

Personal Emergency Preparedness Guide



Working Together to Keep Halton Safe

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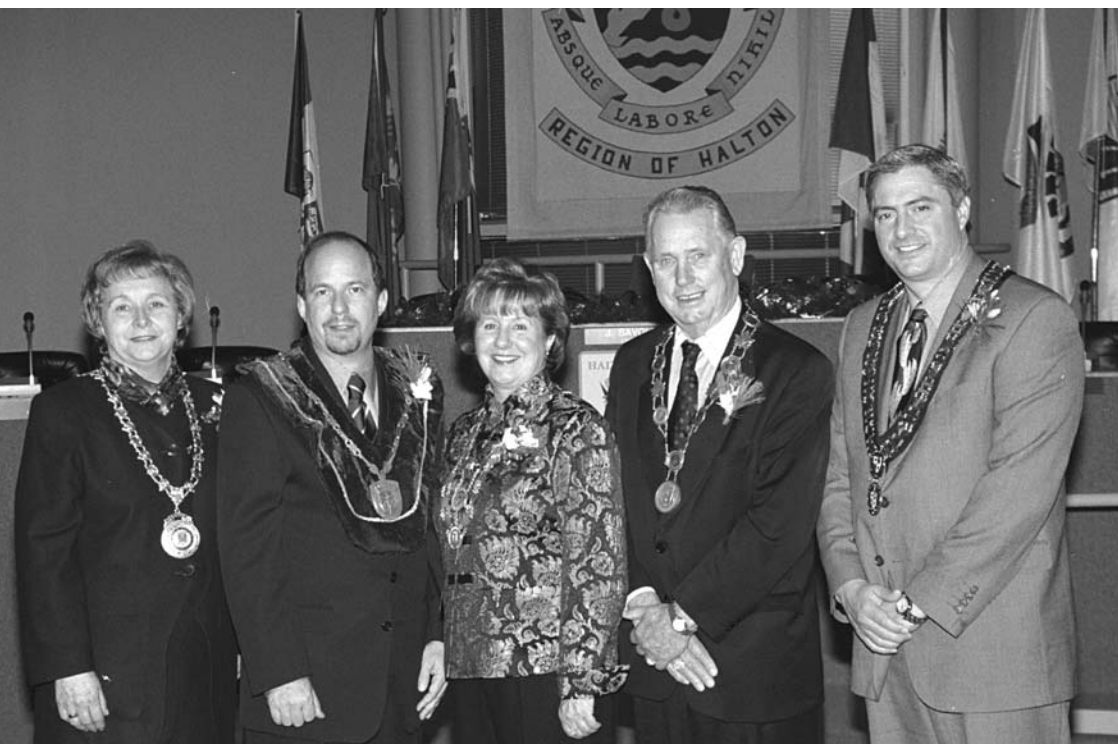
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A Message from the Chairman of Halton Region and the Mayors of Burlington, Halton Hills, Milton and Oakville

Halton Region, the City of Burlington and the Towns of Halton Hills, Milton, and Oakville work with local emergency responders all year round to plan for emergencies and ensure a coordinated response. Our Police, Fire and Emergency Medical Services make community safety their top priority.

In an emergency, being prepared makes all the difference and that goes for individuals and families as well. To that end, we are pleased to provide the *2004 Personal Emergency Preparedness Guide*.

By reviewing this Guide, you will be taking steps towards personal emergency preparedness. In it you will find information and steps that you can take **now** to reduce the impact of an emergency on you and your family. We hope that you will keep the guide as a handy reference and useful resource in your home.



Partners In Emergency Preparedness

At Halton Region we are here to help you remain safe throughout any emergency situation.

Halton Region, the City of Burlington and the Towns of Halton Hills, Milton and Oakville each have comprehensive emergency management plans and programs to address any emergency - human-caused, technological or natural - while ensuring that daily services provided to residents continue uninterrupted.

The nature and scope of any emergency determines which of these emergency plans are activated. In the event of a large scale emergency, a team of qualified professionals from Halton, the City of Burlington and the Towns of Halton Hills, Milton and Oakville, and the Halton Regional Police Service, work together to coordinate emergency response services. Municipal and Regional Emergency Planning Committees meet regularly to develop effective emergency management programs, ensuring continuous training of personnel and testing and updating of the plans.

The level of emergency preparedness we enjoy does not happen without the dedication and cooperation of many agencies and organizations. We wish to acknowledge the following for their on-going participation and support:

- Our emergency services (Halton Regional Police, Halton Emergency Medical Services and the Burlington, Oakville, Milton, and Halton Hills Fire Departments)
- Local hospitals and school boards
- Volunteer Organizations (Amateur Radio Groups, Red Cross, Salvation Army, St. John Ambulance)
- Local Utilities (Hydro, Natural Gas)
- Industry CAER (Community Awareness Emergency Response) Groups, Chemical Producers Association
- Citizen Advisory Groups
- Neighbouring Regions/Municipalities
- Emergency Management Ontario



The Personal Emergency Preparedness Guide

We are pleased to provide this Personal Emergency Preparedness Guide.

The guide outlines common sense steps that you can take right now to ensure that you are prepared in the event of an emergency. It includes information on preparing for many different types of emergencies including winter storms, flooding, hazardous spills and power outages.

You will find that this guide is an excellent resource, not only to prepare for unforeseen circumstances, but also to have on hand during an emergency situation.

Please take the time to look through this publication, review it with your family, and take steps now that could reduce the stress and impacts of dealing with an emergency situation in the future.



The 9-1-1 Emergency Telephone Number

When should you call 9-1-1?

Call 9-1-1 when you require the immediate response of police, fire and/or ambulance to:

- Report a fire or other dangerous situation.
- Save a life.
- Stop a crime in progress.

Multi-language translation services are available through 9-1-1 when needed.

Do **not** call 9-1-1 during an emergency to:

- Locate relatives during an emergency.
- Ask about the availability of gas at local pumps, or local services.
- Find out the location or availability of shelters and other services.
- Find the non-emergency numbers for fire, police, or ambulance (they are listed in your Personal Emergency Guide).

Listen to your radio for information and instructions from your emergency response officials.

Ensure that emergency responders can find your address.

For urban residents:

- Post your house number at the front of your home where it is clearly visible from the street.
- Install a light fixture above the house numbers.
- Use large, plain numbers - not script or other hard-to-read lettering.
- Use colours that contrast, such as black on white.

For rural residents:

- The local municipalities have established a Municipal Street Addressing System for all properties on municipal roads in rural areas.
- Installation guidelines have been established to ensure a standard within the community and one that provides for rapid identification by responding emergency personnel. Call your local Fire Department for more information (see page 6).

IN A LIFE-THREATENING EMERGENCY, DIAL 9-1-1.

911



Non-Emergency Numbers

Halton Region

.....905-825-6000
 TTY (Teletype)905-827-9833
 Toll Free ..1-866-442-5866 (1-866-4HALTON)
www.region.halton.on.ca

Local Municipalities

City of Burlington905-335-7777
www.burlington.ca
 Town of Halton Hills905-873-2600
www.haltonhills.ca
 Town of Milton905-878-7252
www.milton.ca
 Town of Oakville905-845-6601
www.oakville.ca

Fire Departments

Burlington905-333-0772
 Halton Hills905-877-1133
 Milton905-878-9251
 Oakville905-845-7114

Halton Regional Police Service

Halton905-878-5511
 Automated Attendant905-825-4747
 TDD1-800-990-8199
 When dialing from the
 Acton area519-853-2111
 Hamilton area905-634-1831
 Toronto area905-825-4777
www.hrps.on.ca

Crimestoppers

.....1-800-222-TIPS (1-800-222-8477)

Emergency Hazardous Spill Response

To report an emergency involving
 a spill of any material call 9-1-1
 For non-emergency incidents, contact Halton's
 Emergency Spill Response Team on a
 24-hour basis905-825-6000
 Toll Free1-866-442-5866

Rail Safety

To report an emergency involving
 rail traffic call 9-1-1
 For non-emergency incidents, call:
 Canadian National Railway ...1-800-601-7630
 or Canadian Pacific Railway ...1-800-795-7851

Pipeline Safety

To report emergency situations call 9-1-1
 For non-emergency
 incidents 1-888-982-7222

Utilities

Bell Canada310-2355
 Burlington Hydro905-332-1851
 Halton Hills Hydro519-853-3700
 Milton Hydro905-876-4611
 Oakville Hydro905-825-9400
 Ontario Hydro1-800-664-3377
 Union Gas1-877-215-6959

Transit

Burlington905-639-0550
 After Hours905-815-3224
 Milton Transit905-815-2020#0
 Oakville Transit905-815-2020 #0

Other Important Numbers

Call Before You Dig! 1-800-400-2255
 Weather Information 416-661-0123
 Roads Report 1-800-268-1376
 Telehealth Ontario 1-866-797-0000



Personal Record Of Important Information

Local Contact

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: Day _____

Evening _____

Nearest Relative

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: Day _____

Evening _____

Family Work Numbers

1. _____

2. _____

Family Cell Phone/Pager Numbers

1. _____

2. _____

Family Out-of-Area Contact

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: Day _____

Evening _____

Children's School(s)/Day Care Provider

Hospital: _____

Family Physician: _____

Poison Control Information

If you have an emergency, call 9-1-1

For non-emergency: 1-800-268-9017

Emergency Reunion Locations

1. Outside your home:

2. Away from the neighbourhood, in case you cannot return home, meet at:

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

3. Travel route to try first: _____

Other

During significant emergencies, a **Citizen Inquiry Information Number** will be provided through the local media. As soon as you are aware of it, write it down:



In case of an emergency, monitor activities through your local media outlets for on-going news, updates and information.

See page 16 for a list of local media.

Our emergency radio is located: _____

Extra batteries are located: _____

Flashlight/candles/matches are located: _____

Our emergency survival kit is located: _____

Shut-off switches for heating & ventilating equipment and utilities are marked with an and are located: _____

Gas: _____ Provider: _____

Water: _____ Provider: _____

Electricity: _____ Provider: _____

Other: _____

Caution: If you turn off the gas, it should only be turned back on by a professional from the gas company.

Our Emergency Heat Source is: _____

Our Insurance Company is: _____

Policy No.: _____ Insurance Agent: _____

Home Escape Plan:

For information on preparing this plan, see page 9. Always keep it in a visible location.



What You And Your Family Can Do To Plan For Emergencies

Be Prepared - Have a Plan

Make sure everyone in your family knows what to do before, during and after an emergency. Set up a family meeting this week to discuss how you can best prepare for an emergency. Have a plan. If you live alone, develop a plan for yourself with links to neighbours and friends.

Keep Emergency Numbers Handy

Keep a list of key telephone numbers and addresses near the phone. Remember to use the phone for emergency calls only.

Select a person in another area to be your family's contact person if you get separated during an emergency. Ensure that everyone memorizes this person's name and telephone number.

Develop A Home Escape Plan

Develop an escape plan by drawing a floor plan of your residence. Using a black or blue pen, show the location of doors, windows, stairways, and large furniture on a separate page for each floor. Indicate the location of emergency supplies (Family Emergency Survival Kit - see page 11), fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, collapsible ladders, first aid kits and utility shut off points. Next, use a coloured pen to draw a broken line charting at least two escape routes from each room. Finally, mark a place outside of the home where household members should meet in case of emergency.

If you live in an apartment, show everyone in your family where the emergency exit is. Show them where the fire alarm is, and explain when and how to use it. In a fire or other emergency, never use the elevators as they may not work if the power goes out. For further information on highrise safety, contact your local Fire Department.

Practise emergency evacuation drills with all household members at least twice per year. Keep your home escape plan visible where babysitters or children can see it. For further

information on developing a Home Escape Plan, contact your local Fire Department - Fire Prevention Division.

Prepare A Family Emergency Survival Kit

Assemble an Emergency Survival Kit to manage an evacuation or home confinement. Make sure everyone knows where to find the family emergency survival kit.

Have A Plan For Home Health Care Patients

Persons who receive home health care and/or personal support should discuss emergency plans with their caregiver or home care agency. They should also check with their physician if prior arrangements are required for evacuation to a hospital.

Persons receiving care or personal support in their homes from the Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) of Halton Region should discuss emergency plans with their CCAC Case Manager and their home care agency. For more information call 1-800-810-0000.

Locate And Label Shut-Off Switches

Locate all shut-off switches for heating and ventilating equipment in your home.

Identify these switches with easy-to-see signs placed near the breaker panel (or main circuit breaker), gas and water supplies. Clearly label the on-off position for each. Teach members of your family how to shut off these services. List the locations on the Personal Record of Important Information sheet (page 8).

If your home is equipped with natural gas, tie or tape the appropriate wrench to or near the pipe. No one but a qualified technician should ever turn the gas back on - do not attempt this on your own!

Check Your Insurance

Make sure you have adequate insurance coverage for the range of risks that might occur in your area. Discuss your insurance needs with an agent, broker or insurance representative. For further information, call Insurance Bureau of Canada's consumer information centre at 1-800-387-2880 or visit their website at www.ibc.ca.

Keep an inventory of all your possessions listing approximate costs, serial numbers, and a short description. Photographs are an excellent way of recording objects of extraordinary value. Once you have completed your list, discuss it with your insurance agent.

Make Plans For Pets And Livestock

Have a plan of action for care of your pets and livestock during an emergency. Prepare for the possibility you may have to evacuate and relocate your animals. Since you may not be home when an evacuation order comes, find out if a trusted neighbour would be willing to take your pets and meet you at prearranged location. Research and make your contingency plans for possible relocation of livestock in the midst of an emergency.



Preparing A Family Emergency Survival Kit

There are six basics you should stock in your home: *water, food, first aid supplies, tools and supplies, clothing and bedding, and some special items listed on subsequent pages.* Keep the items that you would most likely need during an evacuation in a waterproof backpack or duffelbag. Make sure everyone knows where to find the family emergency survival kit.

Water

Preparing an emergency water supply

- Store at least a three-day supply of water for each member of your family.
- A normally active person needs to drink at least two litres of water each day, so store at least four litres per person per day to provide additional water for washing, etc.
- Children, nursing mothers and people who are ill will require more water.
- Never ration water. Drink the amount you need and try to find more for tomorrow.
- Minimize the amount of water your body needs by reducing activity.
- Store your water in thoroughly washed plastic, glass, fibreglass or enamel-lined metal containers.
- Never use a container that has held toxic substances.
- Change your stored water supply every six months to ensure it stays fresh.

Purifying a water supply during an emergency

During an emergency situation, if you have no water supply or have used your supply up, it may be necessary to purify water if you are unsure of its quality.

- Heating water to a rolling boil for one minute is an effective method of disinfecting water.
- Boiled water will taste better if you put oxygen back into it by pouring it back and forth between two containers.
- Chlorination uses liquid chlorine bleach to kill micro-organisms. Add .018 ml (2 drops) of

fragrance-free household bleach to 4 ½ litres (1 gallon) of water. Mix well and allow to stand at least one hour before drinking.

- Purification tablets release chlorine or iodine. They are inexpensive and available at most sporting goods stores and some drugstores. Follow the package directions.

Food

Preparing an emergency food supply

- Store at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food.
- Select foods that require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking, and little or no water.
- If you must heat food, pack a can of sterno (available from camping supply outlets) or other heat source.
- Select food items that are compact and lightweight, such as:
 - Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits and vegetables.
 - Canned juices, milk, soup (if powdered, store extra water).
 - Staples such as: sugar, salt, pepper, spices.
 - High-energy foods (peanut butter, jelly, crackers, granola bars, trail mix).
 - Foods for infants, elderly persons or persons on special diets.
 - Comfort /stress foods - cookies, hard candy, sweetened cereals, instant coffee, tea bags, hot chocolate.
- Individuals with special diets and allergies will need particular attention, as will babies, toddlers, nursing mothers and the elderly.
- Make sure you have a manual can opener and disposable utensils.
- Do not forget non-perishable food for your pets.

A good rule when dealing with food is:
**When In Doubt
 Throw It Out**

Some general guidelines for rotating emergency foods

Don't store longer than six months:

- Powdered milk (boxed)
- Dried fruit (in sealed container)
- Dry, crisp crackers (in sealed container)
- Potatoes

Don't store longer than one year:

- Canned meat and condensed vegetable soups
- Canned fruits, fruit juices and vegetables
- Ready-to-eat cereals and uncooked instant cereals (in containers)
- Peanut butter & jams (if seal unbroken)
- Hard candy, chocolate bars and canned nuts

Storing and using food properly during an emergency situation

If there is a power failure:

- Meat, dairy and frozen foods can be hazardous if not stored properly.
- Use perishable food and foods from the refrigerator first.
- Then use foods from the freezer. To minimize the number of times you open the freezer, post a list of freezer contents on the door.
- A full freezer will keep food frozen for about two days. A half-full freezer will keep food frozen for one day. Cover with blankets for extra insulation.
- The refrigerator will keep food cool for four to six hours, depending on the kitchen temperature.
- Keep the door shut as much as possible.
- Finally, begin to use non-perishable foods.

How to cook if the power goes out

For emergency cooking, you can use a barbeque, a charcoal grill or camp stove, outdoors only. You can also heat food indoors using candle warmers, chafing dishes and fondue pots.

First Aid Supplies

Purchase a complete first aid kit and first aid manual. Add personal care items such as toothpaste and soap, and a supply of non-prescription drugs such as:

- Pain relievers (e.g., acetaminophen)
- Anti-diarrhea medication
- Sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher)
- Antacid
- Laxative
- Epipen for allergic reactions

*If you must leave your home in an emergency, be sure to take prescription drugs with you.

Tools And Supplies

The following are examples of the type of items you should consider:

- Paper cups, plates and plastic utensils, storage containers
- Battery-operated radio, flashlight and extra batteries
- Lantern and fuel, candles
- Fire extinguisher (small canister, ABC type)
- Duct tape
- Pliers, hammer, nails, crowbar, shut-off wrench for household gas and water
- Compass, matches in a waterproof container, signal flare, whistle
- Paper, pencil, needles, thread
- Plastic sheeting
- Map of your community (for locating shelters)
- Toilet paper, towelettes
- Soap, liquid detergent, unscented household chlorine bleach
- Plastic garbage bags, ties (for personal sanitation use)
- Plastic bucket with tight lid
- Emergency blanket
- Mosquito repellent
- Rope and shovel
- Pocket knife or multi-tool

Clothing And Bedding

Include at least one complete change of clothing and footwear per person:

- Sturdy shoes or work boots
- Rain gear
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Hat and gloves, scarves
- Thermal underwear
- Sweaters

Special Items

Keep important family records and documents in a waterproof, portable container or a bank safety deposit box:

- Passports
- Health cards
- Bank account and credit card numbers, and a small amount of cash
- Photos of family members in case you are separated in an emergency

Those With Special Needs

Remember family members with special needs, such as infants and elderly or disabled persons. Include any relevant medications, denture needs, corrective lenses, hearing aids and batteries.

For people with mobility problems, consider the need for the following:

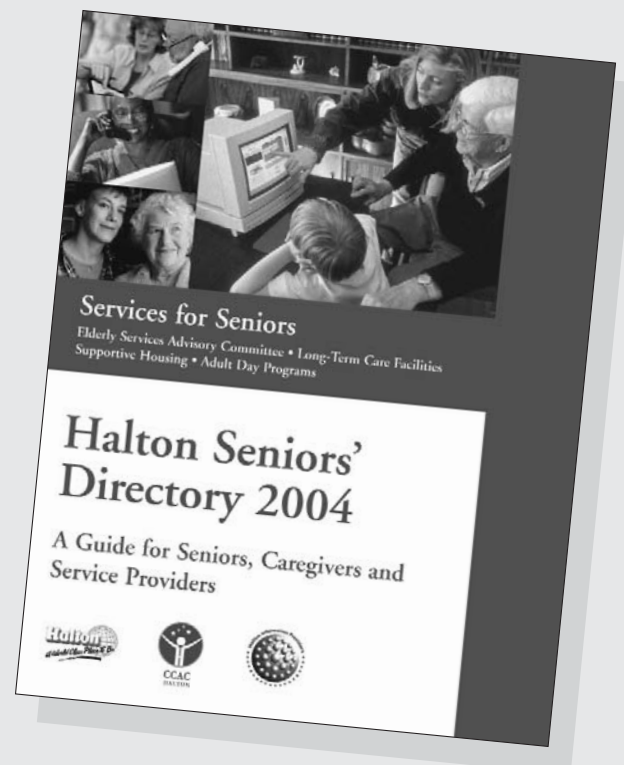
- Extra wheelchair batteries, oxygen, medication, catheters, food for guide or service dogs, plus other special equipment you might need
- A list of individuals to contact in the event of an emergency
- A list of the style and serial numbers of medical devices, such as pacemakers
- Store back-up equipment, such as a manual wheelchair, at a neighbour's home, school or your workplace
- Keep the shut-off switch for oxygen equipment near your bed or chair so you can get to it quickly if there is a fire

For More Information on assisting seniors in emergency situations, you can obtain

Halton Senior's Directory

through Access Halton: 905-825-6000

Toll free 1-866-4HALTON (1-866-442-5866)



Be Prepared For Emergencies On The Road

- Carry a Car Survival Kit - every driver should carry a car safety kit, including items such as booster cables, vehicle fluids, emergency flares, "survival" candle, a blanket, and first aid equipment. Always remember to keep your vehicle serviced and keep the gas tank at least half full.
- Purchase a Highway Help Program sign. The Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police (OACP) introduced the Highway Help Program to provide quick and safe emergency communications between stranded motorists, other drivers and the police. A fully reflective sign can be attached to the outside of your vehicle as a call for help. The Highway Help Program is a non-profit, province-wide program. For more information call 1-888-466-5486 or visit www.highwayhelp.org
- In addition, you may purchase a reflective "CALL POLICE" highway sign which can be seen in both directions and which allows you to ask for assistance without leaving your vehicle. Signs can be purchased at many retail outlets.
- In an emergency situation where you must pull off the road:
 - Pull your vehicle completely off the road.
 - Turn your emergency flashers on.
 - Roll the driver's window down halfway, hook the sign on the window, and roll the window back up.
 - Lock all doors and remain in the vehicle.
 - Open a window 1 cm for ventilation.
 - If someone other than a police officer approaches your vehicle DO NOT open the windows further or unlock the doors.

If you see a "CALL POLICE" highway help sign

1. **DO NOT** stop.
2. Note the location of the vehicle.
3. With your cellular telephone, call OPP (Dial * 6-7-7) or the Halton Regional Police (With Rogers AT&T dial * H-A-L-T; with Bell Mobility dial 905-878-5511). If you do not have a cellular phone, stop at the nearest gas station or store to use a pay phone.

Always pull to the right for emergency vehicles when you hear the siren or see their lights flashing!



If you are driving in emergency conditions

- Keep the radio on to hear important information.
- Have a cellular phone with you, if possible.
- Follow the routes specified by officials. Don't take short cuts. They could lead you to a blocked or dangerous area.
- If your car gets stuck, remain calm and stay in your car. Keep fresh air in your car by opening the window slightly on the sheltered side, away from the wind. You can run the car engine about 10 minutes every half-hour if the exhaust system is working well. Beware of exhaust fumes and check the exhaust pipe periodically to make sure it is not blocked with snow. (Remember, you cannot smell potentially fatal carbon monoxide fumes.)
- Watch out for power lines that are down. Drive carefully and watch for debris, damaged bridges/roads and dangling wires.

In a flooding emergency

- If you must walk or drive in a flooded area, make sure you are on firm ground.
- Travel very carefully, and only if absolutely necessary through flooded areas. Roads may be washed away or covered with water.
- If you come across a barricade or a flooded road, take a different route.
- If you are caught in fast rising waters and your car stalls, leave it and save yourself and your passengers.

When the lights are NOT working, a traffic light intersection becomes a four-way stop!

Drivers are often confused and frustrated when approaching and waiting at non-functioning traffic light intersections. Many people have no idea what to do at a traffic light intersection when it is not working.

Here are the rules of a four-way stop for those who are unsure of what to do in this case.

The first vehicle to arrive and stop has the right of way. If two or more vehicles stop at the same time then the vehicle on the right has the right of way.

Know What To Do During An Emergency

Stay calm.
Help the injured, if possible.
Listen to the radio or television.
Monitor the Internet.

Evacuation

During some emergencies, it may be necessary to protect our residents by evacuating the area impacted by the emergency. An emergency evacuation centre may be set up to provide shelter and food to people affected by the emergency. If there is a need to be evacuated, you would be notified by one of the following:

- An emergency official knocking at your door, providing evacuation instructions.
- Emergency services driving through your neighbourhood, providing evacuation instructions over a loud speaker.
- Evacuation instructions provided over the local radio or television, or the Internet.

If you have to evacuate

Be sure to take the following items with you:

- Eyewear (glasses/contact lenses)
- Identification (and other personal documents)
- Cell phone (charger and extra batteries)
- Citizen Inquiry Telephone Numbers
- Small amount of cash, debit/credit cards
- One day supply of food and water
- Medication
- Toiletries
- Extra clothing
- Contact numbers
- Keys
- Paper/Pencils/Pens

If you expect to be evacuated during an emergency

- If an emergency is imminent, keep phone lines open for use by emergency workers. Monitor local radio broadcasts for emergency instructions and current information.
- Do not assume an evacuation will last only a few hours. Plan to evacuate with enough items to keep your family comfortable for at least three days.
- Take your personal emergency kit with you (see Preparing a Family Emergency Survival Kit). Refer to lists of medications, records and irreplaceable items.
- If you are instructed to do so, shut off water, gas and electricity.
- Make sure you have your car emergency kit and keep your car fueled.
- Follow local government instructions. If you are asked to evacuate, do so promptly. Travel only on routes specified by officials. A shortcut could take you to a blocked or dangerous area.
- If you have time, leave a note telling others when you left and where you went. If you have a mailbox you could leave the note there.
- If you are evacuated, register with the reception centre so that you can be contacted and reunited with your family and loved ones. If you are going somewhere other than the reception centre, advise the centre, local government or police of your whereabouts.

Local Media

(at time of printing)

CHTV
 COGECO
 The Weather Network
 CHWO 1250 AM
 680 NEWS on your AM dial
 102.9 K-Lite FM
 The Halton Compass
 Your local Metroland newspaper: Oakville
 Beaver, Burlington Post, Georgetown
 Independent & Free Press, Milton Champion
 Oakville Today

Halton Region appreciates the efforts of our media partners in helping to keep Halton residents informed during emergencies.

Specific Emergency Situations

In any emergency situation, you should follow the previous general instructions for preparing for and dealing with an emergency. Keep your family emergency survival kit ready and listen to the broadcast media or monitor Internet media. The following are tips relating to specific types of emergencies:

Winter Storms

In Southern Ontario, winter storms can be dangerous:

- When a winter storm advisory is in effect, listen to the radio or television for information or instructions.
- Make sure you have enough heating fuel.
- Farmers should take the necessary precautions to safeguard animals and livestock.
- When a winter storm hits, stay indoors. If you must go outside, dress for the weather as working outdoors can result in serious cold-related injuries.
- If you must travel during a snowstorm, do so during the day and let someone know your route and arrival time.

Recognizing cold-related injuries

The risk of cold-related injury varies depending on such factors as the temperature, wind speed, your length of time outdoors, your age, physical conditions, and whether your clothing is wet or dry.

- Frostbite, or the freezing of body tissue exposed to the cold, is a common cold-related injury.
- Since frostbite has a numbing effect, you may not be aware you are frostbitten. Warning signs may include a stinging or aching feeling, followed by numbness; skin that feels waxy and cold; and skin that turns red, then gray, white, yellow or blue.
- Hypothermia occurs when your body loses heat faster than it can produce it. Heat loss occurs more rapidly when you are wet.
- Warning signs of hypothermia include increased shivering, slurred speech, impaired judgement, and poor muscle coordination.

How to treat frostbite

- Move the person to a warm place and call for professional emergency medical help. Don't let the person walk if his or her feet are frostbitten.
- Handle the frostbitten area gently; never rub it.
- Wait for professional emergency medical help to arrive. Do not try to rewarm the frostbitten area.

How to treat hypothermia

- Gently move the person to a warm place and immediately call for professional emergency medical help.
- Remove the person's wet clothing.
- Slowly warm the person by wrapping them in blankets or putting on dry clothing.
- If the person is conscious, offer a warm, non-alcoholic drink (avoid caffeine).

Lightning

To estimate how far away the lightning is, count the seconds between the flash of lightning and the thunderclap. Each second is about 300 metres. If you count less than five seconds, take shelter immediately - lightning is near.

If you are outside

- Do not lie flat but crouch in the leap frog position and lower your head. You do not want to be the tallest object in the area.
- Take shelter in a building or depressed area such as a dry ditch or a culvert but never under a tree.
- Do not ride bicycles, motorcycles or golf carts, or use metal shovels or golf clubs as they conduct electricity.
- If swimming or in a boat, get back to shore immediately.
- If you are in a car, stay there but pull away from trees which might fall on you.

If you are inside

- If indoors, stay there but away from windows, doors, fireplaces, radiators, stoves, sinks, bathtubs, appliances, metal pipes, telephones and other materials, which conduct electricity. (You can use a cellular telephone.)
- Unplug radios and televisions. Use battery or crank powered radio instead.
- Do not go out to rescue the laundry on the clothesline as it conducts electricity.

Power Outages

- Do not call 9-1-1.
- If a power outage leaves you without heat for some time, there is an added threat of pipes freezing and bursting. To prevent this, drain the pipes and shut off the main water supply. Before you drain your pipes you may first want to collect water in clean containers for emergency drinking and cleaning purposes. Open all faucets, including your water heater. If you have an electric hot water heater, drain the hot water heating system by turning it off and leaving the valves open. Add plumbing antifreeze or recreational vehicle winterizing solution to the toilet and other pipes and traps with standing water. If you have a septic tank, antifreeze could damage it so make sure you pump the chemical from the plumbing fixtures and pipes before they are refilled with water. Do not drink water to which you have added antifreeze.
- If your pipes do freeze, do not attempt to thaw them yourself. Contact a qualified professional.
- In some situations, power outages mean no running water. If you have no running water and wish to continue to use your toilet, fill your bathtub from an alternate water source, eg. with snow or water from a creek. After using the toilet pour a bucket of water in the tank, then flush.
- If your basement is flooding and you have no emergency generator to power a sump pump or other means to pump the basement, move all furniture and anything of value to a dry location and disconnect the power supply to prevent damage when the power comes back on.

Basement Flooding

- Move furniture, electrical appliances, pets, equipment and other belongings to higher levels.
- Make sure basement windows are closed.
- Remove or seal hazardous products like weed killers or insecticides.
- Remove toilet bowl water and plug basement sewer drains and toilet connection.

Tornadoes

- Hot, humid weather combined with a cold front could be a sign that a tornado is brewing. Boiling green-tinged clouds overhead are an indicator of possible tornado activity nearby. A funnel cloud hanging from a dark cloud may be visible before the tornado actually occurs. A tornado may be accompanied by lightning, high winds and hail.
- If you are at home, go to the basement or take shelter in a small interior ground floor room such as a bathroom, closet or hallway or protect yourself by taking shelter under a heavy table or desk. Stay away from windows and outside walls and doors.
- At the office or in an apartment building, take shelter in an inner hallway or room, ideally in the basement or the ground floor. Do not use the elevator and stay away from windows. Avoid buildings such as gymnasiums, churches and auditoriums with free-span roofs.
- Do not get caught in a car or mobile home. Take shelter elsewhere, such as a building with a strong foundation. If no shelter is available, lie down in a dry ditch, away from cars or mobile homes.
- If you are driving and spot a tornado in the distance, try to get to a nearby shelter. If the tornado is close by, get out of your car and take cover in a low-lying area or high under an overpass on a freeway.
- Get as close to the ground as possible, protect your head and watch out for flying debris.

Contrary to popular belief:

- Areas near rivers, lakes and mountains are NOT safe from tornadoes.
- The low pressure with a tornado does NOT cause buildings to “explode” as the tornado passes overhead.
- Open windows do NOT equalise pressure and minimize damage.
- You are NOT safe if you are downtown.

Earthquakes

Knowing what you should do during an earthquake will help you remain calm, be better prepared to protect yourself and help others.

- If indoors, stay there. Don't run outside.
- Take cover under a heavy table, desk or any solid furniture and hold on.
- In a hallway, crouch down against an inside wall. Avoid doorways. Doors may slam shut and cause injuries.
- Protect your head and face.
- Move away from windows, glass partitions, mirrors, fireplaces, bookcases, all furniture, and light fixtures.
- If in a wheelchair, lock the wheels and protect the back of your neck and head.
- Do not use elevators. If you are in an elevator during an earthquake, hit the button for every floor and get out as soon as you can.
- Wherever you are when the earthquake starts, take cover immediately and stay there until the shaking stops. Expect aftershocks—they may occur for some time after the initial quake.
- If outdoors, stay there. Try to move to a safe spot away from windows, buildings, overhead wires or telephone poles.
- If you are in a vehicle, try to pull over to a safe place. Try not to block the road. Park away from bridges, overpasses and buildings, if possible. Stay in the vehicle.

Hazardous Spills

Your response to an emergency involving a hazardous spill or fire resulting from the spill should be the same as in all other emergencies except for the following:

- You may be evacuated. Listen for instructions from local emergency response officials.
- Be prepared to “Shelter in Place”. “Shelter in Place” is the practice of going or remaining indoors during the release of an airborne hazardous material, as opposed to evacuating the area.

Things To Do To *Shelter In Place*

- Move out of the path of smoke or fumes to seek shelter indoors. DO NOT attempt to go through smoke or fumes.
- Seek shelter in a house or automobile and remain indoors. (This can reduce your exposure to 1/10 of that outdoors.) Close all doors and windows. Shut down air conditioners, fans etc., which bring in outside air. Close all interior doors so that you “compartmentalize” your house.
- Do not use bathroom vents or kitchen vents.
- Set thermostats so air conditioners, furnaces and hot water heaters will not come on.
- Cover window openings with plastic held by duct-tape. You may want to pre-cut pieces of plastic for this purpose.
- Do not use fireplaces. Close all dampers.
- Do not operate clothes dryer.
- Turn on and monitor your radio or television or Internet for additional information and instructions.
- Wet towels under the doors will do much to prevent the entry of smoke and/or fumes into the relatively airtight homes of today.
- If fumes threaten you, cover your mouth and nose with a wet handkerchief or towel.
- Evacuate only if told to do so. In the short term, staying indoors with the house closed up is the most effective action you can take.
- Stay away from the emergency area. You may hinder rescue and recovery efforts.
- Monitor local media reports for when it is safe to return home. They can also provide other post-incident advice and assistance.
- Drive carefully and watch for notification of debris, dangling or broken wires, damaged bridges and roads. Report problems to fire or police Departments.

Know What To Do After An Emergency

Do not re-enter your home unless authorities advise you it is safe to do so.

If you suspect/smell a natural gas leak when you arrive home

- Leave the house.
- Go to another location and call 9-1-1 and request the fire department who will respond and notify gas company.

Re-entering your home (provided you do not suspect a natural gas leak)

- Check for blown fuses and look for short-circuits in your home wiring and equipment - if you suspect a problem, call your utility company.
- Report any emergency situation to the local police or fire department.
- Notify your insurance agent or broker if your property is damaged.

Re-entering your home after a flood

- If children must be present during the clean-up operations, supervise them closely.
- Before entering a flooded building, check for foundation damage and make sure all porch roofs and overhangs are supported.
- If your basement is full of water, drain it in stages, about a third of the volume of water per day. Draining too quickly can damage your home structurally.
- Using a dry piece of wood, turn off the electricity at the main breaker or fuse box.
- Wear rubber gloves, rubber boots and protective eyewear when cleaning up.
- Do not use wet appliances or motors unless a qualified electrician has serviced them.
- Contact your local heating repair company to inspect your furnace and chimney.

- Do not use your regular water supply or septic system until it has been inspected and declared safe to use.
- Check to see that sewage lines are intact before flushing toilets.
- Report damaged water, sewage and gas lines to the proper authorities.
- Dispose of all contaminated food.

Checking your well water drinking water supply

Wells that have been flooded should be tested for bacteria and found to be safe before water from the well is consumed. Information regarding how to obtain water sample bottles and instructions for disinfecting your well are available at www.region.halton.on.ca or by calling Halton Region Health Department at 905-825-6000 (Toll free: 1-866-442-5866).

Note: Floodwater may be heavily contaminated with sewage and other pollutants that can pose a serious health hazard.

Coping With A Disaster: What You And Your Family Might Experience

During, or following a traumatic event, it is not unusual to have physical and emotional reactions. Here are things that may help you cope:

- Recognize that the way you react to the event is not unusual.
- Try not to make big life changes.
- Talk to family members and friends.
- Listen to one another and help each other with daily tasks.
- Try to achieve a balance between rest and activity.
- Seek counseling to help cope with the emotional trauma associated with disasters.

Children And Emergencies

Children's fears and anxieties are very real to them and should be taken seriously. Here is how parents can help:

- Encourage children to express themselves through play or drawing.
- Take their fears seriously, talk about what happened, and what's being done.
- Comfort young children with physical care, holding and hugging.
- Keep the family together as much as possible.
- Give children information they can understand.

For More Information About Emergency Preparedness, Visit or Contact:

Halton Region

Emergency Management Co-ordinator

www.region.halton.on.ca

905-825-6167

1-866-4HALTON

(1-866-442-5866)

City of Burlington

Burlington Fire Department

www.burlington.ca

905-637-8207

Town of Halton Hills

Municipal Emergency Planning

Co-ordinator

www.haltonhills.ca

905-877-1133

Town of Milton

Milton Fire Department

www.milton.ca

905-878-9251

Town of Oakville

Oakville Fire Department

www.oakville.ca

905-845-7114

Halton Regional Police Service

Planning Bureau

www.hrps.on.ca

905-825-4830

Emergency Management Ontario

General Inquiry:

[www.mpss.jus.gov.on.ca/english/](http://www.mpss.jus.gov.on.ca/english/pub_security/emo/emo.html)

[pub_security/emo/emo.html](http://www.mpss.jus.gov.on.ca/english/pub_security/emo/emo.html)

416-314-3723

Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada

Critical Infrastructure Protection and
Emergency Preparedness

www.ocipep.gc.ca

Canadian Centre for Emergency Preparedness

www.ccep.ca

1-800-965-4608

Canadian Red Cross

www.redcross.ca

905-890-1000

Your comments on this Personal Emergency Preparedness Guide would be appreciated, as well as any suggestions for additional information that you feel should be included in future editions.

Please send any comments to the following:

- Local Municipal Fire Chief
- Regional Police Chief
- Regional Emergency Management Co-ordinator

Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication has been developed from many sources and is intended to be a guide only. The Region of Halton, the City of Burlington, the Towns of Halton Hills, Milton and Oakville, and the Halton Regional Police Service are not responsible for any errors or omissions.



Smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors save lives...

...but only if they're working properly.

- Remember, *change your clocks – change your batteries.*
- Use only batteries recommended by the manufacturer of the alarm or detector.
- Do not use rechargeable batteries.
- Test your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors monthly.
- Clean your alarms and detectors frequently by gentle vacuuming.

