

**Township of Val Rita - Harty**

# **Emergency Response Plan**



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## Contents

1.0	INTRODUCTION.....	4
1.1	Purpose of Plan .....	4
1.2	Plan Limitations .....	4
1.3	Planning Assumptions.....	4
2.0	Initial Response.....	4
2.1	Site .....	4
2.2	Notification of Community Control Group Members .....	5
2.3	Activation of the Emergency Operations Center.....	6
2.4	Operations Cycle.....	6
2.5	Chair of CCG Meeting .....	7
2.6	CCG Meeting .....	7
3.0	EMERGENCY COMMUNITY CONTROL GROUP .....	7
3.1	Emergency Community Control Group Membership.....	7
3.2	Additional Supporting Members .....	8
3.3	Purpose of the Community Control Group.....	8
3.4	Responsibilities of the Community Control Group.....	8
3.5	Log Protocols.....	9
4.0	EMERGENCY DECLARATIONS.....	10
4.1	Declaration of Emergency .....	10
4.2	Notification of Declaration .....	10
5.0	INDIVIDUAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES .....	10
5.1	Mayor.....	10
5.2	Clerk .....	11
5.3	The Community Emergency Management Coordinator .....	11
5.5	Fire Chief .....	12
6.0	Requests for Assistance .....	12
	Military assistance .....	13
7.0	Termination of Emergency Declarations .....	13
8.0	Recovery .....	14
8.1	Critical Infrastructure.....	14

8.2 Social Services .....14

8.3 Landfill and Recycling.....14

8.4 Municipal Disaster Recovery Assistance Program.....15

8.5 Disaster Recovery Assistance for Ontarians .....16

8.6 Donations Management .....16

8.7 Debriefing and After Action Report .....17

8.8 Critical Incident Stress Management.....17

9.0 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION.....17

9.1 Purpose .....17

9.2 Communications with the Public .....17

9.3 Documentation .....18

9.4 Emergency Information Officer .....18

9.5 Emergency Information Centre .....18

9.6 Public Inquiries.....18

10.0 CONTINUITY OF MUNICIPAL OPERATIONS.....19

10.1 Purpose .....19

10.2 Reduction or Suspension of Municipal Services .....19

10.3 Alternate Work Locations .....19

Appendix A – Community Control Group Contact List .....20

Appendix B – CCG Notification Message Format/Script.....21

Appendix C - Activity Log IMS 214 .....22

Appendix D - Checklist in Consideration of a Declaration of Emergency.....26

Appendix E Declaration of Emergency Form .....30

Appendix F – Outside Organizations Contact List.....31

Appendix G Termination of Emergency Form .....32

Appendix H Legal Authority & Plan Administration .....33

    Legal Authority.....33

    Plan Approval .....33

    Plan Maintenance and Revisions.....33

    Distribution .....33

    Training and Validation .....34

Appendix I – Definitions.....35

Appendix J – By-law .....37

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Purpose of Plan

The Township of Val Rita-Harty Emergency Response Plan has been prepared to provide overall guiding principles to Township staff in planning for, responding to and recovering from a potential or actual emergency or disaster. The objective is to limit the impact on people, property and the environment.

The broad scope of this document allows a flexible response to any emergency situation while at the same time providing some specific information such as how to activate the Community Control Group or how to declare a local state of emergency. The plan can also be used as a tool to communicate how Val Rita-Harty will respond before, during and after a disaster and will be provided to external organizations that are required to understand the Township's actions and the methodologies during these events.

### 1.2 Plan Limitations

The Township of Val Rita-Harty Emergency Response Plan does not address detailed or specific response procedures normally handled by the appropriate responding department(s), emergency site management or comprehensive departmental emergency plan contents.

### 1.3 Planning Assumptions

The following assumptions are made within the Plan:

- All response efforts are made to protect life safety, property and the environment;
- Departmental emergency plans and hazard specific plans will be developed as required and are integral and supplemental to this plan;
- During emergencies, normal municipal operations may cease or be altered in an effort to minimize negative consequences from the event and allow resources to be prioritized towards emergency operations;
- This plan provides structures and guidelines which, depending on the emergency or disaster, may need to be modified to ensure the most effective and efficient response possible; and,
- This plan is considered a dynamic 'living' document

## 2.0 Initial Response

### 2.1 Site

An [emergency](#) may or may not be bounded by a defined site. A chemical spill or fire, for example, will have a defined site. A pandemic or power outage may not have a defined site.

At the site, the agency which is the [authority having jurisdiction](#) for the site will generally be the [Incident Commander](#) (IC). First responding agencies will determine who the IC will be. For an emergency that has an undefined site, such as a flood, the [Community Control Group](#) (CCG) will determine the IC. Some emergencies, such as a long-term power outage, there may be no need for a site IC.

During the course of an emergency, it is not unusual for the IC to change from one agency to another. The outgoing IC will notify the CCG (if activated) of changes in IC. The CCG can also direct a change in IC if the CCG believes another agency to be better able to manage the site.

The IC will be responsible for managing the response at the site including establishing an inner and outer perimeter, notifying the CCG if required, communicating with the CCG (if activated), and requesting additional support and resources as required. If activated, the CCG will support the site with resources, advice and assistance; as well as managing any response required beyond the outer perimeter.

The IC should notify the CCG of the possibility of an emergency if any of the following criteria are met:

- resources assigned to the site are inadequate;
- resources available locally are inadequate;
- repercussions outside the site will have to be managed by municipal officials;
- response at the site will be long term and will cause disruptions or delays in municipal services or affect other critical infrastructure;
- other support or resources will be required by the site.

If there is no defined site, the CCG should be notified of the severity of the situation as soon as possible by any responding agencies.

## 2.2 Notification of Community Control Group Members

The Township of Val Rita-Harty Emergency Response Plan and notification of community control group members can be activated by:

- Any member of the Community Control Group; or,
- The most senior on scene official (Police, Fire, EMS, Public Works) of the agency most directly involved in the response and/or mitigation of an emergency. The request for activation will be based on the size, seriousness, or complexity of the emergency and the response capability of that agency.

Note: Activating the Emergency Response Plan or assembling the Community Control Group does not automatically require an emergency declaration be made.

Upon notification by the IC of the need to activate the Community Control Group (CCG), the CCG shall be notified immediately and shall meet as soon as possible (may meet by telecommunication where travel is impractical).

The first Community Control Group member to be alerted to the activation of the CCG shall be responsible for ensuring that all other members are contacted without delay and shall record the results of his/her attempts to contact the Community Control Group members.

The clerk of the municipality shall maintain and distribute an up to date list of contact list for the Community Control Group and other key personnel. A copy of the most current contact list is attached as [Appendix A](#).

A script to be used when calling the other members of the CCG can be found in [Appendix B](#)

Where a threat of an impending emergency exists, the CCG will be notified and placed on [standby](#).

### 2.3 Activation of the Emergency Operations Center

The Clerk, as Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Commander, should begin to set-up the EOC. Set-up of the EOC will involve the following general steps:

- Unlock either the EOC or alternate EOC
- Ensure there are enough table and chairs for CCG members
- Ensure materials for CCG members are available such as personal logs, emergency response plans, pens, paper, etc.
- Set-up a sign in/sign out log
- Ensure maps of the municipality are displayed
- Computers are operating
- Informational display boards are available

Set-up of the OWL teleconferencing system through Microsoft Teams may need to be completed if agencies are attending the CCG meetings virtually.

The primary EOC will be located in council chambers at 106 Government Road W.

In the event that the primary EOC cannot be used, the alternate EOC will be used.

The alternate Emergency Operations Centre shall be the Val Rita Fire Hall located at 36 Municipale Street.

Upon arrival at the EOC, each CCG member will:

- a. Sign In;
- b. Check telephone/communications devices;
- c. Open personal log using Activity Log IMS 214 – attached as [Annex C](#);
- d. Contact their own agency and obtain a status report;
- e. Participate in the [Operations Cycle](#);
- f. Participate in determining priorities and tasks;
- g. Pass CCG decisions on to member's agencies/areas of responsibility;
- h. Continue participation in the EOC Operations Cycle.

Upon leaving the Emergency Operations Centre, each Control Group member will:

- a. Conduct a hand over with the person relieving them;
- b. Sign their personal log and give it to the EOC Commander for retention;
- c. Sign out in EOC log.

The EOC is to remain a restricted room with access to only CCG members and support staff.

### 2.4 Operations Cycle

At the beginning of an emergency the [Operations Cycle](#) (OC) may be only one hour long. Therefore the OC would be set-up in this manner:

- 1<sup>st</sup> 5 minutes – communicating with staff and colleagues to get latest information on the emergency;
- Next 15 minutes – Community Control Group (CCG) Meeting – discussing with the CCG members the latest information, setting priorities, and assigning tasks;

- Next 5 minutes – communicating with staff decisions made and task assigned;
- Next 35 minutes – staff begin tasks.

If the EOC Commander determines the operations cycle should be longer than 1 hour, all times mentioned above remain the same, except for the time staff have to complete tasks. For example, if it is a 4 hour operations cycle, staff will have 3 hours and 35 minutes to perform tasks. It is important to keep the CCG meeting to only 15 minutes, regardless of how long the operations cycle is.

### 2.5 Chair of CCG Meeting

The [EOC Commander](#) will Chair the CCG meeting and will:

- Set time allotments for CCG members and ensure each CCG member keeps to their allotted time;
- Ensure all tasks are assigned and prioritized;
- Status of last meeting tasks are provided by each agency responsible;
- Ensure notes of meetings are recorded and relevant information is displayed in the EOC;
- Ensure cell phones are not answered during the meeting.

### 2.6 CCG Meeting

During the CCG meeting the following must be accomplished:

- Each CCG member must provide latest information or update from their agency;
- Determine as a group the tasks that must be accomplished and assign a priority to each task;
- Determine who the tasks will be assigned to.

When providing an update, CCG members must:

- Keep information concise and accurate;
- Request assistance from other agencies, if required;
- Request any resources needed to complete task;
- Provide an update on previous tasks assigned.

When holding meetings the option of teleconferencing should be made available for those who can't make it to the EOC. Emergency Management Ontario can assist in setting up teleconference options for the municipality.

If virtual meetings are required, CEMC has Zoom Meeting capabilities, if there is power and internet.

## 3.0 EMERGENCY COMMUNITY CONTROL GROUP

### 3.1 Emergency Community Control Group Membership

The Township of Val Rita-Harty Emergency [Community Control Group](#) (CG) consists of the following members:

- The Mayor;
- The Clerk;

- Fire Chief or alternate;
- The Community Emergency Management Coordinator;
- Public Works Foreman or alternate;

The control group may function with only a limited number of persons depending upon the emergency. While the CG may not require the presence of all the people listed as members of the control group, all members of the CG must be notified.

### 3.2 Additional Supporting Members

Depending on the nature of the emergency, other persons not normally part of the Community Control Group may be asked to join the Community Control Group. This may include representatives of, but is not limited to:

- Municipal Clerk and other municipal departments • Provincial Ministries • Ontario Provincial Police
- Cochrane District Services Board EMS • Sensenbrenner Hospital • Northeast Public Health
- Cochrane District Services Board • Canadian Red Cross • Hydro One • Enbridge Gas Inc.
- Trans-Canada Pipeline • Ontario Northland Railway • Val Rita-Harty Fire Department • Ontario Clean Water Agency

### 3.3 Purpose of the Community Control Group

The purpose of the Community Control Group is to direct the municipality's response in an emergency, including the implementation of the Emergency Response Plan. The Community Control Group's priorities include:

- Protecting the health and safety of emergency responders and the public;
- Supporting emergency operations at the site(s);
- Issuing public warnings, orders, and instructions;
- Establishing information centres for the public and news media;
- Coordinating evacuations as required;
- Assessing risks to the community outside of the emergency area;
- Assessing the municipality's capacity to provide a sustained emergency response;
- Requesting emergency assistance from community partners and other levels of government;
- Ensuring municipal/emergency services are provided to the unaffected areas of the municipality;
- Advising the Mayor as to whether the declaration, or termination, or an emergency is recommended; and,
- Directing community recovery initiatives.

### 3.4 Responsibilities of the Community Control Group

The members of the CCG are likely to be responsible for the following actions or decisions:

- Determining the need to declare an emergency;
- Calling out and mobilizing their emergency service, agency and equipment;

- Coordinating and directing their service and ensuring that any actions necessary for the mitigation of the effects of the emergency are taken, provided they are not contrary to law;
- Determining if the location and composition of the CCG are appropriate;
- Ordering, coordinating and/or overseeing the evacuation of inhabitants considered to be in danger
- Discontinuing utilities or services provided by public or private concerns, i.e. hydro, water, gas;
- Arranging for services and equipment from local agencies not under community control i.e. private contractors, industry, volunteer agencies, service clubs;
- Notifying, requesting assistance from and/or liaison with various levels of government and any public or private agencies not under community control, as considered necessary;
- Determining if additional transport is required for evacuation or transport of persons and/or supplies;
- Appoint the Emergency Information Officer (EIO) other than the Mayor and Councillors;
- Ensuring that pertinent information regarding the emergency is promptly forwarded to the Emergency Information Officer, for dissemination to the media and public;
- Determining the need to establish advisory groups and/or sub-committees/working groups for any aspect of the emergency including recovery;
- Authorizing expenditure of money required dealing with the emergency;
- Notifying the service, agency or group under their direction, of the termination of the emergency;
- Maintaining a log outlining decisions made and actions taken, and submitting a summary of the log to the Community Emergency Management Program Committee within one week of the termination of the emergency, as required;
- Participating in the debriefing following the emergency;
- Considering application for the Ontario's Disaster Recovery Programs

### 3.5 Log Protocols

- All members of the CCG must maintain a log.
- All members are to record all activities that they perform in the EOC in the log (ie. Phone calls, emails, decisions made, arrival and departure times etc.)
- [IMS Form 214 – Activity Log](#) (Annex C) will be used as a log.
- Each person is to have their own log.
- At the end of the day/shift each person will sign their log and give it to the EOC Commander for safe keeping.
- Do not use white-out or scratch anything out in a log.
- If a mistake is made, simply put one line through it, initial it, and then include proper information.
- If a full page is not used, put a line through the unused portion
- Include name, position, date, time, emergency, and page # of ? on each page
- Date shall be written as YY/MM/DD
- Time shall be written in the 24 hour clock format

- Keep comments factual and without sentiments
- Never use pencil, only pen.

## 4.0 EMERGENCY DECLARATIONS

### 4.1 Declaration of Emergency

This plan may be activated without having a formal state of emergency declared.

The head of council may declare a state of emergency exists, this allows extraordinary actions to be taken, facilitates access to provincial resources, provide WSIB coverage for volunteers, may reduce liability, and increases public awareness of the situation. The Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act states that:

“The head of council of a municipality may declare that an emergency exists in the municipality or in any part thereof and may take such action and make such orders as he or she considers necessary and are not contrary to law to implement the emergency plan of the municipality and to protect property and the health, safety and welfare of the inhabitants of the emergency area.” [EMCPA Section 4(1)]

If the Mayor is not available to be a member of the CCG, the Deputy Mayor may declare on the municipality’s behalf.

If the Deputy Mayor, is not available, then the succession of council members who will act as Mayor are as follows: Councillor Angele Beauvais, Councillor Roger Lachance and Councillor Alain Tremblay.

Any declaration made by the Mayor should be based on the advice of all CCG members responding to the emergency, and not a decision made alone.

### 4.2 Notification of Declaration

Upon a declaration of Community Emergency, the Mayor will notify Council, the public, neighboring community official, as required, a local member of the Provincial Parliament (MPP) and a local Member of Parliament (MP).

The head of council is required to notify the Provincial Emergency Operations Centre (PEOC) forthwith of a declaration of an emergency. A declaration form that can be used for this purpose is attached as [Appendix E](#). However, in the event fax and email facilities are unavailable the initial notification can be done via telephone by calling the [PEOC](#) in Annex F.

## 5.0 INDIVIDUAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 5.1 Mayor

The Mayor shall sit as a member of the Community Control Group, and may be required to perform any or all of the following responsibilities:

- Declare an emergency to exist;
- Chair or designate a chair for a meeting of the Community Control Group;
- Add to the composition of the Community Control Group to formulate an appropriate response to the emergency;

- Provide overall leadership in responding to an emergency;
- Maintain a [personal log](#) of all actions taken;
- Ensure that the members of Council are kept informed of the emergency situation; and,
- Act as the official spokesperson for the Community Control Group.

### 5.2 Clerk

The Clerk shall sit as a member of the Community Control Group as the EOC Commander and may be required to perform any or all of the following responsibilities:

- Organize and Supervise the Emergency Operations Center;
- Schedule regular meetings of the Community Control Group during the course of the emergency, as necessary;
- Provide advice to the Mayor and Community Control Group on administrative matters;
- Provide financial authorizations; and,
- Call out additional staff to provide assistance, as required;
- Maintain a [personal log](#) of all actions taken;

### 5.3 The Community Emergency Management Coordinator

The CEMC shall sit as a member of the Community Control Group, and may be required to perform any or all of the following responsibilities:

- Provide advice to the Mayor and the Community Control Group on matters of emergency planning, the Emergency Response Plan, and fire response matters;
- Establish ongoing communications with the senior fire official at the scene of the emergency;
- Liaising with supporting agencies; and,
- Ensure that the Emergency Operations Center is made operational when activated and that the Community Control Group members are equipped with all necessary resources.
- Maintain a [personal log](#) of all actions taken;

### 5.4 Public Works Foreman

The Public Works Foreman shall sit as a member of the Community Control Group, and may be required to perform any or all of the following responsibilities:

- Provide advice to the Mayor and the Community Control Group on public works matters;
- Establish ongoing communications with the public works employees at the scene of the emergency;
- Liaising with the public works representatives of neighboring communities;
- Providing an Incident Commander if required;
- Liaising with other utility providers (water, hydro, gas, etc);
- Ensuring that municipal services (roads, water, sewer, etc.) are maintained to the extent possible; and,
- Coordinating the provision of public works vehicles, equipment and resources.

- Maintain a [personal log](#) of all actions taken;

### 5.5 Fire Chief

- Provide advice to the Mayor and the Community Control Group on Fire Department matters;
- Notifying staff of the emergency and of any actions that need to be taken;
- Providing an Incident Commander (IC), if required;
- Establishing an ongoing communications link with the senior fire official at the scene of the emergency;
- Informing the Mutual Aid Fire Coordinators and/or initiating mutual aid arrangements for the provision of additional fire fighters and equipment, if needed;
- Determining if additional or special equipment is needed and recommending possible sources of supply, e.g., breathing apparatus, protective clothing;
- Ensuring liaison with public utilities to disconnect any service representing a hazard and or to arrange for the provision of alternate services or functions;
- Providing assistance to other community departments and agencies and being prepared to take charge of or contribute to non-firefighting operations if necessary, e.g., rescue, first aid, casualty collection, evacuation;
- Maintain a [personal log](#) of all actions taken.

### 5.6 External Agencies

The municipality does not have the authority to control external agencies, as such the Emergency Response Plan does not specify their specific roles and duties; however the municipality expects that external agencies will fulfill their legislated and mandated roles during an emergency, and that they will work cooperatively with the municipality.

## 6.0 Requests for Assistance

Assistance may be requested from the Province of Ontario at any time without any loss of control or authority. Such requests can be done by contacting the Provincial Emergency Operations Centre (PEOC) 24/7/365 – [Annex F](#).

Assistance from neighbouring municipalities or industry may be made by direct contact.

When making any request for assistance the following information should be relayed to the agency providing assistance:

- Exactly what type of assistance is needed, i.e.;
  - Generators – what type, size, gas or diesel etc.;
  - Personnel – what certification or licensing is required;
  - Sandbags – how many;
- How soon is the assistance required;
- How long the assistance is required for;
- What quantities of resources will be needed;
- Who will transport resources to emergency;
- Where resources will be delivered;
- Who is responsible for feeding/sheltering personnel resources;

- Who is responsible for care and maintenance of resources.

**Military assistance** - All requests for military assistance must be made via the PEOC. Do not contact the military directly for assistance.

## 7.0 Termination of Emergency Declarations

The head of council of a municipality may at any time declare that an emergency has been terminated.

The head of council is required to notify Council, the public, neighboring community officials, the local member of the Provincial Parliament (MPP) and the local Member of Parliament (MP).

The head of council is required to notify the PEOC forthwith of that the declaration of emergency has been terminated, a form that can be used for this purpose is attached as [Appendix G](#).

When deciding to terminate a declaration, the following should be considered:

- Have all evacuees returned home;
- Have all outside resources returned;
- Does the municipality need any further outside assistance;
- Has a semblance of normalcy returned to the municipality;
- Have all outstanding invoices been paid;
- Has all damage been repaired;
- Is all critical infrastructure in place and working properly;
- Has all money donated/promised by other levels of government been received;
- Do other municipalities or levels of government still have declarations in place;
- Are any special instructions directed to the public still in place;
- Are there any benefits to keeping the emergency declaration in place?

Council may also terminate the emergency if quorum is reached and all applicable by-laws and council meeting procedures are met.

## 8.0 Recovery

Recovery is the process of restoring a stricken community to a pre-disaster level of functioning. This may include the provision of financial assistance, repairing buildings and/or restoration of the environment.

Recovery can occur simultaneously with response and will likely last long after the emergency is over.

What needs to be recovered will depend on who, what, and how people and things were affected by the emergency.

### 8.1 Critical Infrastructure

Identify the essentials services that will be needed to ensure the health, safety and well-being of the public. If any of these services were compromised during the emergency steps will need to be taken to restore these services as soon as possible.

Basic services required would be – water, electricity, shelter (permanent or temporary), food supply, and basic health services (EMS).

In an evacuation, any essential services lost will need to be re-established before people can return to the municipality and their homes.

Other services to be considered when restoring services are fuel (for vehicles and homes), building and home supplies (especially if homes have been damaged), telephone, and internet.

### 8.2 Social Services

[Cochrane District Services Board](#) should be contacted to assist with the provision of social services after an emergency.

Services that may need to be started or expanded include:

- Ontario Works (for those that lost employment, homes etc.);
- Employment Insurance (for those that lost employment);
- Mental health services for victims;
- Personal support services.

### 8.3 Landfill and Recycling

If the emergency has caused a great amount of damage to homes and personal belongings the landfill site may be filled quickly, with years taken off its life expectancy. Proper steps need to be taken to ensure:

- minimal waste is sent to the landfill;
- debris and waste is not left in homes or yards for long periods promoting rodents and other infestations;
- as much material as possible is recycled or repurposed.

Tipping fees at landfills could be waived for a limited time after the emergency along with extended landfill hours.

Collection of hazard materials will need to be managed including building materials that may contain asbestos.

Debris from trees and other plant material can be diverted to another location where it can be shredded and used as mulch or cut into firewood for use by the public.

Steel and other metal material should be separated and recycled.

Concrete, cement and blocks can be separated and crushed to be used later as road base or fill.

If power has been out for multiple days, fridges and freezers will need to be discarded properly ensuring Freon is captured. Food waste will need to be discarded properly according to public health guidelines.

#### 8.4 Municipal Disaster Recovery Assistance Program

The Municipal Disaster Recovery Assistance program helps municipalities that have incurred extraordinary costs because of a natural disaster.

Eligible expenses may include capital costs to repair public infrastructure or property to pre-disaster conditions, and operating costs over and above regular budgets that are necessary to protect public health, safety, or access to essential services.

Costs are not eligible if they are covered by insurance or if they would have been incurred anyway had the natural disaster not occurred.

##### **Program activation and delivery**

The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing makes the decision to activate the program based on evidence demonstrating that the event meets the eligibility criteria for Municipal Disaster Recovery Assistance. The minister considers both the cause and extent of damage, along with the initial claim and supporting documentation provided by the municipality.

If the program is activated, the province and municipality enter into a grant agreement. All payments under the grant agreement are based on eligible costs actually incurred by the municipality as a result of the natural disaster.

##### **Eligibility Requirements**

In order to be eligible for the program, a municipality must have:

- Experienced a sudden, unexpected, and extraordinary natural disaster.
- Incurred costs over and above regular budgets that can be demonstrably linked to the disaster. These costs must equal at least three per cent of the municipality's Own Purpose Taxation levy.
- Passed a resolution of council and submitted an initial Municipal Disaster Recovery Assistance claim (with supporting documentation) within 120 calendar days of the date of the onset of the disaster.

##### **How to Apply**

Municipalities can request Municipal Disaster Recovery Assistance guidelines, claim forms, and additional documentation from their Municipal Services Office.

More information can be found at [www.ontario.ca/disasterassistance](http://www.ontario.ca/disasterassistance) (must have internet connection for link to work).

### 8.5 Disaster Recovery Assistance for Ontarians

Disaster Recovery Assistance for Ontarians is designed to provide financial assistance in the aftermath of a natural disaster that causes costly, widespread damage to eligible private property.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing may activate the program for areas affected by natural disasters. Applicants within an area for which the program has been activated can apply to be reimbursed for basic, necessary costs related to the disaster.

Homeowners, tenants, small owner-operated businesses, farmers, and not-for-profit organizations are eligible to apply for financial assistance through Disaster Recovery Assistance for Ontarians. The program does not provide assistance for costs covered by insurance.

#### How to Apply

Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the “Disaster Recovery Assistance for Ontarians” program guidelines. The guidelines contain important eligibility information and include easy-to-follow checklists that may help you with completing your application.

More information can be found at [www.ontario.ca/disasterassistance](http://www.ontario.ca/disasterassistance) (must have internet connection for link to work).

### 8.6 Donations Management

People from across the municipality, province or country may want to donate goods, services or money. It is important early on in the recovery phase to establish with the public what exactly is needed. It is **strongly recommended** that if a message for donations is sent to the public, that **only financial donations are requested**. Financial donations are much easier to manage logistically, and donations can be made from around the world. The money can then be used to purchase exactly what is needed or given to victims in the form of gift cards. It is also recommended that a third party non-government organization be utilized to manage financial donations such as Red Cross or the Salvation Army. Any remaining funds when the emergency is over can be donated to local volunteer charity.

If material goods must be requested please ensure the following:

- be very specific about goods requested;
  - for example if asking for clothes include information such as size, gender, age and season;
- Food donations must be professionally packaged with security seals intact and prior to expiration dates;
- **Absolutely no personally prepared food donations accepted;**
- Food donations from restaurants, caterers, church groups, etc. must have been prepared in facilities pre-approved by the public health unit;
- Proper refrigeration will be required for food donations;
- Warehousing and security of all donations must be considered;

Distribution of goods will need to be planned in advance. Some items can be boxed as packages for each person and/or family. Other goods can be arranged so that people can choose what they need. The distribution centre will need to be readily accessible and large enough to contain all donated goods. Also a distribution system for those who are not mobile will need to be considered. Local volunteer groups such as Meals on Wheels may be able to provide this service.

### 8.7 Debriefing and After Action Report

A [debriefing](#) should take place with all stakeholders as soon as possible after the emergency. The idea of the debriefing is to identify what went well during the emergency and what the challenges were. The debriefing is not to place blame or to voice opinions regarding actions taken or not taken.

The debriefing will be chaired by the EOC Commander and follow a structured format where each phase of the response and recovery is discussed, and participants are allowed to provide input on what they did or did not do.

Input from participants must be based on facts and void of speculation, presumptions and hearsay.

Minutes and notes from the debriefing will be gathered by the EOC Commander's Assistant. The information will then be written into an [After Action Report](#) (AAR) that will detail changes that need to be made to the emergency response plan or the municipality's emergency management program. The AAR will feature who is responsible for implementing changes and timelines for those changes. Once complete, the AAR will be presented to the emergency management committee and/or council who will then decide on any changes requiring budget approvals, by-law amendments, etc.

### 8.8 Critical Incident Stress Management

[Critical Incident Stress Management](#) should be considered for the public and for staff whenever there is a traumatic event. It will help with the personal recovery process and help prevent post-traumatic stress.

## 9.0 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

### 9.1 Purpose

Accurate information and effective communications are important for successful operations during and after an emergency or disaster.

### 9.2 Communications with the Public

Whenever possible the public should be provided information on the emergency and the services that are available to them. A variety of methods can be used to communicate with the public, including:

- Social media
- Radio
- Municipal website
- Public meetings
- Printed notices
- Telecommunications
- Door-to-door messaging

Messaging with the public should be clear and consistent, for that reason it is important to ensure that messages from the Community Control Group will not conflict with messages given by other agencies (ex. OPP, hydro, etc.). Public messages should be developed in coordination with all applicable agencies, and should not be released unless approved by the Community Control Group and the Incident Commander at the emergency site (when applicable). The Community Control Group should appoint an official spokesperson, this role is typically filled by the Mayor or Clerk.

### 9.3 Documentation

All decisions made, and activities conducted, during an emergency must be documented. Proper records management is the responsibility of all individuals involved in a response. Every individual should maintain a personal activity log for the duration of the emergency. These records shall be kept in accordance with the municipality's record keeping policies.

### 9.4 Emergency Information Officer

As required by the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, the municipality has appointed an Emergency Information Officer. This position is responsible for:

- Acting as the primary media and public contact for the municipality during an emergency;
- Collecting and disseminating accurate and timely emergency information;
- Activating and staffing an Emergency Information Centre (when required);
- Drafting information releases;
- Managing the municipality's social media accounts; and,
- Coordinating media conferences and briefings.

Note: The Emergency Information Officer is not a spokesperson for the municipality (unless appointed as such by the Community Control Group). The release of information is subject to approval by the Clerk.

### 9.5 Emergency Information Centre

When required, an Emergency Information Centre (EIC) may be established as a facility to conduct media briefings and for public meetings. For confidentiality and security reasons, this facility should be separate from the Emergency Operations Centre. The EIC is located in the part of the municipal office that can be locked and separated from the EOC.

### 9.6 Public Inquiries

In addition to other means of communicating information to the public such as social media, the municipality may establish a public inquiry line. The purpose of the public inquiry line is to provide an avenue for the public to contact the municipality to exchange essential emergency information. The Emergency Information Officer will oversee the Public Inquiry line and may also use social media as a method to exchange information with the public.

Only information approved for release by the appropriate authority shall be released to the public via the public inquiries line and social media.

## 10.0 CONTINUITY OF MUNICIPAL OPERATIONS

### 10.1 Purpose

Municipal government must have the ability to continue providing leadership and essential services throughout an emergency or disaster. The municipality must be prepared to continue or reintroduce all other municipal services as quickly and efficiently as possible. Essential services include:

- Governance
- Water/Sewer
- Fire Department
- Garbage Collection
- Roads

### 10.2 Reduction or Suspension of Municipal Services

During an emergency the Clerk may reduce or suspend certain municipal services to allow resources to be directed to the emergency situation or for the protection of the public. Examples include:

- Closing or reducing business hours at municipal buildings
- Altering, reducing or suspending municipal services
- Extending the deadline to pay taxes and other fees without penalty
- Closing roads, parks and other public spaces

### 10.3 Alternate Work Locations

Where conditions during an emergency make it difficult for staff to report to their normal work location, the Clerk may authorize staff to work from alternate locations including from home where possible.

In the event of damage to or inaccessibility of a municipal building, limited operations may be resumed at an alternate location either within the community or at a neighboring community. Where possible, the municipality should make preparations to allow for continued operations off-site, including:

- Backing up electronic databases off-site;
- Ensuring that essential forms and records can be made available off-site;
- Utilizing equipment that can be made mobile (laptop computers, cell phones, etc.);
- Ensuring alternate sites have telecommunications capability (phone, internet, etc.)