

EMERGENCY

TIPS FOR BEING PREPARED

What to do when a weather emergency strikes

(NC) Emergencies can happen at any time and often without warning. As extreme weather events such as severe storms or flooding appear to be increasingly frequent and intense, more Canadians are having first-hand experiences with them. While no one wants to go through an emergency, there are a few things you can do to make the best of the tough situation and ride it out safely. Here's what you need to know.

Keep yourself safe. Your own safety is your top priority during an emergency. During severe weather events, shelter inside away from windows, doors and fireplaces. If you're driving, pull over away from trees or power lines and stay inside your vehicle if it's safe to do so. Make sure you have put together an emergency plan and kit, as they are important tools that can help you stay safe during an emergency.

Follow the plan. Public Safety Canada recommends every Canadian household have an emergency plan. It should include details such as: what to do for likely weather events in your area; emergency exits and safe routes out of your home and neighbourhood; meeting points and contacts in case your family isn't together at the time of the event; as well as copies of important documents like birth certificates, land deeds and insurance information; even include places for your pet to stay. In an emergency, you can locate your plan and use the relevant information.

Use the kit. In an emergency, you will need some basic supplies ready to go in your emergency kit, and you may need to get by without power or tap water. Your kit should have supplies for everyone who lives with you for several days. Keep it on



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hand so you can grab flashlights if the power goes out or leave quickly if you are directed to evacuate. Make sure your kit is organized and easy to find. You may also buy a pre-assembled emergency kit or a car kit online and in various stores throughout the country.

Listen up. During an emergency, first responders and local government will evaluate the situation and jump into action, as required. Follow official alerts and news stories on the radio, television or internet to keep up with their directions and stay informed. This is important in case the situation changes and you need to evacuate. A windup radio and extra battery packs in your emergency kit can be especially helpful to stay connected if you lose power. Use your cellphone to get in touch with family and friends if you can, but aim to keep landlines clear and reserve 911 for true emergencies.

Make your emergency plan online or find tips on how you can be ready in case a disaster happens at getprepared.ca.

How to overcome extreme heat in your house?

(NC) In the winter you can put on layers and hopefully turn up the heat. But if you don't have air conditioning in your home, it may be difficult to stay comfortable when the temperature rises high.

Here are some key tips to cool down in your overheating home

- Close your curtains and blinds to block out the heat of the sun
- Open windows overnight to let cool air in, if it's safe
- Go somewhere air conditioned for a couple of hours to take a break from the heat
- Have friends or family stop by to check on you and see if you're okay

- Be patient with yourself, as it's hard to be physically or mentally productive when you're very hot

- Plan and prepare recipes that don't need the oven — cold or no-cook meals are best

- Drink cool liquids such as water before you feel thirsty to keep hydrated

- Dress to keep cool in light-coloured, loose-fitting clothing made of breathable fabrics

If your home is very hot, it's also important to watch for the signs of heat illness. Keep an eye out for symptoms like unusually rapid heartbeat and breathing, nausea or vomiting, dizziness or fainting, and extreme thirst. If you experience them, get somewhere cool immediately and drink cool liquids.

Call 911 if someone you're with has a very high body temperature, is unconscious or confused, or has stopped sweating. These can be signs of heat stroke, which is a medical emergency.

Find more information and tips for staying cool at Canada.ca/health.



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