

Coping with a Disaster: What you might experience

It is not unusual to have physical and emotional reactions to a traumatic event

Physical

- Rapid heart beat
- Difficulty breathing
- Chills or sweating
- Nausea or vomiting
- Wakefulness or fatigue
- Change in appetite
- Increased sensory perception, hyper vigilance
- Difficulty in sleeping
- Headaches

Emotional

- Fear or panic, confusion or poor concentration
- Denial, disbelief
- Withdrawn from family and/or friends
- Anger, guilt, suspicion
- Reoccurring thoughts, flashbacks, nightmares
- Difficulty making decisions
- Need for information
- Reluctance to abandon property
- Rejection of outside help



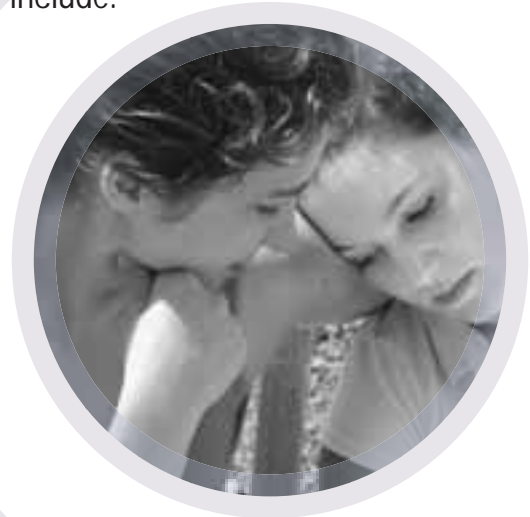
How do Families Cope with Disasters

- Recognize the way you react to the event is not unusual
- Try not to make big life changes
- Talk to family members and friends
- Listen to one another, help each other with daily tasks
- Try to achieve a balance between rest and activity

Emotional Problems: After a disaster

Emotional problems following a disaster are a result of problems in daily life and not from personal reactions or poor coping skills. Problems can include:

- Dealing with the emotional reactions of family members
- Family and marital problems including domestic violence
- Uncertainty about insurance coverage or the need to borrow money because of insurance shortfall
- Reconstruction strains and delays
- The discomfort and lack of privacy of having to live in shelters, damaged homes, motels or with relatives



How You Can Help

The tips in this guide are designed to help you and your family prepare for and survive an emergency. If you are interested in helping your community recover from an emergency, here are some suggestions:

Make a Donation

- Making a financial contribution to a volunteer agency involved in disaster relief is often the most sensible and efficient way of helping people in need after a disaster
- Before donating any goods, including food or clothing, wait for instructions from local officials or check with a specific organization. Unneeded items overwhelm the recovery effort and may go to waste

Become a volunteer

- Volunteer with a recognized disaster volunteer organizations such as the Red Cross or St. John Ambulance before a disaster happens
- Do not go directly to volunteer at a relief organization, hospital or disaster site during or immediately following an emergency; wait for instructions from local officials, or check with specific organizations as to their needs. Be prepared to provide information on what skills and training you have to offer
- Be patient. Immediately following a disaster, there are often many people waiting to volunteer. But remember there may be a greater need for volunteers in the weeks and months following a disaster

During or immediately after an emergency, residents should contact their local municipality for information on the need for volunteers.



Know Your Insurance

Damage from most storms, including hurricanes, tornadoes, wind and hail, is generally covered by insurance. Also, water damage caused by water coming through storm-damaged roof and windows, broken pipes or overflowing appliances is usually covered. Other water damage such as sewer backup may, or may not, be covered.

Insurance covers more than damage to your home and contents. Additional living expenses are an example. It pays for the increase in living expenses, including moving expenses, if your home is unfit to live in or you have to move out while repairs are being made.

If a generator is hardwired into your electrical panel, notify your insurance representative and ensure the work was done by a qualified professional.

Be prepared. Protect your financial assets. Discuss your insurance needs with an agent, broker or insurance representative.

What should you do if damage occurs?

Take steps immediately to protect your property from further damage. Board up holes or shut off water supplies to ensure your belongings are not damaged more than they already have been. If possible, get your car under cover. Save receipts for materials you use. Any reasonable costs incurred to protect your property will be covered by your insurance company. **Advise your insurance representative about your loss as soon as possible.**

For free information on car and home insurance, call Insurance Bureau of Canada's consumer information centre at 1-800-387-2880 or visit their website at www.ibc.ca.

York Catholic District School Board

No matter how we may plan, many things in our world can and do go wrong. While we may not be able to avoid the unexpected, at least we can be prepared for them.


Every school and location in the York Catholic School Board has an Emergency Response Manual on site, which details actions to be taken in the event of emergencies like:

- Student accidents
- Fire
- Bomb threats
- Trespassers or intruders
- Hostage-taking
- Severe weather conditions
- Protocol for dealing with child abuse

The Board's Emergency Response Manual was developed with the assistance of representatives from the fire department, police, and Children's Aid Society.

School principals have emergency plans and procedures in place to address the above mentioned situations. Principals also ensure that staff and students are trained in the plans and procedures and hold regular drills to practice and evaluate their plan.

In case of a school evacuation, depending on the emergency, parents or guardians would be called to pick up their children, or parents or guardians would be called once their children are safe in an alternate location.



If parents or guardians cannot be reached, the emergency contact (noted on the form filled out by parents at the start of the school year) would be called. If the school were unable to reach the parent or emergency contact, then students would be supervised at the alternate location until parents can be reached.

For further information, contact the York Catholic District School Board at (905) 713-2711, (416) 221-5050, or e-mail ycdsb.edu.on.ca.

York Region District School Board

The Education Centre
60 Wellington St. W., Box 40
Aurora, Ontario L4G 3H2
905-727-3141
905-895-7216
Fax: 905-727-1931

Are school staff trained to deal with emergencies that may arise in schools?

The York Region District School Board staff in public elementary and secondary school and education centre offices are trained to deal with emergencies that may arise.

Plans are in place to deal with emergencies such as:

- Fire
- Bomb threats
- Armed intruders
- Gang activities
- Severe weather conditions
- Regional chemical spills

Each school administrator has a CRISIS MANAGEMENT BINDER and a FIRE PLAN in his/her location which outlines actions to be taken in such emergencies.

Administrators ensure staff are trained in policies and procedures that are in place to deal with emergencies that may arise.

These plans have been developed in co-operation with the York Regional Police and local Fire Departments.

School Evacuation

Should it be necessary to evacuate the school, a plan is in place to bus students and staff to alternate locations.

Parents or guardians would be called once the children are safe in the alternate location.

If the parent or guardian cannot be reached, the emergency contact would be called. This is the person who is designated by the parent (on the school's emergency form) to be called in an emergency when parents are unable to be contacted.

Should the school be unable to reach the parent or the emergency contact, the child(ren) would be supervised at the "alternate location" until the parents or guardians could be reached.

For more information on the school's emergency plan, parents are asked to talk to their school's administrator.



Resources

For more information about Emergency Preparedness in your community, contact:

Town of Aurora

Community Emergency Management Co-ordinator
Central York Fire Services
905-895-9222
www.town.aurora.on.ca

Town of East Gwillimbury

Community Emergency Management Co-ordinator
East Gwillimbury Fire Department
905-853-8842
www.eastgwillimbury.ca

Town of Georgina

Community Emergency Management Co-ordinator
Georgina Fire Department
905-476-5167
www.town.georgina.on.ca

Township of King

Community Emergency Management Co-ordinator
King Township Fire & Emergency Services
905-883-2800
www.township.king.on.ca

Town of Markham

Community Emergency Management Co-ordinator
Markham Fire and Emergency Services
905-415-7521
www.city.markham.on.ca

Town of Newmarket

Community Emergency Management Co-ordinator
Central York Fire Services
905-895-9222
www.newmarket.ca

Town of Richmond Hill

Community Emergency Management Co-ordinator
Richmond Hill Fire Department
905-833-5444
Emergency Preparedness Public Education/Awareness
Richmond Hill Fire Department
905-763-8778, or
905-883-5444
www.richmondhill.ca

City of Vaughan

Manager of Emergency Planning,
Vaughan Fire and Rescue Service
905-832-2281
E-mail: fireemergencymanagement@vaughan.ca
www.vaughan.ca

Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville

Community Emergency Management Co-ordinator
Whitchurch-Stouffville Fire and Emergency Services
905-640-9595
www.townofws.com/emergency

Region of York

Emergency Management
1-877-464-9675 ext. 1230
E-mail: emergencymanagement@york.ca
www.york.ca

Canadian Red Cross

www.redcross.ca

905-890-1000

Emergency Management Ontario

www.mpss.jus.gov.on.ca/english/pub_security/emo/about_emo.html

416-314-3723

Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada

www.ocipep.gc.ca

Safe Canada

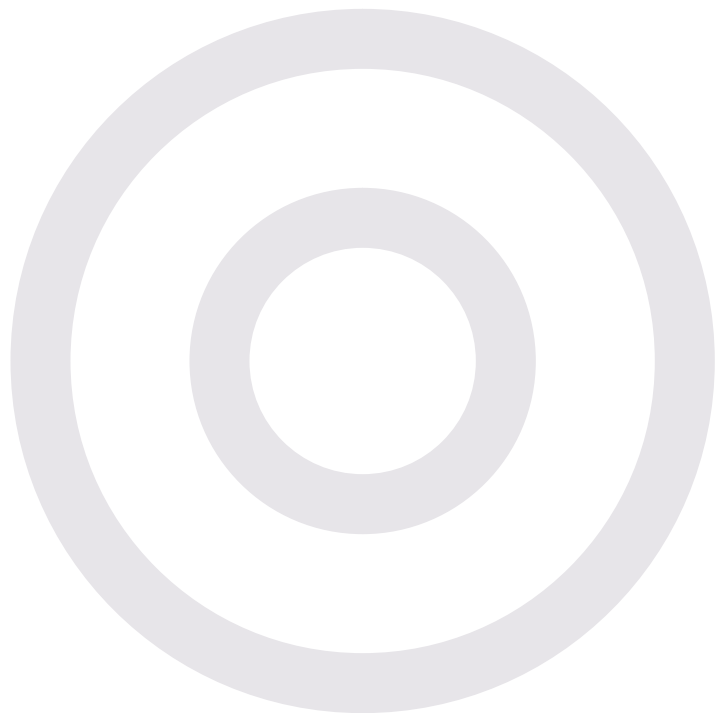
www.safecanada.ca

Canadian Centre for Emergency Preparedness

www.ccep.ca

National Organization on Disability (U.S.)

www.nod.org



Acknowledgements

This information in this Emergency Preparedness Guide has been compiled from a wide variety of sources including local, provincial, federal and U.S. organizations and agencies, and we would like to acknowledge and thank them for their assistance.

Since much of the information related to emergency preparedness exists in the public domain, it is impossible to acknowledge every individual source; however, some of the sources used for this publication include:

The Regional Municipality of Durham, The Regional Municipality of Halton, City of Ottawa, Emergency Management Ontario, Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Ontario Ministry of Energy, Independent Electricity System Operator, Office of the Fire Marshall of Ontario, Canadian Automobile Association, Insurance Bureau of Canada, York Region District School Board, York Region Catholic District School Board, Environment Canada, Canadian Red Cross, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada, Canadian Centre for Emergency Preparedness, New York City Office of Emergency Management, The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (U.S.), Federal Emergency Management Agency (U.S.), American Red Cross, Canadian Red Cross and National Organization on Disabilities (U.S.).

Your Important Telephone Numbers

Out of province contact:

Name: _____ City: _____

Telephone (Day/Evening): _____

Local contact:

Name: _____ Telephone (Day/Evening): _____

Nearest relative:

Name: _____ City: _____

Telephone (Day/Evening): _____

Family Work numbers:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Emergency Telephone Numbers

In a life-threatening emergency, dial 911.

Police Department: _____

Fire Department: _____

Hospital: _____

Family Physician: _____

Poison Information: **1-800-268-9017**

Reunion Locations

1. Outside your home

2. Away from the neighbourhood, in case you cannot return home, please meet at:

Address: _____ Telephone: _____

Route to try first: _____

Notes:

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