

# Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Guide and Emergency Plan Template

## Introduction

In an emergency, responders need to attend to the immediate needs of the affected population. It could take 72 hours or longer for certain vital services to be restored. In an emergency it is important for residents to be prepared with the knowledge and resources to stay safe. Resident preparedness is important to ensure safety and basic comfort in times of emergency.

### What is neighbourhood preparedness?

Neighbourhood preparedness means that emergency preparedness is well practiced in a defined area. Each neighbor is personally prepared with the resources and planning they need to be safe in an emergency. In addition they have created a plan with their neighbours to utilize the skills and resources to add additional comfort and readiness in times of need.

### What does a prepared neighbourhood look like?

A prepared neighbourhood:

- Has a majority of its residents individually prepared with a 72-hour Emergency Kit, Family Emergency Plan and Emergency Communications Plan
- Is clearly defined and mapped
- Understands and are prepared for possible emergencies the neighbourhood could face
- Created a list of risks and has a plan of action for each risk
- Defined specific skill sets and resources required and available for each emergency
- Has identified high risk/vulnerable individuals as well as neighbours that can assist in an emergency.

The creation of the Neighbourhood Emergency Plan (NEP) will make residents more prepared and ready if an emergency strikes.

### When would the emergency plan be used?

There are two main emergency response plans neighbourhoods should be preparing for: Evacuation and Shelter-in-Place. In some emergencies you may be asked to leave your homes or neighbourhoods, following evacuation procedures. Shelter-in-Place is the practice of going or remaining indoors to be safe during an emergency of an airborne hazardous material release into the air. Both of these procedures will be covered in your NEP plan. In addition, provisions for recovery after an emergency should be considered.

## Choosing your plan

There are two options for creating an Emergency Neighbourhood Plan. Choose the option that is best for your neighbourhood depending on size, amount of participants and amount of time and resources your neighbourhood has.

### ***Basic (small scale) plan:***

The Basic Plan is recommended for smaller neighborhoods (15 to 25 houses) or neighbourhoods that have limited planning time and resources.

This plan requires two neighborhood meetings for each level (or 1 longer meeting):

- Level 1: Focuses on personal preparedness, risks in the neighbourhood, creation of Family Emergency Plans, 72-Hour Emergency Kits and Emergency Communications Plans.
- Level 2: Neighbourhood plan – Basic assignment of duties/roles, meeting places, and neighbourhood risk analysis.

### ***Advanced (large scale) plan:***

The Advanced Plan is recommended for larger neighbourhoods (30 – 40 houses) or neighbourhoods that have more time and resources. It is the Level 1, a modified version of Level 2, with the addition of a Level 3.

- Level 1: Focuses on personal preparedness, risks in the neighbourhood, creation of Family Emergency Plans, 72-Hour Emergency Kits and Emergency Communications Plans.
- Level 2: Full neighbourhood plan – Risk assessment, roles and duties assigned, meeting places assigned, neighborhood assets assessed, specific action plans dependent on risk factors.
- Level 3: Practice emergency neighbourhood drill.

### ***How to create a NEP:***

#### ***1. Recruit your neighbours!***

Find people in your neighbourhood that would be interested in creating a NEP. A Neighbourhood Preparedness Plan needs as many people as possible in your neighbourhood to participate in order to be successful. If you already have a neighbourhood emailing list or meeting this is the best way to recruit. Ask at that time who would be interested in taking on a leadership role.

#### ***2. Level 1 meeting.***

Discuss Emergency Preparedness in your neighbourhood and discuss what type of NEP is best for you (see below for details). Go through Level 1 together. Neighbours should be creating their Family Emergency Plan, 72-Hour Emergency Kit and Communications Plan on their own before the next meeting. A member of the Brampton Emergency Management Office team can come and do a presentation to your neighbourhood on Personal Preparedness.

### **3. Level 2 meeting.**

Fill in your NEP template as a group. For this you will need a map of your neighbourhood (google maps is a good tool). Here you will be defining coordinators, emergency risks and neighbourhood assets. Once the template has been filled out, scanning and emailing a copy to all participants allows them to review it at any time.

### **4. Emergency Drill (advanced plan only)**

An Emergency Drill is a great way to test neighbourhood communication and practice evacuation. Read the final page on Emergency Drills to see if it's right for your neighbourhood.

## **Level 1: Personal Preparedness**

Being personally prepared is the most important step in the Neighbourhood Emergency Plan. Without being personally prepared you leave yourself vulnerable in emergencies and you may not be able to help the neighbourhood. To be personally prepared you must have a Family Emergency Plan, 72-Hour Emergency Kit and Communication plan.

### **Family Emergency Plan**

A Family Emergency Plan will help you and your family know what to do before, during and after an emergency. Every member of the family should participate in the planning allowing everyone to understand the need to prepare. Regular revisions and updates should take place to keep the plan current and act as a refresher.

Your Family Emergency Plan should include:

- Two escape routes from each room where possible
- Location of emergency kit, fire extinguishers, smoke alarms, first-aid kit and utility shut off point
- A meeting point outside, away from your home

For more information on developing your own family emergency plan, refer to the Emergency Preparedness Guide published by the Brampton Emergency Management Office, especially the information on pages 11 and 12.

### **Plan for pets**

Depending on the nature of the emergency the City of Brampton may establish shelters to provide basic assistance to the public. Pets may not be permitted in shelters due to health regulations. It is essential to care for your own pet with an emergency plan.

If pets are left behind during an evacuation, makes sure they have ready access to several days' worth of food and water in a tub or toilet. Place a sign outside your home visible to others, indicating a pet is inside.

If pets are to be evacuated, leashes and carriers can prevent them from bolting in panic while they are being transported and helps reduce their stress levels.

If you are not present during an emergency have a system in place for friends or neighbours to care for your pet.

## **72-Hour Emergency Kit**

Emergency kits prepare you and your family to be self-sufficient for at least 72 hours. Your household may possess most or all of the following items but in an emergency you may not have time to acquire them.

*A question to consider: will you be able to find your flashlight if a power outage occurred at this moment?*

Your kit should be assembled in an easy-to-carry bag, perhaps using a backpack or duffle bag. Updating this kit seasonally (summer vs winter) is a great way to refresh yourself and your family of the plan.

There are two purposes to this kit:

1. To be prepared for situations where you have to leave your house immediately
2. To be prepared to shelter-in-place

The kit itself should be in an accessible place, such as the hall closet. All members of your household should be able to locate the emergency kit. Your kit should include all of your family's necessities including your pets.

For more information on preparing your 72-Hour Emergency Kit, refer to the Emergency Preparedness Guide published by the Brampton Emergency Management Office, especially the information on pages 15 and 16.

## **Emergency Communication Plan**

Create a list of emergency contacts to reach family members in an emergency. Appoint an out-of-area contact, a family friend or relative, to be reached if separation occurs. An out-of-area contact can help reunite separated family members in times of emergency.

In an emergency if time permits:

- Call your out-of-town contact and tell them where you are going and when you expect to arrive.
- Once settled in a safety shelter, notify them, along with current status of other family members

## **Level 2: Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Plan**

A template form is provided as an appendix to this document to serve as a guide for creating your own plan.

### **Define your area**

Brampton is made up of many different neighbourhoods and communities. It is important to define the exact area that your Neighbourhood Preparedness Plan is covering. Any neighbourhood bigger than 40 houses should be split in half with coordinators for each group.

To define an area the following questions should be considered:

- General parameters of the neighbourhood i.e. single homes, high-rise, low-rise, condos
- Make-up of the neighbourhood i.e. young families, retired couples, singles, renters
- Number of homes, businesses, schools, places of worship and other key facilities/buildings
- Number of people living or working in the area
- Roads, entrance and exit points, hills and waterways
- Areas that may be a hazard

### ***Define your coordinators:***

Identify potential coordinators that can play a leadership roles in emergencies. They would be responsible for leading the neighbourhood during an emergency as well as organizing/ participating in neighbourhood meetings. Coordinators *must be involved in the planning process* and should have one or more of the following qualities:

- The ability to lead and/or coordinate the actions of a group
- A position or education background that would make them a neighbourhood emergency response team leader (CERV certified, police officer, workplace H&S coordinator)
- Currently a neighbourhood leader

The number of coordinators needed is dependent on the amount of people that need to be helped and directed during an emergency.

### ***Scout your area***

Scouting the area will allow for a greater understanding of the risks and threats involved in the neighbourhood. Scouting an area includes:

- Knowing the risks
- Identifying neighbourhood assets
- Mapping the neighbourhood

### ***a) Know the risks***

#### *Identify the risk*

It's important to understand and identify the risks that are specific to each neighbourhood and to Brampton. Understanding these risks and their impact will allow for better preparation if an emergency occurs.

#### *Assess the risk*

How vulnerable is your neighbourhood to injuries or property damage? Classify the risks for your neighbourhood into low, medium or high in likelihood to occur.

- Low – 3% - 10% chance
- Medium – 11 % - 50%
- High – 51% - 90 %

#### *Evaluate the impact*

Identify the level of impact (how much each risk will impact your neighbourhood) as Minor, Moderate or Major.

- Minor impact – Some disruption of service. Little or no property damage and personal injuries.
- Moderate: Disruption of some services. Minimal property damage and personal injuries.
- Major: Many services disrupted or structures damaged. Multiple persons injured.

### ***b) Identify neighbourhood assets***

It is important to identify neighbourhood assets, anything that is useful in responding to or recovering from a disaster. Some examples are:

- Neighbourhood Emergency Supplies – are there any businesses that can supply them?
- Areas that can be utilized in an emergency - parks, schools, hospitals and fire stations
- Neighbourhood organizations that can help in an emergency – clubs, businesses, disability providers
- People with special skills – CERV trained, first-aid trained, other certification

### ***c) Map the neighbourhood***

A map of the neighbourhood will identify all neighbourhood houses and assets. In an emergency it will show where to meet as well as entrance and exit points in the neighbourhood.

Create a map of the neighbourhood using an online mapping tool (Google Maps) or other source. Ensure that it's a bird's eye view to see all buildings, lots and houses. Identify on the map each number of lot and street.

The map should include:

- Homes identified with street numbers
- Street names clearly written
- Neighbourhood gathering place
- Area entrance and exit point as well as routes that can be accessed by emergency vehicles and cars
- Resource locations
- Key people addresses identified

### ***Make a Plan***

The creation of the NEP will cover two main scenarios: Evacuation and Shelter-in-Place. The plan will define roles and responsibilities in these emergencies and outline the best procedures for participating neighbours. Considerations can be made for recovery planning as a third element.

### ***Evacuation***

In some emergencies you may be asked to evacuate your homes. You will receive notification of evacuation through radio or television. In the case of a neighbourhood evacuation an officer may come to your door. In this emergency you will have to leave immediately with your Emergency Kit and go to an evacuation centre.

When evacuating your neighbourhood, look for debris or any possible hazards. Having two or more evacuation routes is important in case one of them is blocked in an emergency. Plan to have one or more coordinators leave the area once everyone else has left in order to inform the first responders and to direct them to any identified needs or special risk areas. Be ready to follow specific instructions from the authorities.

### *Neighbour to neighbour system*

A “neighbour to neighbour” system allows designated people to check in on vulnerable neighbours in emergencies. Vulnerable neighbours include the elderly and people with disabilities or with special needs, but in certain circumstances could also include people without a rapid mode of evacuation i.e. vehicle, or people with limited resources. Evacuation should always be a priority. If neighbours need assistance evacuating it should be done quickly. No one should ever re-enter an evacuation site until given instructions by the authorities.

### *Shelter-in- Place*

Shelter-in-Place is the practice of going or remaining indoors to be safe during an emergency of an airborne hazardous material release into the air. An accident may cause a hazardous material to enter the air. Unless the hazardous material is flammable, emergency response professionals recommend that you stay indoors until you receive instructions to leave.

#### *The basics*

- Go indoors immediately and stay there
- Close all windows and doors
- Turn off furnace, air conditioners and exhaust systems
- Listen to your radio or television for information

#### *Do*

- Close all windows, doors and vents
- Shut down air conditioners, fans or machines that bring in outside air
- Time permitting, cover window openings with plastic, held by duct tape - you may want to pre-cut pieces of plastic for this purpose
- Reduce or avoid smoking
- Turn on radio for information and instructions
- Close all dampers

#### *Don't*

- Don't use the fireplace
- Don't operate the clothes dryer
- Don't leave the building until instructed to do so
- Do not leave your home to assist other neighbours. Communication and reassurance can be delivered through the phone.

## Level 3: Emergency Drill (Advanced Plan)

Practicing your emergency plan allows you to become more familiar with it, working out any issues while allowing participants to fully understand the action required. Coordinators will be responsible for planning and executing the drill. It is essential to let all participants and neighbours in the area know that it is a drill and understand that it is for practice purposes. When doing any form of practice communication it is important to repeat to the participant that it is a drill. The drill is for neighbourhood practice only and no essential services will be involved.

The practice drill will be a simulated neighbourhood evacuation. At this time have participating neighbours practice their Family Emergency Plan as well. Have a central meeting site outside the neighbourhood to use as the evacuation site. Discuss how the drill went and make any necessary changes. Emergency drills should be practiced every year.

### ***Emergency Drill Steps:***

#### ***1. Inform all residents about the drill.***

Written memos should be handed out to each resident in the neighbourhood informing them when and where the drill is taking place. If there is a neighbourhood email or phone tree, use this to provide information on the drill time and date.

It is important to inform the neighbourhood that there will be a practice drill taking place to avoid any confusion or panic. Only neighbours who want to participate in the drill will be included in the actual performing of the drill.

#### ***2. Have a meeting before the drill begins***

Take down all participants' names and contact information before the drill.

Discuss that the emergency drill is for practice and is a good way to review emergency procedures. Emphasize that no emergency services will be used or should be called for practice purposes. Participants should practice their Family Emergency Plan to exit their house and bring with them their 72-hour Emergency Kit.

The drill is for practice purpose only. Try and move quickly but calmly as this is important to practice in case of emergency.

Inform participants that all communication occurring in the drill, it is important to always say "This is a drill" before speaking. This will reduce any confusion between the practice drill and a real emergency.

#### ***3. Practice evacuation procedures***

This is when the actual drill occurs. Now is the time to practice the Family Emergency Plan, pet procedures and any neighbour to neighbour communication. Neighbours should practice evacuating and moving calmly.

All participants should be evacuating to an agreed upon meeting place to meet and discuss the drill afterwards. At the meeting point, check off all present participants. Ensure that everyone is accounted for.

#### ***4. End Meeting***

Once everyone has met at the meeting site answer any questions participants may have. This is a good time to come together as a group and discuss any issues or positive outcomes that occurred. Use this time to get feedback from everyone and inform participants that it will be used to make any adjustments to the plan as needed.



## **5. Evaluate**

Once the drill is complete, neighbourhood coordinators will evaluate the drill. The following questions can be used as a guide to determine the success of the emergency drill. Use the evaluation to adjust your plan as needed. Any changes that need to be made to the original plan should be sent to all participating neighbours.

### **Questions to be asked in the evaluation:**


1. We're the goals of the Emergency Drill Met?
2. Did everyone "evacuate" in a time appropriate manner?
3. Was communication calm and clear between neighbours?
4. We're all plans practiced (Family Emergency Plans, communication plans, pet procedures)?
5. Was the Emergency Drill a positive experience for participants?
6. What can be improved upon
7. What changes will be made to the NEP
8. What was the feedback like from participants?

## **Support**

Upon request, a member of the Brampton Emergency Management Office team can come and work with the neighbourhood team to plan and implement the drill, and to help in the evaluation process.

## **Contact information:**

### **BRAMPTON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE**

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# APPENDIX

## NEIGHBOURHOOD EMERGENCY PLAN TEMPLATE

*Neighbourhood Parameters (residence type, make-up):*

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*Streets (north to south, east to west):*

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*Entrance and exit points into the neighbourhood (street, pathways, walkways):*

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*Possible area hazards ex. low lying areas for flooding:*

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

<i>Approximate number of people in the area:</i>	<i>Number of homes:</i>
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*Names of businesses:*

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**Names of schools:**

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**Names of places of worship (churches, temples, mosques, other):**

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**Other key facilities:**

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**NEIGHBOURHOOD PREPAREDNESS COORDINATORS**

Name	Email	Telephone

**RISK EVALUATION**

Risk	Occurrence likelihood	Level of Impact

**NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSET IDENTIFICATION**

Asset Description	Asset Location/ Contact info

**PEOPLE WITH KEY SKILLS**

Name, address, phone number	Skill and/or certification

**Evacuation route 1 out of the neighbourhood:**

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**Evacuation route 2 out of the neighbourhood:**

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**Additional routes:**

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**Neighbour matchmaking**

Neighbour 1	Vulnerability	Neighbour 2

***SPECIFIC PLANS FOR IDENTIFIED RISKS (This is optional and may not apply)***

***Risk:***

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***Additional action required:***

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***Action coordinated by:***

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***Other people participating:***

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***Additional comments:***

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***Create one page per risk***

**RECOVERY COORDINATION (This is optional and may not apply)**

**Possible action required:**

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**Action coordinated by:**

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**Other people participating:**

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**Additional comments:**

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