

Seniors' Emergency Preparedness Program

Household Emergency Guide



- Know your risks
- Create a plan
- Make an emergency kit

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Household Emergency Guide

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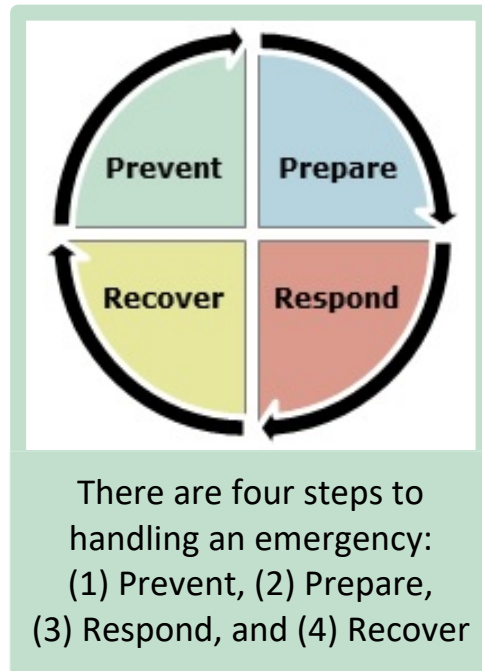
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Introduction

Toronto is vulnerable to a variety of hazards. These include natural hazards like extreme weather, technological hazards like utility or power failures, or human-caused hazards like cyber-attacks.

The unpredictability and challenges of facing emergencies and disasters can feel overwhelming. However, with the right preparation, you can significantly reduce the stress associated with emergencies. By following the steps outlined in this guide, you'll gain the confidence and knowledge to prepare effectively, making emergencies and disasters less overwhelming and more manageable for you, when they occur.



In this guide, you will learn about local risks and hazards and how to prepare for them by creating a plan for your household and building an emergency kit.

Prevent and Mitigate

Prevention and mitigation start with understanding what hazards may occur, and what the consequences may be. What potential hazards and risks are specific to your region, city, and home? What is the difference between a hazard and a risk?

- *A hazard* is something that can cause loss, injury, or fatalities.
- *Risk* is the chance or likelihood that a hazard will occur.

Toronto's top hazard risks include severe weather, flooding, health emergencies, power and utility disruptions, and fires/explosions (find more information at [Toronto.ca](https://www.toronto.ca)*). For many of these hazards, although you may not be able to prevent them from occurring, you can still take proactive steps to minimize the risk to yourself, such as:

- employing fire safety measures in your home
- having insurance coverage to mitigate risk
- creating a comprehensive emergency response plan

*<https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/public-safety-alerts/emergency-preparedness/types-of-emergencies/>

Prepare

We are each responsible for preparing our home for an emergency. Planning and practicing what to do in an emergency will help you stay calm when you need to take action. Having a plan to follow when you are under pressure will save time and reduce stress for your household as you respond to and recover from any emergency.

Have a plan: Every household needs an emergency plan.

Determining before hand what your household needs, how you will communicate, and how you will act during an emergency will reduce anxiety and help you think more clearly in times of stress.

Make an emergency kit: During or after an emergency, you may be without power, tap water, or other utilities for some time. It may take emergency workers some time to reach you, or you may need to evacuate. In any case, you need to be prepared to take care of yourself and your household for a minimum of 72 hours. Your emergency kit should equip you to shelter-in-place or evacuate, if necessary.

Respond

In an emergency, make sure you are safe before you assist others.

- ☑ Follow your emergency plan. Locate your emergency kit.
- ☑ Listen to the media for information from authorities. Local officials may advise you to stay where you are. Follow their instructions.
- ☑ Stay in place until all is safe or until you are ordered to evacuate.
- ☑ Remain calm. Follow instructions from officials and emergency workers — Police, Firefighters, and Paramedics. Stay informed of the disaster situation by watching the television, listening to the radio, or calling your local municipal Emergency Office.

Recover

Everyone reacts differently to disasters. You can expect physical and emotional reactions after the disaster or emergency such as exhaustion, sleeplessness, anger, frustration, a sense of loss, or mood swings. These are a normal part of the recovery process. Remember that it takes time to recover.

How will I recover after a disaster?

- Allow yourself to rest and relax more than usual.
- Get back to normal routines as soon as possible.
- Keep normal schedules.
- Limit time spent watching programs or reading about the disaster.
- Eat healthy, regular meals.
- Spend time with other people. Talk with friends and family.
- Seek professional help, if needed, such as a counselor or doctor.

Emergency Contacts and Support Network

A support network is a group of at least three people who you know and trust who will assist you with your specific needs in an emergency. Work with your network to make your plan match your needs.

How to create a support network:

- Ask people if they are willing to help you in case of an emergency. Ask at important locations such as your neighborhood, workplace, or anywhere else you spend a significant amount of time.
- Include someone who lives far enough outside your area that they will not be affected by the same disaster.
- Inform these people where you keep your emergency supplies. Consider giving one person a key to your home.
- Arrange for more than one person from your support network to check on you in an emergency, so there is at least one back-up if the primary person you rely on cannot.
- Work with your support network to make your plan match your particular needs.
- If you use special equipment, teach those who may need to assist you in an emergency how to operate necessary equipment. Also, label your equipment and attach laminated instructions for equipment use.
- If you are vision impaired, deaf, or hard of hearing, plan for someone to convey essential emergency information to you if you are unable to use the TV or radio.

Emergency Contacts / Support Network

Name:	
Relationship	
Phone	
Address	
Name:	
Relationship	
Phone	
Address	
Name:	
Relationship	
Phone	
Address	
Name:	
Relationship	
Phone	
Address	
Name:	
Relationship	
Phone	
Address	

Note: Print additional copies of this page as needed.

Household Members' Information

Name:

Passport/PR/Status Card	
Health Card Number	
Driver's License Number	
Cell / Work Phone	

Name:

Passport/PR/Status Card	
Health Card Number	
Driver's License Number	
Cell / Work Phone	

Name:

Passport/PR/Status Card	
Health Card Number	
Driver's License Number	
Cell / Work Phone	

Name:

Passport/PR/Status Card	
Health Card Number	
Driver's License Number	
Cell / Work Phone	

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Medical Contacts and Information

Consider all medical conditions of all household members. Record any additional needs they may have and have a plan to manage these needs during and after an emergency (e.g., wheelchair, crutches, oxygen, etc.).

Consider attaching copies of:

- Health card(s)
- Third-party, private or other additional health insurance
- Prescriptions

In an emergency, it may be difficult to refill your prescriptions or find an open pharmacy, even after an emergency is over. Consider having a two-week supply of prescription medication, medical supplies, over-the-counter drugs and medicines, and vitamins. Keep these in your emergency kit, or at least have such supplies in a safe location within your home that you are prepared to grab and leave with, if necessary.

- If you are on dialysis or other life-sustaining medical treatment, record the location and availability of more than one facility that can help you.
- If you or a loved one depend on electrically-powered medical equipment, such as a ventilator or kidney dialysis machine, contact Toronto Hydro at 416-542-8000 to be placed on the Life Support Notification Registry.
- Wear medical alert tags or bracelets and add crucial information to your electronic devices.
- If you have medication that needs to be refrigerated, make a plan to keep medications cold in case of a power outage.

Medical Contacts

Doctor:	
Phone	
Out of Hours Contact	
Address	
Pharmacy:	
Phone	
Out of Hours Contact	
Address	
Other:	
Phone	
Out of Hours Contact	
Address	
Other:	
Phone	
Out of Hours Contact	
Address	
Other:	
Phone	
Out of Hours Contact	
Address	

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Medical Information

Household Member:	
Essential medication, vitamins, and over-the-counter drugs Include dosage and frequency	
Diagnosis / conditions	
Allergies	
Blood type	
Medical aids, supplies, and equipment Include brands, models, and serial numbers	
Emergency plan to manage medical aids and equipment Include extra batteries, power sources, etc.	
Additional information	

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Utility and Service Provider Information

Service Providers

Electricity Provider:

Account Number

Contact Details

Gas Provider:

Account Number

Contact Details

Water Provider:

Account Number

Contact Details

Internet Provider:

Account Number

Contact Details

Phone Provider:

Account Number

Contact Details

Other Provider:

Account Number

Contact Details

Always review the manufacturer or supplier instructions for your utilities and follow these instructions when preparing your plan. List any tools needed to shut off or override your utilities.

Utility Shut Off / Override Information

Electrical Panel Shut Off / Override

Location	
How to Shut Off / Override	

Gas Shut Off / Override*

Location	
How to Shut Off / Override	

Main Water Valve Shut Off / Override

Location	
How to Shut Off / Override	

Other Shut Off / Override:

Location	
How to Shut Off / Override	

*If you have natural gas service, leave it on unless officials tell you to turn it off. If you turn off the gas, the gas company has to reconnect it. In a major emergency, it could take weeks for a professional to respond.

Insurance Information

Insurance Details

Insurer Name:

Type of Insurance

Policy Number

Contact Details

Insurer Name:

Type of Insurance

Policy Number

Contact Details

Insurer Name:

Type of Insurance

Policy Number

Contact Details

Insurer Name:

Type of Insurance

Policy Number

Contact Details

Insurer Name:

Type of Insurance

Policy Number

Contact Details

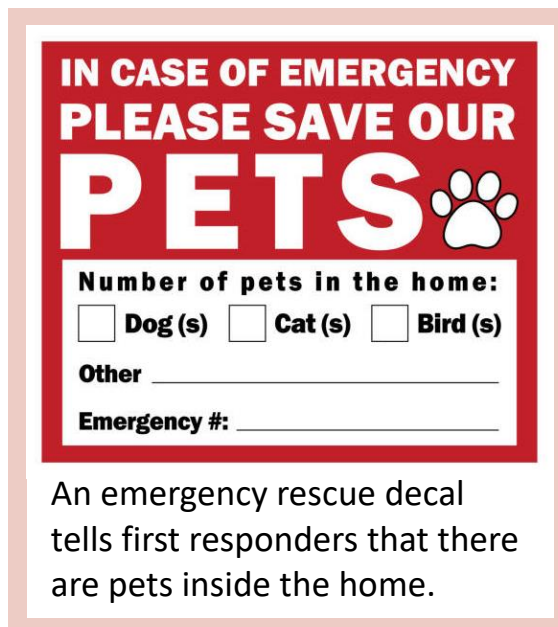
Pets and Service Animals

Sometimes, emergencies may occur when you are not home. If an emergency like a fire occurs, having a rescue decal on your front door will improve the chances your pets will be rescued or receive the care they need. To request a free emergency decal, visit ontariospca.ca/ep.

In case of an evacuation, remember that pets are not allowed in some public shelters or hotels. Have a plan to take your pets with you to the home of a relative or friend, or take steps to identify pet-friendly hotels or pet boarding facilities in your area and further away from home.

If you need to leave your pet behind, leave an extra supply of food and water, and make sure your pets have ID tags with your address and phone number.

If you are evacuating with your pet, be sure to have their leash or pet carrier, and pack extra food and water.



What about my service animal?

- Service animals are permitted inside shelters.
- Pack necessary items for their care and hygiene.
- Service animals must be identified as service animals and should have ID tags with your address and phone number.

Pet / Service Animal Details

Name:	
Species and Breed	
Licence / Microchip	
Vet and Contact Info	
Medical / Allergy / Dietary Information	
Safe Location and Emergency Plan	

Name:	
Species and Breed	
Licence / Microchip	
Vet and Contact Info	
Medical / Allergy / Dietary Information	
Safe Location and Emergency Plan	

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Meeting and Evacuation Plans

Authorities will not ask you to leave your home unless they have reason to believe that you may be in danger. If you are ordered to evacuate, take your emergency kit, your wallet, personal identification and copies of essential documents with you. Bring your cell phone and spare battery or charger with you, if you have one. Follow instructions from authorities.

In case of evacuation:

If possible, leave a note telling others when you left and where you are. Shut off water and electricity if officials instruct you to. Lock your home.

Use travel routes specified by local authorities. If you go to an evacuation centre, register your personal information at the registration desk. **Do not return home until authorities advise it is safe to do so.**

Arrange for each household member to call, email or text the same out-of-town contact person. Tell them where you are going and when you expect to arrive. Once you are safe, let them know. Tell them if any household members have become separated.

For those with mobility challenges:

Plan ahead for accessible transportation that you may need for evacuation or during and after a disaster.

Check with local transit providers and your local emergency management agency to learn about appropriate accessible options.

Household Meeting Plan

Meeting Locations

In Neighborhood	
Out of Neighborhood	

Out-of-Area Contact:

Phone Number	
--------------	--

Places to Stay if Evacuated

Name:	
Phone	
Address	
Name:	
Phone	
Address	
Name:	
Phone	
Address	
Name:	
Phone	
Address	

If you have children in your household, ask their daycare or school about their emergency policies, how they will communicate with you in an emergency, and what authorization is required to release the child to a designated person if you can not pick them up yourself. Ensure the school or daycare has updated contact information for parents, caregivers, and designated persons.

School Emergency Plan

School / Daycare:	
Phone / Address	
Child / Children	
Designated Person 1 and Phone Number	
Designated Person 2 and Phone Number	
Emergency Plan Details	

School / Daycare:	
Phone / Address	
Child / Children	
Designated Person 1 and Phone Number	
Designated Person 2 and Phone Number	
Emergency Plan Details	

Note: Print additional copies of this page as needed.

Shelter-in-place

In certain circumstances, you may be instructed to “shelter-in-place”. This means that you would take shelter inside your current location, whether your home, workplace, vehicle or wherever you happen to be.

Maximize your protection:

- Close all windows and doors.
- If you see or suspect that any hazardous materials have been released, turn off fans and close all vents, windows, and outside doors. Tape garbage bags over these to keep gases, vapors or smoke out. If you are in a vehicle, turn off fans and close all vents.
- Keep your emergency kit with you, including a radio and cell phone.
- Monitor TV, radio or local news websites until you are told all is safe or you are advised to evacuate.

Emergency Kit

In an emergency, you may need to get by without power, tap water, or be required to shelter-in-place. Be prepared to be self-sufficient for at least 72 hours by building an emergency kit. You may have some of the items already – the key is to ensure they are organized and easy to find.

If you have a large household, your emergency kit could get heavy. You may want to redistribute some items in your kit so that each person can personalize their own grab-and-go emergency bag.

Make sure your bags are easy to carry (e.g., a backpack, duffle, or suitcase with wheels) and that everyone in the household knows where they are. Keep them in an easy-to-reach, accessible place, such as your front-hall closet.

Emergency Kit – General Essentials

Item	Description
<input type="checkbox"/> Water for drinking	2 liters per person per day
<input type="checkbox"/> Water for cooking / cleaning	2 liters per person per day
<input type="checkbox"/> Non-perishable food	Canned and dried foods, energy bars (Consider any dietary needs)
<input type="checkbox"/> Manual can opener	In case of power failure
<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Guide copy	Keep updated copy in emergency kit
<input type="checkbox"/> First aid kit	
<input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight and extra batteries	
<input type="checkbox"/> Radio and extra batteries	
<input type="checkbox"/> Candles, matches / lighter	Use only in sturdy containers and do not burn unattended
<input type="checkbox"/> Whistle	To attract attention, if needed
<input type="checkbox"/> Hand sanitizer and masks	
<input type="checkbox"/> Extra home / vehicle keys	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cash (include small bills and change)	Credit / debit machines may not have power or network connection and ATMs may not function or be hard to access
<input type="checkbox"/> Waterproof / zip-lock bags	
<input type="checkbox"/> Important legal documents	

Emergency Kit – Personal Essentials

Item	Description
<input type="checkbox"/> Prescriptions, over-the-counter medications, and vitamins	1-2 week's supply
<input type="checkbox"/> Personal hygiene and self-care items	E.g., hairbrush, toiletries, extra dentures
<input type="checkbox"/> Set of clothes and footwear	In case of evacuation
<input type="checkbox"/> Assistive devices / special equipment Include extra batteries if needed	E.g., walker, wheelchair, breathing device, blood glucose monitoring device, hearing aids
<input type="checkbox"/> Medical supplies	E.g., asthma ventilator, nitro lingual spray, syringes
<input type="checkbox"/> A list of all vital devices, equipment, and supplies for each household member	If you do not have extras, include the normal location of each item on your list.

Note: Every household member should have their personal essentials packed in an easy-to-carry bag. Record the location of each bag, in case of evacuation.

Emergency Kit – Babies and Children

Item	Description
<input type="checkbox"/> Formula / baby food / bottles	Enough for 72 hours, at minimum
<input type="checkbox"/> Diapers / hygiene items	
<input type="checkbox"/> Clothing (seasonal)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Toys / activities / comfort items	
<input type="checkbox"/> Blankets / wraps	

Emergency Kit – Additional Items to Consider

Item	Description
<input type="checkbox"/> Disposable plates, cups, utensils	Reduces amount of water used for cleaning
<input type="checkbox"/> Cooler bag and ice packs	To keep medication cold
<input type="checkbox"/> Basic tool kit	Include pocket knife, pliers, screwdriver, duct tape, wrench
<input type="checkbox"/> Power bank and extra charging cords	
<input type="checkbox"/> Water purifying tablets	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sleeping bag or warm blanket	Pack one per household member, in case of evacuation
<input type="checkbox"/> Extra prescription eyewear and footwear	E.g., reading glasses, contact lenses, orthopedic shoes

Emergency Kit – Pets and Service Animals

Item	Description
<input type="checkbox"/> Food and water	Enough for 72 hours, at minimum
<input type="checkbox"/> Water and food bowls	In case of evacuation
<input type="checkbox"/> ID Tags / Licences	
<input type="checkbox"/> Medications	
<input type="checkbox"/> Travel Items	E.g., leash, harness, muzzle, carry case, waste bags

Additional Tips

Highrise Safety

If you live in a high-rise building, you may want to record and attach the following to your Emergency Guide:

Contact information:

- The name of the Superintendent and their phone number
- Members of the building Safety Committee
- The contact names and locations of Floor Monitors

Location of:

- Fire extinguishers, automated external defibrillator units and oxygen tank
- Emergency evacuation device(s)
- Your building's escape routes and evacuation plan
- Emergency buttons in the building and exits that are wheelchair accessible (if applicable)

Your Building Emergency Plan:

- Advise your building superintendent of your requirements during an emergency.
- If applicable, request that an emergency evacuation chair be installed close to the stairwell on the floor where you work or live. If you cannot have an evacuation chair, have a backup plan for evacuating without one.
- If you will need help during an emergency, obtain large printed signs from the building manager that you can place in your window/door, indicating that you need assistance.

Tips for Specific Disabilities

If you are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing

- Consider buying a weather radio (with text display and flashing alert)
- Extra hearing-aid batteries
- If you sign: Pack pen and paper, in case you have to communicate with someone who does not know sign language.
- Battery-operated lantern to enable communication by sign language or lip reading, especially when the electricity is out and it is dark.

If you are Blind or have Low Vision

- Mark emergency supplies / equipment with Braille labels or large print. Keep a list of your emergency supplies and where you bought them on a USB drive or make an audio file that is kept in a safe place where you can access it.
- Keep communication devices for your particular needs, such as a Braille or deaf-blind communications device as part of your emergency kit.

If you have a Speech Disability

- If you use an augmentative communications device or other assistive technologies, plan how you will evacuate with the devices or how you will replace equipment if it is lost or destroyed. Keep model information and note where the equipment came from (Medicaid, Medicare, private insurance, etc.).
- Plan how you will communicate with others if your equipment is not working, including laminated cards with phrases and/or pictograms, or storing information on your devices to inform first responders and others about how to communicate with you.

If you have an Intellectual or Developmental Disability

- Keep handheld electronic devices charged and loaded with videos and activities.
- Pack spare chargers for electronic devices and keep them charged.
- Consider packing sheets and twine or a small pop-up tent to decrease visual stimulation in a busy room or to provide instant privacy, in case of evacuation.
- Consider a pair of noise-cancelling headphones to decrease auditory stimuli.
- Pack comfort snacks.

If you have a Mobility Disability

- If you use a power wheelchair, keep a lightweight manual chair available as a backup if possible.
- Show those in your support network how to assemble, disassemble and operate your wheelchair.
- Purchase an extra battery for a power wheelchair or other battery-operated medical or assistive technology devices. If you can't purchase an extra battery, find out what agencies, organizations or local charitable groups can help you buy one. Keep extra batteries charged at all times.
- Consider keeping a patch kit or can of sealant for flat tires and/or an extra inner tube if the wheelchair or scooter is not puncture-proof.
- Keep an extra mobility device such as a cane or walker, if applicable.
- Keep a portable air pump for wheelchair tires.
- If you use a seat cushion to protect your skin or maintain your balance and you must evacuate, consider keeping an extra cushion on hand.

Plan Updating/Maintenance

Review and practice your emergency plan as a household at least once a year. Check and update your plan at least twice a year. You can also use that time to replace any expired emergency food and water and update any other items in your emergency kit, if needed.

Keep one updated copy of this Guide in your emergency kit. You may also want to keep a digital copy in a secure place on your computer or other devices.

Local Resources

Toronto Police Department	Poison Control Center
Non-Emergency: 416-808-2222 Web: tps.ca	Phone: 416-813-5900 Web: ontariopoisoncentre.ca
Toronto Hydro	Nearest Emergency Department*
Emergency: 416-542-8000 Web: torontohydro.com	Phone: Address:
311 Toronto	Canadian Red Cross
Dial: 3-1-1 Web: Toronto.ca/311	Social Media: @311Toronto Toll Free: 1-800-418-1111 Web: redcross.ca
Health811 Ontario	Emergency Management Ontario
Dial: 8-1-1 Web: health811.ontario.ca	Web: ontario.ca/alert Social Media: @OntarioWarnings
Environment Canada	Public Safety Canada
Web: weather.gc.ca	Web: GetPrepared.ca

*Look up the Emergency Department closest to where you live and record the address and phone number.