

# **EASY READING BROCHURE**

## **How to Prepare for an Emergency**

**An information brochure for adults  
with low English literacy**



**EASY READING**



Vecova Centre for Disability Services and Research is a leading-edge, registered not-for-profit charitable research and service organization that has been building the capacity of persons with disabilities and enriching communities through leadership, innovation and collaboration since 1969. Affiliated with the University of Calgary we are recognized as a leader in the field of disability services and research.

The following publication How to Prepare for an Emergency, was written by Donovan Tymchyshyn, The Vocational and Rehabilitation Research Institute, now Vecova Centre for Disability Services and Research in 2009 with funding provided in part by the Calgary Region Community Board Persons with Developmental Disabilities. How to Prepare for an Emergency has been updated by Vecova Centre for Disability Services and Research in 2012.



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## What is an Easy Reading Brochure?

Plain language is a way of writing so that more people can understand the information. There are some things we do with plain language that you would not see out-side of plain language.

For example, words like understand and outside, used in the first paragraph, have a - in the middle. This helps to make a longer word that is made of more words, easier to read.

We also use things like square brackets and definitions:

### **Square Brackets** [ ]

Some-times you will see square brackets, like these [ ], beside a word. The letters between the brackets are there to help people learn how to say the word.

### **Definition Box**

Some words you see will have a box around the word like "Definition Box" to the left. Beside each box, there will be a paragraph that has an line around it, like this one. This is to help people learn what the word means.

**The Red Cross has trained  
15,126 Canadians in  
disaster preparedness.**

- Annual Report, Canadian Red Cross

**You will learn about:** .....

- .....  **1 What an Emergency is**
- .....  **2 Prepare for an Emergency**
- .....  **3 What You Do and Do Not Do in an Emergency**
- .....  **R Resources**



**4 in 10 Canadians say they  
have provided first aid,  
8 in 10 say it is very  
important to know how to  
perform first aid.**

- Ipsos Ried, Canadian Red Cross

**1****What an Emergency is**

- ▶ Emergencies can cause direct risk to some-one
- ▶ Emergencies can happen at any-time
- ▶ There are many kinds of emergencies

**Emergency**  
[ee-merge-en-see]

Some-thing that:

- Causes a direct risk to one's health, life, property, or environment
- Needs direct action so things do not get worse
- Can happen any-time and any-where

**Kinds of Emergencies**

Emergencies can be caused by:

- Natural risks, like a storm
- Electrical [e-lec-trick-al] risks, like a black-out
- Human error, like a house fire

Know the kinds of emergencies in your area.

Canada has different kinds of emergencies.





Check off the kinds of emergencies that happen in your area.

- Black-out
- Earth-quake
- Fire
- Flood
- Industrial [in-dus-tree-al] accident
- Hurricane
- Land-slide or avalanche
- Snow storm
- Tornado
- Severe weather (heat or cold)



**2****Prepare for an Emergency**

To prepare for an emergency you should follow these 4 steps:

- Step 1: Make an emergency plan
- Step 2: Make an emergency kit
- Step 3: Make sure your home is safe
- Step 4: Know when to call 9-1-1

▶ **There are 4 steps to prepare for an emergency:**

- **Make an emergency plan**
- **Make an emergency kit**
- **Make sure your home is safe**
- **Know when to call 9-1-1**

▶ **If you follow all of these steps it will help you be more prepared in an emergency**

**Step 1: Make an Emergency Plan**

Every home should have an emergency plan.

It will help you to know what to do in an emergency.

Plan what you need to do for different emergencies.

Ask a family member, friend, or support worker to help you make the plan.

Keep this plan in a place you will remember and that is easy to find.

You can put it with your emergency kit.

You should practice your plan at least once a year.

You can use the next pages to help you make you plan.

### Make your home emergency plan

Draw a plan that shows all the rooms of your house.

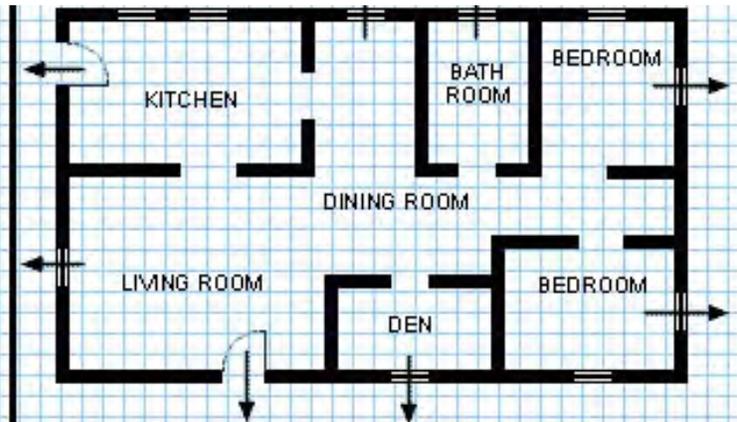
The plan needs to show where you can find:

- Exits (windows and doors) from each room of your home
- Utility [you-till-it-ee] shut-offs like:
  - Water
  - Gas
  - Electricity [e-lec-triss-it-ee]
- Your emergency kit

Make sure that every-one in your home:

- Knows the plan
- Knows how to get out fast

If you live in an apartment do not use the elevator. Use the stairs. If you can not use the stairs wait for an emergency worker.



**Draw your emergency plan here:**



**When you make your emergency plan:**

1. Talk about where you will meet and what you will do if an emergency happens when you are not home
2. Plan a safe place to meet with every-one in your home
3. Prepare your list of important addresses and phone numbers
4. Make sure every-one in the house has a copy
5. Remind every-one that they should call emergency workers only if it is important
6. Talk about what kind of emergency each person is afraid of
7. Talk about how your plan will help them not be afraid

**Safe place to meet**

Meet at a place near your home on the same side of the street as your house. This way you will be out of the way of emergency vehicles and workers.

A safe place to meet near your home is:


There may be a bigger emergency in your neighbourhood.

You may have to leave the neighbourhood and not just your home.

Pick a safe place to meet your family if you have to leave your home because of an emergency. This can be a friend's house or a coffee shop.

A safe place to meet away from your neighbourhood is:




### **Make copies of important papers**

Make a copy of your:

- Birth certificate
- Passport, driver's license, or AISH card
- Insurance
- Contact info for your doctor, family, and support workers

#### **Info**

We will use info for information [in-for-may-shun]. Info is easier for some people to read.



Keep a copy of these papers in a safe place inside your home.

You should also keep a copy of these papers with your family and a friend.



If you have special health needs, write down the info.

Special health needs can be:

- Medical conditions (diabetes)
- Allergies (food)
- Surgeries (appendix)
- Family medical history (diseases)
- Medications (blood pressure pills)
- Family emergency contacts (parents)

Talk to your doctor about how to make a grab and go bag.



### **Grab and go bag**

A bag with a 2 week supply of:

- Medications, like blood pressure pills
- Medical supplies, like bandages
- Health information, like your doctor's phone number

**Write down your health info here:**

Name:
Date:

List any medical conditions you have:


List any allergies you have:




List any surgeries you had:


List any medications you take:


List your family doctor:

Doctor's name:
Phone number:
Emergency number:

List your support worker:

Support worker's name:
Phone number:

## Step 2: Make an Emergency Kit

In an emergency kit, you will need to have some things ready.

You may be with-out power or water for 1 or 2 days.

You may already have some things in your home like a flash-light, food, and blankets.

Make sure the emergency kit is:

- Organized and easy to find
- Easy to carry, like a back-pack
- In an easy place to reach
- In a place that every-one in the home knows where it is



### 3 day emergency kit

Your 3 day emergency kit should have:

- A flash-light and batteries
- A blanket
- Non-perishable [non-pear-ish-a-bull] food
- Bottled water
- Water proof matches and candles
- A first aid kit
- Garbage bags
- Basic tools (hammer, pliers, wrench, screw-drivers)
- A copy of your emergency plan and important papers
- A radio
- Batteries



### **Step 3: Make Sure Your Home is Safe**

Make sure your home is safe.

Your home is safer if you have a:

- Carbon [car-bon] monoxide [mon-ox-ide] detector
- Smoke detector
- Fire extinguisher [ex-ting-wish-er]

Every-one in your home should know:

- Where to find the fire extinguisher
- How to use the fire extinguisher
- How to test the carbon monoxide detector and smoke detector
- You need to test the carbon monoxide detector and smoke detector every 2 months
- How to change the batteries in the carbon monoxide detector and smoke detector
- You should change the batteries in the carbon monoxide detector and smoke detector every 6 months

Where is your fire extinguisher?





If you live in an apartment know where the fire alarms are.

Every-one in your home should know how to turn off the:

- Water
- Electricity
- Gas

Make large signs for the water, gas, and electricity box about how to shut them off.

#### **Water valve:**

Location:
Shut off instructions:
Water company phone number:

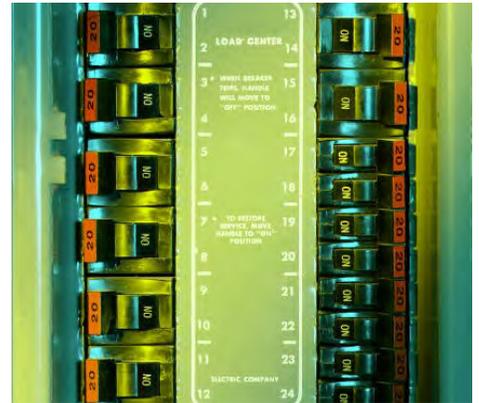


#### **Gas valve:**

Location:
Shut off instructions:
Gas company phone number:

**Electricity box:**

Location:
Shut off instructions:
Electric company phone number:



**Step 4: Emergency Steps**

**Plan for different risks**

What should you do in case of a storm, black-out, or fire?

Write down steps for the emergencies that are most likely to happen in you area.




### When to call 9-1-1

You should call 9-1-1 only if it is an emergency.

- Report a fire
- Report a crime
- Save a life

For non-emergency calls, use the phone number listed in your local phone book for police, fire, and ambulance services.

In case of an emergency:

1. Follow your emergency plan
2. Get your emergency kit if it is safe to get it
3. Make sure you are safe before you help others



## ③ What You Do and Do Not Do in an Emergency

- ▶ Stay calm during an emergency
- ▶ Follow the emergency plan you have created
- ▶ Do not be afraid to call for help

### DO...

- Stay calm
  - You have prepared for an emergency
  - You have an emergency plan
  - You have an emergency kit
- Follow the instructions of the emergency workers
- Call for help if you need to move some-one who is hurt and you can not move them
- Keep your cell phone on and the ringer on loud
  - Keep you cell phone battery charger close by
  - Recharge your cell phone when-ever you can
- Call your family to let them know WHERE you are and that you are OK
- Try to make sure your neighbours are OK.
  - Do not put your-self at risk.
- Take your pets with you when you leave



**DO NOT...**

- Do not be afraid to call and ask for help if you need it
- Do not take an elevator where there is a fire or earth-quake
- Do not leave unless you are told to by emergency workers, radio, or TV
- Forget to tell emergency workers if you have pets in your home



## Resources



### Places You Can Contact to Prepare for an Emergency

#### Canadian Red Cross

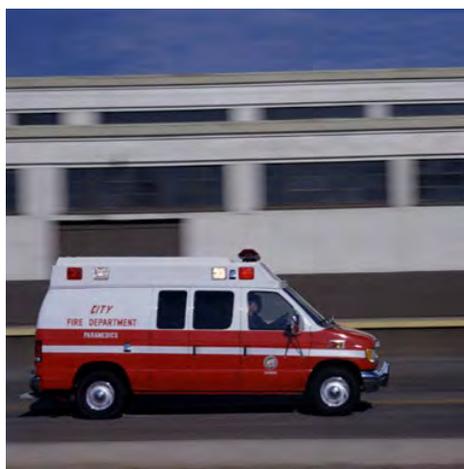
- Phone: 613-740-1900
- Fax: 613-740-1911
- Email: [feedback@redcross.ca](mailto:feedback@redcross.ca)
- Web-site: [www.redcross.ca](http://www.redcross.ca)

#### Public Safety Canada

- Phone: 1-800-622-6232
- Fax: 613-941-0827
- Email: [safety@canada.gc.ca](mailto:safety@canada.gc.ca)
- Web-site: [www.safecanada.ca/beprepared/beprepared\\_e.asp](http://www.safecanada.ca/beprepared/beprepared_e.asp)

### **St. John's Ambulance**

- Phone: 613-236-7461
- Fax: -613-236-2425
- Web-site: [www.sja.ca](http://www.sja.ca)



Please think of the environment when printing this workbook.

Please print double sided.

How to Prepare for an Emergency is an information brochure developed for adults with low English literacy created by Vecova, located in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

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