

# Paloma Member's Emergency Plan



Make a plan



Build a kit



Stay informed

# Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Paloma Emergency Committee Mandate.....	2
Emergency Plan Principles.....	3
Joint Co-op Emergency and Resilience Planning.....	4

## **Part 1: Preparing for an Emergency**

Create a Family Emergency Plan.....	5
Emergency Planning for Members with Disabilities.....	7
Emergency Contacts List.....	8
Emergency Planning for Your Pet .....	9
Shelter-in-Place Supplies.....	10
Grab-and-Go Kits.....	11
Additional Emergency Kits .....	13
Preparing for a Fire.....	14
Preparing for an Earthquake.....	15
Emergency Communications.....	16
Fire Prevention.....	17

## **Part 2: When an Emergency Strikes**

During a Fire: Evacuation Procedures.....	19
During an Earthquake: Evacuation Procedures.....	21
After an Evacuation: Sheltering in Place.....	23

## **Part 3: Other Emergencies**

Extreme Heat.....	25
Wildfire Smoke.....	27
Power Outage.....	28
Hazardous Spills.....	29
Disease Outbreaks.....	30

## **Part 4: Recovery.....**

<b>Appendix: Household Emergency Plan.....</b>	<b>32</b>
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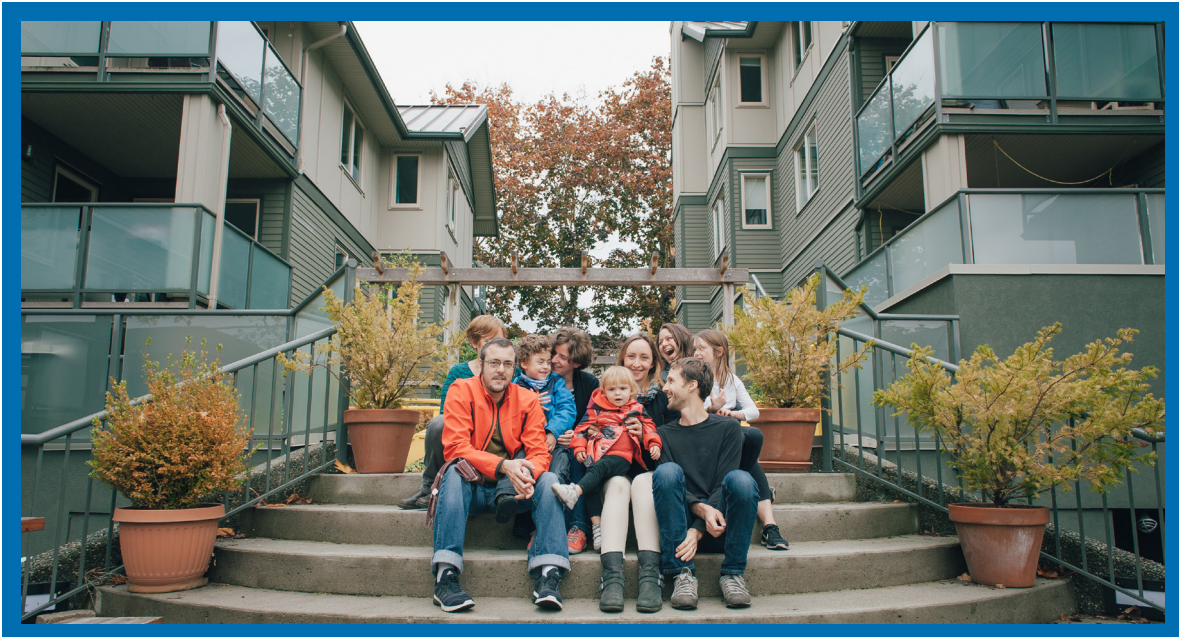
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# Introduction

The Paloma Emergency Plan has been developed by the Paloma Emergency Committee with support from neighbouring housing co-ops. This plan includes general emergency-planning information and also covers fire and earthquake evacuation procedures for co-op members.

Depending on the nature and severity of an emergency, phone, gas, electrical and water services may be disrupted. Roads could be blocked, stores closed and gas stations out of service. In the event of a major disaster, community members may be left on their own for days or even weeks as emergency responders work to save lives and manage the disaster's aftermath. It could be months before infrastructure, utilities and essential services are fully restored. The more self-reliant, collaborative and prepared we are, the easier things will be for everyone.



# Paloma Emergency Committee Mandate

1. Research matters relating to emergency preparedness and resilience planning.
2. Make sure that the Paloma Emergency Plan is updated annually or as needed, and that all Paloma members are familiar with the plan.
3. Maintain an up-to-date members list, noting any members who will have special requirements during an evacuation.
4. Establish a support system that can be activated to assist vulnerable members in the event of a disaster.
5. Work with the co-op's Maintenance Committee to address any building deficiencies and eliminate or minimize hazards.
6. Manage and restock all common co-op emergency supplies as needed, including Emergency Hub kit supplies.
7. Conduct a co-op fire and evacuation drill at least once annually.
8. Select and train several members on an annual basis to serve as Emergency Co-ordinators, Hub Supervisors and Fire Marshals.
9. Assume lead co-ordination in the co-op in the event of an emergency, including Emergency Hub set-up and operation, following in the plan laid out in the East Vancouver Joint Co-op Emergency and Resilience Planning Co-ordinator's Guide.
10. Work with other co-op committees to create stronger social connections and encourage knowledge-sharing among members.
11. Participate in the East Vancouver Joint Co-op Emergency Planning Committee to share ideas and practices regarding emergency preparedness, to assist each other and provide mutual support in the event of a disaster.
12. Ensure that the co-op's Board of Directors annually sign the Memorandum of Understanding developed by the East Vancouver Joint Co-op Emergency and Resilience Planning Committee. Ensure that the co-op is meeting all commitments laid out in the MoU.

# Paloma Emergency Plan Principles

- ✓ **Members commit to being prepared for an emergency.** The Plan requires all co-op members to take responsibility for their own household preparedness, including keeping adequate personal supplies on hand.
- ✓ **Members are expected to be familiar with the Emergency Plan.** The Plan is based on the idea that members will take action during an emergency as appropriate to their capabilities. This requires members to have a good understanding of the Plan in advance of any emergency.
- ✓ **Members will strive to act cooperatively** during an emergency, including following the direction of the co-op's designated Emergency Co-ordinators, Emergency Hub Supervisors and Fire Marshals.
- ✓ **The safety of each member is paramount.** At no time should members take any risk during an emergency action that threatens their personal safety or that of others.



# Joint Co-op Emergency and Resilience Planning

The East Vancouver Joint Co-op Emergency and Resilience Planning Project is an initiative of six housing co-ops: Paloma, Sitka, Rising Star, Sunrise, Westerdale and Laura Jamieson housing co-ops. Located within a five-block radius of each another, our co-ops have been working together since 2017 to develop a joint emergency and disaster response, aiming to ensure greater emergency preparedness and increased resilience through a uniquely collaborative approach. The Toolkit we have developed, available on-line at [www.eastvancoopsemergencyplanning.com](http://www.eastvancoopsemergencyplanning.com), includes an Emergency Co-ordinator's Guide that all six co-ops will use to organize a response in the event of a disaster.

Our collaborative response is based on a "mutual aid" model, in which community members step up to support one another rather than relying on a traditional government led emergency response. Our joint plan will allow our six housing co-ops to leverage our invaluable human and physical assets at the local level in response to both acute and long term emergencies.



Key to our joint emergency plan is the idea of Emergency Hubs, which will function as gathering, communications and care centres. These Hubs will fulfill a similar function to that of the City of Vancouver disaster-support hubs, with one key difference: we will set up our co-op Emergency Hubs in our own homes and operate them as self-reliant alternatives to potentially over-stretched City and Neighbourhood hubs. We will also establish a Central Community Emergency Hub to co-ordinate emergency response among our six co-ops.

# Part 1: Preparing for an Emergency

## Create a Family Emergency Plan

Schedule time with your family members to discuss what you need to do to prepare for an emergency or disaster. Plan to share responsibilities and work together as a team.

Involve your children in developing your family's disaster plan and in preparing your grab-and-go-kits. Consider simulating post-disaster conditions by going without electricity or tap water as a family for a short period of time. For children as for adults, being well prepared can help reduce fear and stress when an actual emergency strikes.

- Identify the types of disasters that are most likely to happen. Be sure you and your family members understand what to do in each case.
- Determine objects in your home that could be dangerous during an emergency and secure them wherever possible.
- Make sure everyone in your household knows where to find your family's disaster grab-and-go kits and shelter in place supplies.
- Store a flashlight, a sturdy pair of shoes, and warm clothes in a plastic bag under each person's bed in case there is a fire or earthquake during the night.
- Make sure everyone in your family is familiar with the co-op's evacuation plan and keep a copy in a prominent place.
- The immediate outdoor meeting place for all Paloma members after an emergency is at the corner of Cotton Drive and East 3rd Avenue. This is where we will gather to ensure that all members are accounted for and safe. If you need to leave this location for whatever reason, please advise the co-op's Emergency Coordinators where you've gone and how you can be reached.
- Pick an alternative meeting place. Choose a place for your family to meet if you are in different locations when an emergency strikes. Gathering back at home in the co-op is the ideal but agree on a secondary location in case you can't get there. A friend's house or a community centre are two options.

## Create a Family Emergency Plan Continued

- If you have young children, consider what will happen if you can't make it to their school or daycare due to an emergency. Identify someone who could pick them up if you can't, ideally someone who's home during the day and within walking distance of where your children will be. Notify their school or daycare of who's authorized to pick up your children in your absence and make sure your children know as well.
- Maintain an up-to-date emergency contact list for your family.
- Create an emergency plan for your pets.
- Make photocopies of important documents and inventory your valuables. Keep these papers in a safety deposit box or entrust them to someone outside of your immediate area.



## Emergency Planning for Members with Disabilities

If you have a disability or will need additional assistance during an emergency, the following steps will be important as part of your emergency plan.

- Create a customized emergency health information card that covers the following: accommodation needs; insurance details; information on allergies, medical conditions, and medication use; personal emergency contacts; and any other crucial information. Keep a copy in your wallet or purse and also in your grab-and-go kit.
- Develop a support team made up of family, friends, co-op neighbors, co-workers and/or your personal care attendant if applicable. Plan how you will help each other in an emergency. Designate a particular person to call if you and your team members are separated from each other while an emergency strikes.
- Be sure your grab-and-go kit includes necessary medications, basic toiletries and extra essential supplies. Try to have at least a seven-day supply.
- Prepare instructions on anything else specific to your needs, such as assistance you may require with evacuation, transferring, etc. Be sure your co-op Emergency Co-ordinators have a copy.
- Plan what to do in case of a power outage. If you use equipment that requires power, try to identify an alternative source of power somewhere in your community that you could access in case of an emergency.

## Emergency Contacts List

It is important for each co-op household to create an emergency contacts list. All family members should keep a copy of this list on hand as well as in their grab-and-go kits. Your list should include at least one out-of-area contact. Ideally, choose someone who lives outside of B.C. or U.S. Pacific coastal areas and wouldn't be affected by a major disaster there, such as an earthquake.

Call the out-of-area contact if you and your family members are separated during an emergency. Let your contact know where and how you are. Ask who else has checked in and advise your contact when you will check in again. Keep your calls short, as others will be trying to call their own contacts. It is also important to keep lines clear in case of life-threatening emergencies. You could also try to communicate through text messaging, email or social media to communicate before calling your contact, since local mobile networks may be overwhelmed or unavailable in an emergency.



## Emergency Planning for your Pets



The most important thing you can do to prepare your pet for an emergency is to make sure they have a collar and an up-to date licence and/or ID tag.

Having an emergency plan for pets can also save precious time and maybe even your pet's life. Designate someone to care for or evacuate your pet if you are not home when disaster strikes.

If you need to leave your home because of a fire or other emergency, you will have to decide whether to take your pet with you. If you are evacuated to a group lodging facility or reception centre, you may be required to make alternative arrangements for your pet.

If you choose or need to leave your pet at home:

- Post a highly visible window sign letting rescue workers know that pets (including a description of each) were left behind. Also, leave a sign on your door indicating the number of animals in your unit along with their locations so emergency responders know where to look.
- Leave plenty of water in a large tip-proof container inside your home. Leave enough dry food for at least seven days in timed feeders to prevent your pet from eating a week's worth of food all at once.
- If possible, put pets in a room that is free of hazards such as windows, mirrors or picture frames.
- Separate your dogs, cats and other smaller pets from one another as they may behave differently under stress.
- Consider an alternative location for housing your pets during an emergency, possibly a neighbour's yard or an animal shelter.
- If you choose to take your pet with you, put them in a portable carrier. Practice beforehand to make sure your pet is comfortable with the carrier. Include items for your pet in your grab-and-go kit, such as dry food, water and medications.

It is also advisable to have a pet plan on hand in the event of something unforeseeable, such as a sudden hospitalization. The plan should include instructions on how to care for your pet properly in your absence, along with any long-term care provisions.

## Shelter in Place Supplies

In the event of a disaster like a major earthquake, a building without significant damage may be the preferred choice for shelter, even if it lacks essential utilities such as water, sewer and electricity, since the demand for other emergency accommodation will be high.

For this reason, it is essential for each co-op household to keep food, water and other emergency supplies on hand. Ideally, each household will have enough food and water to last for two weeks. Ensure that you have a suitable food supply for babies, toddlers and pets.

Count on 5 litres of emergency water per person per day. Store water in sturdy food-grade jugs or bottles; juice or soft-drink bottles can also be used. Date each bottle and label it. Replace water every six months or according to instructions on sealed bottles. Store bottles in cool, dark locations. Storing water in the freezer can also help to keep food frozen longer should the power be off for an extended period of time.

Other items to have on hand when sheltering in place are:

- > A first-aid kit
- > A battery-powered or hand-crank radio
- > A battery-powered or hand-crank flashlight with extra batteries
- > A whistle to signal for help
- > Garbage bags, moist towelettes and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- > Dust masks to help filter contaminated air; duct tape
- > Cash in small bills
- > If you have mobility or health needs, keep specialized items ready, including extra wheelchair batteries, oxygen and catheters supplies.
- > Create a list of prescription medications and keep extra medications on hand (ideally a two-week supply in blister packs for easy storage). Have an insulated bag and freezer pack ready for medications that require refrigeration.
- > Keep copies of all important documents in a secure, easily accessible and ideally fireproof location. Copies should also be stored in your grab-and-go kits.
  - > Insurance policies, wills, financial documents
  - > Passports, citizenship certificates/cards or permanent resident cards
  - > Social insurance numbers
  - > Bank account numbers
  - > Credit-card account numbers
  - > Inventory of valuable household goods (photos can also be stored on a memory device)
  - > Important telephone numbers, including an out-of-town emergency contact
  - > Family records (birth, marriage and death certificates)
  - > Photos of family members in case you are separated

## Grab-and-Go Kits

A grab-and-go kit is a small emergency kit that's ready to take with you in case you need to leave right away. Every person in your household should have their own customized grab-and-go kit at home, at work and in your car. Keep kits in an accessible location where they will be easy to grab if you need to evacuate quickly.

Ideally, your grab-and-go kit will have supplies for 72 hours. Check your kits twice a year to replace any expired food, batteries and medications.

Consider the following list when putting together your grab-and-go kits:

- > Backpack or tote bag (to carry the kit items)
- > Emergency blanket
- > Bottled water
- > Candles and matches or a lighter
- > Seasonal clothing
- > Emergency blanket
- > First-aid kit
- > Flashlight and extra batteries
- > Food that requires no cooking
- > Spare glasses or contacts (case and solution)
- > Copies of your identification, insurance papers and other important documents
- > Medications
- > Money, including coins
- > Phone cards
- > Extra keys
- > Plastic poncho
- > Playing cards and games
- > Book
- > Pen and notepad
- > Radio and batteries, or hand-crank radio (to listen to news and public advisories)
- > Toilet paper and personal hygiene supplies
- > Whistle
- > Special items for babies and toddlers
- > Toys, crayons and paper
- > Hand sanitizer and N95 masks



# Additional Emergency Kits

## Car Emergency Kit

- food that won't spoil, such as energy bars
  - large wool blanket
  - extra warm clothing, shoes and gloves
  - rain gear
  - seatbelt cutter
  - candle in a deep can; matches
  - whistle in case you need to attract attention
  - copy of your emergency plan and personal documents
  - jumper cables/portable jump starter
  - fire extinguisher
  - emergency poncho
  - pair of instant hand warmers (8 hours)
  - water in plastic bottles so they won't break if frozen (change every six months)
  - first aid kit
  - folding shovel, scraper and snow brush
  - wind-up flashlight/headlamp
  - roadmaps
  - sand, salt or cat litter (non clumping)
  - antifreeze/windshield washer fluid
  - tow strap rated for 20,000 lbs
  - warning light or road flares
  - toolkit with variety of tools and spare parts
  - tire gauge
  - engine and transmission oil
- 

## Office Emergency Kit

- bottled water and purification tablets
  - basic first-aid kit
  - maps of surrounding area
  - paper and pen
  - latex and non-latex gloves
  - antibacterial wipes or hand sanitizer
  - special-needs items, prescriptions, eye glasses, etc.
  - crank-powered cell phone charger
  - non-perishable food and energy bars
  - flashlight and batteries
  - dust mask and gloves
  - whistle
  - battery-powered radio
  - spare clothing, rain poncho
  - N95 masks
- 

## Pet Emergency Kit

- food and water
- crate and / or carrier
- leash and harness
- litter box and litter (for cats)
- recent photos of your pet
- ID tag and collar
- pet first-aid kit
- collapsible bowls
- manual can opener
- copy of pet's vaccination history

## Preparing for a Fire



- Be aware of the location of your co-op's exits, fire alarms, alarm pull stations and extinguishers. Use a fire extinguisher only on a small, contained fire no larger than yourself.
  - Alarm pull stations are located next to the stairways, near the elevators and in several places in common areas.
  - If mobility is a factor in getting down stairs, let your co-op's Emergency Committee know in advance that you will need volunteers to get you out safely. If you are able-bodied, keep members with disabilities in mind during an evacuation and assist them if you can.
- Keep hallways and doorways clear at all times to allow for quick and easy evacuation.
  - Keep your unit's grab-and-go kits in an easily accessible location.
  - Plan alternate escape routes from your unit in case you cannot use your door or balcony. (For example, keep a rope ladder under each bed in upstairs bedrooms, in case occupants need to escape quickly through the window).
  - Practice fire protocols calmly ahead of time with children. Make sure they know where to go and what to do even if they are not with you.

### Drills

Fire and evacuation drills should occur on at least an annual basis and will be initiated by the Emergency Committee with the knowledge of the Board. At the end of the procedure, Committee members will meet to discuss the outcome of the drill, including evacuation time, any unforeseen problems and recommendations for making the plan more effective. The Committee will then communicate any pertinent information to members.

## Preparing for an Earthquake



The first sign of an earthquake may be a loud bang or a roar. The ground may start to pitch and roll. Objects that are not anchored to the floor or walls will shake and may fall, break or shift. Windows may break, creating shattered glass. The motion can be severe enough to topple people off their feet. Electricity, telephones, traffic lights, water and sewer systems may stop working in areas hit by a large earthquake. Often there is a lot of noise. The shaking may last just seconds, but in strong

earthquakes it may continue for several minutes. Aftershocks may continue over the next few days, weeks or months.

To prepare for an earthquake, take the following steps:

- Secure your space
  - > Attach tall, free-standing furniture, such as bookcases, china cabinets and shelving units, to wall studs using “L” brackets or corner brackets.
  - > Consider moving all framed pictures and mirrors away from beds and couches.
  - > To prevent cabinet doors from flying open, install either push latches or pull latches.
- Keep your unit’s grab-and-go kits in an easily accessible location.
- Always keep the gas tank of your car at least half full.
- Download the Canadian Red Cross Society’s First Aid App and its Be Ready app onto your telephone or tablet.
- Keep a home power-failure light plugged into a hallway outlet; it will automatically go on in power outages.

# Emergency Communications

**Communication is vital during an emergency. Good sources for news during an emergency include:**

- Public radio:
  - CBC: 690 AM and 88.1 FM
  - CKWS, 1130 AM
  - CKNW, 980 AM
- Radio stations certified by the CRTC to broadcast emergency updates:
  - CFML-FM: 107.9
  - CJFS-FM: 90.1
  - CIHR-FM, 98.3
- Alerts from Emergency Management BC via X (formally Twitter:)  
@EmergencyInfoBC
- Download the City of Vancouver VanConnect app for information updates
- The Government of British Columbia's Prepared B.C. website:  
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-management/preparedbc>

## Emergency Contact Numbers:

- For all emergencies (Vancouver Police Department, Vancouver Fire and Rescue Services, B.C. Ambulance Services) 911
- Vancouver Police Department non-emergency 604-717-3321
- Vancouver Search and Rescue non-emergency 604-219-8374
- Fortis BC 1-800-663-9911
- BC Hydro\* 1-800-224-9376

\* The B.C. Hydro number is for reporting a power outage. For downed lines, first try to call 911. When notifying emergency services of your location, provide the co-op's exact street address and the nearest intersection (1638 and 1580 E. 3rd Ave at Cotton Dr).

# Fire Prevention

Apartment fires most often originate from everyday activities. The most common causes of apartment fires are cooking-related accidents, heating mishaps and smoking, although electrical or equipment malfunctions and burning candles are also frequent culprits.

## 1. Kitchen Safety

- Never leave food unattended on a stove or in the oven.
- Always keep cooking areas clean and clutter-free. Keep potholders and towels away from the cooking area.
- Avoid wearing clothing with loose-fitting sleeves when cooking.
- Take care to turn the stove and oven off when you're finished cooking.
- Keep your oven and stove clean and free of grease spills.
- Store containers of cooking oil well away from the stove.
- Learn how to use your units or the common area's fire extinguishers before a fire occurs.
- Be especially careful when cooking or frying with oil or grease.

### How To Put Out a Grease Fire

- If a fire starts while you're cooking, try not to panic: just handle it as soon as you can.
  - Cover the fire with a heavy metal lid and turn off the heat source.
  - DO NOT USE WATER to put out the fire as water splatters the grease and will create an explosive response.
  - Know where your fire extinguisher is in case the fire grows.
  - Call 911 if you can't extinguish the fire. Then GET OUT!
- 

## 2. Heating

- Don't place space heaters near curtains or other fabrics, including couches, chairs or rugs. Use the appropriate and recommended electrical outlets. A three foot clearance area from the wall or other objects is recommended. Don't plug space heaters into an extension cord.
- Don't overload electrical circuits.
- Appliance cords that are frayed or worn should not be used. Replace all damaged electrical cords.
- Don't store kerosene, propane or other combustible materials inside your unit.
- Don't store kerosene, propane, or other combustible materials inside your unit.

# Fire Prevention

## 3. Candles

- Never leave an open flame unattended.
  - Keep candles away from holiday decorations, papers, books, curtains, blinds, lampshades, flammable liquids, clothing and bedding.
  - Place candles on stable furniture where children and pets can't knock them over.
  - Trim candle wicks to 1/4 inch before lighting and use non-combustible holders to catch drippings.
  - Extinguish candles when you leave a room. Never fall asleep while candles are burning.
  - Keep matches and lighters away from children. Store them up high in a locked cabinet.
  - Consider replacing regular burning candles with battery-operated versions.
- 

## 4. Electrical

- Home electrical fires can occur if wires are installed incorrectly or circuits are overloaded. Warning signs include:
    - > Flickering or dimming lights
    - > Switches or outlets that are hot to the touch
    - > Switches or outlets that emit a pungent odour
    - > Discoloured cords, outlets and switch plates
    - > Repeated blown fuses or tripped circuit breakers
  - Always replace burned-out fuses or circuit breakers with replacements of the correct size.
  - Don't run electrical cords under carpeting, bedding or other combustible materials.
  - Discard frayed or broken cords and never splice two cords together.
  - Use the indicated wattage of bulb for lamps and fixtures.
  - Place lamps away from open windows, where strong breezes can blow draperies onto hot lightbulbs.
  - Avoid using plug-in power bars, since they can quickly overload an electrical circuit.
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## 5. Smoking

- It's safest simply not to smoke in your unit.
- Never smoke in bed or when under the influence of alcohol or medication.
- Wet the contents of ashtrays before emptying them.
- Keep matches and lighters where children can't reach them.

## Part 2: When an Emergency Strikes

### During a Fire - Evacuation Procedures

- Don't assume that an alarm going off is only a drill. Fire regulations require that members evacuate every time the fire alarm goes off.
- Fight a fire **only** if it is small and you are not alone, and **only** after the alarm system has been activated, evacuation has begun, and the fire department has been called. Two common-area fire extinguishers are located on each floor.
- Quickly put on outdoor footwear and warm/water-resistant outerwear if the temperature outside is cold or the weather is bad.
- When the alarm goes off, vacate your unit quickly and make your way to the closest safe stairway and then to the co-op muster point whether or not you can see or smell smoke. Close all windows and doors behind you. Do not use elevators. Everyone should stay together at the muster point and remain calm.
- Take any pet that's easily led or carried. If your pet is not nearby or cannot be quickly led or carried, leave the building without your pet. Delaying your exit could endanger your life as well as that of others trying to rescue you.
- Knock loudly on neighbours' doors as you pass and yell "Fire!" Do not wait for a response but proceed to the muster point.
- If the fire is in your unit and the alarm is not yet ringing, activate the alarm when leaving your unit. To do this, look for a pull station. This is a small red wall-mounted box with a lever and a glass tube. To activate the fire alarm, pull the lever and break the tube. Pull stations are located next to the stairways, near the elevators and in several places in common areas.
- If you can't assist members with disabilities to a stairwell or exit, call out to them to remain in their units with the doors and windows closed. Assure them that when emergency responders arrive, they will be given the unit numbers of residents who need assistance evacuating the building.
- Once outside the co-op, call 911. The building's fire alarm only notifies the co-op and is not linked to the fire department. Don't worry about 911 getting too many calls. They would rather get several calls than none.

## During a Fire - Evacuation Procedures

- All members should gather at the co-op's muster point at the corner of Cotton Drive and 3rd Avenue. Be sure to check in with the designated Fire Marshal when you get to the muster point so that your safe arrival can be documented. If there are members unaccounted for, the Fire Marshal will report this to the nearest firefighter.
- Don't return to the building until the all-clear is given or you are directed to temporary shelter.
- If you are in an enclosed room, feel the doorknob for heat before opening the door. If it is not hot, brace yourself against the door and open it slightly. If you feel air pressure or heat, close the door quickly. If you can't exit through your door, go to your balcony, close the balcony door, and wait for the fire department. You can also use a fire ladder if you have one.
- If you are caught in smoke or can't leave because of smoke or fire:
  - > Drop to your hands and knees and crawl, because the air is freshest near the floor.
  - > Hold your breath as much as possible.
  - > Breathe slowly through your nose, using a blouse, shirt or jacket as a filter.
  - > Stay in your unit and call the fire department if you are unable to evacuate. Don't open the door to your unit if it feels hot.
  - > Place wet towels along the bottom of the unit door to keep out smoke.
  - > Attract attention by waving something at a window.
  - > If your unit becomes smoky, move to the balcony. If you can't exit to a balcony, go into a room with a door and window, close the door, seal the door with a towel or other cloth, open the window, and try to attract the attention of firefighters.

### How To Operate a Fire Extinguisher

- P** Pull the pin
- A** Aim low at the base of the fire from 3 metres away
- S** Squeeze the trigger
- S** Sweep the spray back and forth (contents spray out in under a minute)

## During an Earthquake: Evacuation Procedures

- **Duck, Cover and Hold.** Take immediate shelter under a table, desk or any object that can offer protection from flying glass or other debris. If possible, keep at least 15 feet away from windows to avoid shattering glass. Protect your head.



- Don't try to flee the building during an earthquake. Most injuries and casualties result from falling debris, glass and other materials. If you are outside when an earthquake hits, get clear of buildings, overhead wires, trees and other hazards.
- If you are in a vehicle, pull to the side of the road, away from bridges, overpasses and buildings. Stay in your vehicle.
- If you are in an elevator, push all of the floor buttons at once and get off at the first stop.
- If you are in an underground parking garage, crouch against a pillar or solid wall and cover your head with a jacket, bag or briefcase. Do not run.

### Evacuating the Building

- Wait at least one minute after the shaking ends before attempting to exit the building. Check for falling debris and other hazards before getting out from under your shelter. Once outside, check yourself, your family and others for injuries. Do not move anyone who is seriously injured unless necessary.
- If you have time before evacuating, turn off lights and appliances. Lock your unit door.
- Be sure to bring your emergency grab-and-go kits.
- Exit the building as outlined in the co-op's fire and emergency evacuation plan.
- Take the stairs to exit the building. Do not use the elevator.

## During an Earthquake: Evacuation Procedures

- In the event that a fire is caused by the earthquake, pull the nearest fire alarm and follow the fire evacuation procedures.
- If you are unable to leave the building, place a HELP sign in your window if you need medical assistance or an OK sign if no assistance is necessary.

### Assembling at the Muster Point

- Proceed to the co-op's designated muster point, at the corner of East 3rd Ave and Cotton, staying away from any objects or buildings in danger of collapsing and other hazards such as downed electrical wires.
- If it is unsafe to meet at East 3rd and Cotton, we will assemble at Alice Townley Park at East 2nd and Woodland Drive.

Gathering at the muster point in the immediate aftermath of a disaster is critically important so that all members can be accounted for. Even if you plan to leave to get your children or to shelter elsewhere, go to the muster point first to let an Emergency Co-ordinator know your whereabouts and plans.

- Remain at the muster point until everyone is accounted for. The co-op building will need to be completely evacuated and assessed for damage before it is deemed safe to return.
- The co-op's Emergency Co-ordinator's will assume leadership roles at this time. Where there is building damage and/or members unaccounted for, a rapid-response search-and-rescue team may be organized if it is safe to do so to evacuate everyone who can safely be evacuated. Follow all further instructions from the Emergency Co-ordinators or other emergency personnel on the scene.

## After an Evacuation: Sheltering in Place

In the event of a major earthquake, it could be days before disaster responders are available. A building without significant damage may be the preferred choice for shelter given the increased demand for emergency accommodation after a disaster, despite the possibility that the water, sewer, gas and/or electricity may not be functioning.

The Joint Co-op Emergency Co-ordinator's Guide outlines the steps to follow for members to safely shelter in place. The co-op's designated Emergency Co-ordinators will assume leadership at this time. Should all trained Co-ordinators be away from the building when a disaster strikes, an alternate team of members can take responsibility for initiating the procedures laid out in the Guide.

All spaces in the co-op deemed to be basically sound should be made as safe as possible through cleaning and any manageable repairs. An Emergency Hub will likely be set up in the common room as a place to assemble, share information, identify resources and determine members' needs. In the case of a major disaster, a Central Community Emergency Hub will be set up at Paloma Co-op to coordinate response efforts across all six co-ops.

If all or some units in the co-op can be occupied, members will:

- Attempt to call or otherwise reach their emergency contacts.
- Communicate to the Emergency Co-ordinators whether they will stay in the building or not and leave contact details if going elsewhere.
- Co-operate with the co-op's Emergency Hub team to ensure that response efforts run smoothly.

Sheltering in place may also be necessary in other emergency situations, such as if chemical, biological or radiological contaminants have been released into the atmosphere. If this occurs, local authorities will provide information on how to protect yourself and your family. In the meantime, take these steps:

- > Close and lock all windows and exterior doors. If there is danger of an explosion, also close the window shades, blinds or curtains.

## After an Evacuation: Sheltering in Place

- > Turn off all fans, heating and air-conditioning systems.
  - > Take everyone, including pets, into an interior room with few or no windows and shut the door.
- Most official shelter in place orders last only a few hours, but you should keep your grab-and-go kit handy just in case. Make sure the radio is working.
  - If you have pets, prepare a place for them to relieve themselves where you are taking shelter. Pets should not go outside during an air-quality emergency because outdoor conditions may be harmful to them and they may also track contaminants into your shelter. Keep plenty of supplies on hand to help deal with pet waste.
  - If you are instructed to seal the room where you're sheltering, use duct tape and plastic sheeting, such as heavy-duty plastic garbage bags, to seal cracks around exterior doors. Tape plastic over all windows and vents. Seal electrical outlets and other openings. Reduce the flow of air into the room as much as possible.
  - Call your emergency contact and then keep your phone handy in case you need to report a life-threatening situation. Otherwise, stay off the phone so that the lines will be available for use by emergency responders.
  - Keep listening to your radio or television until you are assured all is safe or you are told to evacuate. Do not evacuate unless instructed to do so.



# Part 3: Other Emergencies

## Extreme Heat

Keeping your body cool during extreme heat can help prevent harms to your health.

Ways to stay cool:

### ✓ Drink plenty of water

- Drink more fluids than you usually do, especially during and after any activity outside.
- Drink fluids even when you do not feel thirsty.
- Flavour water to make it taste better.
- Eat foods with high water content, like fruit and veggies.

### ✓ Use fans and water to cool your body

- When temperatures get too high (above 35° C), fans are not enough to keep you cool.
- Apply cool water (through mist, wet towels, or a shower or a bath) to your body and sit in front of a fan as a quick way to cool off.

### ✓ Keep your space cool

- Open windows at night to let cooler air in; close windows in the morning before the sun starts to come up.
- Put light-colored or reflective material (like tin foil, white blinds or curtains) to cover windows during the day.

### ✓ Move to cooler spaces

If your current space gets too hot (above 31° C):

- Move to a room with A/C or in a cooler area for a few days. Ideally our co-op will have a designated space where members can stay cool.
- If it is hard for you to get to a cooler space, ask a friend or neighbour for help.

### ✓ Protect your skin from the sun

If you are outdoors:

- Wear light-colored, loose fitting, breathable clothing, and a wide-brimmed hat.
- Use sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher).

### ✓ Do activities during the cooler part of the day

- Try to do activities like grocery shopping or walking your dog during cooler part of the day.
- Take many rest breaks.
- Move to cooler, shaded areas.

# Other Emergencies - Extreme Heat Continued

## Know when to get medical help

### Learn the signs and symptoms of heat illness

<b>Heat exhaustion</b> can lead to heat stroke.	<b>Heat stroke</b> is a serious medical emergency. It can cause death or permanent disability.
<p><b>Act Fast:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dizziness</li> <li>• Thirst</li> <li>• Heavy sweating</li> <li>• Nausea</li> <li>• Weakness</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move to a cooler area</li> <li>• Loosen clothing and remove extra layers</li> <li>• Cool with water or ice</li> </ul>	<p><b>Call 911:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confusion</li> <li>• Loss of consciousness</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move to a cooler area</li> <li>• Loosen clothing and remove extra layers</li> <li>• Cool with water or ice</li> </ul>
<p>High heat lasting several days affects people’s mental health and how they cope. Seek medical care for increased:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irritability</li> <li>• Psychological distress</li> <li>• Aggression or violence</li> <li>• Suicidal thoughts</li> </ul>	



Heat stroke is a medical emergency! Call 911 or seek medical attention from a trusted service provider right away if you or someone else has a high body temperature 39° C (102.2° F) or higher and is either unconscious or unusually confused.

## Stay connected with others

Check in regularly with family, friends and neighbours. In-person visits are best so that you can see how they are doing. Make sure they are drinking enough fluids and have a place to stay cool.

If you are connected to a health centre or other service, it is possible that they will send someone to check on you during a heat wave to make sure you have access to cooling strategies, resources and fluids.

Download the Canada WeatherCAN app on your phone for up-to-the minute weather information. It is available at:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/weather-general-tools-resources/weathercan.html>

(Information from TowardtheHeart.com, B.C. Centre for Disease Control)

## Wildfire Smoke



Wildfire smoke is a complex mixture of fine particulate matter (PM2.5) and gases such as carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds. The mixture can change depending on the fuel in question, the weather and the distance from the fire. Wildfire smoke causes episodes of the worst air quality that most people will ever experience in British Columbia.

Smoky air makes it harder for your lungs to get oxygen into your blood. This in turn can irritate your respiratory system and cause an immune response, which may lead to inflammation that affects other parts of your body as well as increases the risk of some infections, such as pneumonia and COVID-19, and ear infections in children. Infants, unborn children and those with obstructive lung conditions such as asthma and COPD are most likely to experience longer-term health effects.

Common symptoms include eye irritation, runny nose, sore throat, mild cough, phlegm production, wheezy breathing and headaches. These symptoms can usually be managed without medical attention. People with severe symptoms such as shortness of breath, severe cough, dizziness, chest pain or heart palpitations should seek prompt medical attention.

Reducing your exposure to wildfire smoke is the best way to protect your health. Young children have sensitive lungs and may need to decrease their activities during smoky periods, especially when outdoors.

Here are other steps to take:

- Purchase a portable air cleaner that uses HEPA filters to remove smoke particles from indoor air.
- Build your own DIY air cleaner, following the instructions on the B.C. Centre for Disease Control website:  
[http://www.bccdc.ca/resource\\_gallery/Documents/Guidelines%20and%20Forms/Guidelines%20and%20Manuals/Health-Environment/BCCDC\\_WildFire\\_FactSheet\\_BoxFanAirFilters.pdf](http://www.bccdc.ca/resource_gallery/Documents/Guidelines%20and%20Forms/Guidelines%20and%20Manuals/Health-Environment/BCCDC_WildFire_FactSheet_BoxFanAirFilters.pdf)
- Keep a supply of N95 masks on hand. These can reduce smoke particulate concentrations by more than 90%.
- Libraries, community centres and shopping malls often have cooler, filtered air that can provide a break from outdoor smoke.
- The harder you breathe, the more smoke you inhale. Take it easy during smoky periods. Consider exercising indoors and drink lots of water to help your body cope with the smoke.

## Power Outage



It is important to plan in advance for the possibility power outages caused of heavy rain, high winds, snowstorms or extreme heat leading to power outages. Power outages in Vancouver are typically over almost as soon as they begin. However, during an extended outage, members may be without light, heat and hot water. If you only have a cordless phone, you will also be left without phone service. If you don't have a battery-powered or hand-crank radio,

you may have no way of monitoring news broadcasts. In other words, you could be facing major challenges.

### Preparing Your Unit

- Ensure that your home emergency supplies are well stocked with non-perishable food and water for at least two weeks. Consider allocating one kitchen or closet shelf to canned emergency food. Make sure that you have a manual can opener on hand.
- Keep a high-powered flashlight and extra batteries in an easy-to-access space. It is very difficult to find things in the dark.
- Use surge protectors for your electronic devices such as computers, printers and televisions.

### During a Power Outage

- The co-op's Emergency Co-ordinators should contact BC Hydro immediately to report an outage.
- Turn off all appliances, especially those that generate heat. This helps prevent injury, damage and possible fire when the power is restored.
- Never use a camp stove, propane or kerosene heaters indoors. A build-up of carbon monoxide gas in closed areas can be deadly.
- Use your refrigerator and freezer as little as possible. A freezer will keep food frozen for 24 to 36 hours if the door remains closed. Cover a free-standing freezer with blankets to further insulate it. If you have space, keep some extra ice in the freezer to serve as back-up cooling. Minimize how often you open the refrigerator. Use all perishable food first. When the power comes back on, check to make sure your refrigerator and freezer are back on too.
- If you have to evacuate your unit, remember to take your emergency grab-and-go kits.

# Hazardous Spills

In the event of a hazardous spill which could involve chemicals, radiation, biohazard materials, oil and gas, propane, flammable materials, industrial products and/or mixed waste, the most important thing is to listen carefully to authorities.

Sometimes an accident may cause hazardous materials to enter the air. In some situations, we may be told to shelter in place and seal ourselves inside our units. In an extreme scenario, we may be instructed to evacuate the area.

### If instructed to shelter-in-place:

- Go indoors and stay there.
- Close all outside and inside doors.
- Close all windows.
- If directed to do so, use the duct tape from your shelter-in-place supplies to seal all doors, windows and vents.
- Do not turn on kitchen or bathroom vents.
- Stay in an inside room as far away from windows and doors as possible.
- Do not leave the building until you are told to.



## Disease Outbreak



Communicable diseases have varying modes of transmission, incubation periods and periods of communicability or contagion. Disease prevention focuses on reducing the transmission of communicable diseases. During times of increased communicable-disease risk, such as we saw with COVID-19, public health authorities will provide guidance information about the risk and how to reduce it.

**Learn how diseases spread to help protect yourself and others.** Viruses can be spread from person to person, from a non-living object to a person, and by people who are infected but don't have any symptoms.

**Gather supplies in case you need to stay home for several days or weeks.** Supplies may include cleaning supplies, non-perishable foods, prescription medications and bottled water. It is important to keep an adequate supply of N95 masks on hand.

**Take actions to prevent the spread of disease.** Cover coughs and sneezes. Wear a mask in public. Stay home when sick (except to get medical care). Disinfect surfaces. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are unavailable, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Stay six feet away from people who are not part of your household. Stay at home as much as possible to prevent the spread of disease.

**If you believe you've been exposed to disease,** follow the quarantine instructions from medical providers and monitor your symptoms. If you're experiencing a medical emergency, call 911 and shelter in place with a mask, if possible, until help arrives.

**Properly ventilate your unit where possible.** Keep windows open or set up portable HEPA filters if you have them.

**Prepare for the possibility of schools, workplaces and community centres being closed.** Prepare for online co-ordination of school, work and social activities.

**Create an emergency plan** so that you and your family know what to do and what you will need if an outbreak happens. Consider how a pandemic may affect your plans for other emergencies.

**Know that it's normal to feel anxious or stressed.** Engage with friends and your co-op community through video and phone calls. Take care of your body and talk to someone if you are feeling upset.

## Part 4: Recovery

Recovery begins alongside response in an emergency or a disaster, and it continues for weeks afterwards, if not months or years. Shared experience and working together will help our co-op to adapt and rebuild. Recovery will present challenges, but strong communities face them together.

- ✓ **Stay connected.** Some members may have been evacuated or be living temporarily outside our co-op community. Strive to keep everyone connected and informed. Setting up phone trees, social-media groups and e-mail lists, in addition to meeting in person, will help people to stay connected so they can take action and support one another.
- ✓ **Work together.** The impulse to work together is often high at the start of a disaster, when priorities are centred on meeting basic needs. Keeping this energy alive through the recovery process will take a more concerted effort. Consider how our community can continue to share knowledge and creativity as the challenges shift from responding to an immediate situation to proactively rebuilding the kind of community in which everyone can thrive.
- ✓ **Speak with a common voice.** Work with other local co-ops and non-profit groups to make sure that your community's message is heard when local government and funding organizations are preparing to rebuild. Emphasize common goals. You will also want your co-op's voice to be inclusive. Send a clear message by communicating that your community's needs are diverse.
- ✓ **Pay attention to well-being.** During and after a disaster, it is natural to experience strong emotions. Give yourself time to adjust and to connect with family, friends and others who have been affected in our community, respecting that people's needs will vary. Everyone deals with challenges in different ways but remember that it's always okay to seek help. Re-establishing your regular routines and engaging in healthy activities can also enhance your ability to cope.



# Appendix: Household Emergency Plan

## Family last name and home address:

\_\_\_\_\_

## Family member contact information:

Full name:	Phone:	Email:
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Keep this plan in an easy to find, easy to remember place as well as a copy in your grab and go kits. You may also want to make duplicate copies to keep at work and/or in your car.

## Pet information:

Name:	Type/Breed:	Color:	Registration/ID:
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Your family may not be together when a disaster occurs, so it's important to practice what you planned so you know how to connect with each other in the case of an emergency. Be sure to discuss what you would do in different situations. Review and update your plan yearly.

## Our out-of-area contact(s):

- After a major disaster, local phone service may be limited, so phone your out of area contact to keep in touch with your family.
- Call your contact person to say how you are, where you are and what your plans are.
- Keep the call short, if possible, arrange to call back at a specified time for another check-in.

## Out -of-area contact:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
City/Province: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

# Household Emergency Plan Continued

## Places to meet family:

Working days location:

daytime: \_\_\_\_\_

evening: \_\_\_\_\_

Non-working days location:

daytime: \_\_\_\_\_

evening: \_\_\_\_\_

## Family member health information:

Full name:

Care card number

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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## Medications or other health information:

Full name:

Additional health information:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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## Family doctor(s):

Name:

Phone:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Keep copies of birth and marriage certificates, passports, wills, licences, insurance and other important documents in a safe place both inside and outside your home, such as a safety deposit box or give them to trusted friends or family who live out of town.

Keep a month's supply of prescription medication in your grab and go bag. Be sure to check it regularly and replace before it expires. Also, store an extra set of contact lenses and prescription glasses, if possible.

# Household Emergency Plan Continued

## Other information:

Insurance agent / company contact information and policy number:

Home: \_\_\_\_\_

Auto: \_\_\_\_\_

Life: \_\_\_\_\_

Check with your insurance company about what sort of insurance they can provide if you are evacuated from your home or cannot return.

## School-aged children:

People designated to pick up children from school:

Full name:

Phone:

Email:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Inform your child(ren)'s school who you've designated to pick them up if you are unable.

## School name(s) and address(es):

School name:

\_\_\_\_\_

Child attending:

\_\_\_\_\_

School address:

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone:

\_\_\_\_\_

Pack an envelope in your child(ren)'s backpack that contains your contact information, a recent photo of your family, their health information or special requirements, and your out-of-area contact's information.

## School name(s) and address(es):

School name:

\_\_\_\_\_

Child attending:

\_\_\_\_\_

School address:

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone:

\_\_\_\_\_

Check with your child(ren)'s school or daycare about their emergency plans. Ask how they will communicate with families during an emergency and what type of authorization they require to release your child(ren) to a designated person if you are unable to pick them up yourself.

## Household Emergency Plan Continued

### Plan of action:

1. If separated during an emergency (i.e. if at work or school), the meeting place near our home is:

---

2. The route to get to our neighbourhood meeting place is:

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3. If we cannot return home or are asked to evacuate, the meeting place outside of our neighbourhood is:

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4. The route to get to our meeting place outside of our neighbourhood is:

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5. The room we would go to in our home if we are asked to “shelter-in-place” (that is, stay inside and seal off doors, windows and vents) is:

---