

In It Together: Neighbourhood Preparedness Guide



Did you know the simple act of meeting your neighbour will help you cope in a disaster? When people know each other in a day-to-day setting, they're better able to work together during an emergency.

This is critical since the most immediate help following a disaster, like a flood or earthquake, will come from those directly around you — your family and neighbours. Connecting with them today, and working together to get prepared, will mean a better response and faster recovery.

The *In It Together: Neighbourhood Preparedness Guide* will help you join forces with your neighbours so you know what to do, who to check in on and what resources are available should disaster hit.

Prepared neighbourhoods are resilient neighbourhoods. When you're in it together, you're stronger.

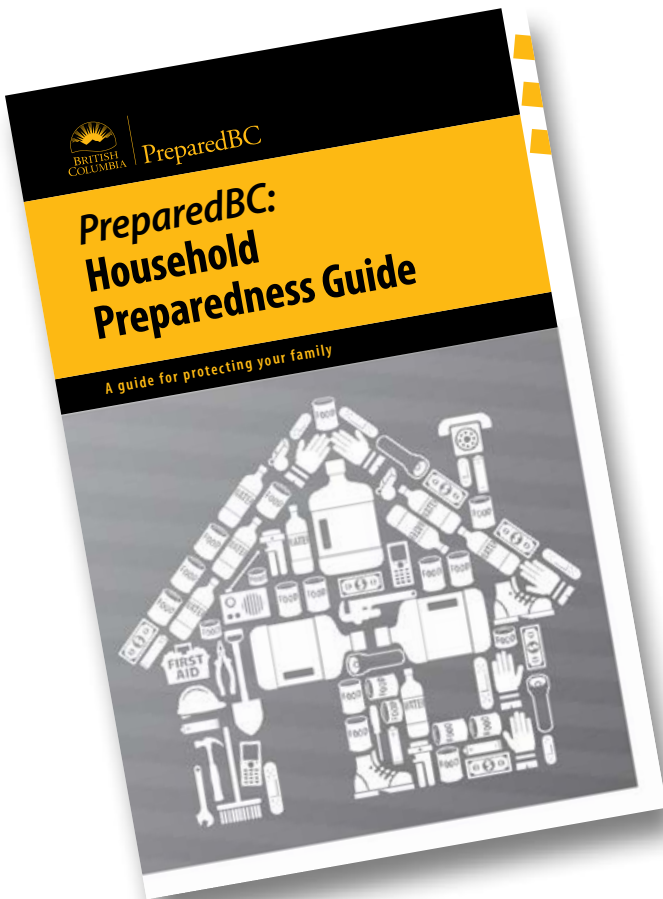
Your Guide to Neighbourhood Preparedness

Complete the following steps and keep your finished guide in an accessible place (like with your household emergency plan). Make sure all members of your household are familiar with the details.

IT'S EASY AS 1... 2... 3...

Step 1 Complete the PreparedBC: Household Preparedness Guide

Emergency preparedness begins at home. Download and follow the *PreparedBC: Household Preparedness Guide* at gov.bc.ca/PreparedBC so you and your family know exactly what to do before, during and after a disaster.



Step 2 *Meet Your Neighbours*

Use this guide as an icebreaker and reach out to your neighbours by organizing a get-together, such as a BBQ or potluck. If you already have a neighbourhood network in place — a Block Watch group, residents association or strata council — start there.

Consider discussing the following topics at your event:

Risks

Learn the potential risks in your area, such as flooding or an earthquake, and how they might impact your community. Not sure what hazards are in your region? Ask your local emergency management program.

Household preparedness

Talk about the need to ensure personal and household safety before responding to neighbourhood needs. Refer to the *PreparedBC: Household Preparedness Guide*.



Neighbours with unique needs

Identify and include anyone who might need extra assistance, such as families with small children or pets, elderly people, people with disabilities or people who speak English as a second language.

Skills and resources

Discuss what skills or resources you have in your area that might be of use in an emergency.

For example, who has a BBQ, generator or chainsaw? Who has construction, first-aid or cooking skills?

Local emergency management program

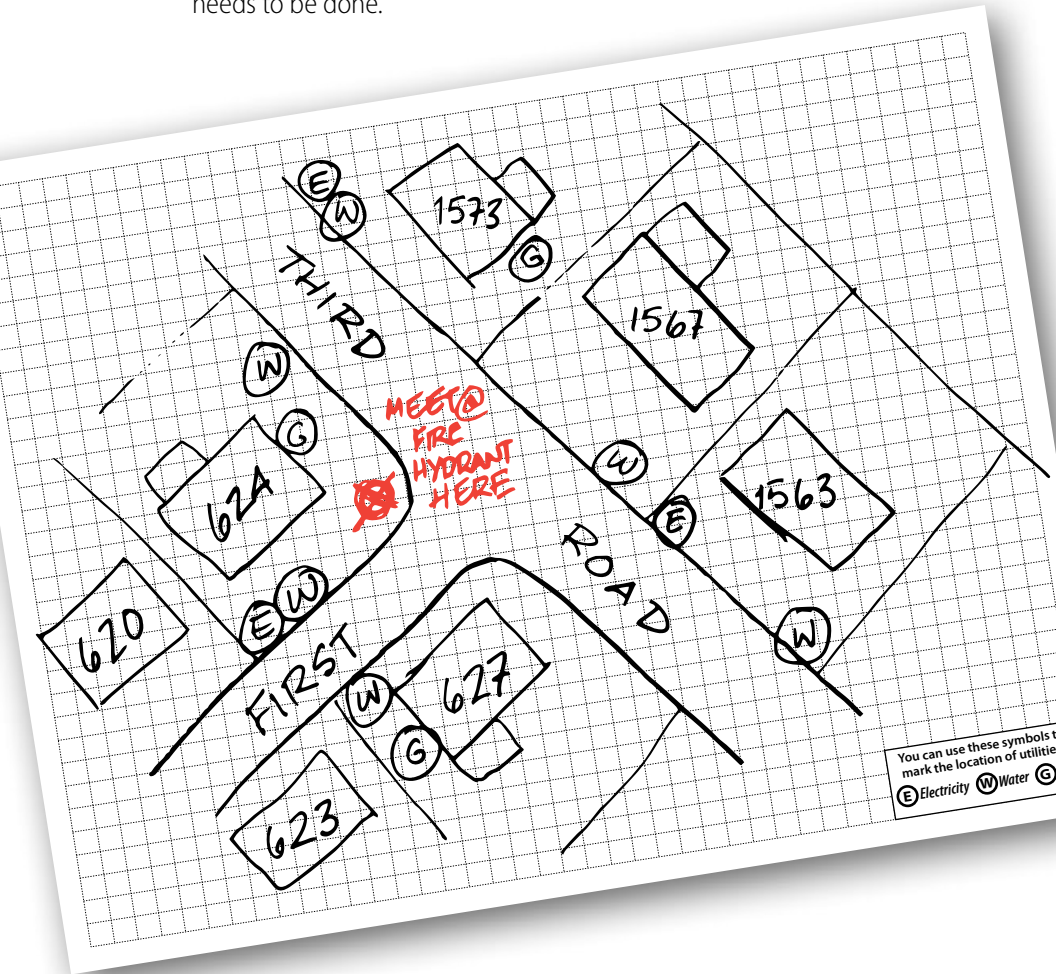
Contact your local program and let them know your neighbourhood is organizing around emergency preparedness. This information can help during a disaster. Your program's coordinator will also be able to answer questions and provide additional tools and tips.

Community Emergency Management Programs

In BC, local governments lead the initial response to emergencies and disasters in their communities. As required by law, they have prepared emergency plans and maintain an emergency management program. Contact your local program for more information on your community's plan.

Step 3 Identify a Safe Meeting Place

In an emergency, you, your family and your neighbours should gather at a predetermined safe meeting point to evaluate the situation and what needs to be done.



Basic Household Emergency Kit Supplies

Have enough non-perishable food and water to support your household for three days to one week. If the power is out, use the food from your fridge and freezer first, followed by your pantry. Ensure you have additional food and water for babies, toddlers and pets.



First Aid kit and medications



A three-day to one-week supply of non-perishable food and manual can opener



Battery-powered or hand crank radio



Garbage bags, moist towelettes and plastic ties for personal sanitation



Battery-powered or hand crank flashlight with extra batteries



Whistle to signal for help



Water, four litres per person per day, for three days to one week, for drinking and sanitation



Cell phone with chargers, inverter or solar charger



Dust mask to help filter contaminated air

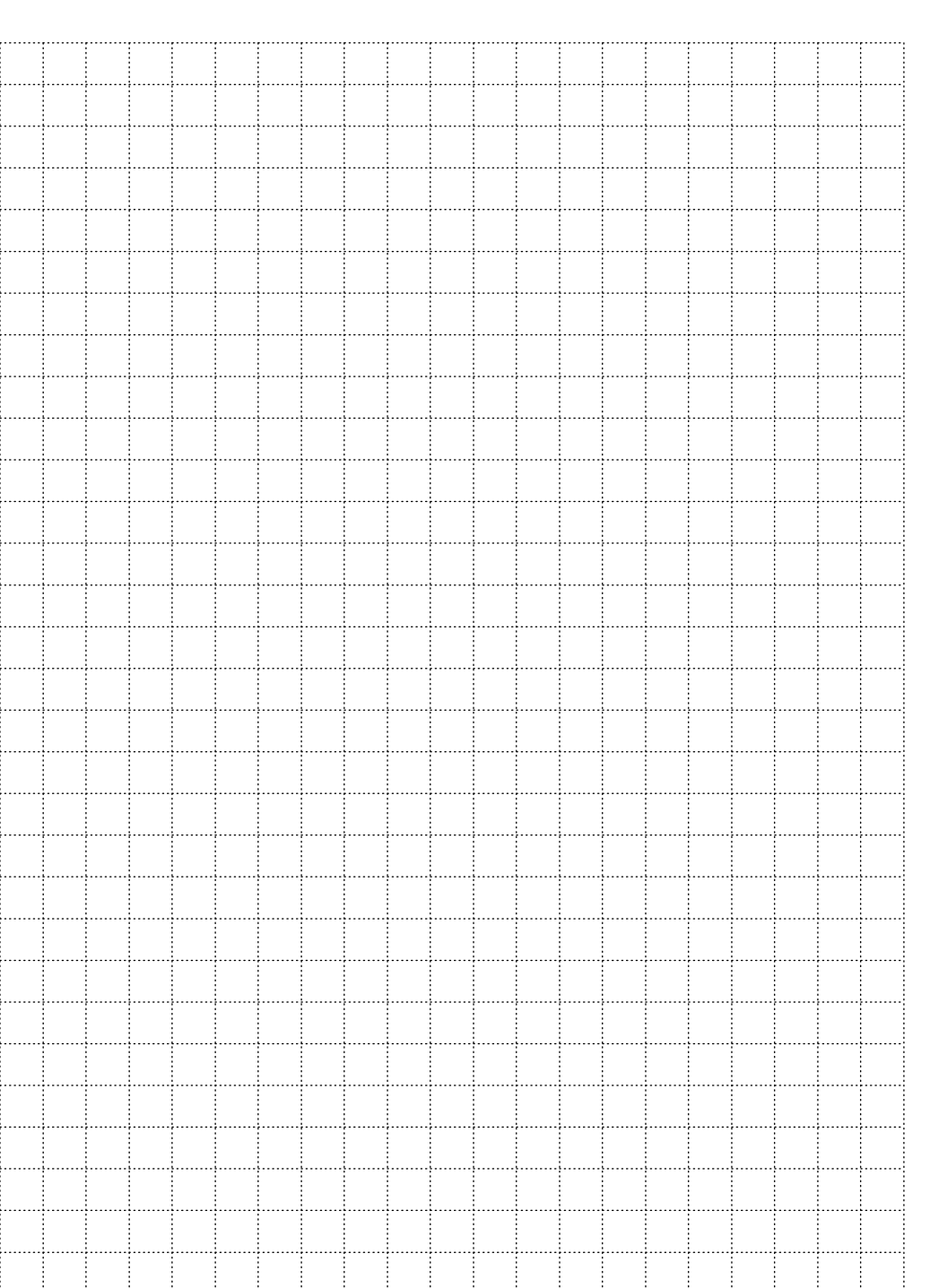


Copy of your emergency plan, copies of important documents and cash in small bills



Seasonal clothing and footwear





You can use these symbols to mark the location of utilities:

(E) Electricity **(W)** Water **(G)** Gas

Our Neighbours

Street address Residents' names Phone Email Skills/resources Emergency role Other notes	Street address Residents' names Phone Email Skills/resources Emergency role Other notes
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Step 4 *Assign Responsibilities*

It can be difficult to think clearly during and immediately after a disaster. Assigning responsibilities in advance will enable a faster and more coordinated response.

Record each person's role on the household information list located in the centre of this guide. Responsibilities could include:

Checking on others: Visit every home involved in your plan, giving priority to those who need extra support. Afterwards, check on the rest of your neighbourhood.

Checking utilities and other potential hazards: Check all gas, electricity and water mains. Turn them off if you suspect a leak, if lines appear damaged or if instructed to do so by your utility company. Also check for fallen trees or power lines, sinkholes or other damage and take appropriate actions to keep people safe.

Gathering information: Listen to the radio and monitor other information sources for emergency updates. Share updates with your neighbours.

Fixing and cleaning up: Assist others in securing their properties, boarding up windows and removing debris. Do not enter buildings or residences that could be unsafe. For instance, beware of electrical wires and outlets under water, as well as façades and insecure items that could give way, particularly in an after shock.

Anything else?

Discuss any other actions you think are important before, during and after an emergency. Be prepared to adapt to your circumstances on the day and reassign roles if needed.

Connect with us

TWITTER:



- *@EmergencyInfoBC* for alerts
- *@PreparedBC* for preparedness information
- *@BCGovFireInfo* for wildfire updates
- *@DriveBC* for road conditions



FACEBOOK:

- *BC Wildfire Service*

WEB:

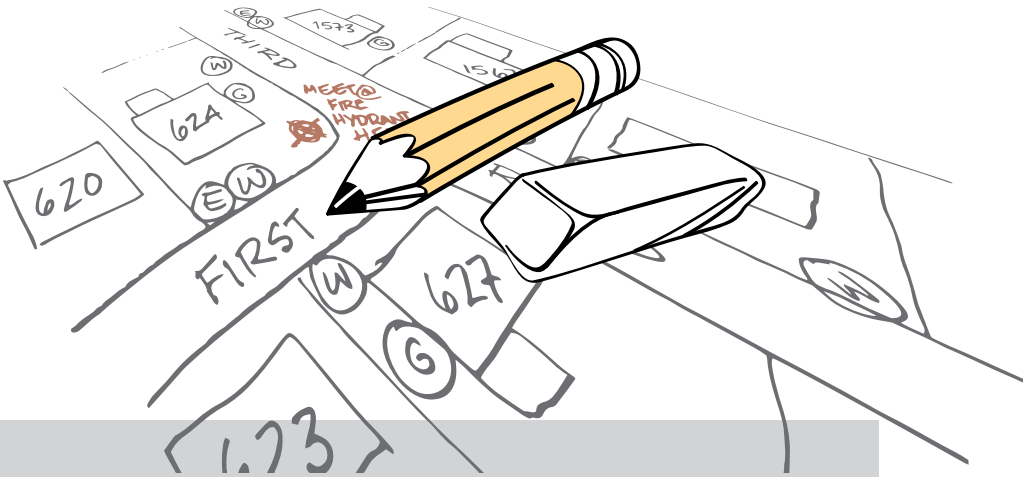
- *www.EmergencyInfoBC.gov.bc.ca* for alerts
- *www.gov.bc.ca/PreparedBC* for preparedness tips



Step 5 Map Your Street

Use the grid in the centre of this document to draw the following:

- An outline of your street with the addresses of participating households.
- Your safe meeting point.
- Households that might require extra assistance.
- Water, gas and electricity mains, and where they can be turned off.
- Other key resources or vulnerabilities identified in your planning.



We're In It Together!

We're all first responders in a disaster. Your family and your neighbours will be the most immediate source of help. Remember you're not on your own; you're with your community.

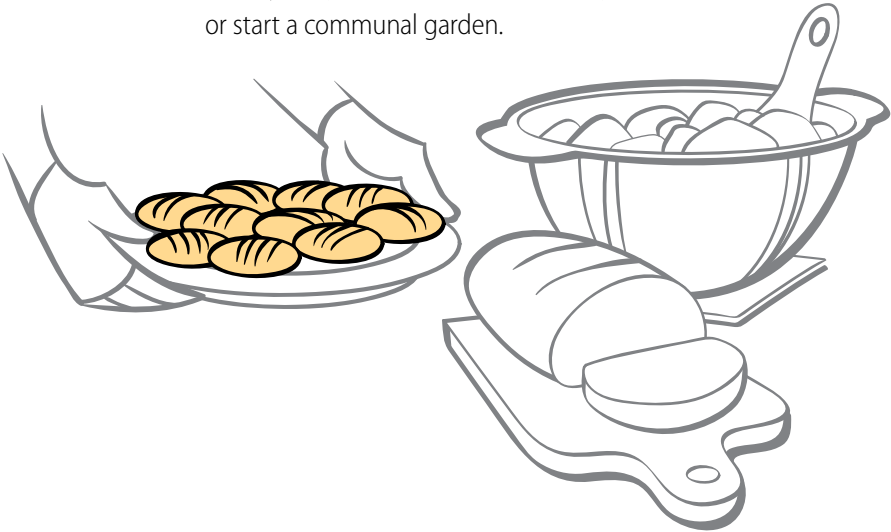
Step 6 *Store This Guide*

Remove the map and contact details page from the centre of this guide and store it with your household plan in an accessible location. Ensure everyone in your group has a copy of the information.

Step 7 *Keep in Touch*

Maintain the momentum by staying in contact with your neighbours. Some ideas to stay connected are:

- Organize an annual street BBQ or potluck.
- Offer support during times of need or life changes, such as a new baby, a recent death or home renovations.
- Welcome new neighbours by taking over a tray of cookies or bottle of wine, or invite them over for a meal.
- Share your garden's produce with neighbours or start a communal garden.



United Front

Living in the same neighbourhood, you and your neighbours face the same risks. That means you'll also endure the same impacts. Working together will make it easier to cope.

Step 8 *Review and Update*

Identify someone who will be responsible for organizing a get-together to review and update the plan each year and consider rotating the responsibility of host each year.





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