

# COMMUNITY EVACUATION GUIDE



What to do before, during,  
and after an emergency.



**HANG  
ON TO  
ME!**

This guide will help you prepare for an emergency and a potential evacuation within the Shuswap.



Overview 2

---

### Before an Emergency

Get Prepared 4

Evacuation Preparedness Tips 7

Neighbourhood Emergency Programs (NEP) 8

---

### During an Emergency

Know Where to Get Information 9

Evacuation Stages 10

---

### After an Emergency

Returning to Your Community 12

Re-Entry Checklist 13

---

Where to Go for Support 14

Common Terms 15



## Emergencies are Unpredictable

Disasters may be beyond our control, but there are ways to reduce the risk and impact of any emergency we might face.



### Know the risks.

Although the consequences of disasters can be similar, knowing the risks specific to your community and region can help you better prepare.



### Make a plan.

It will help you and your family to know what to do in an emergency.



### Get prepared.

Put together an emergency kit and grab-and-go bag. During an emergency, you will need some basic supplies. Prepare to be self-sufficient for at least 72 hours in an emergency.



**Emergencies, such as wildfires, can move faster than evacuation orders. If you see an emergency in progress and you feel unsafe, do not wait.**

**Get somewhere safe first. Once you are safe, call 9-1-1 to report it.**

*We acknowledge that the Shuswap Emergency Program operates on the traditional and unceded territories of the Secwépemc Peoples. We are privileged and grateful to be able to live, work, and play in this beautiful area we call home.*



## BEFORE AN EMERGENCY **Get Prepared**

### **What are my risks?**

You need to be aware of the potential hazards around you in order to plan. For the most up-to-date information on common emergencies in your area, check out:

[CSRD website](#)

[BC Wildfire Dashboard](#)

[Drive BC](#)

[PreparedBC](#)

### **Sign up for Alertable**

in advance of an emergency to receive alerts to your mobile phone, email, or landline during a disaster.

### **Make a Plan to Evacuate**

Depending on the disaster, you may be ordered to evacuate. It is helpful to know how to safely exit your home to avoid scrambling for a solution in the middle of an emergency.

### **Pick a Meeting Place**

Whether you need to evacuate or shelter-in-place, think about a safe location where you and your family can hunker down if an emergency occurs.

In the event you need to evacuate your home, you need to find somewhere safe to meet up. Your plan should have more than one meeting place:

**A friend or neighbour's yard**

**Somewhere outside of your neighbourhood, like a school, store, or local gym**

### **Plan for Your Family**

If you have young children, consider what will happen if you can't pick them up from school or daycare. Notify the school or daycare about who is authorized to pick up your children and make sure your kids know as well.

Your family may need special considerations, such as additional preparedness plans for family members who may need extra help evacuating.

### **Plan for Your Pets**

Preparing for your pets is just as important as preparing for the people in your home. PreparedBC can help you with your [Pet Emergency Plan](#).

If your pet is missing during an emergency, contact the BCSPCA Animal Helpline for assistance: **1-855-622-7722**.

### **Agricultural Operations**

Livestock producers need to have a pre-planned strategy to manage their specific risks. Those with livestock are strongly advised to develop an emergency plan for their farm.

### **Plan for Livestock**

The BC Ministry of Agriculture has worked with livestock industries to develop Emergency Management Guides for producers who would like to be as prepared as possible for such events.

Please visit the Government of British Columbia's [Emergency Response Plans And Roles In Agriculture](#) page for links to beef, dairy, and pork guidebooks.

Call **250-833-5927** during regular business hours for more information.

## It's always better to be prepared

You should always have a 72-hour emergency kit and a grab-and-go bag for you and your family. Keep your grab-and-go bag in a backpack, suitcase, or waterproof tub. Ensure it's light enough to lift it into your car. Make sure to keep enough gas in your tank to make it out of the affected area.

### Items to include in your emergency kit:

- Six litres of water per person (include small bottles)
- Copy of your emergency plan, including emergency contact numbers
- Prescription record from your pharmacist, as needed
- Three-day supply of non-perishable food per person (replace once a year)
- Change of clothing, including winter clothing (hat, mittens)
- Extra set of car keys
- First aid kit
- Flashlights for each family member
- Battery-powered radio and extra batteries or wind-up radio
- Three-day supply of non-perishable food per pet (replace once a year)
- Six litres of water per pet

The ideal time to move sentimental items is when you are on Evacuation Alert.

### Items to grab right before you evacuate at the last minute:

- Wallet: identification, credit cards and cash
- Mobile phone and charger
- Computer/laptop/hard drives
- Glasses and contact lenses
- Medications
- Car keys
- Copies of important documents (birth certificates, passports, insurance, and bank records)

### Additional supplies to consider:

- Candles and matches / lighter
- Toiletries and personal hygiene items, toilet paper, hand sanitizer
- Garbage bags
- Activities for children (books or toys)
- Basic tools and duct tape
- Small fuel-operated stove and fuel
- Other camping supplies

## Emergency & Evacuation Tips

We know an evacuation order can be stressful. That's why planning ahead is so important.

### Here's a few things to consider!

Post your address by your driveway so it's clearly visible.

Ensure that your family knows where your gas, electric, and water main **shut-off controls** are located and how to safely shut them down in an emergency.

### Make your home/property more fire safe.

The **FireSmart BC Program** is a provincial initiative aimed at reducing the risk of wildfire damage to homes, communities, and forests.

Check your insurance policies and keep copies secure. Take photos room by room for insurance purposes.

MAKE YOUR  
EVACUATION  
EASIER

### Create an Emergency Support Services Profile

Emergency Support Services is a program that provides temporary support for essentials, such as accommodation, food, and other support for people who are unable to meet their needs when they are evacuated. During an evacuation, evacuees can go to locations called Reception Centres to access support. These centres can get very busy.

You can streamline this process by **setting up an ESS profile** ahead of time by downloading the **BC Services Card App** on your phone or electronic device. Visit [ess.gov.bc.ca](https://ess.gov.bc.ca) and follow the registration instructions. Using the app allows you to receive money directly into your bank account by Interac e-transfer. You know best what support you need, and e-transfer gives you the flexibility to choose.

# What is the Neighbourhood Emergency Program (NEP)?

After disasters or during other major emergencies, emergency response can be delayed. During disaster situations, neighbours naturally come together to help one another.

The purpose of the NEP is to ensure that Emergency Preparedness is well practiced in the area where it will be most effective—our communities, neighbourhoods, and homes. NEPs can share information which can identify local skills and resources to ensure a neighbourhood is more organized to effectively deal with a disaster.

## How can I start or join a NEP?

The Shuswap Emergency Program is actively supporting Neighbourhood Emergency Program (NEP) groups in our area.

To find out more about how to start a NEP group, call **250-833-5927** or email the Shuswap Emergency Program at [sep@csrd.bc.ca](mailto:sep@csrd.bc.ca).



DURING AN EMERGENCY

## Know Where to Get Information

Communication is key. Ensure you seek out credible sources of information to make informed decisions during a disaster. **When in doubt, turn to these sites:**

**CSRD** – The Shuswap Emergency Program is a regional organization that works to ensure residents are prepared, safe, and informed in cases of floods, wildfire, extreme weather, and more.  
[csrd.bc.ca/shuswapemergency](http://csrd.bc.ca/shuswapemergency)

**Alertable App** – Emergency alerts and mass notifications using a smartphone app, email, text, or landline notifications to keep you informed of emergencies and daily incidents in your community.  
[alertable.ca](http://alertable.ca)

**CSRD and Shuswap Emergency Program on Facebook** – The most up-to-date information on natural disasters and emergencies in your area. [@Shuswap Emergency Program](https://www.facebook.com/ShuswapEmergencyProgram)

**CSRD and Shuswap Emergency Program on Instagram** – The most up-to-date information on natural disasters and emergencies in your area. [@Shuswap Emergency Program](https://www.instagram.com/ShuswapEmergencyProgram)

**CSRD Emergency Mapping Dashboard** – An address look-up tool, showing which areas are under evacuation or experiencing disaster events. [csrd.bc.ca/emergencydashboard](http://csrd.bc.ca/emergencydashboard)

**BC Wildfire Dashboard** – Provincial information about wildfires and firefighting efforts. [wildfiresituation.nrs.gov.bc.ca](http://wildfiresituation.nrs.gov.bc.ca)



Call the Emergency Operations Centre at **250-833-3350** or visit a Reception Centre during an emergency for more information.

# What You Need to Know During an Emergency

## It's time to go. Your life may depend on it.

There is a three-stage evacuation process. The purpose of an evacuation is to move people, domestic animals, and livestock away from an actual or potential danger to a safer place.

The decision to order an evacuation is not taken lightly and must be followed by all residents in affected areas. We rely on the best information provided by expert resources to determine when it's not safe and an evacuation is necessary. **Your safety is our first concern.**

### STAGE 1 Evacuation Alert

#### A warning of the potential need to evacuate.

This is the time to get prepared to leave your home on short notice. An evacuation alert means you need to prepare now.

### STAGE 2 Evacuation Order

#### The population at risk is ordered to evacuate the specified area. You must leave the area immediately.

In some instances, there's no time for an evacuation alert. An evacuation order can be put in place immediately.

Check in with Emergency Support Services at a designated Reception Centre. Emergency Support Services provides temporary support for essentials, such as accommodation, food, and other supports for evacuees.

### STAGE 3 Evacuation Rescind

An evacuation order is rescinded when it is determined to be safe for you to return home. An alert or order may be re-issued at any time if the danger reoccurs.

When an evacuation rescind is issued, you can return to your property. Depending on the type of event, more information will be shared to help you return safely.

## Evacuation Terms — What does this mean?

**Tactical Evacuation** — If an emergency is moving rapidly and there is immediate threat to lives, a tactical evacuation will take place. Public safety personnel, such as firefighters, police, or search and rescue volunteers may tell you to leave your home right away.

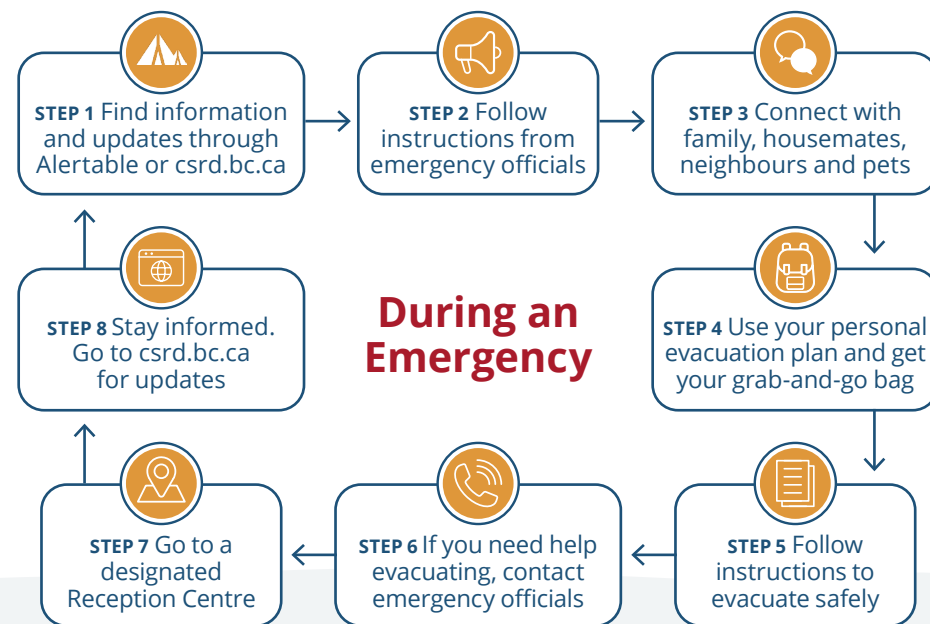
**Shelter-in-Place** — An event with no warning and no time to undertake an evacuation before the hazard arrives. Evacuation would expose residents to greater harm or dangerous conditions, or the immediate risk is unclear.

## Staged Re-Entry

Depending on the size of the event and the number of residents evacuated, there may be a need to stagger re-entry times to reduce congestion. Refer to your community mapping to determine what zone you are located in and look to reliable information sources to let you know when you can re-enter (Refer to "Know Where to Get Information" on page 9).

## Area Restrictions

Some areas may be fenced or blocked-off for safety and security purposes. Entry into these areas will be restricted during an emergency event.





AFTER AN EMERGENCY:

# Returning to Your Community

## STEP 1 Anticipate what the area may be like

It can help to think ahead about what the environment will look, feel, and smell like when you return. The landscape may have dramatically changed depending on the type of emergency.

## STEP 2 Ensure you have adequate supplies and stay alert

When it is safe to re-enter your home, property, and/or community, check that you have enough fuel, food and water in case of unforeseen damage or issues. Be prepared with a radio, flashlight, and emergency supplies.

Be prepared to leave again if an area is under an Evacuation Alert, and stay informed.

## STEP 3 Look out for post-disaster hazards

Following an emergency, there can be new risks for you to be aware of:

Dangerous trees or ash pits

Poor air quality

Contaminated water supply

Unrefrigerated perishable food or damaged food containers

Water-damaged electrical panels or outlets

The area may be at a greater risk of exposure to geohazards such as landslides or rock falls

Learn more at [ClimateReadyBC](https://www.climate-ready-bc.ca).



If you see an immediate risk to public safety, please call 9-1-1. For all other moderate risks (such as fallen trees), please call 250-832-2424.

# Re-Entry Checklist



**IMPORTANT:** If, at any time, you feel your home or surroundings are unsafe, contact emergency officials.

- ✓ If you have insurance coverage, contact your provider as soon as possible.
- ✓ With limited services available in some areas, returning residents should expect some disruptions, service delays, and intermittent road closures.
- ✓ Exercise safety and caution when returning to a property by wearing items such as long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, and safety boots.
- ✓ Wear an N-95 or equivalent dust mask (disposable facemask to filter dust and other air particulates) to reduce potential smoke exposure.
- ✓ Thoroughly check for hazards before entering your house, such as slip, trip, and fall hazards, mold, unstable structures, hazardous materials, such as kitchen and bathroom cleaning products, paint, batteries, and fuel containers that may have been partially damaged.
- ✓ Visit the [Water Advisory Map](#) and other important local government service updates regularly to know if the water is safe to drink.
- ✓ Dispose of perishable food.
- ✓ All appliances must be cleaned and disinfected.





## Where to Go for Support

### **I have a medical condition. Should I return?**

Anyone with concerns about a medical condition is advised to consult with a physician before returning home. Call HealthLinkBC at 8-1-1 or visit [healthlinkbc.ca](https://www.healthlinkbc.ca) if you have questions or need help finding a physician.

### **Where can I get mental health support?**

Experiencing a disaster such as a wildfire can be particularly stressful and overwhelming. If you need to talk, call the BC Crisis Line / Mental Health Support at 310-6789 (no area code needed) or HealthLinkBC at 8-1-1. Visit [healthlinkbc.ca](https://www.healthlinkbc.ca) for more information.

The BC Division of the Canadian Mental Health Association has resources for coping with natural disaster stress at [cmha.bc.ca](https://www.cmha.bc.ca).

### **Where to Find First Nations and Cultural Support**

KUU-US is an Indigenous BC Wide Crisis Line offering Safety Monitoring for Indigenous people at risk, local housing supports and urgent need items. Please contact **1-800-588-8717**.

## Common Terms Used in an Emergency

### **Alertable:**

Alertable is a multi-purpose communication service (website, app) used to send alerts to residents, businesses, and visitors during critical events, such as fires or floods. Sign-up for Alertable in advance of an emergency and tune in when one occurs.

### **BC Services Card App:**

This app allows you to streamline Emergency Support Services' process by creating your ESS profile now. Downloading and verifying your identity with the BC Services Card App will help you avoid long lineups by accessing support online.

### **Emergency Support Services (ESS):**

Provides short-term basic support to people impacted by disasters. Access Emergency Support Services (ESS) if you have been evacuated. You may get basic support, such as accommodation, food, clothing and other temporary support.

### **Evacuation Alert:**

This is the time to get prepared to leave your home on short notice. Get your grab-and-go bags ready (which should include several days of clothing, toiletries and medications), your emergency plan, and copies of important documents. Listen to local emergency officials for further information on the situation.

### **Evacuation Order:**

Leave the area immediately. Follow the directions of local emergency officials and evacuate using the route(s) they've identified. Do not return home until you've been advised that the Evacuation Order has been rescinded.

### **Evacuation Rescind:**

Once local officials determine the situation is currently safe, the evacuation will be rescinded and you can return home. Continue to stay tuned for other possible evacuation alerts or orders.

### **Neighbourhood Emergency Program (NEP):**

CSRD provides information which can assist neighbourhoods to identify their local skills and resources to ensure they are more organized to effectively deal with a disaster.



### **Want to help?**

Emergency Support Services can always use volunteers to help in an emergency. Advance training is required. If you are interested, email [sep@csrd.bc.ca](mailto:sep@csrd.bc.ca)

### **Don't have a Neighbourhood Emergency Program?**

You can start one. Call the CSRD at **250-833-5927** or email [sep@csrd.bc.ca](mailto:sep@csrd.bc.ca)

### **CONTACT US**

Non-emergency  
(during business hours):  
**250-832-8194**

After Hours Emergency:  
**1-877-996-3344**

Emergency Operation Centre  
(active during emergencies only):  
**250-833-3350**

Learn more about the  
Shuswap Emergency  
Program:  
[shuswapemergency.ca](http://shuswapemergency.ca)  
[csrd.bc.ca](http://csrd.bc.ca)

