

Natural Disasters

Earthquake

EARTHQUAKE KIT LOCATIONS

COMMUNITY SERVICES:	In reception, marked cabinet across from the kitchenette sink
THE CLUB:	Under reception desk next to the back entrance
FOUNDRY:	Hallway storage next to the group rooms.
ALISA'S WISH:	In reception area.

Procedure

Earthquakes will strike without warning, so you must be prepared to take appropriate action immediately. Structural damage caused by the earthquake may prevent communication systems from working, or communication systems may be overloaded.

What to expect in the event of a major earthquake:

- During the actual earthquake, people will experience shaking of buildings and possibly extreme loud noises.
- The motion may be severe – if you are standing, you may be thrown to the ground.
- Doors may violently swing back and forth.
- Door frames may bend, jamming the doors closed.
- Pieces of ceiling and light fixtures may drop to the floor.
- Shattered glass from broken windows may fly across the room.
- There may be flooding from burst water pipes/mains.
- Free standing furniture such as bookcases, filing cabinets, may fall to the floor.
- There may be fires from broken natural gas lines, electrical short circuits or other causes.
- There may be structural and/or non-structural damage to buildings.
- There may be injuries sustained by clients, personnel, volunteers, and visitors.
- There may be power outages and other utility failures.
- Chemical spills may also be a possibility.

If you are indoors

- Stay inside; do not immediately attempt to exit the building.
- Stay away from windows, bookcases, filing cabinets, and other heavy objects that could fall.
- Drop, cover, and hold – if possible, take cover immediately under desks, tables, or other heavy furniture.
- Turn away from windows.
- If heavy furniture is not available, take cover in narrow halls or against load-bearing walls.
- If you are in an area where there is no cover available, drop to your knees with your back to the wall and cover your head and neck with your hands to protect yourself.

If you are outdoors

- If you are outside, stay outside.
- Move into an open area away from buildings, trees and power lines.

- Avoid utility poles, trees and overhead wires.
- Once in the open, stay there until the shaking has stopped.

If you are in a moving vehicle

- Stop the car and stay still.
- Avoid stopping near buildings, large trees or utility wires.
- Stay in the vehicle until the shaking has stopped.

If you are in a wheelchair

- Stay in the wheelchair.
- Move to cover if possible.
- Lock your wheels.
- Protect your neck and head with your arms.

Once the shaking has stopped

- Remain in a secure area until the shaking has stopped.
- Wait 60 seconds after the shaking has stopped before moving from the secure area.
- Assess your surroundings.
- Be prepared for aftershocks.

ASSESS THE DAMAGE

- Assess the damage to your designated area and inform a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Use caution when opening doors to cupboards and rooms as objects may have shifted and could fall.
- Salvage essential supplies and equipment if you can do so safely.
- Post premade signs indicating dangerous areas and report these to the Senior Leadership Team.

The Executive Director and/or designate will activate the **EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION TREE** process to inform of the status of the building(s), personnel and services.

EARTHQUAKE LIFE SAFETY

Check for injuries:

- Assess if anyone is injured and provide medical assistance to the best of your ability.
- Call other staff members for assistance if required.
- Do not move seriously injured persons unless they are in immediate danger of further injury.
- Call 911 for help.

Check for people who may be trapped:

- Inspect offices.
- Leave doors to offices open.

Calm clients, personnel, and/or volunteers:

- Remain calm, reassuring clients by speaking and giving instructions in a firm, calm voice.
- Keep clients and visitors away from windows, exterior walls and objects which could fall.

BE PREPARED TO EVACUATE

- Prepare clients and visitors to evacuate. Follow the MRPMCS Evacuation Procedures.
- Evacuate the building when advised by the Executive Director or designate.
- Check the evacuation route(s) for damage and debris in the event that evacuation is required.
- Expect to clear debris while exiting.

CHECK FOR HAZARDS

- Check for fires and extinguish them or call for help.
- Inspect all areas for hazards, ie. Chemical hazards, gas leaks, and/or broken utility lines.
- If you smell gas, open windows and doors. Contact Property Manager to turn off the main gas valve.
- Avoid all obvious hazards;
 - Do not touch fallen or damaged electrical wires.
 - Do not smoke or allow open flames (ie. Lighters, matches, burners)

TELEPHONES

- Check the operating status of all telephones and replace all receivers back on their bases.
- Resist the urge to make phone calls unless they are completely necessary; an overloaded telephone system becomes worthless in a disaster.

FOOD AND WATER CONSUMPTION

- Conserve water – use water supplies plus water from water heaters, toilet tanks, and melted ice.
- Do not flush the toilets.
- Do not consume or distribute food or water unless you are certain it is free from contamination.

Flood

Floods are the most common and widespread of all natural disasters, except fire. Although floods can be slow or fast rising, they generally develop over a period of days. Therefore, advance warning is usually available. The seasons during which threat of flooding is highest are spring and fall.

The best protection during a flood is to leave the area and find shelter on higher ground.

POST FLOOD HAZARDS

- Contaminated drinking water: Use bottled water or bring water to a rolling boil for 10 minutes and add two drops of non-perfumed chlorine bleach to one liter of contaminated water. Stir and wait 30 minutes before drinking.
- Building full of water: Drain water in stages, about one third of the volume of water per day. (Draining the water too quickly could cause structural damage). This will be the responsibility of the remediation company.
- Watch out for mold: Mold is a health hazard. If mold is present, wear a facemask and disposable gloves. Anything that stays wet long enough will grow mold. Dry everything as quickly as possible to avoid further health concerns.
- Dispose of any food that may have come in contact with flood water.

If a flood is likely in your area

- Listen to the radio and social media for information.
- Be aware that flash flooding can occur. If there is any possibility of a flash flood, move immediately to higher ground.
- Be aware of streams, drainage channels, canyons, and other areas known to suddenly flood.

If you must prepare to evacuate

- Secure the building. Move essential items to higher ground.
- Turn off utilities at the main switches or valves if instructed to do so. Disconnect electrical appliances. Do not touch electrical equipment if you are wet or standing in water. Stand on a dry board and shut off the power with a dry wooden stick.
- Follow the **EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION TREE** procedure to contact MRPMCS personnel for evacuation instructions and alternate accommodations.

If you have to leave the building

- Do not walk-through moving water. Six inches of moving water can make you fall. If you have to walk in water, walk where the water is not moving if possible. Use a stick to check the firmness of the ground in front of you.
- Do not drive into flooded areas. If floodwaters rise around your car, abandon the vehicle and move to higher ground if you can do so safely. You and the vehicle can be quickly swept away.

After flood guidelines

- Listen for news reports to learn whether the community's water supply is safe to drink.
- Avoid floodwater; water may be contaminated by oil, gasoline, or raw sewage. Water may also be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines.

- Avoid all moving water.
- Be aware of areas where floodwaters have receded. Roads may have weakened and could collapse under the weight of a vehicle.
- Stay away from downed power lines, and report them to the power company.
- Return home only when authorities have indicated that it is safe to do so.
- Stay out of any building that is surrounded by floodwaters.
- Use extreme caution when entering buildings; there may be hidden damage, particularly in foundations.
- Clean and disinfect everything that may have gotten wet. Mud left from flood water can contain sewage and chemicals.

Driving Flood Facts

- Six inches of water will reach the bottom of most passenger vehicles causing loss of control and possible stalling.
- A foot of water will float many vehicles.
- Two feet of rushing water can carry away most vehicles, including sport utility vehicles and pick-ups.

Severe Lightening Storm

If you are in a building

- Stay inside.
- Stay away from windows, doors, fireplaces, stoves, sinks, and other electrical charge conductors.
- Unplug computers, TVs, radios, toasters and other electrical appliances. Do not use a landline or other electrical equipment.

If you are outside

- Seek shelter.
- If you are caught in the open, crouch down with your heels close together and your head down.
- **DO NOT** lie flat – minimize your contact with the ground to reduce your risk of being electrocuted by a ground charge.
- Keep away from telephone and power lines, fences, trees, and hilltops.
- Get off bikes and motorcycles.

If you are in a car

- Stop the car and stay inside.
- **DO NOT** stop near trees or power lines.
- Do not touch or approach fallen wires, call 911

Excessive Heat

An Extreme Heat Emergency is when daytime and nighttime temperatures get hotter every day and are well above seasonal norms. Extreme heat is dangerous for the health and wellbeing of our communities and is responsible for the highest number of weather-related deaths annually.

While everyone can benefit from planning and preparing for extreme heat emergencies, the following people are especially at-risk if they do not have access to air conditioning. They will need to be prepared and supported:

- Seniors aged 65 years or older;
- People who live alone;
- People with pre-existing health conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, or respiratory disease;
- People with mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, depression, or anxiety;
- People with substance use issues;
- People who are marginally housed;
- People who work in hot environments;
- People who are pregnant;
- Infants and young children; and
- People with limited mobility.

If you are at risk and you live in a building or residence that gets very hot, with sustained internal temperatures of 31 degrees or higher, plan to go elsewhere during an Extreme Heat Emergency. During an Extreme Heat Emergency, you should prepare to stay in the coolest part of your residence and focus on keeping that one location cool. Start by identifying a room that's typically coolest and consider how you can modify the layout to support sleeping and day-to-day living for the duration of the heat event.

If an Extreme Heat Emergency has been issued, it's time to put your plan into action:

- Relocate to a cooler location if you have planned to do so;
- Reconfigure the coolest location as you have planned to do so;
- Check in with your pre-identified heat buddy. If you don't have one, reach out;
- Put up external window covers to block the sun if you can safely do so;
- Close your curtains and blinds;
- Ensure digital thermometers have batteries;
- Make ice and prepare jugs of cool water;
- Keep windows closed between 10am and 8pm. Open them at 8pm to allow the cooler air in, and use fans (including kitchen and bathroom exhaust fans) to move cooler air through the house.
- Discover extreme heat services provided by the municipality, such as the recreation centre or cooling stations.

Getting Too Hot

Overheating can be harmful to your health and potentially deadly. If you're experiencing symptoms, such as rapid breathing and heartbeat, extreme thirst, and decreased urination with unusually dark yellow urine, take immediate steps to cool down and seek emergency care.

- Get medical attention or call 911
- Submerge yourself or the person in cool water
- Remove clothes and apply wet cloths

Heat stroke is an emergency. Call 911 or your local emergency number if you are caring for someone who displays symptoms, then take immediate action to cool down while waiting for help to arrive.

Safe Drinking Water

Loss of safe drinking water can be deadly. Most people, with a few exceptions, will start feeling the effects if they go without water for more than 36 hours. Dehydration occurs much quicker than starvation. Our bodies can tolerate the loss of food much better. With an ample water supply, starvation is delayed many days, even weeks.

If the purity of your water source is questionable, use the following methods to make the water safe to drink:

- The best thing is to use bottled water from emergency supplies.
- If you don't have bottled water, you should boil water to make it safe. Boiling water will kill most types of disease-causing organisms that may be present. If the water is cloudy, filter it through a coffee filter, cheesecloth, or a paper towel and allow it to settle, and draw off the clear water for boiling. Boil the water for 10 minutes, let it cool, and store it in a clean container with covers.
- If you can't boil water, you can disinfect it using household bleach. Bleach will kill some, but not all types of disease-causing organisms that may be in the water. If the water is cloudy, filter it through clean cloths or allow it to settle, and draw off the clear water for disinfection. Add 1/8 teaspoon (or 8 drops) of regular, unscented, liquid household bleach for each gallon of water, stir it well and let it stand for 30 minutes before you use it. Store disinfected water in clean containers with covers.
- **DO NOT** store any plastic water containers directly on concrete. The concrete may leach chemicals into the water, contaminating it and also degrading the plastic bottle, causing failure.

Other sources of water:

- Toilet water storage tank. **NOTE:** Use the water from the storage tank – not the toilet bowl. Do not drink if you use coloring chemicals in the toilet water.
- Melted ice cubes.
- Water packed canned goods (even syrups are mostly water).
- Water trapped in home piping. The water can be removed by locating and shutting off the main valve. Then open the faucet at the highest point of the building. Then when you open the faucet at the lowest point, gravity will force the water from the pipes.
- **DO NOT** use the water from the pipes if you hear reports of or suspect broken water or sewer lines, or if pipes are known to contain lead.

Remember: Shutting off the water at the main valve will trap the water that is in the hot water heater and toilet tank. Not shutting the water off may allow it to flow out of these appliances and back into the main lines.

Getting the water out of your water heater:

- Use extreme caution. Let the water cool.
- Turn off the cold-water supply to the tank.
- Turn off the gas or electric heater for the tank.
- Open the drain valve at the bottom of the tank.
- **DO NOT** turn on the gas or electricity when the tank is empty.

Power Outages

All personnel should shut off computers, office equipment and tools. This will prevent injuries and damage from unexpected equipment start-ups, power surges to the equipment and possible fires.

Leave light switch on, this will signal the return of power.

Call BC Hydro at 1-888-769-3766 to notify them of the outage.

Power Outages

WATER

Turn off the water at the water shut off valve:

- If you hear reports or suspect that water or sewer lines have been broken or damaged.
- If you hear reports or suspect that the water supply has contaminated.
- If there is an extended power outage and the temperature outside is at or near freezing. Turn off the water and DRAIN THE PIPES.

Procedure:

- Locate the main water services pipe into the building.
- You will see a gate valve on the pipe. If you know you have leaks or the water has been contaminated, you can shut off all water to the building with this valve.
- Water shutoff at street level is NOT recommended due to difficulty.

To drain the pipes:

- Shut off the main water valve.
- Open the faucet at the highest point of the building.
- Open the faucet at the lowest point of the building.

ELECTRICITY

Shut off the main circuit breaker or fuse at the electrical panel.

- If your building has flooded or a flood is imminent.
- If you smell, see or suspect an electrical fire.

WARNING: If the area around the fuse or circuit breaker is wet, stand on a dry board and shut off the power with a dry wooden stick.

Always stand to the side of the electrical panel with your face turned away, when shutting off power.

- Locate the electrical panel for the building. Your building may be equipped with either fuses or circuit breakers.
- If your building has fuses, you will find a knife switch handle or pullout fuse that should be marked "MAIN". Remove all the small fuses or turnoff all the small breakers first, and then shut off the "MAIN" switch.
- If your building has a circuit breaker, you may need to open the metal door of the breaker box to reveal the circuit breakers (never remove the metal cover). The main circuit breaker should be clearly marked showing on and off positions.
- If your building has any sub-panels adjacent to the main fuse or breaker panel in other parts of the building, in an emergency be safe and shut them off too. Shorts can sometimes develop that cause a circuit to bypass the breaker or fuse.

GAS

- Call 911.
- Open all the windows and leave the building following evacuation procedures.
- Do not turn off any light or do anything that may ignite a fire from fumes.
- **Call Fortis Gas at 1-800-663-9911**