



City of London

Emergency Preparedness Guide

A step-by-step guide to help your family prepare for emergencies



london.ca/emergency

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Using 911 and emergency contact numbers

Call 911 when you need police, fire or paramedic services to respond immediately.

When should you call 911?

Call 911 if there is:

- a medical emergency (a serious or life-threatening injury)
- a fire
- a crime in progress

Do not call 911 to:

- locate relatives or to inquire about their condition
- ask about current road or weather conditions
- find out when electricity and gas services will return

In the event of a large-scale emergency, information and instructions from emergency response officials will be available through media, such as radio, television and social media.

You can also get information by using non-emergency telephone numbers.

When there is no immediate danger to health or property use a non-emergency number.

Please use the 911 service correctly. If the system is flooded with non-emergency calls, then true emergency calls take longer to get through. This puts the health and safety of others at risk.



Non-emergency contact numbers

Fire Department

London Fire Department • 519-661-2500 ext. 4565
• 519-661-4889 TTY

Police Services

London Police Services • 519-661-5670
• 519-661-6472 TTY

Ontario Provincial Police • OPP 24 hour toll free
Use this number to speak telephone number
with a police officer 1-888-310-1122
about a non-emergency
situation

Public Health

Middlesex-London • 519-663-5317
Health Unit

Ontario Poison Care • 1-800-268-9017

Telehealth Ontario • 1-866-797-0000
• 1-866-797-0007 TTY

Hospitals

London Health • 519-685-8500
Sciences Centre

St Joseph Hospital • 519-646-6100

City of London

City Hall • 519-661-CITY,
519-661-4889 TTY
• Report a problem
519-661-4570

Utilities

London Hydro • 519-661-5503

Enbridge • 1-877-362-7434

Call before you dig

Ontario One Call • 1-800-400-2255

London transit

London Transit • 519-451-1347
Commission

Community resources

Canadian Red • Main emergency
Cross. London and number
Middlesex Branch, 1 800 850-5090
London • Local cell
226 374-6827

London & Middlesex • 519-433-2023
Mental Health Crisis
Service

Kids Help Phone • 1-800-668-6868

Ontario 211 - • Dial 211
Community and • 211ontario.ca
Social Service Helpline

St. John Ambulance • 519-432-1352
- London and
Southwestern Branch

Personal emergency contact numbers

Family contact numbers

Name:

Work address:

Work telephone:

Cell phone:

Email:

School/teacher/child care provider

School:

Teacher/child care provider:

Address:

Telephone:

Name:

Cell phone:

Email:

Family medical information

Family physician:

Telephone:

Local hospital:

Hospital phone:

Name:

Cell phone:

Email:

Emergency meeting place In case you cannot return home, meet at:

Address:

Telephone:



Writing down your contact numbers allows you to quickly find crucial information should an emergency happen.

Emergencies: be prepared

Emergencies are unpredictable.

They can strike anytime and anywhere. Often, they occur with very little warning. Although the likelihood that one will occur in our area may seem like a remote possibility, our region of Ontario is susceptible to severe storms, flooding, winter blizzards and tornadoes.

Hazardous materials incidents, major transportation accidents, power disruptions and disease outbreaks can also have an impact on our area. Communities like London can experience events that pose a risk to the lives, health and property of residents.

Emergencies have the potential to affect large numbers of people and produce substantial damage to property. They can be caused by accidents, forces of nature, technology failures, disease outbreaks or the result of intentional acts.

If an emergency were to occur in our region, it could pose a significant risk to the people, property, environment and economic well-being of our community.

In an emergency, the City of London and emergency services will be working to ensure the safety of residents and to reduce the damage caused by the event.

They will also work closely with hospitals, public health, local utilities, businesses, provincial ministries and other community partners to mount a coordinated response to the situation.

This work will continue through the recovery phase to restore conditions to normal as quickly as possible.

When an emergency occurs, emergency workers focus their initial efforts on helping people who need immediate and urgent assistance.





EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

As a result, if your neighbourhood is not in immediate danger, it may take time for workers to clear roads and restore utilities to your area. Therefore, it is important to be prepared to cope without regular services and assistance for a period of time. In an emergency, you may need to take shelter in your home or workplace. You could be left without electricity, heat or water for hours or even a few days. In some circumstances, you might even need to leave your home and evacuate to a safer area.

All residents should plan for these situations and be prepared to be as self-sufficient as possible for at least three days.

This guide is designed to help you construct an emergency preparedness plan for you and your family.

Develop, discuss and practice your plan together.

There are four steps you can take to help you and your family prepare for an emergency:



Step 1: Know the risks



Step 2: Make a plan



Step 3: Prepare a kit



Step 4: Stay informed



Step 1. Know the risks

In the City of London, we are fortunate to live in a relatively safe region of Canada. However, that does not mean that we are immune to the possibility of a large-scale emergency.

A hazard identification and risk assessment study conducted by the City of London has identified the following potential hazards in our region:



Hazard	Examples
Severe weather and other meteorological events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Snowstorms, ice storms, extreme temperatures, windstorms, tornadoes, floods and fires
Major accidents:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hazardous materials incidents, explosions, transportation accidents, water contamination and train derailments
Technological failures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extended power failures, network interruption and phone system failures
Disease outbreaks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Widespread health emergencies, human or animal borne diseases and pandemic influenza
Intentional acts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arson, crime and civil unrest

Severe Weather



What to do in specific emergencies

When severe weather is approaching.

Environment and Climate Change Canada issues storm watches, warnings and advisories through local radio and television broadcasts. Information is also available on the Environment and Climate Change Canada website:

weather.gc.ca

Preparing for severe thunderstorms and high winds:

- Cut down dead trees and branches ahead of time so they can't fall and cause damage.
- Secure lawn furniture and other objects that might be blown around.
- If a thunderstorm is approaching, unplug televisions, computers and other electronic equipment.
- Do not go out in a boat during a storm or if one is in the forecast. If you are on the water and bad weather is approaching, head for shore immediately.
- If you are in a vehicle and need to stop, park away from trees and power lines that could fall. Stay inside your vehicle.
- If you are outside in a thunderstorm, take shelter in a building immediately. If there is no building nearby and you are located in a forest, shelter in a low, protected area such as a ditch, culvert or cave.
- If you are outside and there is no building available while lightning is present, avoid high areas and anything with metal. Vehicles are safe to shelter in.
- Don't lie flat if you are caught in an open area. Crouch down on two feet to minimize your contact with the ground in case there is a nearby lightning strike. Never take shelter under a tree.

Winter storms, ice storms and blizzards

- When a winter storm hits, stay indoors. If you must go outside, dress for the weather and wear warm boots, mitts and a hat or toque.
- Blowing snow reduces visibility on the road. Avoid driving in these conditions.
- If a blizzard catches you when you are driving, pull off to the side of the road. Turn on your flashing hazard lights to make your vehicle as visible as possible for other drivers.
- If your car becomes stuck in snowstorm, stay inside the vehicle.
- To stay warm in a vehicle, you can run the engine for ten minutes every half- hour if the muffler is not blocked by snow. Check the tailpipe to make sure it is not obstructed. Dangerous carbon monoxide fumes can enter the car if the exhaust pipe is blocked by snow.
- Ice from freezing rain accumulates on branches, power lines and buildings. Use caution around branches or wires that could break under the weight of the ice.
- Stay away from fallen power lines to avoid the risk of electrocution.

If freezing rain is in the forecast, avoid driving because roads become extremely hazardous. After a storm, wait until road conditions are safe before driving.



Tornadoes

If you are in the house:

- Stay away from windows, doors and outside walls.
- Take shelter in the basement.
- If there is no basement, go to a small interior room, hallway or closet on the ground floor.
- Take shelter under a sturdy desk or table for more protection.
- In a multi-storey building, go to an interior room or hallway on the ground floor. Avoid using elevators.

If you are in a large open building such as a gym, grocery store, arena, auditorium or church:

- Be aware that the wide span roof of a large building can collapse in a tornado.
- Take shelter in another building if possible.
- If you cannot leave, move to a small interior room such as a change room, washroom, cloakroom or storage room. Look for sturdy tables or desks to shelter under.

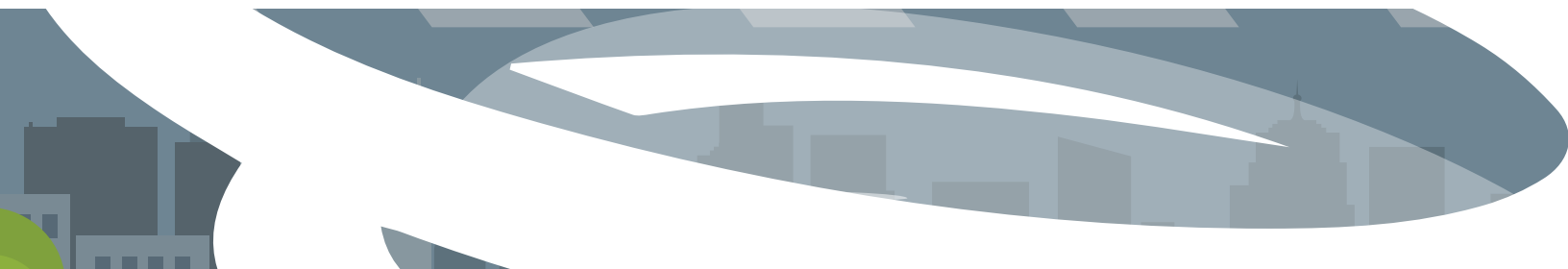
If you are driving and spot a tornado:

- Never chase a tornado - they are unpredictable and can change direction quickly.
- If the funnel is in the distance, take shelter in the nearest solid building.
- If it is nearby, get out of your vehicle and take shelter in a low-lying ditch or depression.
- If you are caught in an open area, get as close to the ground as possible and cover your head to protect it from flying debris.

If you are in a mobile home, vehicle or RV when a tornado is approaching:

Take shelter in a nearby building that has a strong foundation.

- If no building is available, get out of the vehicle and lie down in a low area or ditch.



Floods

Floods are the most frequent natural hazard in Canada. Parts of this area are susceptible to flooding during the spring run-off, particularly if there is a combination of heavy rainfall and rapid melting of the winter snowpack.

To reduce the possibility of flooding to your property:

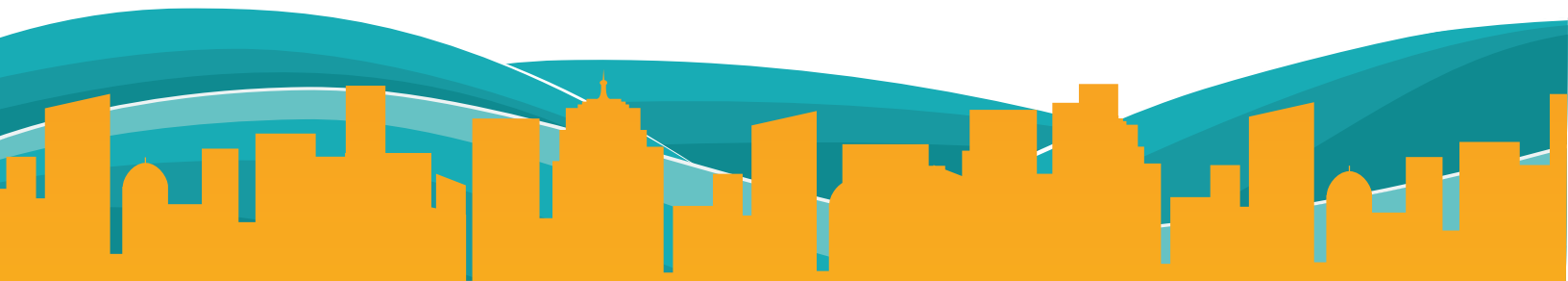
- Ensure the ground slopes away from your house and downspouts are extended away from the building envelope
- Ensure lot grading is maintained to convey water away from your house and neighbouring houses
- Ensure window wells are free draining and raised to prevent the overtopping of water
- For more information about managing stormwater, visit london.ca/living-london/water-environment/stormwater
- If you must store important documents or items in the basement, ensure they are elevated well above floor level in a water-resistant container
- Inspect your plumbing and drainage system regularly to ensure proper operation
- Consider installing additional features as required, such as a sump pump and backwater valve
- For more information about basement flooding and the Basement Flooding Grant Program, visit london.ca/living-london/water-environment/flooding

If Flooding is Imminent:

- Turn off your basement furnace
- Keep valuables and cleaning products elevated

If your basement floods:


- Do not enter your basement if water has come into contact with electrical outlets, baseboard heaters, the furnace and/or the electrical panel. For more information, visit london.ca/living-london/water-environment/flooding





If you need to evacuate:

- If an evacuation is ordered, leave your home. Staying may put your safety and others at risk
- Bring your emergency kit with you as you evacuate visit [London.ca/emergency](https://www.london.ca/emergency) for a list of items to keep in your emergency kit
- Do not cross flooded areas on foot or in a vehicle. The water can be much deeper than it appears, and fast flowing water, even if shallow, can sweep you away



DO NOT attempt to turn off your electricity if any water is present. Water and live electrical wires are an electrocution hazard. Leave your home immediately and inform authorities. Do not return until told it is safe.

After a flood

- Do not return home until authorities say it is safe to do so. This may include the need to complete an electrical inspection. For more information, call London Hydro or visit [esasafe.com/safety/storm-safety/flood-safety](https://www.esasafe.com/safety/storm-safety/flood-safety)
- Wiring in flooded electrical appliances may be damaged. If so, they can short circuit and catch fire or give off an electrical shock. Make sure they are cleaned, dried and inspected by an electrician before use, or replace the items
- Watch for any dangerous flood debris, including sewage contamination and broken glass
- Call your home insurance company and seek guidance before returning to your home

Contaminated water and mold:

- Flood water is often heavily contaminated with sewage and other pollutants. Take precautions to protect your health.
- Use gloves, masks and rubber boots when working in contaminated areas and wash thoroughly afterwards. You may need to have mold removed by professionals.
- Do not drink water if you suspect contamination. Have it tested.
Damp basements are an ideal place for mold growth. Mold can lead to serious health problems if it is not removed.

For more information on cleaning up after a flood, visit the Middlesex-London Health Unit website: [healthunit.com](https://www.healthunit.com)

Extended power outages

Most power failures are short in duration. However, during severe storms or other emergencies they can last for hours, days or even a week or more.

- During a power outage, you may be left without heating, air conditioning, lighting and running water. Phone service can also be disrupted. Basic analog telephones which do not require electricity may still work. A radio in your emergency kit makes it possible for you to monitor news broadcasts. You can reduce the impact of a power outage by taking time to prepare in advance. Be prepared to manage without electricity for at least three days.



Preparing your home:

- Consider installing a backup heating source for winter power failures. Gas or wood stoves and heaters that don't rely on electricity can heat your home and keep water pipes from freezing.
- Clean your chimney every fall if you have a woodstove or fireplace.
- Another option is to install a backup generator. People choosing this option need to check their home's energy requirements and have the generator installed by a professional.
- Have at least one telephone that doesn't require electricity to work (for example, analogue phones).

During a power outage:

- If yours is the only home without power, check your electrical panel or fuse box.
- If neighbouring homes are affected as well, call your electricity supplier.
- Turn appliances off. Appliances and electronic equipment can be damaged by a power surge when electricity returns.
- Turn off all lights, except for one or two. When they come on you will know that service has been restored.
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to prevent food from spoiling. Food will remain frozen in a full freezer for 24 to 36 hours if the door remains closed.
- Never use barbecues, camping stoves, propane heaters or generators indoors.
- Use safe candle holders which will not topple. Do not leave lit candles unattended and put them out before going to bed.
- A crank or battery powered radio will enable you to stay informed during an outage.



Step 2. Make a Plan



Emergencies can strike with very little warning, leaving you with no time to make plans about where to go and what to do.

Challenges you might face in an emergency:

- You might not have the opportunity to gather resources that you need
- Family members may be in different locations when the event occurs
- Communication networks can break down
- Electricity, water or gas service to your home may be disrupted
- Roads could be blocked or closed
- Regular sources of food, water and gasoline might not be available

Residents have a key role to play in responding to emergencies. Make plans to be able to take care of yourself and the members of your household for up to three days or more.

Being prepared ahead of time will help you and your family cope with an emergency more effectively and enable you to make a faster recovery.

Emergencies can be particularly stressful for children, seniors and individuals with disabilities. They may feel especially vulnerable if they rely on caregivers for assistance, but are separated from them when the incident occurs. If your household includes a person who requires extra help, be sure to include provisions for them in your plan.

Make your plan before an emergency occurs

- Create a home escape plan
- Record your emergency contact information
- Identify a meeting place away from your home
- Choose an out-of-area contact person
- Copy and protect important documents
- Take an inventory of household possessions
- Prepare an evacuation plan
- Make a plan for your pets

Creating a home escape plan

Make a plan to ensure you can leave your home quickly and safely in the event of a sudden emergency.

Draw a floor plan of your home. Identify two ways that you can exit from each room. Draw arrows on your diagram to show where these emergency exits are located. Use a different colour ink to make the arrows stand out.

Consider buying a collapsible emergency ladder if you might need to exit from an upper floor window or balcony. If you live in a high-rise building, do not use elevators in an emergency. Use the stairs instead.

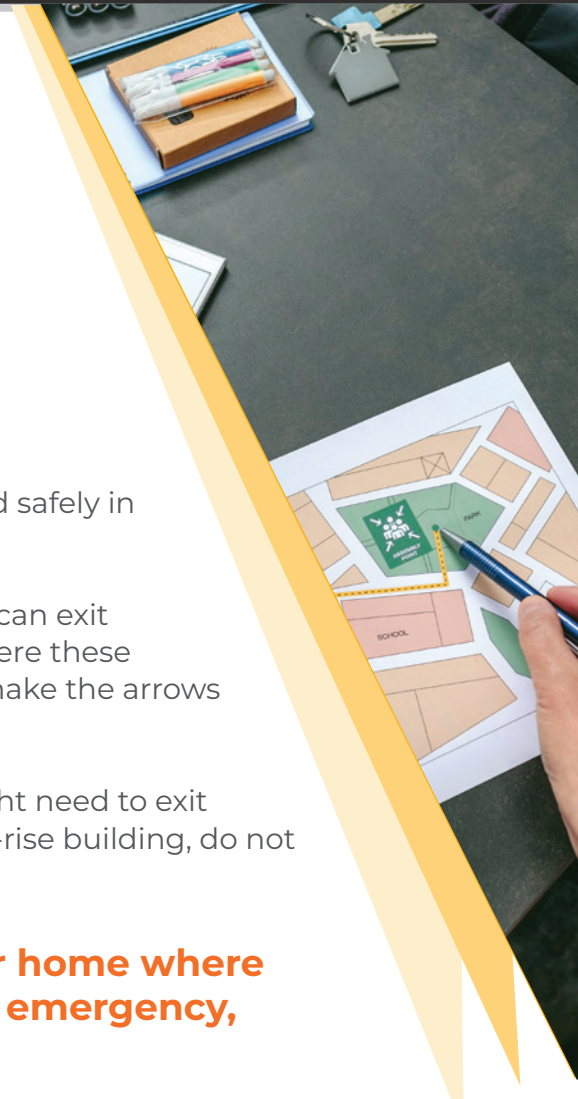
Decide on a safe meeting place outside your home where everyone will go if you need to get out in an emergency, such as a fire.

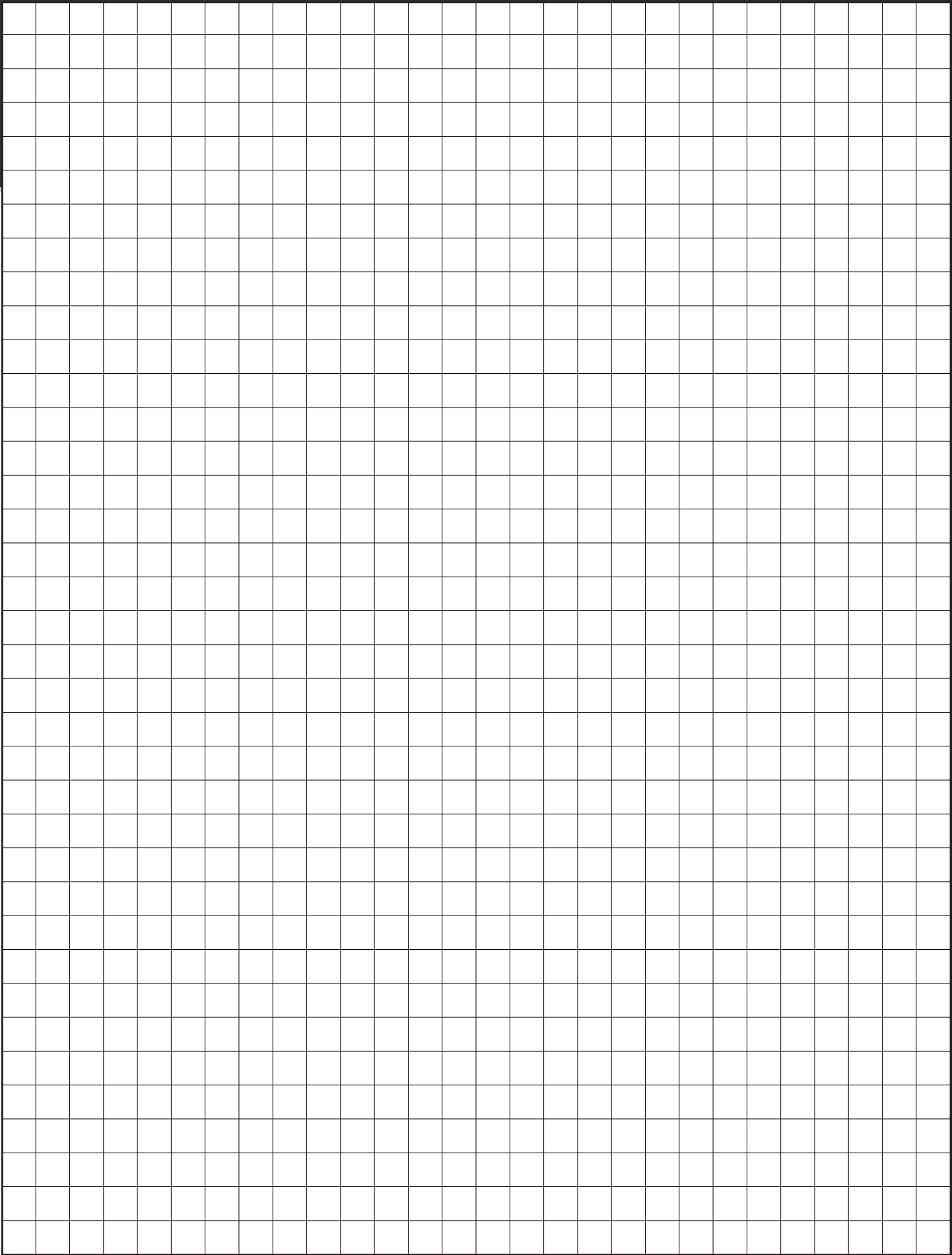
Ensure that everyone in your family knows where the meeting place is and practice your home escape plan together.

Safe meeting place near home: _____

Phone number: _____

Use this area to sketch your home escape plan. Identify two ways to exit from each room and mark each with an arrow.





Record your emergency contact information

Members of your family may not be together at home when an emergency occurs. Children may be at school, in daycare or visiting friends. Adults may be at work or elsewhere. **Make plans to be able to contact each other in order to reunite.**

Gather a list of your emergency contact phone numbers.

Every family member should carry a copy of these numbers with them at all times. Adults can keep a copy in their wallet or store numbers in a mobile phone. Children can write them in a school agenda, or keep a copy in a backpack. For younger children, you can give a copy to the child's teacher or daycare provider.

Identify a meeting place away from your home

Select a meeting place located well outside of your neighbourhood where everyone will go if you cannot return to your home in an emergency.

Location:

Contact phone number:

Make plans ahead of time about who will pick up children who are at school or daycare.

Choose an out-of-area contact person

Decide on an out-of-area emergency contact person. This person should live far enough away that they will not likely be affected if an emergency occurs in your area. Contact this relative or friend if you are separated from your family in an emergency. They can co-ordinate information about where family members are and help you to reunite with them. You can also use this contact to provide information to other relatives and friends to let them know that you are safe.

Emergency contact information

Family Member:

Work phone:

Mobile phone:

E-mail:

Meeting Place:

Out-of-area contact:

Phone number:

E-mail:

School Phone:

School Address:

Record emergency contact information on a card for each family member to carry with them at all times.

In mobile phones store emergency contact numbers under **ICE**.

In **C**ase of **E**mergency

Copy and protect important documents

Make copies of all important documents. For example:

Birth and marriage certificates
Health cards
Prescriptions
Driver's licences
Banking and investment information

Wills
Passports
Land deeds
Vehicle registration

Find recent photographs of each family member and include them with your sets of copies. Make backup copies of important electronic files and scanned documents. Store them on a CD, DVD, USB drive or a secure cloud.

Keep one set of all backup copies in your emergency preparedness kit and store another set in a safe place away from home. These files contain sensitive information so store them in a safe place. You might choose to store them in a safety deposit box or with trusted family or friends who live out of town.

Take an inventory of household possessions

Compile an inventory of your household possessions. For each item, include a description, serial numbers, approximate value and original purchase receipts if possible. Photographs are an excellent way to keep track of your home's contents, especially unique items such as antiques and jewelry.

When your inventory is complete, it is a good idea to make sure you have adequate insurance for your property and possessions. Check that you are covered for the types of emergencies that might occur in your area.

Make a plan for your pets

Pets are generally not allowed in evacuation centres. Make plans for pets in case you are forced to evacuate from your home. Prepare a pet emergency kit (see page 25) and think about family, friends or boarding kennels that would take care of your pet in an emergency. Some hotels and motels allow visitors to stay with their pets. Explore your options before the need arises.

Prepare an evacuation plan

In some emergencies, such as floods, fires or hazardous materials incidents, it may be necessary for you to evacuate from your home and neighbourhood. Authorities will not ask you to leave your home unless they believe you are in significant danger.

If you are directed to evacuate, take your emergency kit with you. Carefully follow the instructions given by emergency authorities. Stick to the evacuation route you have been told to follow and proceed to a reception centre or evacuation shelter. When you arrive, be sure to register with the shelter or reception centre staff. Do not attempt to enter or return to an area that has been evacuated.

Make arrangements ahead of time with relatives or friends who would be willing to provide you with temporary lodging during an evacuation. Choose one location that is not too far from your home where you can go in the event of a small, localized evacuation. Choose another that is farther away in case there is a major incident that requires the evacuation of a larger area.

Place to stay in the event of an evacuation

Name:		
Home phone:		
Work phone:		
Mobile phone:		
E-mail:		
Home address		
Two travel routes to this location:		

In an evacuation, once you have taken care of yourself and your family, check to see if there are neighbours who you can assist. Discuss emergency plans with neighbours ahead of time.

Step 3. Prepare a Kit

1. Home emergency kit
2. Vehicle emergency kit
3. Pet emergency kit



Make preparations before an emergency to be self-sufficient for up to three days. This allows emergency workers to focus on people who require urgent assistance.

Assemble an emergency kit that contains items to help you cope for a minimum of three days. Store the items in backpacks, duffel bags or luggage so you can easily take the kit with you in case you need to evacuate. Keep it in a cool, dry area of your home. Ensure that every household member knows where the emergency kit is located.

Check your kit at least twice a year. A good time to inspect it is when the time changes in the spring and fall. Check that all items are in working order and use your checklist to ensure that your kit is still complete. Replace food, water and batteries in your kit at this time.

Include accessibility supports/accommodation items that may be required for individuals with disabilities.

Emergency Management Ontario has produced an excellent guide on emergency preparedness for individuals with disabilities. The guide is available on their website: ontario.ca/page/emergency-management.

Families with infants and toddlers also have additional needs.

Remember to include baby food, formula, bottles or sippy cups, diapers, baby wipes, toys, crayons, paper and other items as required.



Never use camping stoves, barbecues or propane heaters indoors or in enclosed spaces. The carbon monoxide gas that they emit can be lethal if used indoors.



Home emergency kit checklist:

- ☐ water – 4 litres per person per day
- ☐ non-perishable food
- ☐ manual can opener
- ☐ first aid kit
- ☐ prescription medications
- ☐ flashlight
- ☐ batteries
- ☐ radio
- ☐ candles and matches or a lighter
- ☐ a basic analog telephone
- ☐ warm clothing and footwear
- ☐ blanket or sleeping bag for each person
- ☐ toilet paper, feminine hygiene products
- ☐ and other personal care supplies
- ☐ plastic garbage bags
- ☐ soap, shampoo and hand sanitizer
- ☐ toothbrushes & toothpaste
- ☐ whistle to attract attention
- ☐ spare house and car keys
- ☐ money - include small bills and change.
- ☐ a copy of your emergency plan
- ☐ Emergency contact information
- ☐ copies of important documents
- ☐ recent photos of each family member
- ☐ playing cards, games or small toys
- ☐ infant supplies and diapers if needed
- ☐ charging cords and portable chargers

Consider the following:

Water (four litres per person per day):

- two litres for drinking
- two litres for washing, hygiene and food preparation

For prescription medications, include a one-week supply and copies of prescriptions.

Water treatment methods include water purification tablets, filters or bleach.

Basic analog telephones that work when they are plugged into a phone jack (and don't need to be plugged into an electrical outlet) will still work in a power outage if telephone lines are not damaged.

Keep some cash on hand - debit and credit cards may not work in an emergency.

Recommended additional items:

- small camping stove and fuel for cooking outside
- utility knife
- duct tape
- basic toolkit
- work gloves
- dust masks
- tarps or plastic sheeting
- two-three pots or pans
- disposable dishes, cups and cutlery
- disposable razors and shaving cream
- toys and games for children if needed

First aid and medical supplies

Purchase a basic first aid kit or assemble one on your own and ensure that it has adequate supplies for the number of people in your home.

A basic family first aid kit should include:

- two pressure bandages
- eight gauze pads
- four 2x2 gauze pads
- four 4x4 gauze pads
- 20 wrapped antiseptic towelettes
- two abdominal pads
- one roll adhesive tape
- two gauze rolls
- five large fabric fingertip dressings
- two triangular bandages
- assorted adhesive bandages
- safety pins
- instant cold pack
- scissors
- tweezers
- first aid gloves (non-latex, nitrile)
- one thermal blanket
- first aid manual



Include some non-prescription medications in your first aid kit:

- a pain reliever (for example, acetaminophen)
- an anti-inflammatory (for example, ibuprofen)
- an antihistamine for allergy relief
- a topical antibiotic cream for cuts and abrasions
- skin moisturizer
- an anti-diarrhea medication (for example, Imodium)
- antacid tablets

Food in emergencies

Choose foods which:

- do not require refrigeration
- have a long shelf life
- are ready to eat or require little preparation
- are calorie and nutrient rich

Suggested foods

- canned fruits, vegetables and ready-to-eat soups
- energy rich peanut butter, granola bars, dry pasta sauces, dried fruit and nuts
- canned juice or juice-boxes
- instant coffee, tea and hot chocolate
- energy bars and meal replacement drinks
- spices, sauces, condiments and sugar to improve the taste of the food

Pet emergency kit

- food, water, bowls, paper towel and manual can opener
- blanket and a small toy
- leash
- cat litter (if required) and plastic bags
- pet carrier for transportation
- current photo of your pet in case your pet gets lost
- up-to-date id tag with your contact number
- copy of pet licence
- medications and records (including vaccinations)
- record details of feeding schedules, medical or behavioural problems in case you must board your pets

Vehicle emergency kit:

- water
- emergency food supply (for example, energy bars)
- blanket
- extra pieces of warm clothing including a hat, mitts, scarf and boots
- emergency candle in a deep can and matches or a lighter
- seat belt cutter and window breaker tool (keep these two items where they can be easily reached from the driver's seat)
- sand, salt, cat litter or traction mats for ice
- extra anti-freeze and windshield wiper fluid
- first aid kit
- flashlight
- snowbrush and ice scraper
- shovel
- emergency contact numbers (relatives, work and roadside assistance)
- booster cables
- fire extinguisher (class ABC)
- emergency flares
- whistle
- spare fuel container
- road maps
- a small amount of change

Step 4. Know what to do during an emergency

The key to responding effectively in an emergency is to be prepared, remain calm, use common sense and follow the directions issued by emergency authorities.

In an emergency you will be provided with information through the media about the nature of the emergency, status of the situation and instructions about what to do.

Monitor radio and television broadcasts for emergency information and notifications. You could also be alerted by emergency services personnel who come directly to your home or workplace.

If you need to wait out an emergency in your home, use the provisions in your home emergency kit. Cook outside on a barbeque or camp stove if there is no electricity. In cold weather, you may be able to use a fireplace or woodstove to heat your home.



Do not use barbeques, gas stoves or propane heaters indoors.

Water treatment in emergencies

On average, a person can only survive for three days without water.

If you run out of stored supplies, you will need to turn to other sources for drinking water. Ensure that the water is safe to drink. If you are not sure, you must treat it before drinking or using it to prepare food.

Temporary treatment of water

- 1.** Boiling is an effective method for disinfecting water. Bring water to a full boil for at least one minute to kill bacteria and parasites. Boiling is a good temporary treatment for clear surface water or rainwater.
- 2.** Plain household bleach can also be used to treat water. Add five to eight drops of plain bleach for every four litres of water. Stir and let the water sit for 15 minutes before using. Do not use specialty, colourfast or scented bleach.
- 3.** Water purification tablets that contain iodine or chlorine are another option. They are available at camping and outdoor stores. Follow directions carefully.
- 4.** A safe and effective method is to use a portable water filtration system. These systems typically pump water through special filters to remove bacteria, viruses and contaminants. They are sold at camping and outdoor stores.



Stay put to stay safe: learn how to shelter in place

Depending on the emergency and conditions outside, it may be safer for you and your family to stay inside your home or workplace rather than leave or evacuate. This is known as sheltering-in-place.

Be prepared:

- Predetermine a room that will be your Safe Space during an emergency. An upper-level room with few or no windows is best. Choose an area that can be sealed off easily, with access to necessities like food, water and washroom facilities. A good example would be an upper-level bedroom with an en suite.
- Prepare an emergency preparedness kit for you and all members of your family, including your pets. It is a good idea to keep the kit in your Safe Space. For more information on what to put in your kit, visit london.ca/emergency.
- Include materials to keep your Safe Space airtight in case of a hazardous materials event. This includes duct tape, towels and pre-cut pieces of plastic sheeting to place over the windows.
- Sign up for notification services. For more information, london.ca/alert.

The following steps will help to reduce your exposure and maximize your protection:

1. Close and lock all exterior doors and windows.
2. Shut off all fans to avoid drawing air in from outside. Turn off heating and air-conditioning (HVAC) systems that circulate air through your home.
3. Close your fireplace chimney damper.
4. Monitor your radio or television station for information. You will be notified when it is safe to come out of shelter or you may be instructed to evacuate.

If you suspect that you have been exposed to a hazardous material, call 911 immediately and seek medical care. Monitor any symptoms that you experience. Be aware of perspiration, dizziness and changes in your heart rate, breathing, skin tone and level of consciousness. Tell medical personnel about these and any other symptoms that you notice.

If you need to evacuate

Authorities will only direct you to evacuate from your home if they have reason to believe you are in significant danger. Follow instructions that you are given about when to leave, where to go and what transportation routes to follow. Do not enter or return to an evacuated area unless emergency officials have given you specific instructions and permission to do so.

If you are ordered to evacuate, remember to take:

1. your emergency kit
2. your emergency plan and contact information
3. essential medications and copies of prescriptions
4. a mobile phone
5. your pets and their supplies

Take steps to protect your home:

- Locate all shut-off switches and valves for water, electricity, gas, heating and ventilating systems in your home ahead of time.
- Identify valves and switches with labels and clearly mark the on/off position.
- Officials may advise you to shut off water and electricity service. Only turn them off if you are instructed to do so by emergency officials.
- Do not shut your natural gas service off unless you are specifically directed to by emergency officials. If you turn off your gas a qualified technician will have to reconnect it. In a major emergency, it could take weeks for a technician to respond, leaving you without gas for heating and cooking.
- When you evacuate, lock your home and leave a note on the front door that indicates when you left, where you are going and your contact information.
- If you are able to, assist your neighbours with the evacuation.
- If you have time, call or e-mail your out-of-area contact. Let them know where you are going, your planned route and when you expect to arrive. When you arrive at a reception centre, register with the staff. Also contact your out-of-area contact to give them an update. Tell them if any family members have become separated.



After an emergency

- Check yourself and your family for injuries.
- Help injured individuals and provide first aid if it is safe to do so. Otherwise, get help or call 911 if it is an emergency.
- Once you have taken care of people in your own household, check on your neighbours.
- Monitor local radio and television stations for information from emergency officials.
- Avoid using telephones or cell phones unless you require emergency services. Keep the lines free for those who need them most.
- Stay away from emergency areas. Going there may interfere with rescue work. If you become injured or stranded in a dangerous area, you become part of the emergency and create more work for emergency personnel.
- Avoid fallen power lines. Report their location to local utilities.
- If there is damage to your residence use caution. If there is structural damage, leave your home and do not re-enter until it has been examined by a professional.
- Check for fires, fire hazards and gas leaks. If there are any hazards present, leave your house and call for help.
- Be sure to use appropriate safety equipment to protect yourself from injury.

Recovery

- Notify relatives and friends that the emergency is over.
- Contact your insurance company.
- After any emergency, do not drink the water until you have verified that it is safe.

Insurance and emergencies

Check your insurance policy before an emergency strikes to determine if you have enough coverage and exactly what types of damage will be covered. For insurance purposes, make sure you have an accurate description of your home and an inventory of your belongings. Take photographs, record serial numbers and keep copies of receipts to show the value of items. If an emergency damages your home or possessions, take immediate steps to protect your property from further damage and contact your insurance company as soon as possible.

Children and emergencies

Children may experience anxiety and fear after an emergency. Children take their cues on how to respond to a situation by how the adults around them react. Try to be calm, reassuring and realistically optimistic about the situation.

- Children may feel powerless and worry that the event will happen again.
- Encourage children to talk about the event and their feelings.
- Listen to their fears and take them seriously.
- Talk about what happened and what is being done to return life back to normal.
- Encourage children to express themselves through playing or drawing.
- If you have evacuated, try to keep the family together in one place.
- Provide children with information at a level they can understand.
- Hold and hug young children to give them a sense of safety and security.

Coping with the aftermath

What you are your family might experience.

- Realize that people react in different ways following an emergency.
- Recognize that the way you are feeling and reacting to the event is normal.
- Talk to family members and friends.
- Be there to listen to others as well.
- There may be a lot of cleanup and recovery work to do, but don't overdo it. Take time to rest.
- Remember that emergencies are very stressful events.
- If physical and emotional reactions continue to persist after the event, or if you have experienced particularly traumatic losses, it may be necessary to seek counselling and professional help. Don't hesitate to do this – help is available.

Self-care during emergencies

Self-care is not only important in your daily lives. When emergencies happen, this can be stressful and challenging. Managing stress daily can help strengthen resilience and help us cope in times of emergencies. Everyone responds to stress differently. Identifying your stress response and building a self-care plan can help when it comes to emergencies.

Self-care plan

Building a self-care plan may take some time but it can be helpful to your well-being. You can make as many changes to your self-care plan as you need. Think about your current self-care plan and how your wellness strategies may change during an emergency.

Some practices for your self-care plans include:

- Your emotional stressors: plans to overcome this include talking about your emotions, journaling and having a positive outlook
- Your body stressors: plans to overcome this include going into nature, praying, connecting with your community and meditating
- Your mind/psychological stressors: plans to overcome this include journaling, therapy, meditation and self-reflection
- Your spirit stressors: plans to overcome this include going into nature, praying, connecting with your community and meditating
- Your professional stressors: plans to overcome this include taking your full lunch break and using your vacation days
- Your home stressors: plans to overcome this include making goals, practicing hobbies, getting a coffee or tea with friends and going on a date

Now, how would your plan change during an emergency?

Think about how you can continue with your self-care plan and what may need to be changed. Also think about how it would change if you had to be evacuated from your home. What would this look like?

Identify supports and social network

Creating a positive social network can help with self-care and resilience during stressful times. Social supports can come from family members, friends, neighbours, professionals, clubs and organizations, faith-based groups, and workplaces.

NAME	RELATION	ADDRESS/PHONE

Make a self-care kit for your emergency kit

This will be a small kit that will fit inside of your emergency kit to help with self-care during an emergency or evacuation. Make sure to include a copy of your emergency self-care plan for you to reference.

Items to consider that help with grounding your senses include:

- Stress balls
- Fuzzy socks
- A stuffed animal
- Your favourite tea or snack
- Essential oils
- Your favourite book
- Photos of loved ones
- Colouring books
- Fidget toys

Even during emergencies, self-care can help to alleviate your stressors, take care of yourself, and allow you to be more resilient.

When using methods of self-care, try to use the methods that best help you. Some self-care methods could work well for some people but may not have the same effect on you and your mental health.

Alert London Notification System

We all have a role to play in ensuring that the City of London is prepared for an emergency and can respond effectively.

Alert London may provide critical public safety messages to registered Londoners through their preferred point of contact, such as telephone, cell phone, text message and/or email.

In cases where emergencies only impact a certain geographic area in London, Alert London notifications may only be delivered to registered residents that could be affected by the situation.

Emergencies are often stressful, and it can be hard for individuals to think clearly in these situations. Alert London can provide guidance and critical information to Londoners navigating an emergency.

Possible emergency situations that may trigger the Alert London Notification system include community wide power outages, ice storms, aftermath of tornados, drinking water advisories, community evacuations, hazardous material spills and situations that may require residents to shelter-in-place.

Learn more at london.ca/alert.



Where to find more information

For more information on emergency preparedness, explore these websites:

- **City of London – Emergency Management**
london.ca/emergency
- **Emergency Management Ontario (EMO)**
emergencymanagementontario.ca
- **Public Safety Canada**
getprepared.ca
- **St. John Ambulance Canada**
sja.ca
- **The Salvation Army**
salvationarmy.ca
- **Middlesex - London Health Unit**
healthunit.com
- **The Canadian Red Cross**
redcross.ca
- **Public Health Agency of Canada**
phac-aspc.gc.ca

Other general information

- **211 Ontario provides easy access to community, social, health, and related government services in Ontario.**
211ontario.ca
- **Ontario 511**
Provides traffic information/road conditions on provincial highways/roads
<https://511.on.ca>



london.ca/emergency