
BACKGROUND

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Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

PREPARING FOR AN EMERGENCY AT HOME

British Columbians can take a few simple steps to prepare for any kind of an emergency:

- **Make a kit**, which should include a flashlight, batteries, candles, water-proof matches, first-aid kit, battery operated or wind-up radio, whistle, pocket knife, medical prescriptions, extra set of keys and money, copies of important documents, change of clothing for all members of the family, blankets, sleeping bags, enough canned food and a three-day supply of water for each person. Some good places to store a kit at home are under a bed, in a closet, behind drapes, in a garage or in a garbage can – any place that is cool, dry and dark, but easily accessible.
- **Make a plan** that outlines potential risks in your home, your workplace, and your community. Include a list of out-of-town contacts, temporary accommodations and emergency pick-up for school or daycare. Most importantly, have a family evacuation plan and make sure to practice it at least once a year.
- **Be informed** about the risks in your area and what to do in case of floods, earthquakes, severe storms, power failures or any other potential hazards. Check your insurance to make sure you have adequate coverage for the range of risks in your community.

A few tips on preparing your home for an emergency:

- In an earthquake zone, install latches on cupboards, and secure water tanks, top-heavy furniture, appliances, and computers against movement in the event of an earthquake. Remove heavy pictures that could fall on a family member while sleeping.
- For all emergencies, know the location of your gas shut off, electricity panel and main water valve.
- Know ahead of time where the safest spots are at home.
- Keep sturdy shoes beside the beds of all family members.
- In an apartment, make sure all family members know where the emergency exit is, where the fire alarm is, and how to use it.
- If you have a fire extinguisher in your home, know how to use it.

For more information on emergency preparedness, including a checklist of items that should be included in an emergency kit, visit the Provincial Emergency Program website: www.pep.bc.ca.

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