

# Government of Alberta

## Community Evacuation Guidelines and Planning Considerations

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## Introduction

### Background

Following the May 2016 Wood Buffalo Wildfire, the Government of Alberta contracted KPMG to conduct a post-incident assessment on the provincial response. This document addresses one of their recommendations for improvement. Specifically, KPMG made a recommendation to develop a Provincial Emergency Evacuation Guide that *“could be leveraged by local authorities through the existing Community Emergency Management Program as they develop their own emergency and evacuation plans.”*

### Guide Development

A thorough review of available evacuation plans and documentation was undertaken highlighting key assumptions, differences in methodology, challenges, opportunities and general applicability. Lessons learned and best practices outlined in evacuation literature from other jurisdictions throughout Canada, United States and Australia were also researched. Consultation took place between, Alberta Emergency Management Agency (AEMA) Field Operations, Government Ministries, ATCO, EPCOR and over 40 Alberta communities. An Evacuation Guide workshop was also held as part of the AEMA Stakeholder Summit 2017 to solicit input and feedback from emergency management partners.

### Purpose

The purpose of this Evacuation Guide is to provide local authorities with a series of planning guidelines to assist in the development of their own evacuation plans. It is not intended to be an all-inclusive set of specific directions. Each community and every disaster will present its own specific set of circumstances and it is recognised that any generic plan will need to be adapted to differences in the time, place and circumstance of a specific emergency.

## Legislation

The *Municipal Government Act* (MGA) and *Emergency Management Act* (EMA) establish the province's legal basis and framework for managing emergencies.

The MGA is the legislative framework within which all municipalities and municipal entities across the Province of Alberta operate. Amendments to the MGA have been made through three bills passed by the legislature since 2015; some provisions of the act will come into force in phases, with some happening immediately and others becoming effective in January and April 2018. A copy of the MGA can be found at the link provided below and the extract which defines the purpose, powers and capacity of municipalities can be found at Annex A.

<http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/m26.pdf>

The EMA provides the legislative framework for local and provincial management of emergencies and disasters. A copy of the EMA can be found at the link provided below (printed copies are available from the Queens Printer). Annex B of this guide provides extracts of the EMA which relate specifically to evacuation and access control. To obtain a full understanding and perspective of the legislation, it should be read in its entirety and in conjunction with the MGA and any applicable local Emergency Management bylaws. At the time of publication the EMA was under review; proposed changes could impact the way communities conduct evacuations.

<http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/E06P8.pdf>

Clarification on the contents of both the MGA and EMA can be obtained through Alberta Emergency Management Agency Field Officers.

Depending on the nature and the scope of the emergency, a number of regulations and acts could provide context for evacuation activities. A full listing can be found at the link provided below.

<http://www.qp.alberta.ca/570.cfm>

## Evacuation Guidelines

Evacuation is a risk management strategy that can be used to mitigate the affects of an emergency that necessitates the movement of communities out of a high-risk area. Depending on the nature and scope of the event, evacuations may be limited to a single building or can affect a large area such as a whole city. Detailed planning is one of the keys to a successful evacuation.

For planning purposes we identify three types of evacuations:

- Immediate Evacuation - where the result of a hazard requires immediate action allowing for little or no preparation (eg release of toxic gas)
- Pre-warned Evacuation - where reliable information and intelligence allows for the planning of an evacuation ahead of the hazard (eg flood warning)
- Self-Evacuation – where individuals/families/groups spontaneously decide to evacuate an area.

## Planning Stakeholders

Ensuring the safety of a community is the primary concern of evacuation planning and requires a focused and deliberate effort. Effective planning requires the ongoing engagement of all key stakeholders, particularly those with a role in an evacuation as well as the community likely to be impacted. Key stakeholders may include, but would not be limited to:

- Elected Officials
- Chief Administrative Officer
- Director / Deputy Director of Emergency Management / Emergency Management Staff
- Local Emergency Social Services Staff
- Community and Regional Planners
- Law Enforcement, Fire/Rescue and Emergency Medical Services, Public Health and Safety Personnel
- Public Information Officer / Communications
- Public works/Engineering departments
- Multi-modal transportation providers
- Supporting social service agencies and volunteer organizations
- Neighbouring jurisdictions/First Nations
- Alberta Emergency Management Agency Field Officers
- School Board(s)
- Industry
- Utilities / Critical Infrastructure Stakeholders
- Health Authorities
- Environmental Authorities
- Special Interest Groups (eg corrections facilities, livestock producers)
- Regulatory bodies (eg Transport Canada)
- Provincial and Federal Partners
- Agricultural Service Board, SPCA or Animal Rescue Groups

## Planning Considerations

The decision to evacuate is influenced by many complex issues, often under a collapsing timeframe. Advance planning will ensure that when the emergency occurs, authorities are better prepared to make informed decisions. Each community will have different considerations and concerns when developing their evacuation plan and plans should be flexible enough to accommodate both immediate evacuations as well as pre-warned situations. Below are a number of planning considerations and factors that may help guide local authorities in evacuation planning and more critically, provide an understanding of how long it could take to evacuate their communities.

Initial planning should address the following:

- All Hazard Risk Assessment - what areas/facilities are at risk and require evacuation?
- Destination - where will the communities be evacuated to (within the jurisdiction or out of jurisdiction) and what resources are required?
- Population Identification and Evaluation - what is the size and demographics of a population and what additional support would be required for vulnerable populations?
- Transportation - what travel routes will be used, what transportation support is required and what are the traffic control requirements?
- Decision to Evacuate - predictors and pre-determined triggers
- Communication and Warning Systems - how will communities be warned or advised?

Further considerations should include:

- Determination of legal or other authority to evacuate
- Clear objectives and outcomes
- Pre-identified chain of authority with clear pre-defined roles and responsibilities
- Clear definitions of roles and responsibilities for supporting organizations

## All Hazard Risk Assessment

An All Hazard Risk Assessment should be completed to determine which areas of the community are at greatest risk from specific hazards, their probability of occurrence and the likely impact or consequences. In accordance with ISO 31000, “Risk Management – Principles and Guidelines”: Hazard and Risk Assessment should be broken down into five phases.

- Setting the Context – The process of articulating an institution's objectives and defining its external and internal parameters to be taken into consideration when managing risks
- Risk Identification – The process of finding, recognizing, and recording risks.
- Risk Analysis – The process of understanding the nature and level of risk, in terms of its impacts and likelihood
- Risk Evaluation – The process of comparing the results of Risk Analysis with risk criteria to determine whether a risk and/or its magnitude is acceptable or tolerable
- Risk Treatment – The process of identifying and recommending risk control or Risk Treatment options

Clear guidelines and direction on conducting an All Hazards Risk Assessment can be found at:

<https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrscs/pblctns/ll-hzrds-sssmnt/index-en.aspx>

Communities can also access the online Risk Assessment Tool through the Community Emergency Management Program. Access to this website can be arranged through the AEMA Regional Field Officers.



## Destinations

Evacuation destinations provide the basic needs for the affected community when removed from the immediate or potential threat. When planning where a community should evacuate to, the following should be considered:

- Assembly points
- Potential Host Communities
- Reception Centres
- Mutual Aid Agreements
- Registration
- Household and Service Animals

## Assembly Points

Assembly points are short-term locations where people can assemble for registration, family reunification and/or transportation to another location. Assembly points are typically well-known landmarks that have the capacity to handle large numbers of people, have transportation access, parking and an indoor sheltering area. Examples include shopping malls, schools or large recreation facilities.

Assembly points should be properly controlled to ensure that:

- People do not return to the evacuated area
- Transportation in and out of the area flows freely and effectively
- Personnel can receive updates on the emergency situation

## Host Communities

Host communities provide temporary accommodations, support and services for evacuated communities. The availability, duration, type and location of host community facilities will have an impact on the planning process. For the purposes of planning, most communities are able to house approximately 10% of its total population in evacuees, without reducing local services (emergency services, food, retail, etc) to an unacceptable level.

The selection and preparation of host facilities should be driven by the needs of the evacuees. Factors affecting the selection of a particular host community include:

- The number of people the community can host
- The safety and suitability of available accommodations

- The services available in that community
- The transportation resources available
- Accessibility of facilities

## Reception Centres

Reception centres can and will provide a safe place for people to receive basic needs away from the hazard. The centres should as a minimum, be able to provide facilities for group lodging, feeding and washrooms and be able to provide information regarding the emergency and resources to help evacuees plan their recovery. Depending on the duration of the evacuation, reception centres may also require additional facilities such as showers, access to communications and recreation facilities (especially for children). Considerations should also be given to meeting the needs of vulnerable populations and pets.

## Mutual Aid Agreements

Mutual Aid Agreements are pre-determined agreements between two or more authorities who formally agree to share resources and services under specific circumstances. Mutual Aid Agreements should be used as the basis for host communities to accommodate evacuees following an evacuation.

## Registration of Evacuees

Reception arrangements should include a formal registration and inquiry facilities that will keep track of evacuees and their relocation arrangements, re-unite families that have become separated, and answer queries from concerned relatives and friends. These are tasks that requires careful planning and training for volunteers. Communities may look to Non-Governmental Agencies (NGOs) to assist with this function; otherwise local trained volunteers may assist in the registration process. Consideration should be given to arrangements that will allow self-evacuees and those who choose not to evacuate to also be registered.

## Household Animals, Service Animals and Livestock

Household pets are often seen as part of the family some people may therefore decide not to evacuate without their pets. It is now an expectation, that evacuation plans include accommodation for household pets – either in the form of pet-friendly reception centres, or dedicated facilities where pets will be cared for.

Service animals are domestic animals trained to perform a specific service to assist their owner, and should not be considered to be household pets. Individuals with disabilities who are accompanied by qualified service animals must be allowed access to any location where the general public is allowed and consideration should be made as to how to house individuals and families with service animals. The preparation and planning for pets in reception centres (or pet-specific facilities if required) should be done in consultation with a number of local or regional community groups. A list of organizations that could assist with

the evacuation of pets can be found at Annex D.

Livestock are animals defined under the Animal Health Act as alpacas, asses, birds (including poultry), bison, cattle, cervids, goats, horses, llamas, mules, sheep, swine and wild boar which are kept for production. A link to a website providing information on evacuating livestock can be found at Annex D.

## Provincial Government Support to Evacuations

When local resources and or capacity is overwhelmed, local authorities can request assistance from the Provincial government; Provincial Emergency Social Services (ESS) provides support for emotional and physical needs of individuals and families affected by an emergency or disaster. Depending on the specific nature of the emergency, ESS could include:

- Clothing
- Food and water
- Accommodation/shelter services
- Registration and inquiry
- Personal services
- Family reunification
- Child care
- Transportation
- Pet care
- Multicultural services
- Communications
- Psychosocial supports
- Personal recovery planning

To administer these services, support activities may also be undertaken such as the establishment and operation of reception centres, and volunteer and donation management.

## Population Identification and Evaluation

The size and demographics of a population will have a significant impact on evacuation planning; it allows the local authority to determine resource requirements and identify vulnerable populations. Understanding the unique challenges and needs of all sectors of the population will assist in the development of strategies to ensure these groups are well supported during evacuations and emergencies. Below is a list (not exhaustive) of some of the populations who may require additional assistance.

### Vulnerable Populations and Populations Requiring Additional Assistance

#### Health Related

- Hospitals
- Nursing Homes/Homecare/Seniors Housing
- Rehabilitation Centres
- People with mental/physical/emotional disabilities

#### Educational Institutions

- Day Care Centres
- Pre Schools
- Schools

#### Other Considerations

- Correctional Institutions
- Shelters
- Remote communities
- Transient Populations (Tourists/ seasonal workers)
- Major Events (Stampede/ Concert)
- Individuals with language needs

# Evacuation Routes and Transportation

The majority of evacuee movements will take place on roadways and highways, in both personal vehicles and transit vehicles; however consideration should also be given to alternative methods (air, rail, marine etc) especially in locations with a single or limited exit routes. This guide will concentrate on evacuations by road.

Transportation and evacuation routes are an important planning factor to ensure an evacuation is as orderly, efficient and safe as possible. The inclusion of local transportation staff and police in the development of the evacuation plan will help identify the most viable evacuation routes and alternatives and to highlight potential areas of congestion or “choke points.” Planning should also consider how many people might require transport assistance with evacuation.

Planning considerations should include:

- Number and geographic distribution of potential evacuees
- Available transportation infrastructure - public transport, school, private
- Capacities of transportation network
- Vulnerabilities of the network
- Potential for congestion
- Areas vulnerable to damage (eg. bridges)
- En-route facilities(internal/external of jurisdiction)

## Transportation Resources

Available transport (including local authority transport, school buses and contracted vehicles) should be assessed against predicted worst-case scenario requirements. Dedicated transport hubs could play an important role in evacuation of people not using their own vehicles to evacuate and plans should reflect the location of pre-determined collection hubs.

## Traffic Management

A traffic management plan will help to ensure that evacuation routes are kept clear and are used as intended. Consideration should be given to:

- Traffic Control Points - should be established at key intersections and at access control points to major evacuation routes as required. In some cases, it may be necessary to control traffic on other routes to minimize the impact on the evacuation traffic
- Access and Egress – need to be identified and clearly marked. Separate routes could be considered for emergency vehicles
- Access Control and Security - Provisions that have been made to control access and provide security to an evacuated area and to ensure unauthorized vehicles are kept out

of the emergency area

- Fuel Supply – location and availability(internal/external of jurisdiction)
- Vehicle breakdown contingencies(internal/external of jurisdiction)

## Evacuation Route Planning

Evacuation routes, when activated, will be used to quickly move the public from an unsafe area into. The following factors should be considered in context of evacuation route planning:

- What is the distribution of the evacuating population with respect to roadways and highways?
- What routes are available to quickly move at-risk populations to safe locations?
- What is the carrying capacity (i.e. number of vehicles per hour) of roadways and highways and are there options for increasing the capacity? (contraflow)
- Are there locations where congestion may occur (such as railroad crossings, lane reduction)?
- Are potential important support locations (including fuelling stations, rest stops, breakdown areas and towing services) aligned with roadways and highways?
- What is the proximity to alternate routes?
- Is there a means to stage evacuations so that roadway congestion is minimized?
- Are there designated routes for operational traffic? While community residents are evacuating, responding organizations may need to bring in additional vehicles (emergency vehicles, other public works vehicles, etc.)
- Should lanes be dedicated for high occupancy vehicles and any other special population groups?

## Phased Approach

In some circumstances, particularly if there is a period of warning, a phased evacuation could be considered. Priority could be given to vulnerable populations, those at greatest risk due to location, or those whom it will take longest to evacuate. Phasing can be determined by geographical location or by demographics (eg a childcare facility or care facilities being evacuated before the general population).

## Coordination with Alberta Transportation

Alberta Transportation maintains the provincial highway network through a series of highway maintenance contractors, as well as locally engaged staff that are distributed throughout the province in different regions and districts. In the event of an emergency, Alberta Transportation plays an important role to ensure public safety and availability of

transportation routes to emergency services. Alberta Transportation is the sole authority who can authorize the closure of provincial transportation routes, including highways and inland ferries. Given the role of Alberta Transportation from both an operational perspective and as a subject matter expert, it is advised that community or regional evacuation plans be built with Alberta Transportation, district or regional staff (and their maintenance contractors, where appropriate) as partners in the process.

## Decision to Evacuate

The order to evacuate a community is recognised as one of the most difficult decisions a local authority is likely to face. It should occur when the Director of Emergency Management, in consultation with the Incident Commander, decides that the risk to the community is high or the community can no longer provide the necessities of life (food, water, shelter). The decision should be based on an assessment of the threat to life and the impact (or anticipated impact) of an event. Determining whether an evacuation is both necessary and possible involves a comprehensive effort to identify and consider both the hazard and the community circumstances. It may require officials to balance potentially costly, hazardous, or unnecessary evacuations against possibility of loss of life due to delayed order.

An important planning consideration when making the decision to evacuate, is the early identification of indicators and triggers. Indicators are information based on intelligence and predictions (predicted rain fall or snow melt). Triggers are pre-determined decision points, that may be related to the hazard impacting on a particular geographical landmark, a change in the magnitude of the hazard, or other measurable indicators (such as water levels during a flood). Some of the considerations that need to be addressed when determining whether or not an evacuation is necessary reflect the main planning considerations and include, but are not limited to:

- Areas/facilities are at risk and require evacuation
- Where will the communities be evacuated to
- Population size and demographics
- Evacuation route availability and capacity
- The availability of transportation resources
- The time required to mobilize evacuation resources
- The time of year, day of the week and day or night
- Time taken to physically evacuate

A simple formula can help to identify pre-determined triggers:

**Time taken to notify the community** (drafting, dissemination, confirmation) + **time taken to mobilize the community** (preparation, vulnerable population etc) + **time taken to physically conduct the evacuation** (phased evacuation, routes etc), + **120 minutes = Trigger point for evacuation**



## Communications

Prior to, and during an evacuation it is important to ensure consistent and clear messaging. Effective communications can help to reassure a community that emergency management and services are responding to the situation. This helps reduce anxiety levels and increases the likelihood that instructions will be followed. Plans should include the identification of community spokesperson(s), clear guidance on who is responsible for the verification of information and establishing who has the authority to approve and issue messaging.

The ability to provide consistent and accurate updates to all those affected in an emergency is critical. Messages should be repeated and communication must be on-going and transmitted through as many mediums as possible. During an emergency the public demand for information is extremely high and this demand needs to be met as soon as possible to prevent the spread of mis-information through unofficial channels. The appointment of an information officer dedicated solely to this task will greatly assist in this process. Information to be communicated to the community should include but not be limited to:

Communications can be split into two distinct groups:

- Active Communications – Requires acknowledgement, normally reserved for essential messaging (methods include telephone calls and door knocking)
- Passive Communications – No acknowledgement is normally required (methods include messaging, websites and social media)

A detailed list of communication methods can be found at Annex C.

### Warning Messages - Three Stage Process

Communities in Alberta are encouraged to follow the Three Stage Process Model, which is considered best practice throughout North America, at both a local and a provincial level. The three stages are:

- Stage 1 – Evacuation Alert
- Stage 2 – Evacuation Order
- Stage 3 – Evacuation Rescind

#### Stage 1 – Evacuation Alert

The purpose of the Evacuation Alert is to inform the community of a potential or current threat which could lead to an Evacuation Order. An Evacuation Alert allows for the affected population to begin preparations to evacuate (fuelling vehicles, gathering documents, preparing food and water, etc) whilst providing them with information regarding the evacuation. This may be an appropriate time to consider the evacuation of vulnerable populations.

The alert should be structured to provide timely and accurate information; an Evacuation Alert should contain the following as a minimum:

- The issuing authority
- The reason for the Alert including a description of the hazard
- Duration of the evacuation
- The areas under Alert, with as much detail as possible – The use of street and highway names with geographic references can provide clarity (eg. All residences located south of Fifth Avenue and north of Second Avenue, between 14<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> street)
- Recommended evacuation routes and identification of closed routes
- Location of reception centres/shelters
- What personal belongings to prepare and take (identification, medication etc) and limitations on luggage if not self-evacuating
- Where to get additional information (websites, radio etc)

Depending on the mechanism and speed of the hazard, an Evacuation Order may be issued without a prior Evacuation Alert.

## Stage 2 – Evacuation Order

When an Evacuation Order is issued the impacted population should leave the specified area immediately. An Evacuation Order will provide the same information as the Evacuation Alert but should include the fact that this is a mandatory Evacuation Order

### Sweep

After an evacuation order has been issued plans should be put in place to conduct a sweep of the evacuation area to ensure that all those at risk are aware of the need to evacuate.

## Stage 3 – Evacuation Rescind

The decision to rescind an Evacuation Order should occur when the Director of Emergency Management, in consultation with the Incident Commander, determines that it is safe to return. Conflict may occur between the evacuees' desire to return to their homes as soon as possible and the emergency management agency's need to delay the return until the evacuated area is declared safe and can adequately support the returning population.

The rescind message should provide the similar level of detail as the Evacuation Alert and Order, but as a minimum should include.

- The issuing authority
- The areas under Rescind with as much detail as possible – The use of street and highway names with geographic references can provide clarity (eg. *All residences located south of Fifth Avenue and north of Second Avenue, between 14<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> street*)
- Specific timings for return

- Details of a phased return if applicable
- Recommended return routes and identification of closed routes
- Where to get additional information (websites, radio etc)

It is recommended that as many dissemination methods as possible are utilized to capture as wide an audience as possible and to mitigate against systems failure. A list of potential dissemination methods is available is at Annex C.

## Social Media

Social media can offer an opportunity to rapidly distribute critical information and in doing so mitigate the impact of emergencies by influencing public reactions. It can be utilized in a variety of ways to communicate and manage associated risks and can provide messages to disseminate official updates, increase awareness and dispel rumours. Incorporating social media into communications plans can be used to enhance efforts through all phases of an emergency.

## Communication with Evacuated Residents

During a prolonged evacuation it is important to continue communications with the evacuated population providing information on the status on their communities and plans for re-entry. Establishing and maintaining communications with a dispersed community can be challenging. Some considerations when planning an effective communications network include:

- What information do you as the evacuating community need to provide for your people once the evacuees are safely away from the hazard?
  - Frequent updates on the status of the hazard
  - Plans for re-entry
  - Psychosocial assistance that is available
  - Health and Safety advice
  - Insurance advice
  - Communications access (Voice, data, internet)
  - 'Returning to Your Home' guide provided by service providers or industry (eg Alberta Health Services)
  - Where to get updates on weather conditions, outdoor air quality conditions, or flood/forecast information (if applicable)
- How do you communicate with communities when they're evacuated?
  - A detailed list of communication methods can be found at Annex C

## Re-entry

Whilst re-entry will be different for each community and each type of disaster, it should occur when the Director of Emergency Management, in consultation with the Incident Commander, determines that it is safe to return. Generic plans for re-entry should be in place for review prior to an evacuation. The document *Community Planning Guide for Re-entry after an Evacuation* will provide local authorities with a series of planning considerations that should be addressed as part of their Community Emergency Management Plan. The guide should assist communities in developing their own re-entry plans.

## Extract from the Municipal Government Act Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000 Chapter M-26 Current as of July 1, 2017

### Part 1

#### Purposes, Powers and Capacity of Municipalities

##### Municipal purposes

3 The purposes of a municipality are

- (a) to provide good government,
  - (a.1) to foster the well-being of the environment \*
- (b) to provide services, facilities or other things that, in the opinion of council, are necessary or desirable for all or a part of the municipality, and
- (c) to develop and maintain safe and viable communities.

## Extract from the emergency management act - revised statutes of Alberta 2000 chapter e-6.8 current as of December 11, 2013

### Part 2

#### State of Emergency

##### Declaration of State of Emergency

18(1) The Lieutenant Governor in Council may, at any time when the Lieutenant Governor in Council is satisfied that an emergency exists or may exist, make an order for a declaration of a state of emergency relating to all or any part of Alberta.

##### Powers of Minister in emergency

19(1) On the making of the declaration and for the duration of the state of emergency, the Minister may do all acts and take all necessary proceedings including the following:

- (a) put into operation an emergency plan or program;
- (b) authorize or require a local authority to put into effect an emergency plan or program for the municipality;
- (c) acquire or utilize any real or personal property considered necessary to prevent, combat or alleviate the effects of an emergency or disaster;
- (d) authorize or require any qualified person to render aid of a type the person is qualified to provide;
- (e) control or prohibit travel to or from any area of Alberta;
- (f) provide for the restoration of essential facilities and the distribution of essential supplies and provide, maintain and co-ordinate emergency medical, welfare and other essential services in any part of Alberta;
- (g) cause the evacuation of persons and the removal of livestock and personal property from any area of Alberta that is or may be affected by a disaster and make arrangements for the adequate care and protection of those persons or livestock and of the personal property;

##### Termination of state of emergency

20(1) When, in the opinion of the Lieutenant Governor in Council, an emergency no longer exists in an area in relation to which a declaration of a state of emergency was made, the Lieutenant Governor in Council shall make an order terminating the declaration of a state of emergency in respect of that area.

(2) Immediately after an order is made under subsection (1), the Minister shall cause the details of the termination to be published by any means of communication that the Minister considers is most likely to make known to the majority of the population of the area affected the contents of the termination order.

#### Declaration of state of local emergency

21(1) A local authority may, at any time when it is satisfied that an emergency exists or may exist in its municipality, by resolution or, in the case of the Minister responsible for the Municipal Government Act, the Minister responsible for the Special Areas Act or a park superintendent of a national park, by order, make a declaration of a state of local emergency relating to all or any part of the municipality.

(2) A declaration of a state of local emergency under subsection (1) must identify the nature of the emergency and the area of the municipality in which it exists.

3) Immediately after the making of a resolution for a declaration of a state of local emergency, the local authority shall cause the details of the declaration to be published by any means of communication that it considers is most likely to make known to the population of the area of the municipality affected the contents of the declaration.

#### Cancellation of declaration of state of local emergency

22(1) The local authority shall forthwith on making a declaration of a state of local emergency forward a copy of the declaration to the Minister.

(2) The Minister may cancel the declaration of a state

(3) A declaration of a state of local emergency ceases to be of any force or effect on the making of an order for a state of emergency by the Lieutenant Governor in Council relating to the same area of the municipality.

(4) A declaration of a state of local emergency lapses 7 days after its making by the local authority unless it is earlier cancelled by the

## Suggested Public Notification Methods

- Media releases (i.e. news releases) – Local (or regional) media can be asked to broadcast or publish information about the evacuation and should be briefed in advance about the types of messages to expect, their meaning, and who will be providing them. Media will also actively seek information during an emergency.
- Radio messages
- Television announcements
- Television news or on-screen crawlers
- Government websites – Websites may be used to provide detailed information about the evacuation. During emergencies they are frequently visited and should be updated as quickly and as often as possible. A best practice is to have a central location for information linked off the main portion of any government website, as this make updates easy to find and read.
- Email – Specific evacuation notifications email lists can be used. An email notification can be issued very quickly, however only some of the people receiving it will open it as soon as it arrives.
- Text messages (Short Message Service – SMS) – Notification messages can be sent by text to people who have asked to receive such a service. A specific list must be created for this. The technology for these services is already used by some transport operators to relay timetable delays, and by other businesses to provide updates about their services.
- Fax
- CB radio
- Sirens – If used, should easily recognized and unique from existing sirens. The disadvantage of sirens is that they do not have any content other than the warning noise itself.
- Public address systems (both static and vehicle mounted)
- Warning systems (such Alberta Emergency Alert or local government alerting systems) – Most warning systems are able to send out information across a number of platforms. For example, Alberta Emergency Alert can send information through multiple social media platforms, radio, television,
- Door knocking – Trials and experience have shown that door knocking, when conducted by the emergency services, is the most effective method of issuing notifications during an emergency or evacuation, it is however, extremely resource intensive and slow in



delivery.

If door knocking is used as a method of ordering evacuations then it is recommended that doorknockers:

- Are uniformed members of a recognized organization
  - Work from a script
  - Provide handouts of written information to residents if possible
- Telephone/phone trees – While this method is effective for the notification of staff during an emergency, it is highly unlikely to be practice for a community of that is larger than a few hundred residents.

The majority of the above methods of notification are passive – they do not require positive confirmation by the recipient of the information. Knocking on doors and direct telephone calls (and phone trees) are a form of active communication.

## A list of organizations that could assist with the evacuation of pets and assistance with production animals

- Local Humane / Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
- Local Veterinarians
- Alberta Veterinary Medical Association
- As part of the greater evacuation planning process, the following lessons from previous evacuation incidents have should be considered during the planning process. When a reception centre cannot handle pets:
  - The location of a pet reception centre must be close to the human centre, so evacuees can be close to their pets.
  - Use same registration process for pets as for people.
  - Some people chose to live in vehicles rather than be separated.
  - Have an excellent working relationship with local kennels and animal boarding facilities.
  - When a reception centre has the facilities for evacuated pets and people:
    - A detailed registration system for pets is needed.
    - Electronic records allow for easy retention of information and forwarding if animals are moved into care or another community.
    - Clear information on owner (i.e.: contact information, location, etc.)
    - Access to veterinarian/vet services.
    - Cleaning schedule and staff.
    - Good communication with the rest of the reception centre.
    - Restricted access to pet area.

Information on evacuating livestock and be found at:

[http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/com14420](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/com14420)

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