



Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Toolkit



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Neighbourhood Preparedness

People cope better during a disaster, and recover more quickly afterwards, when they work together.

“Neighbours helping neighbours” is the principle behind Surrey’s Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Program (NEPP), part of the Surrey Emergency Program (SEP). NEPP helps neighbourhoods identify the skills and resources that would be useful in a disaster, and teaches them how to respond safely and effectively in organized teams. The goal is to prepare neighbourhoods to be self-sufficient for at least 72 hours after a disaster.

A neighbourhood can be a group of homes, an apartment or townhouse complex, a school or daycare, a business, or any other place where the same individuals regularly gather.

How NEPP Works

NEPP facilitators will conduct two meetings with citizen groups and then act as consultants as those groups develop their response plans.

1. Personal preparedness is the first step of NEPP and the subject of the first meeting. Check out the comprehensive Personal Emergency Preparedness Toolkit, available at www.surrey.ca/sep or City Hall.
2. The second meeting focuses on setting up your neighbourhood team, including the following response units:
 - Shelter and Caregiving
 - Light Urban Search and Rescue
 - Disaster First Aid
 - Communications and Transportation
 - Utilities and Fire Suppression
 - Damage Assessment

The first two meetings and a table-top exercise are free. Groups are responsible for their own supply costs if they wish to augment their neighbourhood’s resources. Advanced training is available for a nominal cost.

To arrange a free presentation, contact surreyemergencyprogram@surrey.ca or call 604-543-6795.

About this Guide

This guide was developed through the Surrey Emergency Program to provide Surrey neighbourhoods with information and tools to teach them how to work together as a group to get through a major disaster.

Please note: *Some of the content in this guide has been adapted from information from Prepared BC. While every reasonable effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the guide’s contents at the time of publication, the City of Surrey does not guarantee the accuracy of the information provided.*

Last updated: December 2015

The Road to Readiness



Developing Your Plan

Getting Started

Congratulations on taking the first step in training your neighbourhood to become an effective response team if disaster strikes. Here is what to do next:

- Form a steering committee:** Find a few others in your neighbourhood who will serve as the initial leadership for your neighbourhood team. This is an important step, as the success of your team will rely on the degree of buy-in from your neighbourhood. A good place to start is to approach people you already know, or a pre-existing group such as a Block Watch committee or strata council. Alternatively, consider holding a casual meeting to introduce the idea to others and gauge interest.
- Schedule a meeting:** Arrange for a free presentation with a NEPP facilitator by contacting 604-543-6795 or surreyemergencyprogram@surrey.ca.
- Start the education process:** Before the meeting, it is recommended that you familiarize yourself with the Personal Emergency Preparedness Toolkit, available at www.surrey.ca/sep or City Hall.

You don't need to be an expert to get involved, just willing! As you develop your team, you will identify those in your neighbourhood who have the necessary skills or experience.

The general process for setting up your neighbourhood team is described on the following pages.

Step 1: Define your Neighbourhood

Define the size/type of neighbourhood, demographics and special concerns.

Compile information on:

- Type and nature of building(s) in your neighbourhood, e.g. single-family homes, townhouse complex, low-rise commercial building, highrise.
- Number of households, and number of adults, children and seniors in each household. If you are a school, business or other group, identify number of adults, children and seniors.
- Anyone who may need extra assistance, including:
 - Families with small children
 - People with pets
 - Elderly people
 - People with disabilities
 - People who speak English as a second language

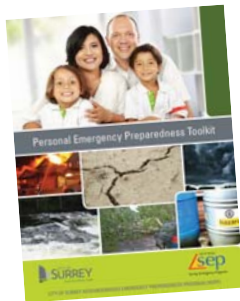
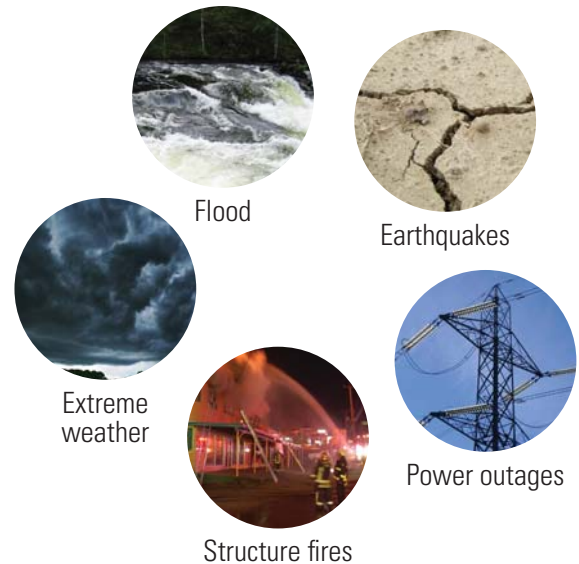
Consider mapping your neighbourhood, including participating households and the information identified above.

Developing Your Plan (*cont.*)

Step 2: Identify Hazards

Identify potential hazards and how they could affect your neighbourhood:

- ❑ Identify potential hazards in your area, e.g. earthquake or flood. Hazards applicable to Surrey are noted in the Personal Emergency Preparedness Toolkit, available for download at www.surrey.ca/sep. Your area may have other unique hazards, however.
- ❑ Identify other attributes of your neighbourhood that could play a role in a disaster, such as limited access, proximity to a major waterway or floodplain, remote location, advanced age of building(s), etc.
- ❑ Determine how these identified hazards could affect your neighbourhood.



Step 3: Personal Preparedness

It's important that members of your neighbourhood know how to take care of themselves during and after a disaster, both for their own safety and so that they can be available to help others.

Encourage those in your neighbourhood to become personally prepared and learn what to expect and how to cope. A good place to start is the Personal Emergency Preparedness Toolkit, available at www.surrey.ca/sep or City Hall.

Developing Your Plan *(cont.)*








Step 4: Recruitment

Encourage others in your neighbourhood to join your neighbourhood team.

Everyone in your neighbourhood has something to offer!

Individuals will be organized into seven response units. The units are described below, along with some of the typical skills and occupations for team members.

- ❑ Note each person's name, address, contact details, response unit, skills and resources.

RESPONSE UNIT	DESCRIPTION	SKILLS / OCCUPATIONS
 Leader / Leadership Team	Provides overall leadership of the plan before, during and after a disaster	Administrators, leaders
 First Aid	Provides on-site first aid care and emotional support to injured neighbourhoods	Nurses, industrial first aid attendants
 Utilities and Fire Suppression	Reduces hazards from fire or damaged utilities	Firefighters, electricians
 Light Urban Search and Rescue	Locates missing neighbours and rescues those trapped and/or injured	Construction workers, Scouts or Guides experience
 Communication and Transportation	Provides a communication link and transportation between teams and outside resources	Drivers, amateur radio operators
 Shelter and Caregiving	Provides a safe, clean environment, as well as shelter, food and care for neighbours who may need help after a disaster	Anyone
 Damage Assessment	Conducts a rapid and accurate preliminary assessment of the damage in the neighbourhood	Construction workers, engineers

Developing Your Plan (*cont.*)

Step 5: Identify Neighbourhood Resources

Identify the types resources that would be useful following a disaster, and where they are located in your neighbourhood. Include individual, family, neighbourhood and community resources.

Types of resources to note could include:

- First aid supplies
- Ladders
- Generators or other power sources
- Tools such as saws, shovels and axes
- Wood or construction supplies
- Safety gear such as hard hats and industrial dust masks
- Potential meeting spaces
- Tarps, tents and other temporary shelter provisions

Step 6: Training and Drills

Encourage training and practice drills both within the individual response units and as a full neighbourhood.

- Those assigned to response units could acquire new skills and/or practice existing ones to help them be more effective if disaster strikes.
- Individual response units could set regular meetings, e.g. once per year.
- The entire neighbourhood team should come together for an annual event to conduct a drill, review the plan and resources, and make any necessary changes. This event could be coupled with a social gathering such as a block party, and be used to help recruit new members.

Step 7: Networking

Encourage your neighbourhood to establish a network with adjacent neighbourhoods, other organizations, and the community at large.

- Reach out to other groups or associations in your neighbourhood, e.g. Block Watch committee, churches or resident associations, to identify opportunities for cooperation.
- Network with adjacent neighbourhoods and other organizations in your community to share what you are doing and determine how you could work together if a disaster occurs.

Next Steps

Keeping it Going

- Make a copy of the plan for all team members and advise them to keep it with their own emergency kits.
- Review and practice your plan at least once a year with all members of the neighbourhood team.
- As new people enter the neighbourhood, provide them with information about your neighbourhood program and invite them to join one of the response units.
- When team members move away, recruit replacements from among others in the neighbourhood.

Surrey Emergency Program

NEPP is a project of the Surrey Emergency Program (SEP), which works to ensure Surrey is ready in the event of an emergency. SEP's work includes:

- Educating and training staff, volunteers, community partners, residents and businesses to respond in the event of a disaster.
- Accumulating resources and developing plans to ensure a coordinated, effective response to major disasters and minimize the impact on the community.
- Conducting table-top and mock disaster exercises to test resources and response skills.
- Managing the Emergency Social Services (ESS) program that will provide short-term help, such as food and shelter, to those who have to leave their homes due to a disaster.

SEP offers free presentations on emergency preparedness to neighbourhoods, businesses, groups, schools and organizations upon request.

For more information, visit www.surrey.ca/sep or contact surreyemergencyprogram@surrey.ca or 604-543-6795.

Click the Volunteer Opportunities link at www.surrey.ca/volunteer to learn about volunteering with the Surrey Emergency Program.