

Before an Emergency

It is important to know who does what

When it comes to emergency preparedness and emergency management, we all have a role to play. Many individuals assume they will be taken care of when a disaster happens. The truth is, help in an emergency initially goes to those who need it the most. It is important to understand everyone's roles and responsibilities in a disaster before it occurs.

Individuals and Families

You should be prepared to take care of yourself and your family for a minimum of 72 hours during an emergency. You should also understand the basic principles of first aid and safety.

To do this you should:

- [Know the risks](#)
- [Make a plan](#)
- [Build a kit](#)

It is important to understand that every disaster starts as a local emergency. Different levels of organizations respond progressively as an emergency escalates and their resources are needed. The first ones to respond to an emergency are always the closest.

First Responders

- Local fire, police, paramedic, and search and rescue teams are normally the first to respond to an emergency. They are responsible for managing most local emergencies as part of their community emergency plan.

Non-Governmental Organizations

- There are several non-profit, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that play very important roles in emergency management, including disaster prevention/mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. Some examples include the [Canadian Red](#)

[Cross](#), [St. John Ambulance](#) and [The Salvation Army](#). They work in partnership with governments to help Canadians deal with emergencies, from providing first aid training to disaster relief assistance.

Provincial and Territorial Governments

- In Alberta, the [Alberta Emergency Management Agency](#) (AEMA) is the emergency management organization (EMO) for the province. AEMA leads the coordination, collaboration and co-operation of all organizations involved in the prevention, preparedness and response to disasters and emergencies.
- Every province and territory has an EMO to manage large-scale disasters and provide assistance to municipal or community response teams, as required. EMOs fulfill an important role and support first responders and communities. [Learn more about your EMO](#).

Federal Government

- Federal departments and agencies support provincial or territorial EMOs as requested. They also manage emergencies that involve areas of federal jurisdiction, such as nuclear safety, national defence and border security. [Learn more about federal emergency management](#).

For more information on hazards in Alberta, contact your municipality's Director of Emergency Management or the Alberta Emergency Management Agency at 780-422-9000 (Dial 310-0000 for toll-free access outside Edmonton). You can also visit www.aema.alberta.ca.