



**Recovery Alberta**

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES

# E-PREP



**Emergency Preparedness**  
**More than a kit, building individual and community resiliency.**



## Acknowledgements

We are grateful to the people and organizations that have provided support and input into the development of Emergency Preparedness (E-Prep). This guidebook and workshop would not be possible without the collaboration, dedication and hard work of all of the people and organizations involved.

### **Need Support?**

**Mental Health Help Line**

1-877-303-2642

**Addiction Helpline**

1-866-332-2322

**Indigenous Support Helpline**

health care and system navigation support

1-844-944-4744

Mental Health Promotion & Illness Prevention (MHPIP)

Email: [hpdip.mh.earlyid@recoveryalberta.ca](mailto:hpdip.mh.earlyid@recoveryalberta.ca)

Version: 07. Revised: 2024-09

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## An emergency or disaster can happen with little or no warning. How prepared are you?

1. Do you know how you tend to react in a stressful situation?
2. Neighbours helping neighbours can be critical in an emergency. Do you know your neighbours?
3. Do you have copies of your family's important documents?
4. Do you know where the utility shut-off valves for your house are (e.g., gas, electricity, water)?
5. If you live in multiple unit housing (e.g., condo, apartment, assisted living), do you know the building's emergency plan?
6. Do you have a person who lives nearby you plus a person who lives outside of your area who knows your emergency plans?
7. Do you have a household plan of where and how to connect with household members in an emergency?
8. If you have children, do you know the emergency plans for their school or daycare?
9. If you don't drive, what are your transportation options?
10. If you're evacuated, do you know what the emergency routes are to get out of your community?

Knowing your risks, knowing yourself emotionally, having social connections with neighbours and your community, and planning and building a kit of what you might need can help you feel more prepared and get you through the challenges of a disaster or emergency more effectively.

## 1 Know the Risks

Knowing possible hazards will help you know what you might need to prepare for an emergency.

For example: Will you shelter in place or be evacuated? Do you need a 72-hour kit? Do you need a grab and go kit?

**Brainstorm**—What are the risks in your community?

## 2 Know Yourself

Emergencies and disasters can affect our ability to cope and make decisions. Understanding ourselves emotionally, looking after our wellbeing, and having a social network can help us get through and recover faster from emergency and disaster situations.

Building blocks of a successful plan include:

- Know Yourself—Emotional Preparedness and Wellness Strategies
- Social Network Considerations

### Emotional Preparedness

Emergencies are stressful; they cause disruption, change our routines, and add a lot of stress. Emotional preparedness is an important and often overlooked part of emergency planning. Anticipating, knowing, and monitoring our own and others reactions can be really helpful in an emergency.

**Brainstorm**—Consider and answer the following questions:

1. How do you know when you're stressed?
2. How do you think you will react to the stress of an emergency or disaster?
3. If you have been through an event, think about how you handled the stress of it. What went well? What would you do differently?



Personal wellness strategies can help us reduce our symptoms of stress and increase our wellbeing and ability to cope with daily stressors and in disaster circumstances. Wellness strategies, just like our stress signs are unique to us. This means that we will have to try different strategies until we find what works for us. The following list provides some examples of typical stress responses and wellness strategies that may be helpful.

### Physical (Body)

Stress Responses	Wellness Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• restless</li> <li>• lack of energy</li> <li>• change in appetite</li> <li>• headaches</li> <li>• sleep disturbances</li> <li>• stomach aches, indigestion</li> <li>• muscle aches and pains</li> <li>• chest pain and tightness</li> <li>• heart palpitations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eat well</li> <li>• drink enough water</li> <li>• exercise regularly</li> <li>• create good sleep habits</li> <li>• spend time outside</li> <li>• practice relaxation (e.g., deep breathing, meditation)</li> <li>• manage any chronic illness</li> </ul>

### Feelings

Stress Responses	Wellness Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sadness, grief</li> <li>• fearful, anxious</li> <li>• guilt, shame</li> <li>• lack of motivation</li> <li>• numb, overwhelmed</li> <li>• feeling disconnected</li> <li>• lonely, bored</li> <li>• resentful, anger</li> <li>• powerless, helpless</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• laugh</li> <li>• practice breathing</li> <li>• acknowledge accomplishments</li> <li>• release anger or resentment</li> <li>• take time for self</li> <li>• nurture positive view of self</li> <li>• maintain positive outlook on life</li> <li>• be present in the moment</li> <li>• enhance appreciation and gratitude</li> </ul>

### Thoughts (Mind)

Stress Responses	Wellness Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• difficulty concentrating</li> <li>• memory loss</li> <li>• forgetfulness</li> <li>• mental fatigue</li> <li>• loss of sense of humour</li> <li>• thoughts of suicide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consider a broader perspective</li> <li>• make clear decisions</li> <li>• seek opportunities for laughter</li> <li>• be mindful of positive events</li> <li>• try not to worry</li> <li>• check the facts about a situation</li> <li>• take a news break as needed</li> <li>• break problems into small steps</li> </ul>

### Actions

Stress Responses	Wellness Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• self-isolation</li> <li>• fast speech, impatient</li> <li>• fingernail biting, teeth grinding</li> <li>• critical of others</li> <li>• anger outbursts</li> <li>• gambling</li> <li>• tobacco use</li> <li>• increase in alcohol or drug use</li> <li>• excessive screen use (e.g., TV, computer, gaming)</li> <li>• self-harm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• practice self-care</li> <li>• maintain a routine</li> <li>• seek alternatives to TV and computers</li> <li>• engage in enjoyable activities</li> <li>• read, write, or listen to music</li> <li>• reach out for social contact</li> <li>• intentionally slow down daily pace</li> <li>• enhance gratitude and appreciation</li> <li>• work to accommodate new realities</li> <li>• monitor for potential concerns</li> <li>• reach out for help when needed</li> </ul>

### Spiritual

Stress Responses	Wellness Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hopelessness</li> <li>• loss of meaning and purpose</li> <li>• religious doubt</li> <li>• spiritual discontent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• seek spiritual connections</li> <li>• seek fellowship with similar beliefs</li> <li>• maintain optimism</li> <li>• practice forgiveness</li> <li>• practice kindness and compassion</li> <li>• take time for prayer or meditation</li> </ul>

### Social Network Connections

Having a social network of people and organizations where we live can help us respond to, go through, and recover from a disaster. When we are friendly and familiar with the people and organizations who are around us, we'll be more invested and comfortable in helping each other. Having a social network will also help us feel less alone and more connected.

One way to look at our social network is to build a social connections map. This map will be unique to you and may change over time. Your map can help you see areas of strengths and areas that could be developed.

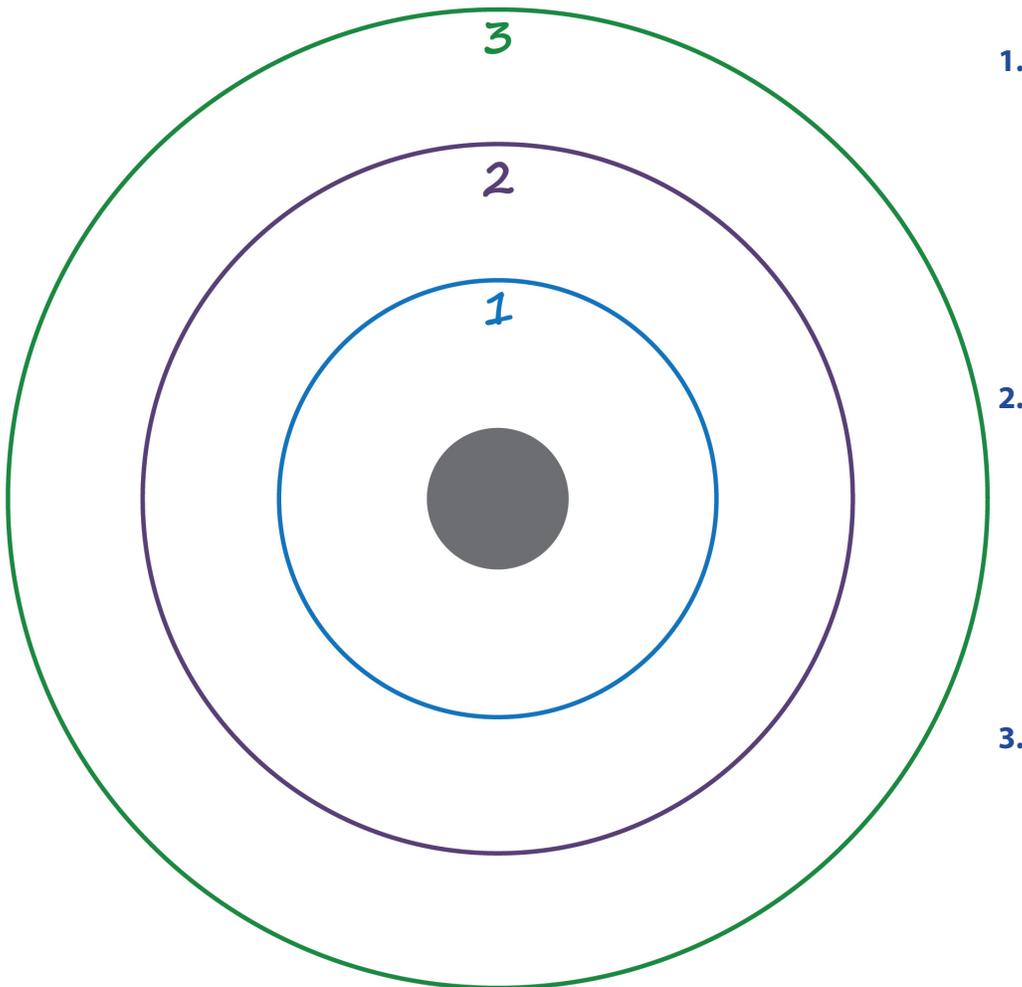
#### Create your social connections map.

Think about who can support your practical, emotional, mental, spiritual, and physical needs in a disaster.

1. supportive people you trust. For example, close family, including spouses or partners, found family, or friends
2. people you spend time with but aren't as close to. For example, extended family, people from ceremony, co-workers, teammates, or people you do other activities with
3. acquaintances, people you know but don't spend a lot of time. For example, people you see at community groups or events, neighbours, faith leaders, services providers or other professionals such as healthcare provider, pharmacist, or case worker. It may also include people that you only interact with through text or group chat, online, or e-mail.



Think about what your needs might be in a disaster and how different people offer different types support. For example, some people may be able to offer both practical and emotional support while others might only be able to offer spiritual support.



## Community Preparedness

Community preparedness strengthens relationships and builds resilience, helping the whole community respond to and recover more effectively after a disaster.

**Brainstorm**—What are some ways build community preparedness?

### Make a Kit

In the event of an emergency or disaster, we may be without power or water for a period of time and we may be asked to stay in place or evacuate. Having some basic supplies and contact information ready is a fundamental part of emergency preparedness. If possible, our emergency kits will have enough supplies for ourselves and the people we live with to last for several days (minimum 72-hours).

### Emergency Kit and Planning Tips

Ideas for supplies, lists, labels, and storage:

- Make a list of things to add at the last minute. Keep this list handy to help you pack quickly if you need to evacuate.
- When getting your food supplies together, consider purchasing things that you normally eat that can also work in an emergency (e.g., canned beans, canned tuna). This will help reduce waste and added expense because you can take them out of your kit to use before they expire and easily replace them with items you may already have.
- Non-perishable food supplies have expiry dates. Consider always having a bit extra on hand if possible, and as you use it replenish it.
- When moving your supplies – realize this is a lot of stuff. It's going to be heavy, consider using a bin or suitcase that has wheels.
- If you don't have a lot of storage space and you do have a suitcase – consider storing some of your items in your suitcase when you're not traveling.
- Make a list of any assistive devices and details you might need if the devices need repairs or are lost (e.g., model number, serial number, brand). In an emergency you can use this list to gather what you need or give it to someone who is assisting you.
- Label your medical and supportive equipment with your name and contact information.
- Store your assistive devices and your emergency supplies in the same locations in your home, then you won't have to search for them when you need them.
- Store original documents in a safe place and keep copies with you (e.g., safety deposit box, sealable and waterproof bag, trusted friend or family member who doesn't live in your city).
- Make electronic copies of important family photos and backup your photos regularly on a USB drive or secure online storage system (e.g., iCloud, google photos).
- Keep recent photos of you and each member of your family, including pets. If you're separated, this may help you reconnect.

Your supplies and information will need to be updated:

- Consider updating your kits in spring and fall and adding clothing as appropriate.

With respect to planning:

- Make sure your plans include what you'll do if you have to stay in place or have to evacuate. Consider your pets and any other needs of the people you live with in making these plans.
- What if you and the people you live with are not together when an emergency happens? How would you connect? Here is a suggestion: Have a contact person who lives outside of your area—far enough that they won't be impacted by a disaster themselves. If you're separated from your family and unable to reach each other, your contact person can relay messages between all of you.
- Make a contact list for each person in your family (personal and professional) and ensure that it's in their personal belongings so that a responder may help your family member if your family member is not able to speak for themselves.
- Have trusted people in your community and outside (likely to be unaffected) who know your plans and have your information.
- Assess your power needs. If you have medical devices that need power, medications that need to be cold, or you can't tolerate too hot or too cold of temperatures, determine how you will ensure you've got a backup power plan (e.g., generator, going somewhere to stay).

Other considerations:

- Take a First Aid and CPR course. You never know when you may need these skills if you don't already have them.
- Be prepared for home fires and carbon monoxide problems.
- Have a whistle. Why? If you need to call out for help, your voice will give out. Three sharp blows on a whistle are the international symbol for rescue.
- In Alberta, it's helpful to sign up for Alberta.ca account and MyHealthAlberta account. Having these accounts set up and learning how to use them will make access to things like license renewals, financial supports, and health records (e.g., vaccinations, medications, allergies, vital signs, wound management), easier in a disaster or emergency.
- Government emergency aid programs and services require an email account. If you don't have a working email address or someone you care about doesn't have an email address, consider setting one up.

## Notes

## Practical Supplies

**Brainstorm**— From the lists below, identify what you will want to add to your kit.

### Food and water

- dry and canned food
- 4 litres of water per person per day
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### First aid kit

- Band-Aids
- gauze
- antiseptic wipes
- protective gloves
- tape
- small scissors
- tweezers
- nail clipper
- needle and thread
- instant ice packs
- antibacterial ointment
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Clothing and bedding

- seasonal clothes (e.g., raincoat, jacket, boots)
- underwear
- socks
- shoes
- blanket
- emergency heat blanket
- sleeping bag
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Sanitary supplies

- hand wipes
- hand sanitizer
- bottom wipes
- non-medical and dust masks
- soap and cleaning supplies
- trash bags, tissues
- toilet paper
- paper towels
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Equipment

- flashlight or lamp (battery or crank)
- candles and candle holder or glow sticks
- lighter
- waterproof matches
- hand operated can opener
- dishes, utensils
- battery powered or crank radio
- extra batteries
- alternate power supply
- pen, paper
- duct tape
- whistle
- extra charging cables
- multi-tool and work gloves
- resealable bags
- aluminum foil
- space heater
- medical equipment (e.g., mobility aids, hearing aids, oxygen, sleep apnea equipment, feeding tubes)
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Distraction and comfort items

- something to read
- non-electronic games
- playing cards
- activity books
- crosswords
- family photos
- small toys, stuffies
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Personal supplies

- prescription glasses
- night guard
- sunglasses
- personal hygiene products
- dentures, braces
- sunscreen
- bug spray
- medical supplies (e.g., needles, glucometer, alcohol wipes)
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Cash

- small bills and coins
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Documents**

- birth certificate
- marriage certificate
- divorce certificate
- adoption papers
- child custody papers
- passport
- driver's license
- Alberta health care card
- social insurance number
- citizenship papers
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- photos of you and your family
- photos of you and your pet
- pet ownership documents
- \_\_\_\_\_
- logins and passwords to online websites
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Financial and Legal**

- mortgage
- rental agreement
- line of credit
- deeds
- utility bills
- alimony, child support
- elder care
- banking information
- insurance policies
- home inventory
- tax documents
- will
- power of attorney
- Alberta Green Sleeve, with advanced care planning documents, goals of care, and personal directive
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Medication**

- list of medications for each member of the family, including your pets (e.g., prescriptions, vitamins, over-the-counter medications)
- list the name of the medication, the dose, how much to take, how often, when and why it's taken, when it was started, if it was stopped, and any additional information (e.g., take with food, name of prescribing doctor)
- check with your pharmacist about emergency preparedness and when to fill your prescriptions and how to store them properly so that you'll have what you need available
- list of allergies and reactions for each family member, including pets

This is an example from MyHealthAlberta:

Name of Medication	Dose/Strength	How Much	How Often and When					Why I Take It	Additional Information	Date
			Morning	Afternoon	Evening	Bedtime	As Needed			
atorvastatin	20 mg	1 pill				✓		lower cholesterol	Dr. Goodheart	09-Jan-2015

For more information, additional resources, and tools, go to: [myhealth.alberta.ca/alberta/Pages/medicine-tracking-tools.aspx](http://myhealth.alberta.ca/alberta/Pages/medicine-tracking-tools.aspx)

If you wear a medical alert, most emergency rescuers will look for a wrist bracelet— they may miss other types of medical alerts (e.g., necklace).

**Contacts to consider for each person**

- family emergency contact person
- family, friends
- neighbours, organizations
- employer, supervisor
- landlord or property management
- pharmacy, doctors, specialists, dentists
- school and childcare
- elder care
- medical equipment providers
- repair services like a plumber, roofer, carpenter, electrician
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## Communication in an Emergency

Disasters and emergencies can knock out our everyday communication modes and we may become separated from the people we live with. Consider creating a communication plan and sharing it with those close to you and your out-of-town contact people. Here are some ideas and questions for planning:

- What will you do if an emergency happens on a day when no one is at home (e.g., travelling, working)? What will you do if an emergency happens on a day everyone is home?
- Where can you safely meet in your community? Where can you meet outside of your community?
- Who is your emergency contact person in your community?
  - Who will be your emergency contact outside of where you live?
  - Do you have a back up emergency contact person?
- If communication lines are down, how will you connect?
- Do you have people who are at risk of going missing and are unable to communicate accurately or pets? If so, what is your plan for reconnection with you or another caregiver?

Helpful things to know about communication in a disaster:

- If you're not in immediate danger, use non-voice communication like texts, email, and social media. These use less bandwidth if phone service has been disrupted. Too many calls can cause network congestion and place people who are in life-threatening situations at risk.
- If you've been evacuated and have a landline with call forwarding, use the call forwarding function to send calls to your cell phone.
- If your cell phone is running out of power, change your greeting message so people know where you are. Your greeting can help people find you.
- If you've made a call and it doesn't go through, wait 10 seconds, and dial again. This can reduce network congestion.
- Keep spare batteries and a charger for your phone. Consider getting a solar powered, crank, or vehicle charger.
- Get accurate information. Check TV, radio, and social media.
- Sign up for emergency alerts like the Alberta Emergency Alert app.
- Keep a list of places and websites to get local information.
- Know your evacuation routes. Contact your local municipality for emergency route information.

## Notes

## Additional Emergency Kits

### Vehicle Kit

Create a kit and leave it in your car. Being prepared for things like vehicle breakdowns, poor weather, and traffic accidents can help you stay safe.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> water and food that has a long shelf-life            | <input type="checkbox"/> roadside assistance emergency kit (e.g., antifreeze, windshield washer fluid, jumper cables, warning lights, road flares, fire extinguisher, small shovel, salt or sand) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> flashlight and extra batteries or wind-up flashlight | <input type="checkbox"/> _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> first aid kit with a seatbelt cutter and multi-tool  | <input type="checkbox"/> _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> light or glow sticks                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a deep can with a candle and long matches            | <input type="checkbox"/> _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> whistle, local road maps                             | <input type="checkbox"/> _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> blanket or sleeping bag                              | <input type="checkbox"/> _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> seasonal clothing (e.g., shoes, boots, sun hat)      |   |

### Tips

- Store larger items in the trunk (e.g., jumper cables) and smaller items in the vehicle cab (e.g., road map) where they're easily stored and accessible.
- If you become trapped in your vehicle, stay calm. Call for help using your cellphone or your car's emergency call system, if available.
- Don't go out in the cold or heat, unless your car isn't safe. You will avoid getting lost and have shelter.
- Use the engine as little as possible to heat or cool the car. Crack the window to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. Make sure the exhaust pipe of the car isn't blocked by snow, mud, or other debris.
- Turn on warning lights or set up flares so your car is visible. Keep your hazard lights and car lights off—it will drain the battery.
- Move your hands, feet, arms, and legs to maintain circulation.
- Stay awake.
- Keep an eye out for other cars and emergency responders.
- Try to keep your clothing dry.

#### Evacuation Tip

Ensure that your vehicle maintenance is up to date, your tires are in good condition, your tire pressure is at the recommended range, and if possible, keep your gas tank at least half full at all times.

### Work or Mini Kit

It's important to know the emergency and disaster protocols and procedures in your workplace (e.g., Is there a first aid kit? Where is the meeting location if you're evacuated?).

**Brainstorm**—Check off what you need and add other things you want in your kit.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> water and food with a long shelf life     | <input type="checkbox"/> flashlight with spare batteries or wind-up flashlight |
| <input type="checkbox"/> toiletries (e.g., toothbrush, toothpaste) | <input type="checkbox"/> medication  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> extra clothing                            | <input type="checkbox"/> _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> emergency contact list                    | <input type="checkbox"/> _____   |

### Notes

## Pet Kit

Pets are a part of the family. Learn about keeping your pet safe and comfortable in an emergency or disaster.

**Brainstorm**—Check off what you need and add other things you want in your kit.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7–14 day supply of food and water                      | <input type="checkbox"/> contact list of pet friendly hotels, kennels, shelters, family and friends outside of your community |
| <input type="checkbox"/> food and water dishes with lids                        | <input type="checkbox"/> someone who can get your pet(s) if you can't   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 14 days of medications, stored in waterproof container | <input type="checkbox"/> adoption records or other proof they're your pet   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> pet carrier, collar, leash                             | <input type="checkbox"/> _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> pet first aid kit                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> disinfectant, dish soap, paper towels                  | <input type="checkbox"/> _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> waste bags   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> comfort items (e.g., toys, blankets)                   |   |

Post a sticker on your door indicating there are pets inside. List the number and type of pets in your home (e.g., 1 dog: Spot, 1 bird: Goldie, 1 cat: Fluffy). Most veterinarian offices have information stickers specifically for this purpose.

If you're evacuated and your pet is placed in temporary shelter, you will need:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a recent photo of you and your pet                             | <input type="checkbox"/> a list of allergies, medications, and food restrictions  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> an active pet license from your municipality                   | <input type="checkbox"/> current medical and vaccine records, vet information   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> up-to-date ID information (e.g., tattoo, microchip)            | <input type="checkbox"/> names of people allowed to give permission for medical treatment or who can pick up your pet if needed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> information on feeding schedules, behaviour, or other concerns | <input type="checkbox"/> _____  |

## Farming Animals and Livestock Preparedness

Preparing for common risks in farming communities is important. It's recommended that you connect with other preparedness resources specific to farming.

A few things to consider:

- Make plans for either sheltering in place or evacuation.
- Have a meeting place or muster point.
- Have a map of the property that includes buildings, key services (e.g., power, water shut-off), access points, equipment locations, and dangerous chemical storage. Post your map in each building.
- Have enough feed, water, and shelter for any animals you can evacuate.
- Have safe transportation methods; if possible, practice loading and transporting your animals.
- Ensure your animals are tagged so ownership is easily identifiable.
- Make an emergency contact list that includes neighbours, animal transport or handlers, vets, and feed suppliers. Keep an updated copy in each building.
- Store all records on-site and off-site digitally (e.g., animal ID, contact list, site map).
- Register livestock and poultry with the Alberta Agriculture's Traceability program.
- Contact your local Emergency Management to learn what help is available.

## Notes

## Emergency Preparedness Considerations

### People with Disabilities

#### Mobility limitations

Depending on your limitation, consider having an evacuation chair that can be stored near a stairwell on the same floor that you live or work. Create a plan with the building manager and the people who will help you get out.

When planning for evacuation, check the areas you may be evacuated to and see if the facilities are accessible for you.

For your checklist consider the following:

- |  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a patch kit for a flat tire and a seal in air product | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> spare inner tubes                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> latex free gloves for anyone who may provide you care | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> spare chair or aid as needed                          | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

#### Non-visible disability

If you have conditions like allergies, epilepsy, diabetes, lung or heart disease, it may be difficult or impossible at times to do tasks, follow instructions, etc....

Consider the following:

- Keeping an emergency contact list on you. This list will identify key people who are aware of your needs.
- Current medications and how they will be stored.
- Wearing a Medic Alert bracelet or identification.
- Having a way to be located in an emergency (e.g., a panic button).

#### Hearing impairment

Consider for your checklist:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A pencil and paper ready for written communication   | <input type="checkbox"/> A laminated card that explains your hearing loss and how people can communicate with you |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A flashlight, whistle, and personal alarm  | <input type="checkbox"/> _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-printed phrases like "I use American Sign Language."<br>or "If you make announcement, I will need to have it written or signed." | <input type="checkbox"/> _____  |

#### Vision impairment

Consider the following:

- Having a longer white cane to get around obstacles that have fallen or shifted.
- Labeling your emergency supplies with fluorescent tape, large print, or Braille text.
- Knowing the escape routes and emergency door exits on the floors of any building you work, live, and visit.
- If you have a guide dog—ensuring you have plans to bring your dog with you.
- Having a way to be located (e.g., a panic button).

#### Notes

## Older Adults

If you are an older adult, planning and preparing may be different depending on several factors. Consider the following:

1. Do you live alone? Is there anything more you would need to do?
2. Do you live in a congregate living setting? Does your building have a plan? Do you know what it is?
3. Consider your life and that factors that affect you, is there anything that you would need to add for your emergency planning and preparing?

### Notes

## Caregivers

If you're a caregiver, you will want to consider the needs of the person you're caring for. Include the person you care for and all caregivers as appropriate in planning.

- Build or help build a kit for the person you're caring for. Keep the kit in an easily accessible location.
- Make a list of medical conditions, medications, doctors, and therapists.
- Speak to a pharmacist about having medications for an emergency.
- Make a list of items (e.g., equipment, special items) the individual needs daily and place the list in an easily accessible location. In an emergency or disaster this list can be used to provide information to others assisting you.
- Label medical and supportive equipment they may need and store the equipment in a consistent location for easy access.
- Add the individual's name to an emergency database intended for special needs that emergency personnel should be aware of (if available in your community).
- Include a recent photo of the person you care for and information on how to contact you or alternate caregivers and any other important information if you're somehow separated.
- Make sure that the individual's emergency information and plan are up-to-date and communicated to all caregivers.

### Notes

## Children and Teens

Children can handle emergencies well if they feel that they understand what is happening and what they can do to protect themselves. Discussing and preparing an emergency plan with your children increases their ability to cope with emergency situations.

Ideas to help children and teens prepare for a disaster or an emergency:

- Talk to your kids about natural hazards in your area and practice what to do if they happen.
- For kids who are able to understand, and in a way that's appropriate for them, create a family plan for emergencies. In planning consider:
  - How to contact each other and reconnect if you're separated.
  - Identifying a meeting place that's familiar, safe, and easy to find.
  - Finding out and coordinating with their school about emergency planning.
  - Making an emergency contact list and ensuring they have it with them at all times. On the list identify parents or guardians and someone else who can help them if you can't be there. Make sure they know the people on the list.
  - Teaching them how to use 911.
  - Helping young children identify people who can help (e.g., firefighters, police, neighbours).
  - Making your kit with your kids and making a plan to update the kit together. They should know where it's stored, what goes in it, and how to use the items in it.
- For little kids, helping them make a "grab-n-go" bag with items like a stuffy, travel game, a book, toy, etc.... This activity may turn into a game for them that they may play often, this is okay—they're learning.

### Notes

## Being Prepared to Help Children Cope Emotionally in a Disaster or an Emergency

Helping your child or teen develop healthy emotional coping skills will help them in life and will help them prepare for, go through, and recover better after experiencing a disaster or emergency.

Here are a few ideas to help you prepare your kids emotionally:

- Being able to say how you feel (e.g., I'm feeling nervous.), can help to start the process of coping with uncomfortable emotions. Help your child learn words to describe and speak about their feelings. One way to do this is by reading books or watching shows and talking about the character's emotions.
- If you notice your child is struggling with a tough emotion, ask them to describe how they're feeling.
- When they speak about their feelings, listen and empathize without judgement or punishment for how they feel. You might say, "That's hard. It doesn't feel good to feel (insert the emotion they named)." This builds trust and lets them know you're there for them no matter how they feel and that feelings are normal for everyone.
- Help your child identify things that make them feel stressed and help them recognize their stress signs.
- Give them opportunities to learn and do stress relief techniques and wellness activities like breathing exercises, physical activity, getting outside, doing artwork, reading, listening to music, playing an instrument, etc....
- Help them learn problem solving skills. When there is an issue, and they seem stuck help them identify and write down 4 or 5 solutions. Then make a pro and con list for each solution. They can decide what they'd like to try first.
- Help your child identify people they feel they can trust to talk to when they feel stressed.
- Be a role model. Talk about your feelings in a way that's appropriate for your child's age and stage. Practice your own helpful coping skills.

### Notes

#### Preparedness is a process

- Develop your own emotional preparedness plan:
  - Be aware of your stressors.
  - Practice wellness strategies that work for you.
- Develop your social network as needed.
- Develop your own emergency preparedness kit(s) with the people you live with.
- Develop emergency preparedness plans based on the possible risks or hazards you identified in your area (e.g., evacuation, stay-in-place).
- Make sure your emergency supplies are up-to-date.
- Ensure your emergency contact and medical information is up-to-date.