



Evacuation Procedures District of Highlands

Policy:

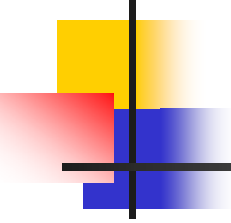
- only order an evacuation when and where lives are threatened and where evacuation could potentially prevent injury and death
- alert community members of potential evacuation as early as possible and advise on appropriate preparations
- return evacuees to their homes as soon as possible considering all the hazards they may face
- arrange for the early return of persons needed to operate essential services in the community



Potential Reasons for Evacuation

- Hazardous Materials Release (Propane)
- Natural gas leak or explosion (Industrial Park)
- Wildland/Urban Interface fire

Evacuation Zones

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- Highlands is divided into 18 zones
 - Know your zone – number and name
 - Based on road network and locations (neighbourhood clusters) of homes
 - most zones have two avenues of road egress
 - need to incorporate local knowledge of trails (HELP Neighbourhood Groups)



Requesting an Evacuation

- The responsibility for requesting an evacuation rests with the on-scene Incident Commander (e.g., for Wildfire the Highlands Fire Department Officer and/or BC Forest Service, Forest Protection Officer)
- The responsibility for ordering an evacuation may rest with several authorities depending upon type of hazard



Who May Order Evacuation?

- BC Forest Service – Tactical, urgent situation where lives are at risk
- BC Fire Commissioner – Fire and Explosion
- Min. Health – Health Hazards (e.g., smoke)
- Municipality Mayor or Council, once a State of Local Emergency has been declared



Municipality May Declare a State of Local Emergency to:

- Cause evacuation
- Control or prohibit travel
- Acquire or use land
- Enter any building or land
- Construct works
- Cause demolition of trees, structures
- Require persons to assist
- Restore essential services, distribute supplies
- Fix prices, ration supplies



Three-stage Evacuation Process

- 1. **Evacuation Alert:** Authorities issue a warning about an imminent threat to life and property, and people are asked to be ready to leave on short notice.
- 2. **Evacuation Order:** When the population is determined to be at imminent risk, authorities issue an evacuation order and people must leave the area immediately.
 - The RCMP implement and enforce evacuation orders.
 - They would also provide security and controlled access to the evacuated area.
- 3. **Evacuation Rescind:** An evacuation order or alert is rescinded (“all clear”) or lifted by authorities when it is determined to be safe for residents to return home. An evacuation order may be reinstated if a threat returns.



Communication of the 3-stage process

- Local AM radio stations (CFAX 1070)
- Telephone fan-out system (through our HELP Neighbourhood Groups)
- Door-to-door contact with bulletins or pamphlets (also posted on bulletin boards)
- RCMP patrolling more compact neighbourhoods making announcements via public address or loud hailer systems.



Written Communications to include:

- The exact nature of the threat
- Explicit area to be evacuated with map of zones involved, evacuation road routes to be taken
- Location of Reception Centres



Reception Centres

- Evacuees MUST register at a Reception Centre, once registered, friends and relatives can learn that you are safe by contacting a toll-free number set up by the Red Cross.
- Reception Centres are staffed by Emergency Social Services (ESS) volunteers
- ESS volunteers are able to provide short-term (up to 3 days) assistance for meals and lodging for those evacuees unable to stay with family or friends.



Receptions Centres (con't)

- While domestic pets may be taken to Reception Centers (in carrying cases or on leash) those evacuees with large animals (e.g., horses) should have a plan in place for transportation to alternate areas for food and shelter



Reception Centres (con't)

- Through mutual aid, the Highlands would depend upon adjacent municipalities for Reception Centre set up, for example:
 - G R Pearkes Recreation Centre in Saanich
 - Eagle Ridge Community Centre in Langford



Evacuation Kit

- Be prepared to be away from your home for any length of time from a few hours to several days
- Prepare an Evacuation Kit in advance and located near an exit
- At a *minimum* essential items include:



Kit Contents:

- extra set of keys to house and vehicles
- copies of identification papers (passports, etc.)
- copies of insurance policies and agent's contact info
- cash and banking information
- flashlight with batteries
- spare warm clothing and blankets
- AM/FM battery powered radio



Kit Contents (con't)

- required medications and prescription drug information
- some non-perishable food items and opener
- a first aid kit
- bottled water
- a contact list: family, friends, doctors names and phone numbers
- family heirlooms, videos & photo albums



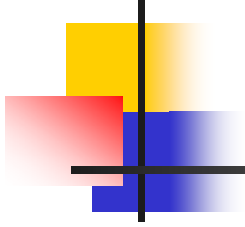
Evacuation Kit for PETS

- enough food and water for three days
- disposable litter trays (aluminum roasting pan)
- litter or paper towels
- Feeding and water dishes
- Leash or harness
- carrying case with blanket
- a photo of your pet



HELP – Highlands Emergency Local Preparedness

- Consider forming or becoming a member of a HELP Neighbourhood Group
- “Neighbours Helping Neighbours”
 - assist people with mobility issues
 - share transportation
 - Share resources and expertise



Wildfire Photos

August 6, 2008

off White Pine Terrace







