Warning – Expect slippery walking and driving conditions, possible damage to trees and power lines due to rain freezing on contact. Travel will be hazardous. Avoid travel in such conditions.

Heavy Rain Warning – Heavy or prolonged rainfall, 50 mm rain over a 12 hour period or less or 80 mm of rain over a 24 hour period or less, is sufficient to cause local or widespread flooding. Heavy rainfall resulted in the Peterborough flood of 2004.

Wind Warning- Steady winds of 60 km/hr or more or gusting to 90 km/hr or more for at least one hour. Take precautions by securing or putting away loose objects. Put your car away so that flying objects will not damage it.

Blizzard Warning – Snow and blowing snow, severe wind chill and reduced visibility to less than 1 kilometre. During the winter months, be prepared for blizzard conditions and be prepared to stay at home to wait out the storm. Good time for that survival kit.

Heavy Snowfall Warning – Snowfall accumulations of 15 cm or more in Ontario in 12 hours or less. Travel could be hazardous.

Winter Storm Warning – In Ontario, this warning is issued when two or more winter conditions (wind, snowfall, wind chill) reach warning proportions. Don't travel and stay indoors. Again, good time for that survival kit.

Wind Chill Warning – Very cold temperatures along with wind create outdoor conditions hazardous to human activity. Stay indoors.

The Environment Canada website was used as a source for the information provided. Environment Canada maintains an Internet weather office at <http://www.weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca>

The site provides information on current weather conditions and with weather warnings and advisories.

If you are looking for information on weather hazard trends for Ontario, the atmospheric website at <http://www.hazards.ca> is a good source of weather trends. This website was created by Environment Canada and Emergency Management Ontario for use by the public and governments.

Power Outages

In August 2003, the “lights went out”. In the initial hours of the blackout in August 2003, a great deal was unknown as to when power would be restored or what the cause had been. What was known was that the power outage was extensive, including much of the Eastern Seaboard of Canada and The United States. For those of us in Leeds and Grenville it was reminiscent of Ice Storm 1998, albeit a bit warmer. Ice Storm 1998 left our community “more prepared” for the power outages of the future. Many residents have since equipped their homes with back up alternatives for power or heat, or at least thought about a contingency plan (i.e. go to family or friends’ homes).

The most difficult part about dealing with a power outage is that it is out of our control, and there is often no definitive time at which the power is expected to return. Initially during a power outage, most people are frustrated by the inconvenience of the situation, but soon after people will need to utilize their coping skills. Communities like Leeds and Grenville, which have experienced similar scenarios in the past, are generally more prepared and experience less stress over the situation. While this is a positive attribute of our community, it is very important to not become complacent as every emergency situation will be different and compounded by other unknown factors. Below are some general suggestions and ideas to help prepare and cope during power outages:

- Keep an extra supply of batteries to power radios and flashlights
- Purchase a rechargeable flashlight; it stays plugged into an outlet and turns on automatically during a power outage
- If your secondary source of heat is wood, ensure that you have an extra supply on hand and that the chimney is clean and clear
- Keep a supply of non-perishable food items on hand
- If you need to use candles, put hot pads underneath the base; it is preferable to use candleholders that enclose the flame (i.e. glass chimney)
- Unplug appliances to protect against possible power surges and minimize risk of fire in the case of heat producing appliances that may have been “on” prior to the outage. This will also help reduce initial demand when power is re-connected
- Limit the number of times that the fridge and freezer are opened to help keep items cold / frozen
- Keep a Ziploc bag of ice cubes in the freezer. If after the power outage, the ice cubes have melted and re-frozen, this will be a good indicator that the food within the freezer has also thawed and may not be safe for consumption.
- A hidden source of water in an power outage is the hot water tank, make sure to turn off the gas or electricity to the tank and open the drain at the bottom of the tank

- If considering the purchase of a generator, it is advised to consult with an electrician regarding the required capacity. Ideally a permanent connection for the generator should be completed by an electrician prior to an actual emergency
- Prepare a 72 hour emergency survival kit, including such items as: bottled water (4 litres/ per person/ per day), blankets, non perishable food items (5 day supply), a supply of pet food, blankets, sleeping bag(s), matches, formula, diapers, rainwear, mitts & hat, copies of important documents, etc.

A unique family activity is to have a “no power” night or “camp time”. A specific evening is selected for the event, in which the basic rule is “no power”. Dinner is prepared without the use of electricity which may include an outside BBQ. There is no computer, no lights, and no TV. Alternative activities may include board games, crafts, painting, books, an evening walk to look at the stars, charades or cards. It can become a weekly or monthly family activity. This type of activity should be modified to best accommodate what the individual family is comfortable with. This activity is best done with children 4 years of age and older. This is not only a great opportunity for quality family time, but it also helps children to have less anxiety during an actual power outage.

To obtain additional information or pamphlets on Power Outages or Emergency Planning and Preparedness, contact your local Township / Municipality or
Elizabeth Stratton
Community Emergency Management Co-ordinator
United Counties of Leeds and Grenville
(613) 342-3840 ext. 2343.

Elizabeth.Stratton@uclg.on.ca

Floods

In recent years, certain areas in Leeds & Grenville have experienced flooding with significant effects on people and property. In all cases, local government authorities try to keep residents informed of developments in areas most likely to be affected by flooding. Regular media advisories will recommend actions people should take to limit or prevent disaster. As the need arises, more detailed instructions by municipal or provincial authorities will be given.

Do you know what to do before and after a flood? Here are some basic tips:

Before:

- Prepare an emergency survival kit
- Have a battery-powered radio on hand and listen for instructions from your local station
- Assuming there is enough time, shut off all power in your home or business, move furniture, electrical appliances and other belongings to higher ground
- Disconnect eaves troughs
- Evacuate your home when instructed by local emergency authorities

After:

- For health reasons, it's important to restore your home to good order as soon as possible
- Make sure the property is safe to re-enter
- Wear rubber boots if there's more than five centimetres of standing water
- Put together the necessary tools for clean up, such as gloves, masks, chlorine bleach and large containers for soaking bedding and clothing
- Before resuming consumption of well water, be sure to have it tested
- Discard any food items which have come into direct contact with floodwater
- Have a qualified heating contractor check your flooded furnace before it is restarted

For Self-help advice from Public Safety Canada, visit their web site at http://www.getprepared.ca/risks/emergency_e.asp

The Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit's website was used as a source for some of the information provided. The Health Unit's website contains information related to public health and emergency response and is located at <http://www.healthunit.org>

For more information, please contact the Health Protection Department of the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit in Brockville at (613) 345-5685 or Smiths Falls at (613) 283-2740, or the Health Action Line at 1-800-660-5853.

Human Health Emergencies

A Human Health Emergency is an occurrence or imminent threat of an illness or health condition, caused by bioterrorism, epidemic or pandemic disease, or a new and infectious agent that poses a substantial threat to the health and lives of humans. The province of Ontario has experienced several significant health emergencies, such as SARS, West Nile Virus and ground water contamination in Walkerton. Increasing concerns have been expressed about water safety, bio-terrorism and infectious disease outbreaks, such as Avian flu. In addition, natural disasters like tornadoes and flooding that cause significant human injury or illness, can also occur and sometimes overwhelm the resources of the community.

It is important to be aware of emerging health threats within our community and to take every precaution to avoid becoming ill. Local doctors' offices, clinics and hospitals offer information pamphlets and post notices regarding signs and symptoms which can be useful for early detection. The health unit's website at <http://www.healthunit.org>

contains a variety of information regarding health hazards and ways in which you can protect yourself.

In the event of a power outage, be prepared. Review food and water safety fact sheets published by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to ensure that you are aware of ways in which to protect yourself and your family. Fact Sheets are available on the following subject areas:

- [How to ensure food is safe to eat](#)
- [What to eat when in a stressful situation](#)
- [How to prepare baby formula](#)
- [How to handle and prepare food safely at an Emergency Shelter](#)
- [Donating Food to an Emergency Shelter](#)

In the event of a human health emergency within the United Counties, The Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit is responsible for liaising with local partners (emergency responders, hospitals, community services) to ensure a coordinated response.

Influenza Pandemic:

What can you do to Prepare?

Pandemic Influenza occurs when a new influenza virus appears to which the human population has little or no immunity. This can result in several, simultaneous epidemics world-wide (**Pandemic**) with significant numbers of illnesses and deaths. With the increase in global transport and communications, as well as urbanization and overcrowded conditions, epidemics from a new influenza virus are likely to quickly take hold around the world. During the last few years, the world has faced several threats with pandemic potential, making the occurrence of the next pandemic just a matter of time.

Currently, health experts are closely monitoring the Avian Flu H5-N1 strain which is spreading among the bird population in Asia and parts of Europe. There have been some cases of human illness, but there have been no confirmed instances of human to human transmission.

A pandemic influenza occurs when all four of the following occur:

- A new influenza virus A is detected
- Human to human transmission occurs
- The population has little or no immunity to the virus
- The new virus causes serious illness and death

How is the Virus Spread?

The virus is spread directly when infected people cough or sneeze and droplets of their respiratory secretions come into contact with the mouth, nose and eyes of another person. It is spread indirectly when people touch surfaces, objects or hands of others that the virus is living on. The virus can live on hard surfaces for up to 48 hours, on cloth, paper and tissue for up to 8 hours and five minutes on hands.

How can I protect myself?

- **Wash your hands, wash your hands.** Frequent hand washing reduces the risk of picking up the virus from surfaces and passing it on to others.
- Practice “cough etiquette”. Instead of covering your mouth and nose with your hands when coughing or sneezing, turn your face into your shoulder. That way you avoid putting the virus onto your hands and passing it on to others.
- Practice social distancing. If you become aware that the virus is present in your area, avoid large crowds of people whenever possible.
- Once a vaccine is available, get immunized.

Part of your personal emergency preparedness should include making arrangements for alternate child care, should schools be closed or your regular child care provider become ill. This is especially important if you work in the health care, emergency, or social services field or any organization which may play a significant role in emergency response.

What are the Plans for Handling a Pandemic Influenza?

In Ontario, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is responsible for public health. There is a Pandemic Influenza plan which clearly identifies the roles and responsibilities of the Ministry and other agencies. In Leeds, Grenville and Lanark, the District Health Unit will be responsible for communicating with citizens and implementing infection control measures.

Pandemic Influenza planning has been under way for quite some time and the Health Unit has also developed its own internal response plan. The Tri-County Pandemic Influenza Planning Committee is composed of key agencies across Lanark, Leeds and Grenville who come together to plan for such an event. The mandate of this committee is to revise, test and maintain a contingency plan for pandemic influenza to ensure a coordinated, effective response and mitigation. In coordination with local municipalities and the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, these plans will be implemented as required.

The Ontario Health Plan for an Influenza Pandemic is published at the following website:
http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/emu/pan_flu/pan_flu_mn.html

The Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit's Contingency Plan for Pandemic Influenza is published at the following website:
<http://www.healthunit.org/reportpub/pandemic/pandemic.htm>

The health unit's Pandemic Influenza Plan contains measures for responding to and recovering from this type of emergency. Listen to your local radio station for important public health advisories and alerts. Fact sheets on availability of vaccines and educational materials in regards to infection control and prevention measures will be posted on the health unit's website.

Visit the Public Health Agency of Canada's website for information about influenza.

<http://www.influenza.gc.ca>

Additional information regarding infection control can be found at the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care's web site:

http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/program/emu/emu_mn.html

Article prepared with the assistance of the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit

Hazardous Materials Release

A hazardous material is defined as a substance (gas, liquid or solid) capable of creating harm to people, property and the environment, e.g. materials, which are flammable, toxic, etc.

A hazardous material emergency is defined as an incident wherein lives or property are threatened by an accidental release of a hazardous material/substance, or other controlled material as may be defined by the Environmental Protection Act, R.S.O. 1990.

In the event of a hazardous material emergency you may be requested to take certain precautions such as shelter-in-place or evacuate.

Shelter-in-Place - What to do?

Should you see or hear about a release of hazardous materials (chemical, biological or radiological) into the environment, it may be accompanied by a request from municipal officials for residents to “shelter-in-place”. Shelter-in-place is the practice of going or remaining in doors during the sudden release of airborne hazardous materials. The following is a checklist of precautions that you should take.

- Close all windows
- Close all outside and inside doors
- Seal off cracks around doors and windows using a wide tape such as duct tape and a rolled damp towel
- Turn off all fans, heating, air conditioning, any outside vents and/or ventilation systems
- Do not use clothes dryers
- Close any fireplace/stove dampers
- Do not use fireplaces, woodstoves, gas stoves, etc.
- Go to an interior room, if available, (above ground – some chemicals are heavier than air and will enter at an underground location first)
- Close and/or lock windows and doors into the room
- Take a radio and your emergency supplies/survival kit
- Monitor radio or television broadcast for updates until advised it is safe to leave or to evacuate

Shelter-in-place requests are usually provided for short periods of a few hours. Therefore, you should not be concerned that the room you are in will run out of oxygen or that you will suffocate.

Source: Office of Critical Infrastructure and Emergency Preparedness Canada

Evacuation - What to do

In some emergencies, as described on the previous page, municipal officials may request that you leave your home or place of work. Sometimes, your local volunteer fire department may be the first emergency response agency to advise you to leave. They may be assisted by the O.P.P., or you may hear an announcement on your local radio or T.V. station requesting you to evacuate.

Should any of these situations described above occur and you are asked to leave, the following steps should be taken:

- Vacate your home or work when municipal officials request you to do so. Ignoring such a request could put you and your family's health or safety at risk
- Listen to your local radio stations for information on the location of evacuation/reception centres
- Leave a note for your family that you left and where you went. This will also assist emergency workers who may be going door-to-door
- Take your survival kit
- Shut off utilities before leaving, if requested to do so. As part of your emergency planning, consult your local utilities. They can provide you with advice on the best way to do this
- Lock your house or business
- Leave via any designated routes
- Register with the local reception centre so that you can be contacted and reunited with your family
- Notify your family contact of your location and condition

Pets and Emergencies

Pets are part of our families. During an emergency situation, it is important to know how to keep our animal companions safe. Emergencies can happen at any time, so prepare today. Assemble a pet emergency kit and make arrangements for your pet in the event that you must evacuate.

Pet Emergency Kits

Prepare an emergency kit for your pet. Be sure you have:

- Food, potable water, bowls, paper towel and a can opener
- Blanket and a small toy
- Sturdy leash/harness
- Cat litter/pan (if required) and plastic bags
- Carrier for transporting your pet
- Medications and medical records (including vaccinations)
- Current photo of your pet in case your pet gets lost
- Information on feeding schedules, medical or behavioral problems in case you must board your pet
- Up-to-date ID tag with your phone number and the name/phone number of your veterinarian
- Copy of licence (if required)
- Muzzle (if required)

Keep this kit in the same spot as your family emergency survival kit for easy retrieval. Pets need supplies, too.

Animals get anxious during emergencies. If possible, keep your pet in a carrying cage with a familiar blanket, so your pet(s) feels as secure as possible. Do not leave your pet alone, with strangers or without a leash at any time. During an emergency, your pet may panic, behave in a distressed manner or even run away and end up lost. Or, because of the distressed state, your pet may bite someone. **REMEMBER** ...during an emergency, **you** are still responsible for your pet.

Pets and Evacuations

If safety permits, take your pet with you! Pets should not be left behind during an evacuation, as they may be injured, lost or even killed as a result of the emergency. Remember to take your pet emergency kit with you when you evacuate.

It is important to note that evacuation centres may not accept pets, with the exception of service animals (e.g., guide-eye dogs). Please do research ahead of time to ensure that you are not separated from your animal:

- Contact hotels and motels outside your immediate area and check their policy on accepting pets during an emergency.
- Ask friends and relatives outside your immediate area if they could shelter your pets in an emergency.
- Prepare a list of boarding facilities and veterinarians who could shelter animals in an emergency (include a 24-hour phone number).
- Contact local animal shelters and ask if they provide shelter for pets in the event of an emergency. This should only be used as a last resort, as animal shelters have limited resources and will be very busy in an emergency.
- Record this information on a sheet and keep it in your pet emergency kit. Review it regularly to ensure the information is accurate.

You may not be at home when an evacuation order is issued. In advance of an emergency, ask a trusted neighbour to evacuate your pet if need be, and meet you in a prearranged location. This individual should have a key to your home, know where the pet emergency kit is located, be comfortable with your pet and, more importantly, know where your pet is likely to be.

Returning Home

- In the days following an evacuation, don't let your pet go outside unattended. Familiar scents and landmarks may have changed and your pet may get easily confused or lost. If there has been damage to your property, be aware that there could be sharp materials, electrical wires or other hazards in and around your home. Inspect your property carefully before allowing your pet to enter.
- Remember, the behaviour of your pet may be different after an emergency. Monitor your pet and contact your veterinarian if you are concerned.

For more information about pets and emergencies, contact the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (OSPCA) at 1-800-ONT-SPCA, or <http://www.ospca.on.ca>

Information provided by: Jude Kelly, Emergency Management Ontario, Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services (416) 212-3471 or www.emergencymanagementontario.ca

72 Hour Emergency Survival Kit Checklist

Here is a list of items to include in your **EMERGENCY SURVIVAL KIT**. Should a prolonged emergency occur, this checklist/kit is designed to sustain one person for three days. This is a suggested guideline. If you or someone in your family has special needs you should consider those too (i.e. seniors, babies/toddlers).

Water

Four litres of water / day (bottled water). Two litres for drinking and two litres for cooking or washing. Many of us already buy or have a supply of bottled water on hand. Therefore, always keep enough extra water on hand to last for at least three days.

Food

Non-perishable foods such as canned goods – salmon, tuna, canned vegetables and fruits. Other food items such as crackers, honey, peanut butter, sugar, coffee, tea, food bars (to be consumed and replaced once/year).

Equipment

Disposable eating utensils, knives, forks, spoons, cups and plates

Manual can opener and bottle opener

Fuel stove and fuel (never use indoors)

Waterproof matches and plastic garbage bags

Pocket Knife or multi-tool

Emergency Survival Kit

Flashlight and batteries or crank flashlight

Portable radio and batteries or crank radio

Spare batteries for both

First Aid Kit

Extra Car Keys

Always have cash on hand (including coins for pay phones)

Important Personal Papers (ID, personal documents such as passports, birth certificates, social insurance numbers, marriage certificates, etc.)

Clothing and Footwear (One extra set)

Toiletries (Toothbrush, Toothpaste, Toilet Paper, Pre-moistened toiles, Tissues, etc.)

Blankets (Mylar type) or sleeping bags

Any necessary medications (one week's supply on hand plus copies of prescriptions and medical contact information)

Whistle (to attract attention)

Playing cards, games

Something to carry survival kit items in case you have to evacuate

Pets

Include a three-day supply of water and food for your pet(s).

Car Kit

Since Emergencies can happen anywhere anytime, and many of us spend a lot of time in our vehicles, it is a good idea to have an emergency kit in your car. Pre-assembled kits can sometimes be purchased through Motor Leagues.

Shovel

Sand or kitty litter

Traction mats or chains

Compass

Cloth or Paper Towels

Warning Lights or Flares

Extra clothing and/or footwear

Emergency food pack (see 3 day survival kit)

Booster Cables

Ice Scraper/brush

Road Maps

Matches and a survival candle in deep can (to warm hands, heat a drink, or to provide emergency light)

Fire extinguisher

Methyl hydrate (de-icing fuel line and windshield)

Flashlight and spare batteries

First aid kit with seatbelt cutter

Blanket (survival blankets are the best)

Sources: Office of Critical Infrastructure and Emergency Preparedness Canada, Emergency Management Ontario

Prepare Now, Learn How

Personal Preparedness Tips for People with Disabilities

This fact sheet is designed to provide a checklist for activities for people with disabilities to improve your emergency preparedness in a disaster or emergency. Preparation may seem like a lot of work. It is. Preparing does take time and effort. So do a little at a time, as your energy and budget permit. The important thing is to start preparing. The more you do, the more confident you will be that you can protect yourself and your family.

Establish a Personal Support Network

A personal support network is made up of individuals who will check with you in an emergency to ensure you are O.K. and to give assistance if needed. This network can consist of friends, roommates, family members, relatives, personal attendants, co-workers and neighbours.

Some people rely on personal attendants. This type of assistance may not be available after a disaster. Therefore it is vital that your personal support network consist of different people than those who are your personal attendants. If you employ a personal attendant or use the services of a home health agency or other type of in home service, discuss with these people a plan for what you will do in case of an emergency. How will you get along after an emergency or disaster strikes? A critical element to consider in your emergency planning is the establishment of an additional support network.

Even if you do not use a personal attendant, it is important to consider creating a personal support network to assist you in coping with an emergency. Do not depend on any one person. Work out support relationships with several individuals. Try to identify a minimum of three people at each location where you regularly spend a significant part of your week: job, home, school, volunteer site, etc.

In spite of your best planning, sometimes a personal support network must be created on the spot. For example you may find yourself in an evacuation centre and needing to assemble help for immediate assistance. Think about what you will need, how you want it done and what kind of person you would select.

Seven Important Items to Discuss, Give to and Practice with Your Personal Support Network:

- Make arrangements, prior to an emergency, for your support network to immediately check on you after a disaster and, if needed, offer assistance.
- Exchange important keys.
- Show where you keep emergency supplies.

- Share copies of your relevant emergency documents, evacuation plans and emergency health information card.
- Agree and practice a communications system regarding how to contact each other in an emergency. Do not count on the telephones working.
- You and your personal support network should always notify each other when you are going out of town and when you will return.
- The relationship should be mutual. Learn about each other's needs and how to help each other in an emergency. You could be responsible for food supplies and preparation, organizing neighbourhood watch meetings, interpreting, etc.

Travelling

When staying in hotels/motels identify yourself to registration desk staff as a person who will need assistance in an emergency and state the type of assistance you may need.

Health Card

- An emergency health information card communicates to rescuers what they need to know about you if they find you unconscious or incoherent, or if they need to quickly help evacuate you.
- An emergency health information card should contain information about medications, equipment you use, allergies and sensitivities, communication difficulties you may have, preferred treatment, treatment-medical providers, and important contact people.
- Make multiple copies of this card to keep in emergency supply kits, car, work, wallet (behind driver's license or primary identification card), wheelchair pack, etc.

Emergency Contact List

- Ask several relatives or friends who live outside your immediate area (approximately 100 miles away) to act as a clearing house for information about you and your family after a disaster. It is often easier to place an out of province long distance call from a disaster area, than to call within the area. All family members should know to call the contact person to report their location and condition. Once contact is made, have the contact person relay messages to your other friends and relatives outside the disaster area. This will help to reduce calling into and out of the affected area once the phones are working.
- Besides emergency out-of-town contacts, the list should include your personal support network, equipment vendors, doctors, utility companies, employers, schools, day care centers, for other family or household members.

Emergency Documents (includes important information typically needed after a disaster).

- Store emergency documents in your home emergency supply kits. Copies of life saving information (i.e., specifications for adaptive equipment or medical devices should be in all of your emergency kits and medication lists should be on your health card) should be stored in all of your emergency kits. Other emergency documents should be kept together with your home emergency pack - family records, wills, deeds, bank accounts, etc., for access in an emergency. These should be stored in sealed freezer bags with copies sent to out-of-province contacts.

Conduct an "Ability Self -Assessment"

Evaluate your capabilities, limitations and needs, as well as your surroundings to determine what type of help you will need in an emergency.

1. Will you be able to independently shut off the necessary utilities (gas, water, electricity)?
 - Do you know where shut-off valves are? Can you get to them?
 - Can you find and use the right wrench to turn those handles?
2. Can you operate a fire extinguisher?
 - Have you practiced?
 - Will extended handles make these items usable for you?
3. Will you be able to carry your evacuation kit?
 - What do you need to do in order to carry it; how much can you carry regularly; do you have duplicates at other locations?
4. Have you moved or secured large objects that might block your escape path?
5. Write instructions for the following (keep a copy with you and share a copy with your personal support network):
 - a. How to turn off utilities; color-code or label these for quick identification:
 - Main gas valve, located next to the meter - blue; electrical power circuit breaker box - red; and main water valve - green.
 - If you have a reduced or limited sense of smell, alert your personal support network to check gas leaks.
 - b. How to operate and safely move your essential equipment. Consider attaching simple to read and understand instructions to your equipment.

- c. How to safely transport you if you need to be carried, and include any areas of vulnerability.
- d. How to provide personal assistance services.
- Remind anyone who assists you to practice strict cleanliness and keep fingers out of mouth. With limited water and increased health hazards, the possibility of infection increases. Keep a supply of latex gloves in your emergency supply kit and ask people assisting you with personal hygiene to use them.
 - List all personal care assistance needs (dressing, bathing, etc.) with instructions on how best to assist you.
 - Make a map of where to find medications, aids and supplies. Share with your personal support network.
- e. How will you evacuate?
- Be aware of barriers and possible hazards to a clear path of exit. Change what you are able to change (clear obstacles from aisles; secure large, heavy items such as bookcases that may fall to block your path). Plan alternate exit paths. Know who can help you.

Communication: Practice Assertiveness Skills

Take charge and practice how to quickly explain to people how to move your mobility aids or how to move you safely and rapidly. Be prepared to give clear, specific and concise instructions and directions to rescue personnel, i.e., “take my oxygen tank,” “take my wheelchair,” “take my gamma globulin from the freezer,” “take my insulin from the refrigerator,” “take my communication device from under the bed.” Practice giving these instructions with the least amount of words in the least amount of time. For example: the traditional “fire fighter's carry” may be hazardous for some people with some respiratory weakness. You need to be able to give brief instructions regarding how to move you.

Be prepared to request an accommodation from disaster personnel. For example, if you are unable to wait in long lines for extended periods of time, for such items as water, food, and disaster relief applications, practice clearly and concisely explaining why you cannot wait in the line.

Carry-On/Carry-With-You/ Supplies to Keep with You at All Times

Packing/Container suggestions: a fanny pack, back pack or drawstring bag which can be hung from a wheelchair, scooter or other assistive device.

1. Emergency Health Information Card.
2. Instructions on personal assistance needs and how best to provide them.
3. Copy of Emergency Documents.
4. Essential medications/copies of prescriptions (at least a week's supply).
5. Flashlight on key ring.

6. Signalling device (whistle, beeper, bell, screecher).
7. Small battery-operated radio and extra batteries

Disability-Related Supplies to Add to Regular Emergency Kits

Store supplies in areas you anticipate will be easy to reach after a disaster.

Others may be able to share traditional emergency supplies, but you need these so store on top and in separate labelled bag! If you have to leave something behind, make sure you get these.

Plan for enough disability-related supplies for up to two weeks (medication, syringes, colostomy, respiratory, catheter, padding, distilled water, etc.). If you have a respiratory, cardiac or multiple chemical sensitivities condition, store towels, masks, industrial respirators or other supplies you can use to filter your air supply. Do not expect reception centres, evacuation centres or first aid stations to be able to meet your supply needs. In an emergency supplies may be limited.

If you are unable to afford extra supplies, consider contacting one of the many disability-specific organizations such as the Multiple Sclerosis Society, Arthritis Foundation, United Cerebral Palsy Association, etc. These organizations may be able to assist you in gathering extra low cost or no cost emergency supplies or medications.

Medication

It is best if you are able to maintain at least a 7 to 14 day supply of essential medications (heart, blood pressure, birth control, diabetic, psychiatric orphan drugs, etc.) and keep this supply with you at all times. If this is not possible, even maintaining a three day supply would be extremely helpful.

Work with your doctor(s) to obtain an extra supply of medications, as well as extra copies of prescriptions. Ask if it would be safe to go without one dosage periodically, until an adequate supply has been accumulated. Make several copies of your prescriptions and put one copy in each of your survival kits, car kit, wallet, with your Emergency Documents and your evacuation plan.

Ask your provider or pharmacist about the shelf life and storage temperature sensitivities of your medication. Ask how often you should rotate stored medication to ensure that the effectiveness of the medication does not weaken due to excess storage time. If you are on medications which are administered to you by a clinic or hospital (such as methadone, or chemo or radiation therapy) ask your provider how you should plan for a 3 - 14 day disruption.

If you are a smoker, be aware that smoking will not be allowed in Reception Centres or Evacuation Centres. If getting to an outside smoking area may be difficult for you, consider stocking your evacuation kit with nicotine gum or patches available by prescriptions.

Equipment and Assistive Devices

Keep important equipment and assistive devices in a consistent, convenient and secured place, so you can quickly and easily locate them. Make sure items such as teeth, hearing aids, prosthesis, mobility aid, cane, crutches, walker, respirator, service animal harness, augmentative communication device or electronic communicator, artificial larynx, wheelchair, sanitary aids, batteries, eye glasses, contacts including cleaning solutions, etc., are secured. For example: keep hearing aid, eye glasses, etc., by your bedside in a container which is attached to a night stand or bed post using string or velcro, oxygen tank attached to the wall, wheelchair locked and close to bed. This helps prevent them from falling, flying or rolling away during a disaster.

If you use a laptop computer as a means of communication, consider purchasing a power converter. A power converter allows most laptops (12 volts or less) to run from a cigarette lighter on the dashboard of a vehicle.

PERSONAL EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

- Establish a personal support network
- Customize an emergency health information card
- Keep copies in wallet, purse and emergency supply kits
- Complete an emergency contact list
- Collect important documents
- Store emergency documents in emergency supply kits, wallet, safe deposit box and give copies to personal support network and out of area contact
- Conduct an ability self-assessment
- Collect Grab and Go supplies to keep with you at all times
- Collect disability-related supplies for emergency kits
- Maintain a seven day supply of essential medications
- Keep important equipment and assistive devices in a consistent, convenient and secure place
- Write out Instructions for items you will need help with in an emergency
- If you use a service animal, be aware that its behaviour may change during a large emergency such as an earthquake

(Important documents may include: Health Cards, Medical Documents for People with Visual Disabilities, Deaf or Hard of Hearing, Communication and Speech Related Disabilities, Psychiatric Disabilities, Developmental or Cognitive Disabilities, Mobility Disabilities, Multiple Chemical Sensitivities, People Who Use Life Support Systems, and Service Animals.)

**Adapted from an article published by the British Columbia Ministry of Public Safety
Solicitor Provincial Emergency Program**

For more information, go to <http://www.getprepared.gc.ca> or www.ontario.ca/emo

**Find out who your Community Emergency Management Coordinator is by contacting your
local municipality and or calling 1-877-314-3723**

Prepare Now, Learn How

Every Business Should Have a Plan

Business continuity planning must account for both man-made and natural disasters. You should plan in advance to manage any emergency. Be prepared to assess the situation, use common sense and available resources to take care of yourself, your co-workers and your business's recovery.

Be Informed: Risk assessment can be a sophisticated area of expertise that ranges from self-assessment to an extensive engineering study. The specific industry, size and scope of your individual company will determine your organization's risk assessment needs. However, you should find out which disasters are most common in the areas where you operate. You may be aware of some of your community's risks; others may surprise you. Finally, learn what to do during a biological, chemical, explosive, nuclear or radiological attack.

Continuity Planning: Carefully assess how your company functions, both internally and externally, to determine which staff, materials, procedures and equipment are absolutely necessary to keep the business operating. Start by reviewing your business process flow chart, if one exists, to identify operations critical to survival and recovery. Include emergency payroll, expedited financial decision-making and accounting systems to track and document costs in the event of a disaster.

Establish procedures for succession of management including at least one person who is not at the company headquarters, if possible. Next, decide who should participate in putting together your emergency plan. Include co-workers from all levels in planning and as active members of the emergency management team. Consider a broad cross-section of people from throughout your organization, but focus on those with expertise vital to daily business functions. These will likely include people with technical skills as well as managers and executives.

Then, make a list of your most important customers and proactively plan ways to serve them during and after a disaster. Also, identify key suppliers, shippers, resources and other businesses you must interact with on a daily basis. Develop professional relationships with more than one company in case your primary contractor cannot service your needs. A disaster that shuts down a key supplier can be devastating to your business.

Finally, plan what you will do if your building, plant or store is not accessible. Define crisis management procedures and individual responsibilities in advance. Talk with your staff or co-workers and frequently review and practice what you intend to do during and after an emergency.

Emergency Planning For Employees: Your employees and coworkers are your business's most important and valuable asset. Two-way communication is central before, during and after a disaster. Include emergency preparedness information in newsletters, on company intranet, periodic employee emails and other internal communications tools. Consider setting up a telephone calling tree, a password-protected page on the company website, an email alert or a call-in voice recording to communicate with employees in an emergency. Designate an out of town phone number where employees can leave an "I'm Okay" message in a catastrophic disaster.

Talk to Co-Workers with Disabilities: If you have employees with disabilities ask them what assistance, if any, they require. People with disabilities typically know what they will need in an emergency. Ask about communication difficulties, physical limitations, equipment instructions and medication procedures. Identify people willing to help co-workers with disabilities and be sure they are able to handle the job. This is particularly important if someone needs to be lifted or carried. Plan how you will alert people who cannot hear an alarm or instructions. Be sure to engage people with disabilities in emergency planning.

Emergency Supplies: When preparing for emergency situations, it's best to think first about the basics of survival: **fresh water, food, clean air and warmth.** Encourage everyone to have a portable kit customized to meet personal needs, such as essential medications.

Talk to your co-workers about what emergency supplies the company can feasibly provide, if any, and which ones individuals should consider keeping on hand.

Recommended emergency supplies include both a battery-powered commercial radio and a NOAA weather radio with an alert function. Include extra batteries, a flashlight, water, food, First Aid kit, whistle to signal for help, dust or filter masks, moist towelettes for sanitation, wrench or pliers to turn off utilities, plastic sheeting and duct tape to "seal the room," and garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation.

Keep copies of important records such as site maps, building plans, insurance policies, employee contact and identification information, bank account records, supplier and shipping contact lists, computer backups, emergency or law enforcement contact information and other priority documents in a waterproof, fireproof portable container. Store a second set of records at an off-site location.

Planning to Stay or Go: Depending on your circumstances and the nature of the disaster, the first important decision after an incident occurs is whether to shelter-in-place or evacuate. You should understand and plan for both possibilities in advance by developing clear, well thought-out plans. If you are specifically told to evacuate, shelter-in place or seek medical treatment, do so immediately.

In any emergency, local authorities may or may not immediately be able to provide information on what is happening and what you should do. However, you should monitor TV or radio news reports for information or official instructions as they become available. Use common sense and available information to determine if there is immediate danger. For example, if your building is damaged you will typically want to evacuate.

Make an Evacuation Plan: Some disasters will require employees to leave the workplace quickly. The ability to evacuate workers, customers and visitors effectively can save lives. If feasible, develop a system for knowing who is in your building, including customers and visitors.

Decide in advance who has the authority to order an evacuation. If local officials tell you to evacuate, do so immediately. Identify who will shut down critical operations and lock the doors, if possible. Create a chain of command so that others are authorized to act in case your designated person is not available.

Locate and make copies of building and site maps with critical utility and emergency routes clearly marked. Identify and label entry-exit points both on the maps and throughout the building. Post maps for quick reference by employees. Plan two ways out of the building from different locations throughout your facility. You should also establish a warning system including plans to communicate with people who are hearing impaired or have other disabilities and those who do not speak English.

Designate an assembly site. Pick one location near your facility and another in the general area in case you have to move farther away. Try to account for all workers, visitors and customers as people arrive at the assembly site. Determine who is responsible for providing an all-clear or return-to-work notification. Plan to cooperate with local authorities responding in an emergency.

If your business operates out of more than one location or has more than one place where people work, establish evacuation procedures for each individual building. If your company is in a high-rise building, an industrial park, or even a small strip mall, it is important to coordinate and practice with other tenants or businesses to avoid confusion and potential gridlock.

Make a Shelter-in-Place Plan: There may be situations when it's best to stay where you are to avoid any uncertainty outside. There are other circumstances, such as a chemical incident or during a tornado when specifically *how* and *where* you take shelter is a matter of survival. You should understand the different threats and plan for all possibilities.

Tornado Warning: Determine where you will take shelter during a tornado. Storm cellars or basements provide the best protection. If an underground shelter is not available, go into an interior room or hallway on the lowest floor possible. In a high-rise building, go to a small interior room or hallway on the lowest floor possible. Stay away from windows, doors and outside walls. Go to the center of the room. Stay away from corners because they attract debris. Stay in the shelter location until the danger has passed.

“Seal the Room”: If local authorities believe the air is badly contaminated with a chemical, you may be instructed to take shelter and “seal the room.” The process used to seal the room is considered a temporary protective measure to create a barrier between your people and potentially contaminated air outside. It is a type of sheltering that requires preplanning. Start by identifying where you will go if you are instructed to “seal the room.” If feasible, choose an interior room, such as a break room or conference room, with as few windows and doors as possible. If your business is located on more than one floor or in more than one building, identify multiple shelter locations. To “seal the room” effectively, close the business and bring everyone inside. Then, lock doors, close windows, air vents and fireplace dampers.

Turn off fans, air conditioning and forced air heating systems. Take your emergency supply kit unless you have reason to believe it has been contaminated. Seal all windows, doors and air vents with plastic sheeting and duct tape. Measure and cut the sheeting in advance to save time.

Finally, be prepared to improvise and use what you have on hand to seal gaps so that you create a barrier between yourself and any contamination. Watch TV, listen to the radio or check the Internet often for official news and instructions as they become available.

Make Fire Safety Part of the Plan: Fire is the most common of all business disasters. Each year fires cause thousands of deaths and injuries and billions of dollars in damage. Have your office, plant or facility inspected for fire safety; ensure compliance with fire codes and regulations.

Install smoke alarms, detectors and fire extinguishers in appropriate locations. Put a process in place for alerting the fire department. Plan and practice how people will evacuate in a fire.

Prepare for Medical Emergencies: Workplace medical emergencies vary greatly depending on the disaster, type of job and the worksite. However, there are steps that can give you the upper hand in responding to a medical emergency. Encourage employees to take basic First Aid and CPR training. If it is feasible, offer on-site classes for your co-workers. You should also keep First Aid supplies in stock and ensure that they are easily accessible. Finally, encourage employees to talk about medical

conditions that may require support or special care in an emergency.

Coordinate with Others: Meet with other businesses in your building or industrial complex. Plan to conduct evacuation drills and other emergency exercises together. Talk with first responders, emergency managers, community organizations and utility providers. Plan with your suppliers, shippers and others you regularly do business with.

Review your Plans Annually: Just as your business changes over time, so do your preparedness needs. When you hire new employees or when there are changes in how your company functions, you should update your plans and inform your people.

One of the best methods of assuring your company's recovery is to provide for your co-workers' well-being. Communicate regularly with employees before, during and after an incident. Use newsletters, intranets, staff meetings and other internal communications tools to communicate emergency plans and procedures.

Practice the Plan with Co-workers: Go beyond planning and frequently practice what you intend to do during a disaster. Conduct regularly scheduled education and training seminars to provide coworkers with information, identify needs and develop preparedness skills. Include disaster training in new employee orientation programs. If you rent, lease or share office space, coordinate and practice evacuation and other emergency plans with other businesses in your building or facility. Evaluate and revise processes and procedures based on lessons learned and keep training records. Drills and exercises will help you prepare.

Promote Family and Individual Preparedness: If individuals and families are prepared, your company and your co-workers are better positioned in an emergency situation. Encourage your employees and their families to: **Get a Kit, Make a Plan, Be Informed.** For more information, go to www.psepc.gc.ca or print out and distribute copies of **Emergency Planning for Your Family** brochures for your workers.

Write a Crisis Communication Plan: Detail how your organization plans to communicate with employees, local authorities, customers and others during and after a disaster. Be prepared to provide employees with information on when, if and how to report to work following an emergency. Provide top company executives with all relevant information. It may also be important to update the general public. Inform your customers about whether and when products will be received and services rendered. Tell officials what your company is prepared to do to help in the recovery effort.

Support Employee Health After a Disaster: There are some procedures you can put in place before a disaster, but you should also learn about what people need to help them recover after a disaster. It is possible that your staff will need time to ensure the well-being of their family members, but getting back to work is important to the personal recovery of people who have experienced disasters.

Encourage adequate food, rest and recreation. Provide for time at home to care for family needs, if necessary. Have an open door policy that facilitates seeking care when needed.

Workplace routines facilitate recovery by providing an opportunity to be active and to restore social contact. Re-establish routines, when possible. Sharing with others can speed personal recovery.

Create opportunities for breaks where co-workers can talk openly about their fears and

hopes. Offer professional counselors to help co-workers address their fears and anxieties.

Review Insurance Coverage: Inadequate insurance coverage can lead to major financial loss if your business is damaged, destroyed or simply interrupted for a period of time. Insurance policies vary, so check with your agent or provider about things such as physical losses, flood coverage and business interruption. Understand what your policy covers and what it does not. Ask about any deductibles, if applicable.

Consider how you will pay creditors and employees. You should also plan how you will provide for your own income. Finally, find out what records your insurance provider will want to see after an emergency and store them in a safe place.

Prepare for Utility Disruptions: Businesses are often dependent on electricity, gas, telecommunications, sewer and other utilities. Plan ahead for extended disruptions during and after a disaster. Carefully examine which utilities are vital to your business's day-to-day operation. Speak with service providers about potential alternatives and identify back-up options such as portable generators to power the vital aspects of your business in an emergency.

Secure Facilities, Buildings and Plants: While there is no way to predict what will happen or what your business's circumstances will be, there are things you can do in advance to help protect your physical assets. Install fire extinguishers, smoke alarms and detectors in appropriate places. Consider the ways in which people, products, supplies and other things get into and leave your building or facility. Plan for mail safety. Identify what production machinery, computers, custom parts or other essential equipment is needed to keep the business open. Plan how to replace or repair vital equipment if it is damaged or destroyed. Identify more than one supplier who can replace or repair your equipment. Store extra supplies, materials and equipment for use in an emergency. Finally, plan what you will do if your building, plant or store is not usable.

Secure Your Equipment: The force of some disasters can damage or destroy important equipment. Conduct a room-by-room walk through to determine what needs to be secured. Attach equipment and cabinets to walls or other stable equipment. Elevate equipment off the floor to avoid electrical hazards in the event of flooding.

Assess Building Air Protection: In some emergencies microscopic particles may be released into the air. For example, earthquakes often can release dust and debris. a biological attack may release germs, and a dirty bomb can spread radioactive particles. Many of these things can only hurt you if they get into your body. A building can provide a barrier between contaminated air outside and people inside, but there are ways to improve building air protection. Building owners or managers, and employers should take a close look at the site's Heating, Ventilating and Air-conditioning (HVAC) system and be sure it is working properly and is well maintained. Be sure any security measures do not adversely impact air quality or fire safety.

Start by developing and practicing shut down procedures. Then, make sure outdoor air intakes are secure. HVAC systems can be an entry point and a means of distributing biological, chemical and radiological threats. Air intakes at or below ground level are most vulnerable because they can be easily accessed. Consider relocating or extending an exposed air intake, but do not permanently seal it.

Finally, determine if you can feasibly upgrade the building's filtration system. Increasing filter efficiency is one of the few things that can be done in advance to consistently protect people inside a building from biological and some other airborne threats. Carefully consider the highest filtration efficiency that will work with a building's HVAC system.

Improve Cyber Security: Protecting your data and information technology systems may require specialized expertise. Depending on the particular industry and the size and scope of the business, cyber security can be very complicated. However, even the smallest business can be better prepared. Use anti-virus software and keep it up-to-date. Don't open email from unknown sources. Use hard-to-guess passwords. Protect your computer from Internet intruders by using firewalls. Back up your computer data. Regularly download security protection updates known as patches. Make sure your co-workers know what to do if your computer system becomes infected.

An investment in planning today will not only help protect your business investment and your livelihood, but will also support your employees, customers and stakeholders, the community and the local economy.

Media Sources:

Radio Stations

JR FM 104.9

Brockville

Tel: 613-345-1666

www.hometownradio.ca

Bob FM 103.7

Brockville

Tel: 613-345-1666

www.bob.fm

92.3 JACK FM

Smiths Falls

613- 736-2001

www.923jackfm.com

Y 101.1 FM

Ottawa

613- 736-2001

www.y101.fm

Television Stations

TV Cogeco - Brockville

Tel: 613-342-7414

CKWS - Kingston (Channel 11)

Tel: 613-498-2597

www.ckwstv.com

CJOH Television

Ottawa, Ontario

Tel: 613- 224 -1313

www.cjoh.com

If you do not have access to the Internet in your home, note that you can obtain access to the Internet at many municipal libraries throughout the United Counties. Contact your local library branch for hours of operation and to obtain Internet access.

For More Information:

Elizabeth Stratton, Community Emergency Management Coordinator

United Counties of Leeds & Grenville

25 Central Avenue West

Brockville, Ontario

K6V 4N6

Phone: 613-342-3840, ext. 2343

Elizabeth.Stratton@uclg.on.ca