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JIBC

School of Public  
Safety & Security

Emergency Management  
Division

# INTRODUCTION TO EMERGENCY SOCIAL SERVICES



Emergency  
ManagementBC

September 2011

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Edition Revised 2011 for Ministry of Public Safety & Solicitor General

Developed By  
**The Emergency Management Division,  
Justice Institute of British Columbia**  
April 2000



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of **BRITISH COLUMBIA**  
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# Foreword



## Welcome

Welcome to the self-study guide for ESS100 Introduction to Emergency Social Services. Completion of this guide is a prerequisite for other courses in Emergency Social Services (ESS).

Thank you for taking the time to volunteer and to participate in the Emergency Social Services Program.

## About this Course

ESS100 Introduction to Emergency Social Services provides new ESS workers with fundamental information about the Emergency Social Services Program.

The course is made up of two modules:

- Module 1: Overview of ESS
- Module 2: Personal Preparedness for ESS Workers

The two modules together can be completed in approximately three hours. It is recommended that Module 1 be completed before Module 2.

**Each module as a short quiz at the end to check your understanding of the material. Once you have completed the Introduction to ESS Module 1 and Module 2 Quizzes, and discussed them with your ESS Director or ESS Support Organization Coordinator (e.g. Red Cross, Salvation Army, etc.), complete the Student Information form before the Table of Contents of this booklet, have it signed by your ESS Director or Coordinator, and fax it to the JIBC Emergency Management Division (604) 528-5798.**

The ESS100 Introduction to Emergency Social Services is a prerequisite for all JIBC ESS courses.

## About the ESS Program

Emergency Social Services (ESS) is an emergency response program made up of dedicated individuals who share a common goal of assisting people in an emergency.



## For More Information

For more information on the ESS program, contact Provincial Emergency Program's (PEP) headquarters in Victoria:



ESS Office  
Provincial Emergency Program  
PO Box 9201 STN PROV GOVT  
Victoria, BC V8W 9J1



1 800 585-9559



[www.ess.bc.ca](http://www.ess.bc.ca)

# Module 1: Overview of ESS



## About this Module

The Overview of ESS module is intended to provide new ESS workers with a general overview of the ESS Program.

## Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this module, you will be able to:

- ✓ define Emergency Social Services
- ✓ describe the basic Emergency Social Services: the provision of emergency food, clothing, lodging, and family reunification
- ✓ describe other Emergency Social Services: the provision of services such as emotional support, volunteer services, communications, first aid, health services, child care, public information, transportation services, pet care, and recreation services
- ✓ define Emergency Management
- ✓ discuss the relationship between the local ESS team and municipal, regional, provincial, and federal governments
- ✓ identify ESS Support Organizations



# How Disasters Affect People



Although disasters may harm the physical environment, they also affect people. Lives are lost, people injured, homes destroyed, and families dislocated. Disasters affect the psychological, social, and economic well-being of individuals, families, and entire communities.

Take a moment now to think about the hazards that may threaten the safety of your community. List 5:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_



Although most of us will not experience a disaster in our lifetime, many others will not be as fortunate.



Take a moment to think about the impact on your life if your home was destroyed today.

List 5 losses you might experience:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_



List 3 emotions you think you might feel if you were to lose your home in a disaster:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_



## Definition of ESS

Emergency Social Services are those services provided on a short-term basis (generally for 72 hours) to preserve the emotional and physical well being of evacuees and response workers in emergency situations.

## What Services Are Provided?

When people are forced to evacuate their homes temporarily or their homes are damaged or destroyed, they may require assistance with essential services to maintain life and health. They will likely be directed to go to a Reception Centre for assistance. A Reception Centre is a safe place where people can gather to get information, register, and receive assistance with their needs.

Primary services available at a Reception Centre are described below.



### Referrals for Food, Clothing and Lodging

- provides food and meals to people who are without food or food preparation facilities, including both evacuees and emergency response workers
- provides essential clothing, blankets and toiletries for evacuees
- provides safe, temporary lodging for those who are forced from their homes, and who are without insurance or unable to immediately access their insurance policies and are unable to stay with family or friends



### Family Reunification

- registers evacuees, takes inquiries about people's safety and whereabouts, and assists in reuniting families

Additional services may be provided at Reception Centres. The needs of each particular emergency will determine the services to be provided. When necessary, communities should plan to provide the services listed below.



## Emotional Support

- provides emotional support for evacuees and ESS workers, and provides referrals to appropriate human services agencies when needed



VOLUNTEERS

## Volunteer Services

- coordinates assignments for trained volunteers and trains “walk-in” volunteers to assist where needed



## Communications

- ensures the effective flow of key information in and out of a Reception Centre



## First Aid

- provides basic first aid support and makes referrals to appropriate health care facilities as necessary



## Health Services

- assists in dealing with public health issues such as communicable diseases as well as ensuring safe water, food, and sanitation
- provides assistance to people with special needs, the dependent elderly, and people with physical or mental disabilities



## Information

- ensures that accurate, up-to-date, relevant information and print materials are available for evacuees as well as workers



## Child Care

- arranges for qualified childcare workers to provide activities in a supportive environment for young children who have experienced a disaster. Some Reception Centres may provide a child care area for parents to care for their own children
- oversee children who arrive at a Reception Centre without a parent or guardian



### Transportation Services

- arranges transportation for evacuees to hotels, motels, or Group Lodging facilities, as required



### Recreation Services

- organizes and provides activities for all ages and special needs groups in a Reception Centre or Group Lodging



### Multicultural Services

- provides needed translation services



### Pet Services

- assists with the care of domestic pets through the provision of food, water, exercise, and shelter

## The Role of the ESS Program in Emergency Management

Emergency management is defined as an organized effort to mitigate against, prepare for, respond to, and recover from an emergency and/or disaster. The purpose of emergency management is to save lives, reduce suffering, protect property, protect the environment, and reduce economic and social losses.

As a critical component of the local authority’s emergency management program, Emergency Social Services plays an important role in:

- helping people remain independent and self-sufficient
- helping people meet their basic survival needs during a disaster
- reuniting families separated by disaster
- providing people with accurate and up-to-date information about the situation at hand
- helping people re-establish themselves as quickly as possible after a disaster



# British Columbia's Emergency Response Management System (BCERMS)

BC has an Emergency Response Management System that will ensure a coordinated and organized provincial response and recovery to all emergency events.

Under the Emergency Program Management Regulation, local authorities must make provisions for the delivery of Emergency Social Services. The Provincial Emergency Program (PEP) provides support to local authorities and their ESS teams by providing training and consultation in developing their plans. All provincial government ministries, crown corporations, most municipalities and many regional district use the BCERMS model for their emergency operations, so all training developed by PEP is also based on BCERMS principles.

## Who Plans for ESS?

Local authorities are responsible for ESS planning. In most communities, local ESS teams made up of volunteers, municipal or regional district staff, and members of existing community service organizations plan for and deliver Emergency Social Services. A community's Emergency Program Coordinator ensures the appointment of an ESS Director. Some local authorities may appoint a municipal employee as ESS Director, while others may recruit a volunteer to fulfill this role.

An ESS Director recruits volunteers to be responsible for each of the Emergency Social Services functions, (e.g., Referrals for Food, Clothing & Lodging, Emotional Support, First Aid, etc.). These volunteers come together to form the ESS Planning Committee (see organization chart, page 1-10).

Supervisors for each service recruit sufficient individuals or members of community organizations to share the responsibility for the ESS planning process and to respond on a 24-hour basis if required.





Emergency Social Services are based on function—in a small community, a team of five or six people may be able to provide all of the required Emergency Social Services. For example, a small team may be able to register evacuees and ensure they have necessary clothing, toiletries, food, and a place to stay. Even if the evacuees require medical assistance, support from a member of the clergy, or short-term shelter for their pets, a small team of ESS workers may be able to arrange for these services.

In a large community where thousands of people are affected by an emergency or disaster, many ESS workers may be required to provide the basic services to evacuees. Even greater numbers of ESS workers may be required to assist evacuees with specialized services such as childcare or pet care.



## When Are Services Provided?

A community's overall Emergency Response Plan outlines the emergency roles of all response agencies, including law enforcement, fire & rescue, emergency medical services (EMS), Emergency Social Services, utilities, and others. Senior officials from each of these response groups generally form the community's Emergency Management Organization or Emergency Planning Committee. They are tasked with developing and implementing plans and measures in emergencies and disasters. The ESS Director represents the ESS team.

### ESS Activation Levels

There are three levels of activation for ESS.

**ESS Level 1** involves the evacuation of only one or two families (or up to 12 people), without activation of a Reception Centre. Services are usually provided at or near the site of the incident and may be delivered by members of the ESS team or other agencies designated by the local authority. A Level 1 ESS

response is frequently activated by local fire or police dispatch and generally requires only two ESS responders. This is the most common level of ESS response.

**ESS Levels 2 – 3** involve larger numbers of evacuees, increase in complexity, and will normally result in call out of the ESS team and activation of a Reception Centre.

The ESS Director will be notified by the local Emergency Program Coordinator (or designated alternate) of the need for an ESS response. The ESS Director will then activate the ESS Plan, calling out necessary volunteers and providing ESS as required.

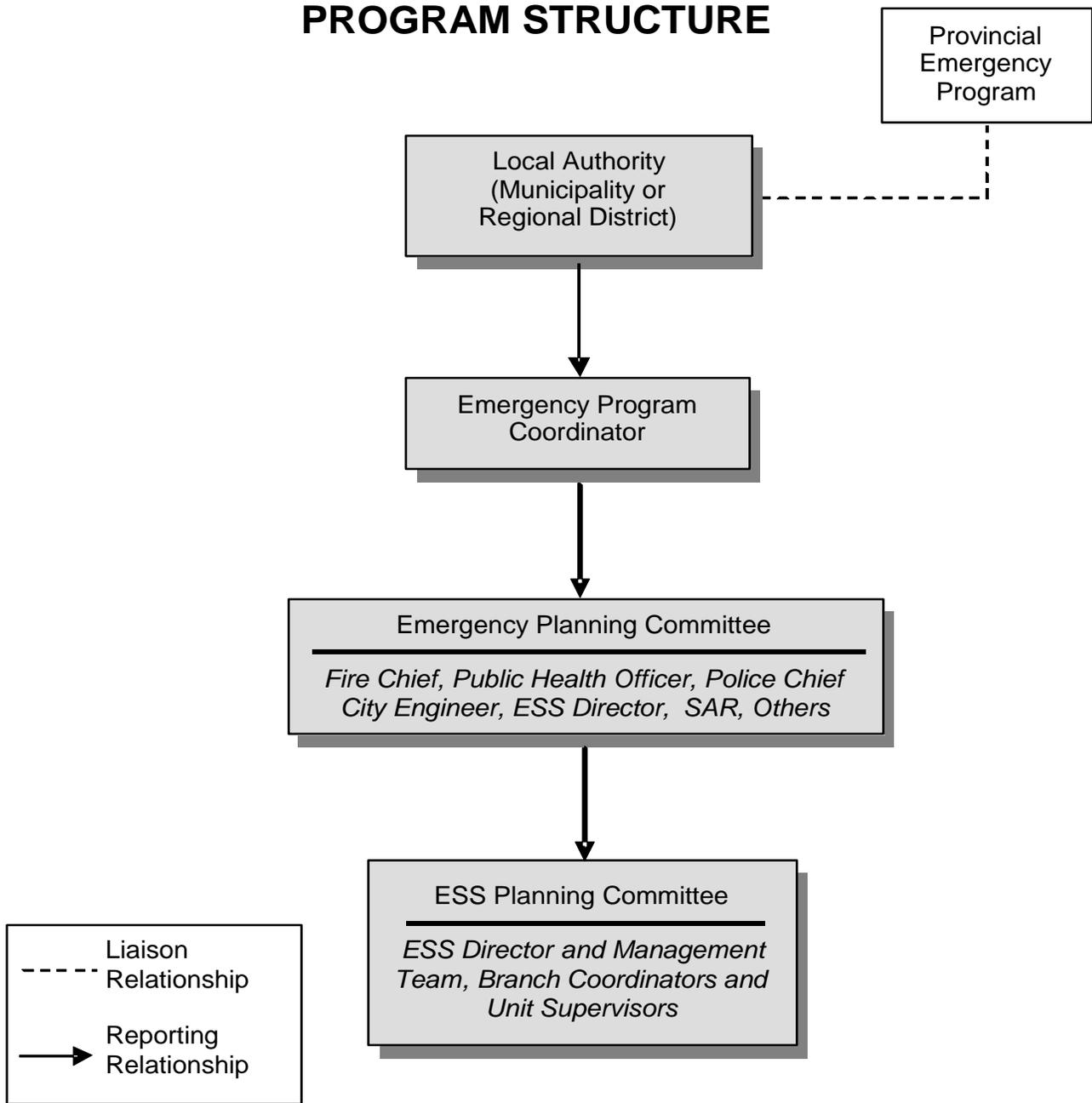
Services are provided for all levels for up to 72 hours to those affected by the disaster and in need of assistance. During those 72 hours evacuees should be making alternate arrangements for their families with the assistance of their insurance company or community organizations.

An ESS team and community unaffected by disaster may even be required to act as a “host community.” The “host community” receives evacuees forced to leave their community because of a disaster or unsafe conditions and provides them with Emergency Social Services.



# Local Authority Emergency Program Structure

## LOCAL AUTHORITY EMERGENCY PROGRAM STRUCTURE

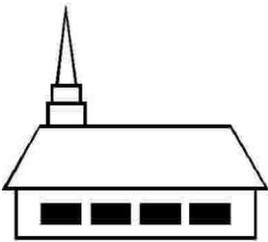


## Where Are Services Provided?



Emergency Social Services are delivered primarily at Reception Centres, Group Lodging facilities, or directly to people who cannot come to these centres and facilities because of disability or transportation problems. Facilities designated as Reception Centres and Group Lodging facilities may include:

- recreation centres
- school gymnasiums
- church halls
- hotel conference or meeting rooms
- shopping malls



If a suitable facility is not available, a site may be selected and tents or trailers may be brought in. Examples of sites include:

- municipal parks
- camp grounds
- school playing fields
- parking lots



The location of Reception Centres will depend on the facilities available in a community or on the specific requirements for a facility during the emergency response.

Experience from previous disasters indicates that as few as 10 to 25% of the population may require assistance. Even if evacuees don't require assistance, they will be encouraged to go to a Reception Centre to register and get current information regarding the disaster. Once evacuees' immediate survival needs have been met, evacuees will continue to be welcomed at a Reception Centre where emotional support and additional information and directives regarding the emergency response will be provided.



Picture yourself being told to evacuate from your neighbourhood in the middle of the night. At the police roadblock you are directed to report to a local gymnasium that has been set up as a Reception Centre. What would you like to see at the Reception Centre when you arrive?

List 5 items:



1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

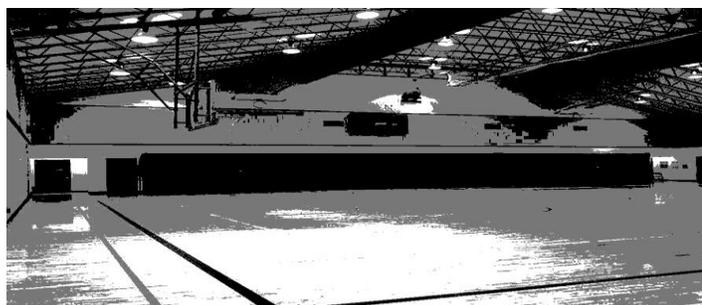


How would you like to be greeted on your arrival at the Reception Centre?

List 5 ways:



1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_



## Why Plan for ESS?



In order to respond promptly to the needs of evacuees and response workers, an ESS team needs to plan, train, and exercise together.

Establishing a team of people and organizations familiar with a community's services helps ensure that people with the ESS knowledge, skills, and resources will be there to help when disaster strikes.

Developing an ESS plan involves identifying a community's human and material resources that will be required in an ESS response. This process includes identifying people with skills in areas such as crisis intervention, amateur radio operation, translation services, volunteer management, first aid, and food safety.

ESS workers should survey community resources and establish written agreements with suppliers such as hotels, motels, restaurants, and thrift stores to assist with the provision of services in time of disaster.



The location of resources such as cots, bedding, and insulated food coolers should also be identified.

It is important that all of this information be included in a written ESS plan that can be implemented in an organized and coordinated manner as soon as an emergency occurs.

## Provincial ESS Support Programs

Most emergencies can be handled by a local authority's ESS resources. However, when a large number of people are displaced by an incident, the province may be asked to assist.

### Mobile Support Teams (MST)

If a community is overwhelmed by a disaster and does not have access to support from neighbouring communities, the Provincial Emergency Program may provide assistance at the request of the local Emergency Program Coordinator or ESS Director by activating ESS Mobile Support Teams (MST).



- MSTs are regionally-based teams composed of trained ESS volunteers.
- MSTs can travel, on short notice, to any community not able to mobilize a sufficient number of trained volunteers to deal with a local emergency.
- MSTs may provide on-site training and consultation for local residents to assist them in organizing ESS during an evacuation.
- Travel and accommodation costs of MST response to an emergency are covered by the Provincial Emergency Program (PEP).
- Management, training, and exercising of these teams are also funded by PEP.
- Information regarding the MST can be requested from the ESS Office at 1-800-585-9559.

### **ESS Support Organizations**

The ESS Office has agreements with ESS Support Organizations to provide additional resources to communities in major emergencies.

The following ESS Support Organizations include the following agencies (listed in alphabetical order):

#### **BC Housing**



BC Housing

BC Housing maintains lists of lodging resources available throughout the province. If more people are displaced than can be housed in their local area, BC Housing may refer them elsewhere for shelter. It also maintains a stockpile of cots and blankets throughout the province to equip Group Lodging facilities when required.

#### **Buddhist Compassion Relief Tzu Chi Foundation Canada**



In British Columbia the Tzu-Chi has taken on the task of mass feeding in times of disaster. The organization will be responsible for tracking the Mobile Feeding Units (MFU) assigned to the province from the National Emergency Stockpile System (NESS). They will also provide support to communities in addressing their planning for mass feeding needs in times of emergency or disasters.



Canadian Red Cross

### Canadian Red Cross Society

The Canadian Red Cross trains their volunteers in family reunification functions. When requested by the ESS Office during a response, Red Cross may provide family reunification volunteers, with disaster experience, to assist local volunteers. The Central Registration and Inquiry Bureau (CRIB) can be used if there are multiple registration sites, and to respond to large numbers of inquiries from outside the disaster area.



### Justice Institute of British Columbia (JIBC)

The Emergency Management Division (EMD) of the JIBC develops and delivers basic and advanced ESS training. On request, ESS instructors may provide or coordinate on-site training during a response. The instructors may be used as consultants in operations as required.



St. John Ambulance

### St. John Ambulance

St. John Ambulance maintains a provincial database of people who have taken its First Aid courses and who are willing to help in the event of an emergency. St. John Ambulance sends personnel to set up and staff first aid stations.



### The Salvation Army

The Salvation Army is responsible for training their volunteers in the functions of meet and greet and emotional support. On request from the ESS Office, The Salvation Army can provide additional meet and greet or emotional support workers, if needed, from outside the affected area.



### Emergency Social Services Association (ESSA)

ESSA is a non-profit association established to support ESS volunteers and communities in British Columbia in the development and maintenance of their Emergency Social Services team. ESSA is not an identified emergency response organization.

# Legislative Authority for ESS

Under BC's *Emergency Program Act*, municipalities and regional districts are required to establish and maintain an Emergency Management plan, of which ESS is an important component.

The provincial and federal governments provide support to the local authorities.

## Provincial Government Support for ESS

The Provincial Emergency Program (PEP) of the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General is responsible for:

- managing a provincial emergency response
- assisting local authorities with planning for an emergency
- supporting volunteers through a PEP Task Number, to ensure that they are eligible for WorkSafeBC and liability insurance when they are involved in an ESS response or engaged in approved training

The ESS Office at PEP Headquarters in Victoria:

- provides overall leadership and coordination of ESS across BC
- develops policies and procedures for use by ESS teams
- supports communities in building capacity and planning for and operating ESS
- funds training for volunteers
- liaises with local governments, provincial ministries, federal government departments, non-government organizations and other key emergency management stakeholders
- provides volunteer support
- supports local and regional level ESS responses to disasters and emergencies
- manages provincial level ESS responses

## **Federal Government Support for ESS**

At the federal government level, Public Safety Canada (PSC), through the *Emergency Management Act*, develops programs and policies to prepare for national disasters. Public Safety Canada oversees Canada's involvement in international emergency preparedness matters, and provides post-disaster financial aid to help communities rebuild following a disaster.

The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) Office of Emergency Services is responsible for supporting emergency health and social services in the provinces, territories or abroad. It manages the National Emergency Stockpile System (NESS), which includes emergency supplies and medical and pharmaceutical supplies, which are available upon request from provincial and territorial governments and from other parts of the Government of Canada.



## Quiz - Module 1: Overview of ESS

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Read the following statement and circle the letter corresponding to the correct answer. When you have completed the quiz, submit it in person or by telephone or fax to your local ESS Director or Support Organization (e.g., Red Cross or Salvation Army).**

1. Emergency Social Services will assist evacuees with which of the following?
  - a) Sandbagging of their primary residence
  - b) Moving furniture
  - c) Temporary accommodation
  - d) Replacement of towels and household linens
  
2. What is the name of the legislation (Act) that guides ESS in B.C.?
  - a) Emergency Preparedness Act
  - b) Emergency Program Act
  - c) Social Services Act
  - d) Disaster Measures Act
  
3. Which level of government has the **primary** responsibility for ESS in British Columbia?
  - a) Local authorities
  - b) Provincial government
  - c) Federal government





**True or False (circle the appropriate letter)**

- 4. Food, clothing, lodging, and family reunification are considered essential to the emotional and physical well being of people in emergency situations. **T F**
- 5. An ESS Director will activate the ESS Plan upon direction from the local Emergency Program Coordinator or designated alternate. **T F**
- 6. When a disaster involves only one or two families the Level One ESS volunteers provide the same Emergency Social Services but on a smaller scale. **T F**
- 7. PEP provides WorkSafeBC coverage and liability insurance to registered ESS volunteers at training sessions, exercises, and responses. **T F**
- 8. ESS is available to those people who have insurance but are unable to access it. **T F**

**In the box beside the name of each ESS Support Organization, place the letter that best describes the service their team provides, at the provincial level.**

<b>SUPPORT ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>FUNCTION</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> I. BC Housing	A. Support volunteers
<input type="checkbox"/> II. Buddhist Compassion Relief Tzu Chi Foundation of Canada	B. First Aid
<input type="checkbox"/> III. Emergency Social Services Association	C. Group Lodging
<input type="checkbox"/> IV. Canadian Red Cross Society	D. Family Reunification
<input type="checkbox"/> V. St. John Ambulance	E. Meet & Greet
<input type="checkbox"/> VI. The Salvation Army	F. Mass Feeding

Answers: 1-C; 2-b; 3-a; 4-T; 5-T; 6-T; 7-T; 8-T; 9-C; 10-F; 11-A; 12-D; 13-B; 14-E



# Module 2: Personal Preparedness for ESS Workers

## About this Module



Although most ESS work involves meetings, planning, and getting ready to respond, the day may come when you are called upon to help at the time of a disaster. Module 2 is designed to help you prepare yourself and your family, friends, and employer so that you will be ready to respond in a time of need.

The module tells the story of Susan, a new ESS volunteer, and the preparations she makes for her first ESS assignment. Susan's story is presented as an example of what a new volunteer might experience. Because each volunteer has unique characteristics and life circumstances, experiences may vary.



The key points of the story are presented after each section to allow quick review.



The module is presented in three parts, each of which introduces new information about ESS:



- Before the assignment
- During the assignment
- After the assignment



Included with the module are some helpful materials:

- A list of items to put in your "Grab and Go" bag
- A sample letter that your ESS Director could send to your employer to help you discuss taking time off work if you are called out on an assignment
- A quiz to help you check your new knowledge of ESS



- Brochures:
  - After the evacuation – help when you need it most
  - Volunteers
  - Returning Home From A Disaster Assignment
  - Disaster Response Routes
  - Out-of-Area Contact Card
  - Emergency Supplies Checklist

## **Learning Objectives**

Upon completion of this module, you will be able to:

- ✓ Describe the activities required of an ESS worker before, during and after an ESS response
- ✓ Explain the slogan, “Sharing the Responsibility”
- ✓ Assemble a “Grab and Go” bag
- ✓ Practice “Worker Care” principles

## Before the Assignment



### The New ESS Volunteer

Recently there was an advertisement in the Middleton Times inviting people to an ESS meeting at the recreation centre. Susan was one of the people who attended and, as a result of the information presented at the meeting, decided to join the ESS team. The following pages describe her experiences from the time she was recruited to the end of her first ESS assignment, and the preparations she and her family made.

Susan lives in Middleton, a community of 35,000 people, with her husband and two children. She is a teller at the Middleton Bank and does some volunteer work for her son Jason's Beaver Troop and for her daughter Shelley's Guide Troop. Her husband Steve works as a computer programmer for the local community college. Jason and Shelley are now old enough that their parents can spare the time to do some volunteer work for their community.



### Sharing the Responsibility

Breakfast time at Susan's home, the morning after the ESS meeting:



"Steve, you know that meeting I went to last night—the one about disasters?"

"Sure. How did it go?"

"It was really interesting. You know, if there was a disaster, like a forest fire or a flood, and we had to evacuate, we'd probably have to go to a Reception Centre for things like food and a place to stay. I'd heard about Reception Centres, but I didn't know who ran them. Actually, they would need a lot of help from volunteers."



"I'll bet you volunteered, didn't you?"

"As a matter of fact, I did. It isn't a huge time commitment, and I'll learn a lot of things that will be helpful to our family. Did you know that if we lost phone service after an earthquake, the pay phones might still be working? We should probably keep some change handy. And the Disaster Response Routes—I thought they were the roads we should use if we had to evacuate, but they're exactly the opposite. We're supposed to keep away from Disaster Response Routes so they're available for emergency vehicles."

"You're right, that is helpful to know."

“The ESS Director who presented the seminar gave us a lot of useful information. There are a few things we need to talk about in case there is ever a disaster here. She said that if a disaster happens, we might be alone for as long as 72 hours. We’re not prepared for that.

She also told us about the commonly used slogan ‘Sharing the Responsibility.’ Maybe this evening the four of us can start doing our share by putting together a ‘Grab and Go’ bag. We should also talk about how our family would get back together if we were separated at the time of a disaster.”

### **Key Points from the ESS Meeting**

-  People should be prepared to be on their own for up to 72 hours.
-  Disaster Response Routes should be kept clear for emergency vehicles—they should not be used to leave the area, unless directed by emergency response personnel.
-  Evacuees requiring food and lodging arrangements are directed to a Reception Centre.
-  While some Reception Centre workers may be employees of the city/municipality and/or community services agencies, the majority of ESS workers are local volunteers.
-  If home phones are not working, pay phones may still work, so everyone should keep some quarters on hand.
-  The slogan “Sharing the Responsibility,” commonly used by emergency preparedness workers, means that everyone should share the responsibility of planning for a disaster.
-  Everyone should have a family reunion plan in place to get the family back together as families may be separated at the time of a disaster, with parents at work and children at school, for example.
-  Planning can make a vital difference in reuniting the family when communications break down following a disaster.

## Consulting the Family

While we were developing our family reunion plan, Steve and the children asked a lot of questions about my new role as an ESS volunteer. Here are some of the things that I explained to them:

I might be asked to work as a Registration & Referrals worker at a Reception Centre, registering evacuees and completing Referral forms for meals, clothing, or accommodation for people who need them. People might need this kind of help because they had to leave their homes in a hurry, are unable to stay with family or friends, or have no insurance to cover their expenses while they are out of their homes.

Or, I might be assigned to a Group Lodging facility, where people sleep in a large hall because there is nowhere else to stay.

I would wear an ESS ID and nametag so that people would know that they could ask me for help.

If a disaster hit Middleton, many people would probably want to volunteer. The ESS Program prefers people to volunteer before the disaster so they can be trained.



What I wanted my family to understand was that I could be assigned to one of several places, depending on what was needed at any given time. All jobs are important in a disaster response.

Steve wanted to know more about the financial impact of volunteering. He was concerned about what would happen if I took time off work, and whether I would lose pay. We can't really afford for me to lose three days' wages.

We agreed that I would only go on an ESS assignment under certain conditions. For example, if my employer agreed that I

could take the time as paid time off, and if one of our relatives could baby sit the kids so Steve could go to work. As a young family we have to be realistic about what we can and can't do.

I also told him that ESS workers on assignments have WorkSafeBC and liability insurance coverage through the Provincial Emergency Program (PEP).

We spent some time talking about ESS workers returning after an assignment and their need for support and understanding at home. It helped to look over the ESS Emotional Health pamphlet series I was given at the team meeting.

After our talk, we both felt comfortable with the idea of me volunteering as an ESS worker.

### **Key Points about ESS Workers**

-  An ESS worker may be called upon to do any one of many jobs at a Reception Centre or Group Lodging facility, depending on the need. All jobs are important.
-  ESS workers can be recognized by their ESS ID (usually vests) and nametags.
-  Registration & Referrals workers are ESS workers who register evacuees, assess their needs, and provide Referral forms for meals, clothing, or accommodations.
-  Many people want to volunteer during an emergency. New volunteers are registered and provided orientation and training so they know what to do. However, it is preferable to have volunteers trained in ESS before a disaster strikes.
-  All ESS workers have WorkSafeBC and liability insurance coverage through PEP, even those who only volunteer during the disaster response.
-  ESS workers should discuss with their employers whether they will be paid during an assignment. This should be done before a disaster occurs.
-  ESS workers need family support to go on an assignment.
-  Emotional support and understanding are important for ESS workers when they return home from an assignment.



## The “Grab and Go” Bag Project

At the ESS meeting, I was given a “Grab and Go” bag checklist (see page 2-10) to help me pack the items I might need in an emergency.

I sat down at the kitchen table with the checklist to decide what items I already had and where to get the items I still needed. For the flashlight, battery-powered radio, and the first aid kit, I thought I would try either the drug store or the hardware store. As for clothes, I checked off the sweatshirts, pants, and waterproof jacket from my wardrobe, but I still needed work gloves and sturdy, comfortable walking shoes.

As I was thinking about this, Shelley ran into the kitchen and sat down right next to me.

“What are you doing, Mom?”

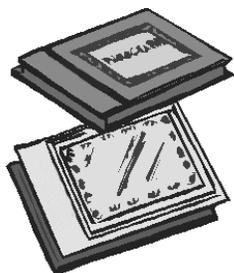
“Getting started on my ‘Grab and Go’ bag.”

“Let me look ... ooh, snacks and drinks, clothes—cool! Can I have a bag, too?”



I knew the kids should be prepared too, so Shelley, Jason, and I went on a shopping trip. Without too much difficulty we were able to get the things we needed for our bags. The most challenging part was persuading the kids to include healthy snacks like bottled water and dried fruit and nuts.

Most of the personal items, like Steve’s spare glasses, were easy to find. The only thing that was time-consuming was getting all our papers together to copy. My driver’s license, medical card, home insurance and list of phone numbers of friends and family all had to be copied. Including the papers for Steve, Shelley and Jason, we had about twenty documents to take to the corner store to photocopy.



Since we were making a family project out of the “Grab and Go” bag, I bought four small, inexpensive photo albums with plastic sleeves, one album for each person. We put each document in its own sleeve for easy access, and included recent family photos to help raise our morale in the event of a disaster, and to assist us in locating missing or separated family members and pets.



We almost forgot our dog Max in our planning. Luckily he came to check out all the activity as we were packing our bags, and we realized that he would need his own supplies in the event of a disaster. The kids packed a spare leash, a 3-day food and water supply, and one of his favourite toys. We also chose an accessible place for Max’s travel kennel.

We confirmed with Steve’s brother Mark, who lives in Ontario, that he would be our out-of-area contact person. Mark needed to know that, following a disaster, each of us would notify him of our condition and location. All our friends and relatives would be instructed to contact him to find out about our family’s safety and whereabouts. All four of us then completed out-of-area contact cards. Steve and I decided to keep our cards in our wallets, while Shelley and Jason put theirs in their “Grab and Go” bags.



I made some last-minute changes to the contents of our bags when I remembered the ESS Director’s suggestion about choosing light-weight items—everyone (except Max) has to carry his or her own bag.

The last thing I did was stick a note to the refrigerator door, reminding me when to replace items that expire, like water, batteries and Steve’s back-up supply of prescription medications. I decided to follow the ESS Director’s suggestion to check our bags twice a year when we change our clocks to Daylight Saving Time and back to Standard Time.

## Key Points about the “Grab And Go” Bag

-  Preparations such as packing a “Grab and Go” bag can make a big difference in the event of a disaster.
-  Most of the items on the checklist won’t need to be purchased—look around your home for items that you already own; if items must be bought and you are on a limited budget, try spreading out your purchases over several paychecks.
-  Pack healthy foods with a long shelf life.
-  Remember to pack supplies for your pets.
-  Consider including a few personal photos as well as pictures of your pets.
-  Identify a person who is willing and able to act as your family’s out-of-area contact person. Seek his or her support in the family’s reunion planning process. The person should have an answering machine to record calls when away and should routinely check for messages.
-  Keep your out-of-area contact card in your wallet, “Grab and Go” bag, or other readily accessible location.
-  Pack lightly—each person will have to carry his or her own bag.
-  Decide on a system to remind yourself when it is time to replace items that may expire, for example, twice per year when you change your clocks to Daylight Savings Time and back to Standard Time.



## The “Grab and Go” Bag Checklist



### Clothing

- T-shirt/sweat shirt/sweater
- good walking shoes
- waterproof jacket
- pants
- baseball cap/hat
- underwear and socks



### Personal hygiene

- soap
- face cloth
- towel
- toothbrush
- toothpaste
- personal items (for example, razor, lip salve, and deodorant)



### First aid

- small personal first aid kit
- antiseptic solutions
- band aids
- tweezers, scissors, and nail clippers



### Identification

(copies)

- driver’s license
- fanny pack with name tag and photo ID
- personal photographs (including those of pets)
- out-of-area contact card
- important ESS phone numbers



### Food and water

- granola bars or similar
- 1 – 2 litres of water



### Tools and equipment

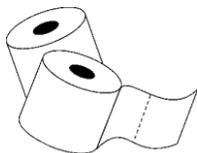
- flashlight
- battery operated, wind-up, or solar radio
- batteries for flashlight and radio (check twice a year)
- lighter/matches
- folding knife
- bottle/can opener
- garbage bags



### Medical aids

- spare eye glasses/contact lenses
- prescription medications

### Extras



- space blanket
- toilet paper and handi-wipes
- feminine hygiene products
- duct tape
- ball of string
- scissors and pliers
- cash including change for phone calls
- wide tip permanent marker
- books, cards, items that make you feel comfortable

## The Employer

A few weeks passed after completing the “Grab and Go” bag project. Since then I had attended a number of ESS meetings and training sessions and decided that now was the time to discuss my ESS work with my employer.

I thought it would be a good idea to give my manager a letter from my ESS Director and an ESS brochure before meeting to discuss possible time off for ESS assignments.



*The Setting: The Middleton Bank, the Manager’s office.*

“Good morning Susan. Come in and we’ll go over the letter I received from your ESS Director.”

“Hi, Joanne. Thanks for taking this time to talk to me.”

“No problem. I read over the letter and the brochure you gave me. I guess what we need to decide is how we would handle your time off work if you were called out to help with ESS. I have a few questions. Are you volunteering for Middleton or the province?”

“Well, the provincial government sets the standards, but every community is responsible for setting up their own ESS teams or Program, so I’m actually volunteering for Middleton.”

“I see. As I understand it, if there were a disaster here, like a major forest fire, you would almost certainly be needed. How long would an assignment like that take you away from work?”

“ESS assignments are usually up to 72 hours, but could be extended.”

“So you could be called out to help at any time and you could be away for three days. If we were short-staffed or really busy, that could be a concern for both the bank and for me.”

“The ESS Director said these assignments don’t happen very often in our community, and I don’t have to accept an assignment. If I were called out, I would certainly discuss it with you first to make sure it was OK.”

“That sounds reasonable. What about training? Are you expected to attend ESS training sessions during working hours?”





“Well, for new volunteers like me, training sessions are offered on weekends or evenings, so that shouldn’t affect my work. More senior people like the ESS Directors and some of the managers attend courses at the Justice Institute of BC. Their courses can be up to three or four days duration.”



“Then it seems to me that there are two things we have to agree on. Let’s start with the easy one. I’m sure the bank will have no problem with you helping in a local disaster response. So let’s agree that if a disaster struck the city, then your time as an ESS worker would be treated as paid leave for up to three working days. After that we would have to discuss further. Does that sound reasonable?”

“I think that’s very fair.”

“Now, as to training, if at some time in the future you want to take extra ESS courses during working hours, I would like to review the courses and timing before we agree to time off and whether it would be with or without pay. Is that OK with you?”

“It certainly is. I really appreciate your consideration, Joanne. You know, once I’m trained, perhaps I could offer personal preparedness training to the staff at lunch time.”

“That’s a good idea. We can consider it when the time comes. But I do want to let you know that the bank is generally supportive of volunteer efforts, especially for something as worthwhile as ESS. What I will do now is write you a memo outlining what we’ve discussed and send a copy to the human resources department. Anything else?”

“No, I think we’ve covered everything. Thanks again.”

As I left the room, I realized how fortunate I was to be working for the Middleton Bank. Some employers, such as small companies, may be unable to make the same arrangements due to lack of staff or funds.

## **Key Points to Discuss with Your Employer Before You Are Called out on an ESS Assignment**

- Although the province sets the standards for ESS, each community is responsible for its own ESS program.
- ESS volunteers are required primarily for their own community.
- ESS assignments don't happen very often.
- It is possible that an experienced ESS worker could be called to help in other areas of the province.
- ESS assignments are generally up to 72 hours duration but could be longer.
- Volunteers do not have to accept an ESS assignment.
- Training for new volunteers is generally held on evenings and weekends.



## Sample Letter from Susan's ESS Director to Her Employer

Date

Ms. Joanne Dufresne  
Manager,  
Middleton Bank  
1432 - 8th Avenue  
Middleton B.C. V9X 9R9



Dear Ms. Dufresne:

I am writing to you as the Emergency Social Services Director for the City of Middleton to introduce our program and seek your support for Susan Jones, should she be called on to assist us in a disaster response.

Emergency Social Services (ESS) is the part of our community's Emergency Management Program that provides emergency food, clothing and lodging services and other basic necessities to people affected by a disaster or major emergency. Communities across BC are responsible for the provision of Emergency Social Services, with the support of both the provincial and federal governments. The services are organized and delivered by trained volunteers, municipal, and provincial workers.

It is very important that our volunteers make prior arrangements with their employers in case they are called on to assist in a disaster response. Should a disaster strike Middleton, the ESS team would be contacted by the city to establish Reception Centres to care for evacuees and assist in re-uniting families and friends. In such a circumstance, I would call on all our trained ESS volunteers, including Susan. This could involve time off from work for up to three working days. It is our hope that your firm and others in Middleton would support any employees who are ESS volunteers by allowing them to take volunteer time off with pay. I stress that disasters requiring ESS are very infrequent in any community. The last time ESS was activated in Middleton was the 2001 flash flood.

I have enclosed a brochure about ESS that explains in more detail its purpose and mandate.

In closing, I would like to thank you in advance for any arrangements you may make to support Susan in her ESS volunteer role.

Sincerely,

Yvonne Beckman, ESS Director  
City of Middleton

## During the Assignment



### The Assignment

When disaster strikes, all the planning and preparations ESS workers have made, and all the training they have undertaken, will be put to the test. The challenges are numerous, such as being away from their families, helping people who are suffering loss and emotional distress, and making do with what is at hand. However, the rewards are usually greater than the challenges: the joy of reuniting a family, the pleasure of being able to give help and support and really make a difference in people's lives at a critical time, and the new bonds forged with fellow workers that will last a lifetime.

The following account tells of Susan's experiences during her first assignment. She is called out to help when Middleton is hit by a major blizzard that has already lasted for several days. The main provincial highways are closed, leaving travelers stranded. Sections of the community have been without power for more than 24 hours and some local residents are being forced to leave their homes because of the intense cold.

The local ESS team has been activated by the ESS Director and asked to open a Reception Centre in the recreation centre. Wang, a friend of Susan's who owns a four-wheel drive vehicle, has offered to pick up the team. Before they set out, the team made all the necessary arrangements with their families and the few employers who remained open despite the blizzard. We join Susan en route to her assignment with Wang, Karen (the Reception Centre Manager), Mary, Peter, and Jas (three other team members).

### En Route to the Reception Centre



"What time are we supposed to be there?" asked Wang.

"I told Yvonne that we should arrive by 8:30 this morning," Karen replied. "We should just about make it on time, despite all the detours we've had to take. Middleton has certainly been hit hard. Look at the height of these snow banks—pretty incredible, eh!"

"I hope we'll be able to get into the hall when we get there. Who has the key to get in?" I asked.

Karen answered: "I spoke to the caretaker before we left and he'll be waiting for us. The recreation centre has its own generator, so we should have heat and light if the electricity goes off. Susan, did you check to see if our Reception Centre kit is complete? I remember that at the last meeting we had the contents out to show everyone."

I was relieved to be able to answer that I had checked the kit. "The only things I didn't check were the spare flashlight and radio batteries."

"Don't worry, Susan, they should be fine. We bought new ones only two weeks ago," Peter reassured her. He then added, "By the way, Karen, how many other ESS workers are we likely to get at our Reception Centre?"

"Well there are the six of us and I'm told that we can expect some other workers to arrive soon," responded Karen. "Let's take a few minutes to talk about what lies ahead over the next few days."

She reminded us of the worker care principles we had learned in our training:

- buddy up with another worker
- watch for signs of stress
- take our breaks together
- provide a listening ear for each other

We talked about some of the important points from our training, until we pulled up in front of the recreation centre.

## At the Reception Centre

8:45 am: When we arrived at the recreation centre, it was still snowing, and the wind was blowing hard. The temperature outside had dropped to -20° C. Tony, the caretaker, was waiting inside for us and let us in.

Karen took charge as Reception Centre Manager.

"First of all, has everyone signed the PEP Task Registration form? We need to make sure everyone has signed in so that they will have WorkSafeBC and personal liability coverage. We'll keep the Task Registration form at the front desk for any other volunteers who arrive later.

"OK, let's get started. Fortunately this centre still has power, which sure makes everything a lot easier. Susan, do you remember the exercise we did a few months ago when we did the Reception Centre floor plan? Could you, Mary and Wang set up the hall using the same plan? I'm sure that if there is anything you need, you could ask Tony. Here's the drawing we used for the exercise.



“We’ll need to get the Reception Centre signs up as well.

“Peter and Jas, can you get started on making some warm drinks?

“I’m going to call Yvonne and let her know we arrived safely and are getting things set up. As ESS Director, she will appreciate that information so that she can pass it on to the other Emergency Management officials at the Emergency Operations Centre.”

Half an hour later, Karen assembled the group.

“Let’s talk about the situation. Yvonne told us to expect anywhere from two to three hundred people. They could start arriving at any time. I’m told that most local people are in pretty good condition, but some of the elderly residents are upset about leaving their homes. There will also be a number of stranded travelers—at least twenty families with very young children and a few with pets. Since there’s only the six of us right now, we’ll just have to cope as best we can until our other ESS workers can get here. I’m sure some of the people coming to the Reception Centre for assistance would be happy to give us a hand.

“The other problem is that right now there are very few hotel or motel rooms available in the area, although a few of the fast food restaurants have electricity and are trying to stay open. I’m afraid that means we might have to set up a Group Lodging facility. We’ll know better by lunchtime.

“Wang, would it be possible for you to stay a little longer?”

Wang was happy to oblige, and having a volunteer available with a four-wheel drive was invaluable. He asked Karen for directions on what to do.

“Could you and Tony alternate working at the entrance? I’d like you to meet and greet the new arrivals and direct them into the Reception Centre.”



Karen continued, “Several trained Meeters and Greeters as well as two Emotional Support workers are scheduled to arrive to take charge of the meeting and greeting roles and to provide support for emotional needs. In the meantime, it would be a great help if Susan and Jas could set up a play area for children as well as a quiet area for those wanting some space away from the activity. That way, we’ll be ready in case evacuees arrive sooner than expected.”



“Once we’re set up, Mary will take on her role as supervisor for Registration & Referrals and she and Peter can cover that function until more volunteers arrive. Susan, could you act as the Resource Acquisition worker responsible for getting all the resources needed by the Registration & Referrals workers? We don’t have a supervisor or Logistics Chief on site yet, so if you have any questions please come to me for now.

“And before you all get started on your assignments, please remember to respect the privacy of the people you are helping.”

Just then five new faces appeared in the doorway, looking ready to help.

Karen greeted them, “Hi there! It’s great to see you. Your timing is perfect. We planned on setting up the ‘Registration Only’ and ‘Inquiry about Family and Friends’ desks right here next to the Registration & Referrals workers. How does that work for you?”

Ten minutes later, the first evacuees arrived....



## Helping Hands

### Day 1

I was a Resource Acquisition worker on day one. I took the requests for things like hotel rooms, meals, clothing, and toothbrushes from the Registration & Referrals workers—the people at the front desks who assist the evacuees. I then grouped the requests, contacted local retail outlets we had set up agreements with previously, to organize the resources, and let the Registration & Referrals workers know what resources were available. They, in turn, distributed these resources to evacuees.



For the first day we didn't have all the resources we needed. Apparently the hotel and motel rooms filled up within a few hours of the highway being closed. We decided that setting up a Group Lodging co-located with the Reception Centre would be the best option to provide a shelter and services for those who couldn't get a hotel and had no one to stay with. Fortunately the recreation centre had enough floor mats and our ESS team had stored 100 blankets, pillows, towels, and comfort kits for a situation such as this.

Although we had some games, puzzles and videos available to help people pass the time, some travelers seemed to be frustrated and anxious to get on to their destinations, their families, and their jobs. Some people were very apprehensive because they had lost contact with family members stranded by the storm. Knowing that there were a lot of cars stuck in the snow in isolated locations, their fears were justified.

One farmer lost his barn, his poultry, and many of his prize cattle when an oil can, left burning to keep the barn warm, tipped over and caught the barn on fire. The place burned to the ground, partly because the firefighters couldn't get to his farm through the snow. Fortunately no one was injured.



What do you say to someone who has lost everything? Or to Mrs. T., an elderly woman who was distraught when the police insisted she leave her unheated house. She still had vivid memories of families being torn from their homes during the war. We found her a comfortable bed, let her know her cat was being looked after, and tried to give her some sense of normalcy until her son arrived from Hammond to take care of her. All I could say was: "Everyone is here to help you as much as we can. Would you like a cup of tea?" and "Would you like to talk about what happened?" It really didn't seem like enough, although she seemed to appreciate a listening ear.

## Day 2

On the second day, I worked as a Registration & Referrals worker on "the front line" as we called it. Workers had attempted to find a motel room for Mrs. T. along with her close friend, but in the end they chose to stay the night in Group Lodging. It was such a great feeling when her son turned up at

the Reception Centre the following day. He was very worried when he arrived, but he was beaming from ear to ear when he found out his mother was okay.

### Day 3

On a typical day I'd be up at six and at the Reception Centre by seven. My first priorities each morning were to sign in on the Task Registration form, get my assignment, and then attend the morning briefing at which Karen would give us directions and support. During my breaks I would talk with the other volunteers about the challenges we'd faced and what we'd tackle next. That really helped.

With all the training and exercises I had done, I felt really well prepared. Still, it was wonderful to have some of the more experienced volunteers around, like Janie. Janie, an ESS Mobile Support Team volunteer from Rosewood, came to Middleton because we were short-staffed. She had been through the Rutherford fires and when something wasn't going smoothly, she'd quietly and competently help us deal with the situation.

At about five or six o'clock we'd finish up the day's work, except for the few people assigned to the night shift. Wang would give us all a ride home and we'd talk along the way. He'd drop Janie off at the home of the family with whom she was staying, and the next stop was my house. I usually made it home by seven o'clock.

By late afternoon of Day 3, we all noticed that things were quieting down. No new people were coming in for assistance, and the highway had re-opened. We were directed to close the Reception Centre. Everyone just pitched in to get things cleaned up and put away. We generated a list of items needing replacement in the Reception Centre Kit, as PEP would reimburse our costs. Fortunately all the ESS signs and vests were returned. Before we knew it, we were done.

All of us were very quiet on the ride home, after three long days on assignment. We all felt a sense of satisfaction at how well we had pulled together as a team.

## **Key Points: What New Volunteers May Experience During Their First Assignment**

- ESS workers need to remember to sign the PEP Task Registration form daily to ensure WorkSafeBC and personal liability coverage.
- Resources are not always available when needed.
- ESS responses are generally a maximum of 3 days; however, they could be longer. ESS workers are not expected to work more than 8 to 10 hours per day.
- Respecting the privacy of evacuees is every volunteer's responsibility.
- "Worker care is important to the physical and emotional well being of ESS workers.
- ESS work can be both tiring and rewarding.

## **After the Assignment**



### **Susan Talks about the Assignment**

Few people are really aware of what ESS workers experience on assignment. This can sometimes be a problem when it is time to go home. It took me a while to get back into my normal routine.

I slept for twelve hours straight when the assignment was over. The next night I was wide-awake at about three in the morning, and I went and sat in the kitchen with all the lights turned on. Steve came to find out what was happening and stayed to listen to my stories about the people I had helped. I remembered what Karen had said and was careful to respect their privacy. It really helped that Steve listened.

I also told Steve about Janie and how well we had gotten along together during the assignment. He thought it was a great idea to get the two families together for a visit at spring break. That's one of the values of an ESS assignment—people who have worked together often develop friendships and can even become lifelong friends.



The following morning I was a little impatient with Shelley when she sat picking away at her breakfast. Seeing people line up for food and being so thankful for the meals they received gave me a lot of perspective on how lucky we are. That evening, Steve wanted to do something special for me. He offered to take me out for dinner and a movie. I think he was quite surprised when I turned him down—all I really wanted was to have a meal at home and spend the evening with my family.

Over the following days, Steve noticed that I still wasn't quite back to myself. At times I still felt sad, but more often, I remembered with pleasure the ways in which I was able to help, and appreciated all the more my family's good fortune.

My mixed emotions were a little confusing for Shelley and Jason, so we held a family meeting and I talked about how my ESS work and the disaster had affected me. The kids were interested in the photographs I had taken of my team, and asked a lot of questions about the people, and my experiences. It seemed to help them understand what happens to people during a disaster and the importance of volunteering.

One week after the emergency, our ESS team held a debriefing at the recreation centre we had worked in, to discuss our experiences and make suggestions for improvements on how we do our work. It was wonderful to see everyone again. Yvonne, who led the debriefing, kept a list of the recommendations we made so we could update our ESS plan and do an even better job in the future. It was interesting to learn that almost everyone was experiencing emotions similar to mine. It helped strengthen the bond between us.

After the debriefing, the mayor joined us at the recreation centre to thank us for our contributions on behalf of Middleton and the evacuees. I felt very proud of the work I had done and honoured to be a member of my community's ESS team.

## **Key Points: What New Volunteers May Learn about Being an ESS Worker**

-  Following a disaster, an ESS worker can experience a wide range of emotions, from excitement of reuniting families, to sadness at the losses people have suffered.
-  Close friendships can form with co-workers during a disaster.
-  ESS workers often undergo a change in outlook because of their experience.
-  It is a good idea to “debrief” your family on your experience so they have a better understanding of it.
-  An ESS team debriefing should take place to discuss what went well, identify lessons learned and areas requiring improvement, and make action plans to implement team recommendations.



## Quiz - Module 2: Personal Preparedness for ESS Workers

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

True or False – circle the appropriate letter. When you have completed the quiz, submit it in person or by phone or fax to your local ESS Director or ESS Support Organization Coordinator (e.g., Red Cross, Salvation Army)

1. Everyone should “Share the Responsibility” for emergency planning. T F
2. ESS workers are covered by WorkSafeBC through PEP. T F
3. Employers are required to pay people sent out of town on ESS assignments. T F
4. A Reception Centre may be run by a combination of municipal employees, community service organization personnel, and ESS volunteers. T F
5. During a disaster, pay phones are more likely to work than your personal phones. T F
6. Disaster Response Routes should be used by people who are leaving the disaster area. T F
7. A “Grab and Go” bag should be personalized with items important to your physical and emotional health. T F
8. Only families with children need a family reunification plan. T F
9. “Worker Care” helps ESS workers maintain their physical and emotional health. T F

Answers: 1-T; 2-T; 3-F; 4-T; 5-T; 6-F; 7-T; 8-F; 9-T





# Appendices



## Contents

- Appendix A: Common emergency management acronyms
- Appendix B: Glossary
- Appendix C: Web sites
- Appendix D: Brochures & Forms



## **Appendix A: Acronyms**

<b>BCERMS</b>	British Columbia Emergency Response Management System
<b>CRIB</b>	Central Registry and Inquiry Bureau
<b>EOC</b>	Emergency Operations Centre
<b>EMBC</b>	Emergency Management BC
<b>ESS</b>	Emergency Social Services
<b>ESSD</b>	Emergency Social Services Director
<b>GL</b>	Group Lodging
<b>JIBC</b>	Justice Institute of BC
<b>MST</b>	Mobile Support Team
<b>PEP</b>	Provincial Emergency Program
<b>PHAC</b>	Public Health Agency of Canada
<b>PREOC</b>	Provincial Regional Emergency Operations Centre
<b>PSC</b>	Public Safety Canada
<b>RC</b>	Reception Centre

## Appendix B: Glossary

<b>Disaster</b>	A calamity caused by accident, fire, explosion, or technical failure, or by the forces of nature that has resulted in serious harm to the health, safety, or welfare of people, or in widespread damage to property (as defined in the <i>Emergency Program Act</i> )
<b>Emergency</b>	A present or imminent event that is caused by accident, fire, explosion, or technical failure, or by the forces of nature and requires prompt coordination of action or special regulation of persons or property to protect the health, safety, and welfare of people, or to limit damage to property (as defined in the <i>Emergency Program Act</i> )
<b>Emergency Management</b>	An organized effort to mitigate against, prepare for, respond to, and recover from an emergency
<b>Emergency Management Organization</b>	An organization made up of officials from local emergency response agencies, tasked with developing and implementing plans and measures for emergencies and disasters who are responsible for the management/coordination of emergency activities on behalf of the local authority
<b>Emergency Operations Centre</b>	EOC – a designated facility established by an agency or jurisdiction to coordinate and support the overall response
<b>Emergency Program Coordinator</b>	A generic term referring to a person(s) responsible for management/coordination of emergency preparedness, response, and recovery activities on behalf of the local authority
<b>ESS</b>	Emergency Social Services are those services provided on a short-term basis to preserve the emotional and physical well being of evacuees and response workers in emergency situations
<b>ESSD</b>	The Emergency Social Services Director is responsible for the management / coordination of a local ESS program / team
<b>Evacuation Order</b>	An Evacuation Order may be issued by authorities having jurisdiction in response to imminent potential of loss of life or injury because of any potential danger to the population at risk, the residents, in the affected area. These orders are issued in the interest of life safety

<b>Incident(s)</b>	An occurrence caused either by humans or by natural phenomena, that requires prompt action by response personnel to prevent or minimize loss of life or damage to property and the environment, and to reduce economic and social losses
<b>Local Authority</b>	A local authority means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ for a municipality, the municipal council</li><li>▪ for a regional district, the board of the regional district</li><li>▪ for a national park, the superintendent</li></ul>
<b>PEP Task Number</b>	A control number assigned by PEP to each response or training event for the purpose of tracing an approved response and providing support for ESS workers with WorkerSafeBC and personal liability coverage



## Appendix C: Web Sites

BC Housing	<a href="http://www.bchousing.org">http://www.bchousing.org</a>
Buddhist Compassion Relief Tzu Chi Foundation Canada	<a href="http://www.tzuchi.ca">http://www.tzuchi.ca</a>
Canadian Red Cross	<a href="http://www.redcross.ca">http://www.redcross.ca</a>
Emergency Social Services Association	<a href="http://www.essa.bc.ca">http://www.essa.bc.ca</a>
ESS Office	<a href="http://www.ess.bc.ca">http://www.ess.bc.ca</a>
Justice Institute of BC	<a href="http://www.jibc.ca">http://www.jibc.ca</a>
Provincial Emergency Program	<a href="http://www.pep.bc.ca">http://www.pep.bc.ca</a>
Public Health Agency of Canada	<a href="http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/emergency-urgence/index-eng.php">http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/emergency-urgence/index-eng.php</a>
Public Safety Canada	<a href="http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/">http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/</a>
St. John Ambulance	<a href="http://www.sja.ca">http://www.sja.ca</a>
The Salvation Army	<a href="http://www.sallyann.org/eds">http://www.sallyann.org/eds</a>



## **Appendix D: Brochures & Forms**

- After the Evacuation – help when you need it most
- Volunteers
- Returning Home From A Disaster Assignment
- Disaster Response Routes
- Out-of-Area Contact Card
- Emergency Supplies Checklist



*Emergency Social Services*

*provides assistance to*

*people for the first 72 hours*

*(3 days) after a disaster.*

Go to  
[www.pep.bc.ca](http://www.pep.bc.ca)  
for more information.



**PROVINCIAL EMERGENCY  
PROGRAM**

**After the  
evacuation  
– help when  
you need it  
most**



Ministry of  
Public Safety  
and Solicitor General

## Where to turn when disaster strikes

### Emergency Social Services

Emergency Social Services (ESS) provides assistance to people for the first 72 hours (3 days) after a disaster. Assistance includes assessment and referral to services you may need, short term help for food, clothing and shelter, emotional support and family reunification. Local ESS volunteers will be at the disaster site or at a safe, near-by location, such as a local gym or recreation centre. Local authorities and emergency officials will provide you with information about the location of the reception centre.

If you still need assistance after 72 hours, you may contact your local Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance office where staff will determine if you are eligible for financial assistance.

For the office nearest you call Enquiry BC:

**Victoria: (250) 387-6121**

**Vancouver: (604) 660-2421**

**Elsewhere in BC: 1-800-663-7867**

## Family Notification

Once you have registered with ESS after a disaster, volunteers will have information to let family and friends know where you are, and that you are safe. If your contact information changes, or if there is anyone who should not have access to your contact information, please inform the ESS volunteer immediately.

## Keeping you updated

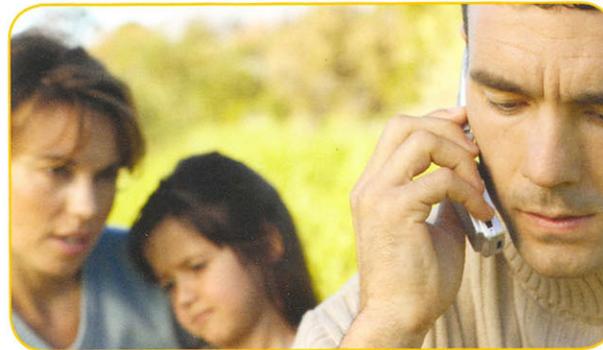
ESS volunteers will have up-to-date information, and understand that keeping you informed will help you cope with emotional responses such as frustration, anger or anxiety.

## Costs for immediate essentials

If you have insurance, it may cover the cost of your immediate needs. If you don't have insurance, or reasonable and ready access to your insurance, the provincial government will cover the cost of items essential to your immediate wellbeing for up to 72 hours — assessment and referral to services you may need, short term help for food, clothing and shelter, emotional support and family reunification. You are responsible for any items that are not essential, such as long-distance phone calls.

## Emergency accommodation for pets

ESS will try to find emergency accommodation that will allow your pets to remain with you. However, not all hotels or motels accept pets, and priority must be given to people with guide or service dogs. You may have to board your pets at a kennel, veterinarian or the SPCA until you are more settled.



## What you can do:

### Take care of important details

Because this is an upsetting time, you may forget important details. Here are some important reminders:

- Contact your insurance company immediately
- Make plans for accommodation, food and clothing beyond the first 72 hours
- Advise your landlord and employer of your current situation
- Cancel appointments and let your children's teachers know what has happened
- If you are not returning home for an extended period of time you may want to redirect your mail
- Contact extended family and friends to let them know you are safe
- Contact your local Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance office or Enquiry BC if you have no other financial resources

### Help yourself and others

It is natural to feel anxious after a crisis. You can help yourself by sharing your feelings, helping others, and passing on information about assistance and resources. You can help others by being patient when stress causes them to be short tempered or irritable. If you or someone in your family experiences a severe or persistent reaction to the disaster, seeking help is encouraged.

For more information or to report a change in your location or contact information, please call:

**Emergency Social Services  
Provincial Emergency Program  
Toll-free within B.C. 1-800-585-9559**

# What is Emergency Social Services?

Emergency Social Services (ESS) is a program that provides short term disaster relief across British Columbia in the event of fires, floods, earthquakes or other emergencies.

ESS depends on community volunteers to plan and provide for the essential needs of individuals, families and response workers. This may include food, shelter, clothing, emotional support and finding loved ones.

Most communities in B.C. have an ESS team that develops liaisons with community businesses willing to share their resources in times of trouble. The task of planning for disasters requires energy and creativity, and depends on the commitment and dedication of many volunteers.



## The Heart of Disaster Response

**“The intensity (of disaster relief work) stays with you, even after you come home.”**

Bob Kennedy, ESS Volunteer, Saanich

**“Your community showed compassion during a period of great stress. You must be proud!”**

A traveller assisted by the Abbotsford ESS Team

**“ESS volunteers truly are the heart of disaster response.”**

Barry Akehurst, former Regional Manager of Provincial Emergency Program, Vancouver Island

**To volunteer call:**

Local ESS contact:



Emergency Preparedness

Emergency Social Services Program  
Ministry of Human Resources

Phone toll free 1 800 585-9559  
within B.C.



# VOLUNTEERS



## The Heart of Disaster Response

# HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Your community needs your help to prepare for emergencies. **ESS volunteers:**

- **inform community businesses of the program**
- **identify potential reception centres and group lodging sites**
- **recruit and train more volunteers**
- **complete contact lists and exercise the plan**
- **inform the public of help available following a disaster**

More volunteers are always needed and welcomed. Disaster work offers a unique opportunity to help others when help is needed most. Working in this field challenges volunteers to stretch their own limits and potential.

## YOUR LOCAL TEAM NEEDS VOLUNTEERS WHO:

- have a concern for people affected by disaster, and want to help
- have good communication skills
- are able to respond on short notice
- are flexible and work well as part of a team
- are in good health
- have a sense of adventure



No specific skills are required to become a volunteer. However, skills such as volunteer management, interviewing and second languages are great assets.

## WHAT ARE SOME OF THE REWARDS IN ESS?

**Making a Difference:** You are part of a team that provides shelter, food and a shoulder to lean on when disaster forces people from their homes.

**Training:** Offered through the Justice Institute and partner agencies, training includes Reception Centre Operations, Family Reunification, Disaster Child Care and others.

**Recognition:** Volunteers form the backbone of ESS. Recognition of their efforts may take many forms, including volunteer appreciation events, certificates, awards or letters from local government or provincial government, in addition to expressions of appreciation from peers, community members and those they have helped.

**Protection:** All ESS volunteers receive Workers' Compensation Board and liability insurance coverage while on assignment.

**Emergency  
Social Services**

# VOLUNTEERS

**1-800-585-9559**



going home



*Disaster work can be a unique and very rewarding experience. Disaster response workers feel part of a family as we all work toward a common goal. There is a sense of adventure as we face the unique problems of each disaster setting, a sense of shared pride as we ease the suffering of victims, and a sense of personal satisfaction in our ability to help.*

*We experience things that most people—including our families, friends, and co-workers—could not begin to understand or appreciate. This can be a serious problem when it is time to go home.*



**The Heart of Disaster Response**

## For Further Assistance

While disaster experiences are very personal, problems like yours may have been encountered by other Emergency Social Services workers. If you have any unusual reactions that last for an extended period, feel free to contact your Emergency Social Services Director and ask to talk to an experienced Emergency Social Services worker. He or she will be able to understand what you are saying and provide appropriate feedback.

*Your participation in disaster relief operations is very important to the entire organization, and we want to do everything possible to make it a rewarding and enriching experience.*

Local ESS contact:



Emergency Preparedness

**Emergency Social Services Program  
MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

Phone toll free 1 800 585-9559  
within B.C.



**BRITISH COLUMBIA**  
www.gov.bc.ca

Information provided courtesy of American Red Cross

**COPING WITH DISASTER**

# Returning Home From A Disaster Assignment



*The Heart of Disaster Response*



## Emotional health issues for

# Volunteers Returning Home From A Disaster Assignment

**Rest** Often, you may not get enough rest while working on a disaster, and when you return home you will feel exhausted. It may take several days to catch up, and both family members and employers need to understand that you need time to yourself before beginning a full schedule of normal activities.

**Pace** On an operation, you perform your job as fast as possible to provide the greatest amount of assistance in the shortest possible time. It may take time to return to the more relaxed pace of your co-workers and family members.

**Sharing** You will want to talk to family members and co-workers about your experiences, and they will be eager to tell you about theirs. What you were doing may seem much more exciting and significant, but remember that their experiences are as important to them as yours are to you. If they seem to accuse you of being away when the washer overflowed, or the kids threw up, it's only their way of saying, 'We missed you'.

**Emotions** When you return home, some feelings or emotional swings may surprise or frighten you. If you anticipate some of these emotions, you can manage them better.

**Disappointment:** You may find that others are not interested in hearing about your experiences, or that your reunion with your family and co-workers does not live up to your expectations. You may expect they will be happy to have you home and be surprised to find they are angry at your absence.

**Frustration and conflict:** Your needs may not match those of family or colleagues. While you may want nothing more than a good home-cooked meal, your family may be looking forward to going out to eat.

**Anger:** Problems presented by your family, friends, or co-workers may seem very trivial compared to those facing the disaster victims you just left. Try to remember that the folks at home feel that their problems are just as important to them right now.

**Victim identification:** The actions or characteristics of people at home may remind you of your experience with disaster victims. You may experience emotional reactions that can surprise

and confuse not only you, but also them. Try to make others understand the reasons behind your reactions.

**Daydreaming:** You may find yourself wishing you could return to the disaster you just left, or be sent out again right away. Remember you are more important to the folks at home than you can imagine; they just express their appreciation differently.

**Mood swings:** These are normal after returning home, one of the ways to resolve conflicting feelings you have experienced on the operation. You may change from happy to sad, tense to relaxed, or outgoing to quiet without much warning. When you have time to put your disaster work into perspective, they will pass.

**Children** It can be hard to explain to children why you must be away. If you tell them why you are leaving, and call home while you are away, it will help calm their fears. When you return home, try not to frighten them with stories about what you have seen and done. Tell them about the disaster, and involve them in preparedness

efforts for your family. This will help them feel as if they are part of what you have been doing and reduce their fears about similar disasters at home.



## Disaster Response Routes

### Disaster Response Routes

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#### What is a Disaster Response Route?

A network of pre-identified municipal and provincial roads that can best move emergency services and supplies to where they are needed in the event of a major disaster. Emergency planners and transportation engineers from all levels of government have cooperated to identify these routes. Public awareness and cooperation is necessary to keep these Disaster Response Routes clear following an earthquake or other disaster, in the interest of saving lives and protecting property.

#### Disaster Response Route Video

[Disaster Response Route Video](#) produced by GVRD  
 (Streaming Video. Length: Approximately 4.5 minutes)  
 (Note, you will need [Windows Media Player](#) to view this video.)

#### When are Disaster Response Routes activated?

Disaster Response Routes are activated only as needed to meet the demands of an emergency or disaster situation. Only required routes are utilized and only for as long as needed.

#### Why do we need Disaster Response Routes?

Fire, police, ambulance, repair crews, emergency and life-saving equipment; services and supplies must move quickly to where the greatest need is...and mobility is the key. Road access from one area to another, from airports and ports, must be kept clear of non-essential vehicles and debris. It could be you they are coming to assist!

#### When a disaster strikes, please **STAY OFF** the Disaster Response Routes!

Look for the signs that have been posted on the Disaster Response Routes in your area. **STAY OFF THOSE ROADS WHEN A DISASTER STRIKES** and **LISTEN TO THE RADIO AND TELEVISION** for public service announcements regarding specific routes and what they are being used for. Be prepared to find other routes if you must be on the roads during those times when the disaster response routes in your area have been activated.

#### What to expect

The Disaster Response Routes should be the first roads to be cleared. Emergency responders and police will control access to Disaster Response Routes and in the immediate aftermath of a disaster, the routes will likely be limited to emergency needs. As soon as possible, the public will be allowed back onto the Disaster Response Routes. In some areas, specific Disaster Response Routes could be reserved for speedy delivery of supplies from ports or nearby airstrips, or for organized medical evacuation to unaffected hospitals.

## Where are the Disaster Response Routes?

[Click here to view the map page.](#)



## Who can use a Disaster Response Route?

Designated responders have been issued with placards identifying them and their vehicles. This will allow for quick identification at checkpoints and permit the efficient movement of required resources to where they are needed most.

## More than just roads...

Planners are now working on an integrated multi-modal Disaster Response Route network that includes designated municipal and provincial roadways, marine connections along the Fraser River and Vancouver harbour, the Lower Mainland rail network and air facilities. The result will be a comprehensive transportation network that will give emergency response authorities a variety of intermodal options for moving personnel and resources around the Lower Mainland in emergency situations .

## Not an Evacuation Route

Many people believe these signs identify an evacuation route which people would use to leave an area. Not true. Disaster Response Routes are required for the movement of responders and resources for emergency or disaster response. The designation of Disaster Response Routes means other roadways can be utilized for non-emergency traffic, commuting, or the unlikely event of an organized evacuation. Disaster Response Routes are NOT evacuation routes.

## A dedicated route for emergency responders in a disaster situation... planning ahead for a rapid response... to you and your family.

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### You Need to Know

Learning to recognize the signs, and learning the Disaster Response Routes in your area, is one important step you can take to get ready for an earthquake or other disaster.

For more information contact your municipal emergency co-ordinator as listed in the blue pages of your phone book, or visit: <http://www.pep.bc.ca> for emergency planning information on the Provincial Emergency Program's Internet Website.

### EComm Centre

EComm is a newly formed corporation that will serve as the consolidated centre for emergency communications in Southwest British Columbia. The corporation is housed in a state-of-the-art, post-

disaster building that will survive through an emergency situation in order to facilitate all aspects of public safety.

For more information about E-Comm, visit the web site at: <http://www.ecomm.bc.ca>

 [Top](#)

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## Information for Responders

Overview of multi-model approach to Disaster Response Routes

[Part One](#) [Part Two](#)

The above links are to two Flash movies.

*If you have the Flash Plugin for your browser installed, each Flash Movie above will automatically load. If it does not load, the following URL will take you to the BC Government sanctioned location where you can download the Flash plugin to enable your browser to view Flash movies*

[http://www.gov.bc.ca/com/help.html&navId=NAV\\_ID\\_province](http://www.gov.bc.ca/com/help.html&navId=NAV_ID_province)

[Disaster Response Route Guidelines for Users](#) - 34 KB PDF

[Disaster Response Route Map with Proposed Muster Zone Locations](#) - 2.7 MB PDF

[Distribution of DRR Identification](#) - 22 KB PDF

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## Information for Planners

[Principles of Emergency Transportation Routes](#) - 46 KB PDF

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**The Disaster Response Route Program is a joint undertaking of:**

The Ministry of Transportation,  
Provincial Emergency Program,  
Greater Vancouver Regional District, and  
Lower Mainland Municipal Governments.

[Print and Close](#)

[Cancel](#)



# EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

**INSTRUCTIONS:** You will be entering vital information on these cards that needs to be updated as circumstances change. You can fill these cards out on-line then print, cut and distribute to each family member. *(If you complete the first card on-line, the rest will be automatically filled in with your information.)* Every household should have an emergency plan in place and practice it regularly; identifying an out-of-area contact and arranging meeting places are only two steps toward family emergency preparedness. The objective of every family emergency plan is to be prepared to be self-sufficient for a minimum of 72 hours. Discuss the information on these cards and your emergency plans with each family member.

## Choosing An Out-of-Area Contact:

- After an earthquake or other major disaster, local phone service may be limited, so you should arrange with someone outside your area to be your family contact. Choose someone away from B.C. or U.S. coastal areas.
- Your contact person should have voice mail or an answering machine.
- Ensure that every family member knows that after a quake or other disaster, they should listen to the radio or TV for telephone use instructions, then phone your out-of-area contact person to say how and where they are and what their plans are.
- Keep calls short, and if possible, arrange to call the contact person back at a specified time for another check-in.

## Choosing A Place to Meet:

- At the time of a disaster, your family may not be together. It is important to choose family meeting places.
- Remember that bridges may be out and roads may be blocked by debris, so choose your meeting places carefully with access in mind.
- Pick places that are easy to identify, that can be reached on foot, and that are in an accessible, open area.
- Take into account where each of you will likely be at different times and on different days.

### Emergency Contact Information Card

You and each family member should carry this card at all times.

#### Out-of-area contact:

- After a major disaster, local phone service may be limited so phone your out-of-area contact to keep in touch with your family. Listen to the radio or TV for phone use instructions, then phone your contact person to say how you are, where you are and what your plans are.
- Keep the call short, and, if possible, arrange to call back at a specified time for another check-in.

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/Province: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

#### Places to meet family:

##### Working Days Location:

daytime: \_\_\_\_\_  
 evening: \_\_\_\_\_

##### Non-working Days Location:

daytime: \_\_\_\_\_  
 evening: \_\_\_\_\_

### Emergency Contact Information Card

You and each family member should carry this card at all times.

#### Out-of-area contact:

- After a major disaster, local phone service may be limited so phone your out-of-area contact to keep in touch with your family. Listen to the radio or TV for phone use instructions, then phone your contact person to say how you are, where you are and what your plans are.
- Keep the call short, and, if possible, arrange to call back at a specified time for another check-in.

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/Province: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

#### Places to meet family:

##### Working Days Location:

daytime: \_\_\_\_\_  
 evening: \_\_\_\_\_

##### Non-working Days Location:

daytime: \_\_\_\_\_  
 evening: \_\_\_\_\_

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- Keep the call short, and, if possible, arrange to call back at a specified time for another check-in.

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/Province: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

#### Places to meet family:

##### Working Days Location:

daytime: \_\_\_\_\_  
 evening: \_\_\_\_\_

##### Non-working Days Location:

daytime: \_\_\_\_\_  
 evening: \_\_\_\_\_

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- Keep the call short, and, if possible, arrange to call back at a specified time for another check-in.

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/Province: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

#### Places to meet family:

##### Working Days Location:

daytime: \_\_\_\_\_  
 evening: \_\_\_\_\_

##### Non-working Days Location:

daytime: \_\_\_\_\_  
 evening: \_\_\_\_\_

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- Keep the call short, and, if possible, arrange to call back at a specified time for another check-in.

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/Province: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

#### Places to meet family:

##### Working Days Location:

daytime: \_\_\_\_\_  
 evening: \_\_\_\_\_

##### Non-working Days Location:

daytime: \_\_\_\_\_  
 evening: \_\_\_\_\_

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- After a major disaster, local phone service may be limited so phone your out-of-area contact to keep in touch with your family. Listen to the radio or TV for phone use instructions, then phone your contact person to say how you are, where you are and what your plans are.
- Keep the call short, and, if possible, arrange to call back at a specified time for another check-in.

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/Province: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

#### Places to meet family:

##### Working Days Location:

daytime: \_\_\_\_\_  
 evening: \_\_\_\_\_

##### Non-working Days Location:

daytime: \_\_\_\_\_  
 evening: \_\_\_\_\_

# FAMILY EMERGENCY SUPPLIES DETAILED CHECKLIST



## 1 Emergency Meeting Place

If a disaster occurs during the day or on a weekend, it's unlikely all family members will be at home. Involve everyone in selecting a family emergency meeting place and a way of contacting each other. Make sure the emergency meeting location is central to the places individual family members visit most frequently.

You should also decide on a system of communication in case all family members can't get to the meeting place. Designate an out-of-province contact your family members can check in with if regular communication and transportation systems are disrupted.

Participate in regular family drills and make sure every family member is part of the planning process. Update your plans regularly as circumstances changes. Always consider those with disabilities or special needs.

## 2 Identification and Important Papers

Be sure each family member carries personal identification. This identification could be a wallet card, clothing label, or ID bracelet with name, address and phone number. Health problems, such as diabetes or heart conditions, should be noted, as well as any allergies to medications.

Keep copies of all important personal papers including home insurance, wills, identification, credit card numbers and records of passwords in a fireproof, water-proof container.

## 3 First Aid Supplies

First aid supplies, and training, may mean the difference between life and death for an injured family member. It's a good idea for at least one family member to have participated in emergency first aid courses, such as those offered by the Canadian Red Cross or St. John Ambulance. You should also have a well-stocked first aid kit containing suggested supplies listed below. Include copies of all drug and eyeglass prescriptions.

### General Items:

- Adhesive bandages, assorted sizes..... 1 box
- Elastic bandage, 7.5 cm x 4.6 cm ..... 2
- Elastic bandage, 10 cm x 4.6 cm ..... 2
- Abdominal pads..... 2
- Sterile gauze pad, 5 cm x 5 cm,  
10 cm x 10 cm ..... 6 each
- Adhesive tape, 7.5 cm x 4.6 cm ..... 1 roll
- Bandage gauze (cling strip 7.5 cm)..... 1 roll
- Triangular bandages ..... 6
- Thermometer (cases)..... 1
- Current First Aid Manual 1 box ..... 1

### Instruments:

- Heavy-duty clothes cutting scissors ..... 1 pair
- Forceps, splint ..... 1
- Pocket knife (Swiss army type) ..... 1

### Non-Prescription Items:

- Pain tablets..... 100
- Anti-nausea tables..... 100
- Hydrogen peroxide 3% (plastic bottle) ... 500ml
- Antibiotic skin ointment..... 15g

## 4 Food

---

Water and food are key elements to surviving a disaster. You and your family can assemble an emergency food pack using the list below. Choose food that doesn't need refrigeration, requires little or no preparation, meets any special diet needs, is familiar to your family and is sealed for protection. Protect items from contamination by rodents, insects, humidity, ground water and variations in temperature.

Some suggested items include:

### Beverages:

- Water (see separate section for information)
- Juices (vacuum sealed, waxed containers, 500 ml each with drinking straw)
- Evaporated canned milk (120 ml cans)
- Coffee, tea, hot chocolate (optional)

### Canned Foods:

- Prepared meats
- Poultry
- Seafood
- Meat spreads
- Sauces
- Stews, baked beans, spaghetti
- Vegetables
- Fruits

### Freeze-dried Products:

- Meats
- Poultry
- Vegetables
- Fruits
- Stews
- Soups

### Instant Foods:

- Dried soups
- Sauces
- Cereals
- Oatmeal cookies
- Crackers
- Candies and jellies
- Peanut butter

### Foil Pouch Projects:

- Stews
- Sauces
- Pasta dishes

### Infant Needs:

Check with a pediatrician or family doctor to be certain your pack contains the proper supply of nourishment.

### Additional Food-Related Supplies:

- Bottle opener
- Can opener
- Salt (in sealed container)
- Aluminum foil
- Plastic wrap
- Sealed containers for storage
- Paper plates and cups
- Plastic bags – different sizes, including orange garbage bags which can be used as a signal flag.

## 5 Water

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Readily available, clean, sealed and re-sealable water for drinking and cooking is essential. Plan for at least four litres of water per person per day, two for drinking and two for food preparation, hygiene and dish washing.

There are many types of bottled water available. A supply of bottled or pouch water should be considered. Alternative water sources could include: covered wells, protected springs, contents of your hot water tank or the reserve storage tank on a toilet. \*

In an emergency situation, if no drinking water is available, liquids may be obtained from canned fruits and vegetables and soft drinks.

If you are uncertain of the safety of water that is available, find out more about the following precautions that can be taken:

- i) *Boil the water*  
Boil suspected impure drinking water for a minimum of six minutes. \*
- ii) *Purification*  
Drinking water may be purified with purification tablets, or small amounts of chlorine bleach or iodine. *Check with your local health authorities for more complete information.* \*

\* Some of these sources may only provide water for cooking, hygiene and washing.

## 6 Clothing

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Plan the clothing you will need and determine how to gather it quickly.

In extremely cold conditions, you'll need multiple layers to reduce body heat loss. A hat and scarf can make a big difference because the areas of greatest heat loss from our bodies are the head and neck. In the summer, you will need protection against the sun and heat.

### Clothing for emergency situations should include:

- Head and neck covering for hot and cold weather
- Shoes and boots — warm, strong, waterproof
- Heavy wool socks
- Rain gear — rubber-coated nylon or canvas
- Coats and jackets — to match the weather conditions
- Gloves — heavy-duty work gloves and leather mittens with wool liners

### Additional Clothing:

- Extra sweaters, rugged pants, sweatshirts and wool socks.

## 7 Prescription Medication

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Inventory a supply of any prescription medication needed by individual family members and ask your family physician about storage life of these medications.

## 8 Other Items

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For a complete emergency pack, consider adding the following items:

- Items for people with disabilities or special needs
- Infant supplies (diapers, bottles, etc.)
- Blankets (two per person)
- Sleeping bags (one per person)
- Waterproof sheets (two per person)
- Towels

- Personal toiletries (soap, detergent, toothbrush, toothpaste, comb, razor, sanitary supplies, tissues)
- Rope, nails, hammer, axe, shovel, whistle
- Survival book
- Reading material, games
- Portable radio
- Flashlight
- Spare batteries (for above items)
- Candles (short, squat)
- Matches (preferably waterproof)
- Safety pins (assorted sizes)
- Signal flares and flag
- Dust mask and eye protectors
- Pet supplies (food, water, safety items)
- Money, including coins

All family emergency supplies should be kept together in a pack or kit close to the door or accessible from the outside.

## 9 Grab and Go Kits

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Another important consideration is to have additional “grab and go” kits for your home, office and car. This kit has the very basic supplies you would need in case of an unexpected evacuation. You might be asked to leave the area on short notice and register at a reception centre. Items may include:

- flashlight
- battery powered radio
- first aid kit
- multi-purpose tool
- cash
- identification
- prescription medication and eyeglasses
- personal items
- basic survival items such as water and energy bars
- garbage bag or emergency poncho

For more information go to [www.pep.gov.bc.ca](http://www.pep.gov.bc.ca)