

A Guide to Personal Disaster Preparedness, Action and Recovery

Saskatoon Emergency Measures Organization

prepared by Saskatoon Industrial Mutual Aid Committee

A Guide to Personal Preparedness

City of Saskatoon Hazards.....	2
What to Do During a Disaster.....	2
Developing a Family Emergency Plan.....	4
Pandemic Preparedness for Your Family.....	6
Emergency Kits.....	9
Phone Numbers.....	9

A Guide for Actions During a Disaster

Evacuation Procedures.....	10
Shelter-In-Place Procedures.....	13

A Guide to Disaster Recovery

Introduction to Recovery

STEP 1: Take Care of Yourself and Your Family.....	15
STEP 2: First Things First.....	16
STEP 3: Re-entering Your Home.....	17
STEP 4: Food, Medicine, Water and Sewage.....	18
STEP 5: Protect Your Home from Cold.....	19
STEP 6: Cleaning Up - General.....	20
STEP 7: Cleaning Up - After a Flood.....	21
STEP 8: Cleaning Up - After a Fire.....	26
STEP 9: Replacing Documents and Money.....	30
STEP 10: Insurance Matters.....	31

Web Links to Additional Information

Government of Canada.....	32
Red Cross.....	32



A Guide to Personal Preparedness

City of Saskatoon Hazards

Accurately forecasting the types of major emergencies or ‘hazards’ which may impact the City of Saskatoon is difficult, but the possibility exists for the following emergency situations to occur in Saskatoon or surrounding area:

- *severe weather;*
- *dangerous goods accident;*
- *aircraft crash;*
- *utility disruption;*
- *flooding;*
- *public health emergencies.*

What to Do During a Disaster

During a Tornado

- If you are in a building, go to the basement. If there is no basement, crouch or lie flat (under heavy furniture, if possible) in an inner hallway, small inner room or stairwell, away from windows.
- Stay away from large halls, arenas and shopping malls; their roofs could collapse.
- If you are caught outside and there is no shelter, lie down in a ditch or ravine, protecting your head.
- If you are driving, get out and away from the vehicle. It could be blown through the air or roll over on you. Lie down in a ditch or ravine, protecting your head.

During a Flood

- Turn off furnace and outside gas valve.
- If you have to step in water to get to the fuse box or circuit breaker, don't do it-call an electrician or your local electric company for advice.
- Never try to cross a flood area on foot; the water could sweep you away. If you are in a vehicle, avoid driving through floodwaters because your vehicle could be swept away.
- If you are caught in fast-rising waters and your vehicle stalls, all occupants should exit as quickly as possible.

During a Severe Lightning Storm

- If you are in a building, stay inside.
- Stay away from windows, doors, fireplaces, radiators, stoves, metal pipes, showers, sinks or other electrical conductors.
- Unplug electrical appliances such as TVs, stereos, computers, toasters, etc.
- Don't use the phone or other electrical equipment. If you are outside, seek shelter in a building or low-lying area.
- If you are caught in the open, crouch down with your feet close together and your head down in the “leap frog” position.
- Don't lie flat; by minimizing contact with the ground, you reduce the risk of being electrocuted by ground charge.
- Keep away from telephone and power lines, fences, trees and hilltops.
- Get off bicycles, motorcycles and tractors. If you are in a vehicle, stop and stay inside.
- Don't stop near trees or power lines that could fall.



During a Prolonged Power Outage

In the winter, an extended power failure can cause damage to walls, floors and plumbing. To help avoid this damage, you can protect your home before leaving, if evacuation is required, or you can take precautions that will allow you to stay in your home throughout the emergency. See Page 19 for further details.

SaskPower generates all of the electrical power used in Saskatoon. Saskatoon Light and Power distributes that electricity to households and businesses in an area roughly contained within the 1958 civic boundary and SaskPower distributes electricity to all other areas of the city. If you are unsure of who distributes your power, check your utility bill.

If the Power Goes Out: *Check It Out*

Is your home the only one without power on your street? If it is, check the circuit breakers or fuses in your electrical panel. If the problem is not internal, call your electric utility.

24-hour telephone number: **SaskPower 310-2220**

Saskatoon Electrical Services 975-2621



If the Power Goes Out: *Tune It In*

If the power is out for an extended period of time or the emergency numbers are busy, turn on your battery-powered or vehicle radio. Tune into any local radio station, and listen for more information from Saskatoon's emergency management officials.

You may be asked to tune into **91.7 FM** in an emergency. During an emergency, **91.7 FM** will be used by Emergency Management Officials to give you the most current instructions on critical information, such as evacuation routes, to help you through the crisis. Normally, this frequency broadcasts Tourism Radio.

If the Power Goes Out: *Turn It Off*

Shut off any computers, televisions, stereos and other appliances. If safe to do so, turn off all the lights in your house, except the ones in the room you will be most likely to stay in.

If the Power Goes Out: *Hang Up*

Use the telephone as little as possible to keep the lines open for officials who are managing the emergency.

If the Power Goes Out: *Stay Home*

Unless you are asked to evacuate your home, stay put. If you must go out, drive cautiously. If traffic lights are not working, light-controlled intersections must be treated as four-way stops. Remember that your electrical garage door won't work, so learn how to operate it manually.

See more on staying home in an emergency in the **"Shelter in Place"** section of this booklet.

Developing Your Family Emergency Plan

Emergencies or disasters, whether natural or human-caused, can strike at any time and you may not have access to food, water and electricity for days or even weeks.

By taking steps now to prepare a Family Emergency Plan, you can help minimize the stressful effects of a disaster or emergency on your family.

Identify the risks.

Refer to Page 2 of this booklet for the identified risks in Saskatoon.

You can find more information on the common risks in all regions by consulting:

Canadian Disaster Database, <http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/prg/em/cdd/srch-eng.aspx>, and the **Natural Hazards of Canada Map**, <http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/res/em/nh/index-eng.aspx>

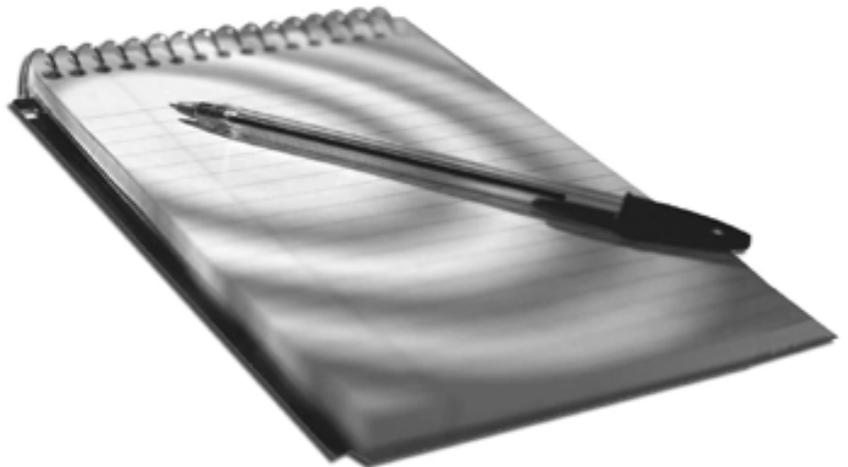
Prepare your emergency plan by considering how these risks might affect your family.

Make your own plan.

Emergencies often strike too quickly to allow you to choose a shelter or pack an emergency kit, so before the emergency strikes, prepare checklists for:

- what to do at home;* ✓
- what to do at school;* ✓
- what to do at work.* ✓

If a disaster strikes, design these checklists so that every member of your household participates as much as possible. Write down the details and make sure everybody has a copy.



Know the safe places to be.

Decide where to take shelter in your home during different situations such as hurricanes or earthquakes. Practice taking cover in the safe places at least once a year. Repeating this kind of safety drill—practicing exactly where to go and what to do—is important for everyone, but especially for children, so they know what to expect and don't forget the instructions over time.

Repeat safety drills—practice exactly where to go and what to do—especially with children.

Learn about the City of Saskatoon's Emergency Plans.

Find out whom you might need to call and what you might be asked to do in an emergency. Find out where emergency shelters are located and whether there are designated emergency routes.

Identify the emergency services offices—fire, police, ambulance, public works (such as gas and electrical utilities)—and record their telephone numbers in a list near the telephone. You can find these numbers near the front of the telephone book.

Not all emergencies will happen when you're together as a family or when you are at home. Find out if your workplace has an emergency plan. If it does, determine what your role is in the plan, what to do if an alarm sounds and how to evacuate the building safely.

Agree on an alternate meeting place and shelter.

Make sure each family member knows what to do:

at home, ✓
at school, and ✓
at work ✓

if family members become separated or find it impossible to get home during a disaster. Choose a place to meet such as a friend's house or hotel, where you can stay for a few days in case you are evacuated. When choosing your shelter, remember that bridges may be out and roads may be blocked. Don't forget to plan for your pets; they may not be permitted in emergency shelters, so find a "pet-friendly" hotel or friend's home.

Select an out-of-the-area contact.

Pick someone each member of the family can call or e-mail in case of an emergency. Be sure to choose someone who lives far enough away that they won't be affected by the same situation. This contact, ideally a relative or close family friend, should agree to pass news on to other family members if you get separated and call the contact from different places. Each member of the household should memorize this contact's phone number and address and keep the information with them at all times. If you live alone, develop an emergency plan for yourself with links to friends and neighbours.

Other Emergency Plans to Consider

Learn about the emergency plans of your children's school or day-care centre. You will need to know whether your children will be kept at school until you or a designated adult can pick them up or if they will be sent home on their own. Be sure that the school has up-to-date contact information for you. Keep in mind that the school's telephones may be overwhelmed with calls during an emergency. Find out ahead of time what type of authorization the school requires to release a child to someone else should you not be able to pick up your child yourself.

Weather alert radios allow the listener to receive the latest official local forecast 24 hours a day. A weather alert radio is monitored at Fire and Protective Services - Central Communications. EMO recommends all businesses purchase a weather alert radio and place the device where it can best be monitored if a watch or warning is issued by the weather office. Further information on these radios is available from EMO.

Another excellent document to use to develop your family plan can be downloaded from this link:

<http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/res/em/nh/index-eng.aspx>

Pandemic Preparedness for Your Family

What can I do at home to prepare for a pandemic?

There are several things that you can start to do, or continue with, if you are already practicing them at home:

- Incorporate healthier lifestyles into your daily routine. Eat healthy nutritious foods, get adequate sleep and rest, and exercise regularly. These activities will help ensure that your body is healthy and boost your immune system, enabling your body to fight off serious illnesses or diseases.
- Get your annual flu vaccination.
- Stay home from work if you are sick with the flu to help protect your coworkers.
- Keep your child(ren) home from school if they are sick.
- Practice good hand washing techniques. Hand washing is the single most effective way to prevent the spread of infections. You can pick up germs when you touch contaminated objects or surfaces and then touch your face, mouth, eyes and nose. Good hand washing techniques include:

- Using an adequate amount of soap and warm water;
- Rubbing the hands together to create friction (making sure to rub between fingers and under nails);
- Lathering up for 20 seconds (equivalent to singing two “Happy Birthday” songs, a good technique for teaching children);
- Rinsing well under running water and drying hands thoroughly.
- Hand wash with a waterless hand scrub:
- Apply gel to palm of one hand;
- Rub hands together, covering all surfaces of hands, fingers, wrists and forearms with enough gel to cover all surfaces;
- Rub into hands until dry (approximately 30-60 seconds). Waterless hand scrubs (alcohol-based gels) are not effective when hands are heavily contaminated with dirt, blood, or other organic materials.
- When there is visible soiling, hands should be washed with soap and water. If there is no soap and water available, use a damp cloth or towelette containing detergent on your hands first, followed by a waterless hand scrub.



When should you be washing your hands?

- ✓ When hands are visibly soiled
- ✓ After using the washroom or changing diapers
- ✓ After blowing your nose or sneezing in your hands
- ✓ After shaking hands with people
- ✓ Before and after eating, handling food, drinking or smoking
- ✓ After touching raw meat, poultry or fish
- ✓ After handling garbage
- ✓ Before visiting or caring for sick people
- ✓ After handling pets, animals and animal waste

Have a plan at home for stockpiling food, water and an emergency survival kit.

This is covered in greater detail on Page 9 of this booklet.

Start thinking about your own personal plan for your family and loved ones during a pandemic.

Communicate with them what needs to be done and who is going to do what.

Remember to plan for your pets.

Pets can be valuable and loved members of your family and they also need to be included in your emergency personal plan. You will need to think about their food and water needs during this time.

Emergencies or disasters, whether they are natural or human-caused, can strike at any time. If this were to happen in our community, you may not have access to food, water and electricity for days or even weeks.

By taking steps now to have a personal family emergency plan and to store emergency food and water supplies, along with an emergency supply kit, you can help minimize the stressful effects of any such disaster or emergency on your family.

Caring for Family Members Sick in the Home

If you or someone in your family becomes ill with the flu during a pandemic, it is likely you will find yourself convalescing at home.

If that should occur, it is important that you try to minimize exposure from your sick family member to other healthy family members.

While no efforts can be totally effective in preventing the spread of the disease in your house, some basic suggestions will go a long way to keeping your family as healthy as possible.



Family who become ill with influenza need to be cared for in a single room to prevent direct or indirect transmission of the virus. This can be a challenge in a home where there may be inadequate resources.

Consider these suggestions:

- Place an “ISOLATION” sign on the door.
- Section off the area from the rest of the home with a door or partition and keep this door closed at all times.
- Nothing (dishes, utensils, linens, furniture, etc.) should be removed to another area until it has been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

Suggested Household Cleaning Solutions

Although there are several acceptable cleaning solutions, here are the recommended usages for bleach.



Bleach (5.25 to 6.0% Sodium Hypochlorite as its only active ingredient) solution should be diluted in clean water

To add to laundry

One part (one 8 oz. cup) of bleach mixed with about 500 parts (28 gallons) of tap water

Surface Cleaning Soaking of glassware or plastic items

One part (one 8 oz. cup) mixed with about 50 parts (2.8 gallons) of tap water

Disinfection of material contaminated with blood and body fluids

Use concentrations ranging from 1 part bleach to be mixed with 99 parts of tap water.(1:100) or one part of bleach to be mixed with 9 parts of tap water(1:10), depending on the amount of organic material (e.g. blood or mucous) present on the surface to be cleaned and disinfected.

Pandemic Preparedness for Your Family *(continued)*

Suggested Household Cleaning Schedule:

Surface/Object	Procedure	Special Consideration
Horizontal surfaces such as tables, work counters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thorough daily cleaning (or as required) with a water and detergent solution followed by use of a hospital grade disinfectant • Clean when soiled 	none
Walls, blinds, curtains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean daily, and as splashes or visible soil occur, with water detergent solution, then disinfect with a low level disinfectant 	none
Floors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thorough daily cleaning • Clean when soiled • Damp mopping preferred 	none
Carpets/Upholstery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vacuum daily and shampoo as necessary 	<p>Detergent is adequate in most areas.</p> <p>Clean blood/body fluids spills with disposable cloths; clean the area with a detergent solution followed by a low level disinfectant.</p>
Toys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean daily, disinfect with a low level disinfectant, rinse thoroughly, and dry 	<p>Toys should be smooth and nonporous (not plush) to facilitate cleaning and decontamination. Do not use any cleansers that are considered toxic.</p>
Toilets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thorough daily cleaning • Clean with a detergent solution when soiled, followed by a low level disinfectant 	<p>These may be the source of enteric pathogens (illnesses in the bowels) such as <i>Clostridium difficile</i> and <i>Shingella</i>.</p>

Emergency Kits

Basic Emergency Survival Kit

flashlight and batteries
radio and batteries
spare batteries
first aid kit
candles and matches or lighter
food and bottled water for 72 hours
clothing and footwear
blankets or sleeping bags
toilet paper and other personal supplies
medication / prescriptions
backpack / duffel bag
important papers including ID for everyone
whistle, in case you need to attract attention
playing cards, games

Vehicle Kit

shovel	matches / survival candle
tow chains	flashlight
warning light / flares	traction mats
axe / hatchet	cloth / paper towels
road maps	emergency food pack
methyl hydrate / de-icer	ice scraper / brush
sand, salt, kitty litter	fire extinguisher
compass	first aid kit and survival blanket
extra clothing / footwear	
booster cables	

During an evacuation, keep checking
Saskatoon Tourism Radio **91.7 FM**
for pertinent information.

Have at least a three-day supply of food and water on hand. Choose ready-to-eat foods—some that don't require refrigeration and some that don't require cooking. Here are a few tips to guide you in accumulating your supplies:

Water: An adult should be provided with at least one litre of drinking water per day. In an emergency, water can be retrieved from toilet tanks (not bowl!), water heaters, or melted ice cube trays.

Food: Canned food can include soups, stews, baked beans, pasta, meat, poultry, fish, vegetables, and/or fruits. Crackers and biscuits are handy, as are honey, peanut butter, syrup, jam, salt and pepper, sugar, instant coffee and/or tea.

Equipment: Keep a supply of forks, knives, spoons, manual can opener, bottle opener, disposable cups and plates. A fuel stove and fuel are handy. Don't use a barbecue indoors and don't forget waterproof matches and plastic garbage bags.

Phone Numbers

For Emergencies, call **911**

Police	975-8300
Fire	975-3030
M.D. Ambulance	975-8800
City Yards:	975-2491
<i>road, sewers and water emergencies</i>	
RCMP (rural)	310-7267
City of Saskatoon	
Emergency Measures	975-2411
Poison Control	655-1010
SPCA	374-7387
City of Saskatoon	
Electrical	975-2621
SaskEnergy (24-hour)	975-8500
SaskPower (24-hour)	310-2220
Sask. Environment Spill Report Centre	1-800-667-7525
Saskatoon Hospitals	
St. Paul's	655-5000
Royal University	655-1000
City	655-8000

You may find it convenient to cut this card out and place it close to your home phone or in your wallet or purse.

A Guide for Actions During a Disaster

Guide to Evacuation Procedures

There are two types of evacuations.

Shelter-in-Place is addressed in a separate section of this document.

The first type, and most common, is a localized evacuation involving the removal of people in dangerous proximity to a serious threat. A good example is the evacuation of persons inside or adjacent to a burning building.

Conducting the localized evacuation requires simple tactics that can be devised on the spot by those in charge of the initial response.

The second type is a mass evacuation involving all the people in a specific portion of the city.

Conducting a mass evacuation requires a strategy that must be laid out in anticipation of the need.

What follows is the strategic plan upon which a mass evacuation in Saskatoon will be based.

Responsibility for Mass Evacuation

Evacuations are a Police responsibility. Police will be the lead agency. Other agencies operate in a support capacity and will take directions from the Police.

Evacuation Strategy

Mass evacuations will be based on the neighbourhood concept. Saskatoon has 59 distinct neighbourhoods, each with specific boundaries and known population figures. Persons will be evacuated from a threatened neighbourhood to a secure neighbourhood for registration prior to dispersal to temporary accommodations.

The receiving neighbourhood will have a Registration and Inquiry Centre (R&I) established in the closest civic centre. Registration staff will be supplied by the Red Cross, and augmented by civic personnel as necessary.

Evacuation Plan

Decisions to evacuate will be made at the City Emergency Operation Centre based on the threat being faced and the advice received from those most knowledgeable about the specifics of that threat.

If necessary, approval will be sought from elected officials.

If approved, the boundaries of the neighbourhood being evacuated will be confirmed, and the demographic information available in the “Neighbourhood Profiles” handbook will provide planning guidance.

Specified routes out of the neighbourhood will be chosen, based on the principle of directing evacuees away from the threat.

Police will ensure access into the area to be evacuated is strictly controlled at strategically placed roadblocks and/or traffic control points.

A list of the minimum belongings that evacuees should take with them will be prepared by the City Emergency Operation Centre and will be based on a best guess of the duration of the evacuation. This list will be publicized via the Public Information Plan.



Evacuation Plan (continued)

A Registration and Inquiry Centre will be located at the civic centre most suitable for the needs of the evacuees and the appropriate facility manager contacted with the instructions to open the facility.

The Social Services Plan will be implemented to deal with receiving the evacuees, registering vital information, and supplying basic human needs that become apparent.

Communications to these Registration and Inquiry Centres will be arranged by the City Emergency Operation Centre.

City buses will be deployed to a staging area and a Transportation Control Officer will be attached to the Police Command staff for this operation.

Ambulances, etc., will be used for special care cases.

A check will be made to ensure the Police Command is ready to begin the evacuation operations.

When ready, the Public Information Plan will be used so that both affected and unaffected residents are aware of the situation.

Notification to affected residents will be given via public broadcast radio and TV, use of PA systems on mobile units, and door-to-door knocking, if necessary.

After evacuees arrive at these centres, the evacuation phase is complete and the Social Services Plan takes over.

Residents will be advised regarding what they can take with them, transportation assistance, the exit routes available, and the need to register at the designated Registration and Inquiry Centre.

Decisions on pets will be made by the City Emergency Operation Centre.

Those with their own transportation will be told to use it. Those without their own transportation will be instructed to go to the nearest bus stop.

Buses will make runs through the neighbourhood until everyone is picked up.

Those without transportation and unable to get to a bus stop will be given a phone number to call for assistance. If the phones are out, those people will be advised via radio, TV, etc., to tie or hang a brightly coloured towel or other piece of cloth from the front door or window, easily seen from the street, and then to securely close all doors, windows and air intakes, if necessary.

Police and Fire Department teams will make final sweeps through the neighbourhood looking for the coloured cloth signal and picking up any persons found.

Provision of security for the evacuation zone will be a Police responsibility. Private security firms, Commissionaires, and specially assigned civic staff may be required to assist in the provision of this security.

The Police Command will send regular situation reports to the City Emergency Operation Centre regarding progress, and will declare when evacuation is complete.

Air sampling, utility service disconnections, etc., required in the evacuated zone will only be conducted with permission of the City Emergency Operation Centre or Police Command. Individuals assigned this task must be escorted by Police personnel with direct communications to the Police Command.

Fly-overs of the affected area may be conducted with the aid of Civilian Air Search and Rescue Association (CASARA) as arranged through the City Emergency Operation Centre.

What to Do When You are Asked to Leave Your Home

For your own safety, you and your family may be asked to evacuate your home during or before a disaster. Here are a number of tips to secure your home and evacuate safely:

- Protect your house from frost damage; (See Page 19, Step 5)
- Follow all instructions from emergency officials announced on radio or issued by police or fire personnel;
- Report to a Registration and Inquiry Centre, letting officials know you are okay and where you will be staying;
- Ask for transportation and accommodation if you need it, and you will be provided with a ride and a place to sleep;
- Take only essential items (listen to your radio for more details); and lock all doors and windows before you leave your home.

Re-occupation of Evacuated Area

The final decision to authorize re-entry rests with the City Emergency Operation Centre, and no return to homes or businesses will be allowed until this authorization is given.

After re-entry is authorized, the Public Information Plan will be used to tell the public. Procedures for re-occupation will be communicated at the appropriate time, and will consider the following factors:

- Residences may not have been locked prior to evacuation, and criminal elements may seek to take advantage of that fact;
- Some danger may remain, i.e. leaking gas lines, pilot lights out, unsafe structures, mould or chemical contamination;
- Persons unintentionally left behind may need specialized assistance;
- Contamination tests of gardens, basements, etc., may be required.





Shelter-in-Place Procedures

“Shelter-in-Place” is one of the basic instructions you may receive from public safety officials during a chemical emergency. Sheltering in place offers you and your family immediate protection for a short time in your home.

If you are told to shelter in place, take your children and pets indoors immediately.

The following general information is a guide on how you should act before, during and after an emergency. The situation in your area may involve unique circumstances. Saskatoon’s Emergency Measures Organization can provide you with details, or you can go to:

<http://www.saskatoon.ca/DEPARTMENTS/Fire%20and%20Protective%20Services/EMO/Pages/default.aspx>

to watch an on-line video explaining how to Shelter-in-Place.

You are most likely to hear about a chemical emergency by radio, television, or through contact with emergency responders.

When you learn of the emergency:

- Immediately take your family and pets to the room you've chosen as a shelter. If your children are at school, do not leave your house to go get them. Going outside could expose you to hazardous chemicals and schools have emergency plans of their own.
- Shut off heating, cooling and fans that draw in air from the outside. If you have a fireplace, close the damper.
- Shut and lock doors and windows; locking makes a better seal. Cover any windows with plastic sheeting. Seal cracks around the door and windows with duct tape.
- Turn on a radio or television to a local station that broadcasts emergency information and stay tuned until the "all clear" message is broadcast.
- Stay off the phone; it should be used for emergency calls only.
- Be prepared to evacuate if ordered to do so by public safety officials. Evacuation instructions will be announced over the emergency broadcast system.

When you hear the "all clear" message over the emergency broadcast system, you should:

- Open doors and windows;
- Turn on your heating/cooling system to ventilate the house; and
- Go outside.



A Guide to Disaster Recovery

Introduction to Recovery

You've been through a traumatic event. Whether it was a flood, a fire or other traumatic event, the danger is past, but in your mind, you may still see the event clearly—and feel the fear and anxiety it caused.

These feelings are normal, a natural reaction to a traumatic event. The key is to remember that you have survived. These feelings will diminish, and for most people, completely disappear. It will take time, and you may need help, but you will put the natural disaster behind you.

Meanwhile, there are many things to do: recover lost documents, salvage furniture and appliances . . . begin cleanup . . .

Where do you start? That's where this booklet can help. It takes you, one step at a time, through the many tasks you need to do in order to put your life back in order. And it helps you keep track of the progress you are making as you move through the steps. Check off each task as it is completed. Skip items that don't apply to your situation.

Now take a deep breath—and get started.



STEP ONE: Take Care of Yourself and Your Family



Disasters can cause emotional and physical reactions. Most people caught in a disaster usually feel confused and may not “act like themselves” for awhile. They may tremble or feel numb. Immediately after the disaster, it is common to feel bewildered, shocked, and relieved to be alive.

You should try to:

- Rest often and eat well;
- Keep a manageable schedule; make a list and do one job at a time, deciding what needs to be done right away and deferring the rest until a less stressful time;
- Get as much physical activity as possible;
- Accept help from others, asking for help and advice on practical matters relating to your finances, your job or other concerns;
- Give someone a hug—touching is very important; think about the coping skills you have used at other difficult times, and use them now;
- Focus on positive memories.

Warning signs of stress:

- short tempers, frequent argument;
- greater consumption of alcohol;
- getting upset over minor irritations;
- difficulty sleeping, bad dreams;
- aches, pains, stomach problems;
- apathy, loss of concentration;
- depression.

It’s important to be aware of your children’s reactions. They might start thumb sucking or bed-wetting, and become clingy or fearful. Children might withdraw and try to be brave, when they really need your reassurance. To get yourself and your family back on track, talk about what’s happened. Here are some suggestions:

- Encourage children to express themselves. They may want to do this by drawing or playing instead of talking.
- Take their fears seriously, reassure them and give them additional attention. Admit to them that you also felt afraid and may still be experiencing some feelings of fear or anxiety, but that with time and possibly some outside help you will work it out together.
- Tell children what you know about the situation. Be honest but gentle. Talk to them about the disaster.
- Keep children with you whenever it is possible to do so, even if it seems easier to look for housing or help on your own. At a time like this, it’s important for the whole family to stay together.
- Expect regressive behaviour and be tolerant of it.
- Give them a real task to do, something that gets the family back on its feet, and let them help in planning something to remember the loss.
- Watch for health problems and signs of stress, such as nightmares and depression, in you or your family. Seek help if you need it. Many organizations in your community can provide counselling and other supports.
- Continue with regular routines (teeth brushing, bed time stories) and chores (picking out their own clothes to wear, etc.).
- Avoid or minimize watching news reports of frightening events.

Recognize that when you suffer a loss, you may grieve—over the loss of personal treasures, your home, your security, a pet. You may feel angry. You may not sleep or eat well. These are normal grief reactions. Give yourself and your family permission to grieve and time to heal.

There are agencies in our area that can help you work through the crisis.

Government of Saskatchewan Social Services offers a 24-hour Mobile Crisis hotline at no charge and a referral service for counselling. **Call 933-6200.**

If you are a member of a church congregation your parish priest or minister may also be of some assistance.

STEP TWO: First Things First

Do these things as soon as possible after your home has been damaged or destroyed, if possible before you leave the property.

Contact the building owner or manager if you rent or lease your home.

Get your family settled. If your home is unlivable, and you cannot stay with family or friends, you can go to temporary housing arranged by local Emergency Social Services personnel. Following a large disaster, the local government may establish temporary housing in secure Group Lodging facilities where possible. Try to keep the family together; togetherness provides mutual support.

Contact your agent, broker or insurance company if you are insured. (See **STEP NINE** in this booklet for more on this topic.) Do this as soon as possible to get your claim underway. Most policies cover the cost of shelter, food and clothing for the reasonable time needed to repair or rebuild your residency up to policy limits.

Remove valuables and essential items. Do NOT enter the home until you know it is safe, or have been given the green light to enter the area (See **STEP THREE** in this booklet.) Try to retrieve the following items:

- important legal documents;
- identification;
- vital medicines;
- eyeglasses and hearing aids;
- credit cards;
- cheque books and cheques;
- insurance policies;
- money;
- jewellery;
- photos and other items of sentimental value (particularly important for children).

CAUTION:

If fire has burned around a safe, do not attempt to open it unless it is cool to the touch.

Secure the property. It's your responsibility to make sure the house is secured against further damage. If you rent, the landlord or property manager should be responsible for this. If you own the home, here's what to do:

- board up broken windows and smashed doors;
- cover holes in roof and walls; and
- in the winter, drain water lines if the house won't be heated for awhile.

You can do these things yourself or call a contractor (**See the Yellow Pages under "Contractors – General" or "Fire and Water Damage Restoration"**.) In Some cases, the Fire Department will secure the property for you.

Your insurance policy may pay reasonable expenses incurred in preserving insured property. If your property is looted, contact the police immediately. Tell them what was stolen. This report may be needed to file an insurance claim for theft, distinct from any disaster damage claim.

Take care of your pets. If a pet is lost, contact the SPCA. Pets may have been injured in the disaster, and can suffer stress, too. If you have to move temporarily, take your pets with you if possible. Make sure they have plenty of food and water and get lots of exercise. If possible, continue with the same food type; a change in diet can cause an additional complication. Normally quiet and friendly cats and dogs may become aggressive or defensive; therefore, pet owners need to take extra care and keep children safe.

Notify people if you move, even temporarily. Be sure to give your new address to:

- post office;
- banks;
- schools;
- newspapers and magazines you subscribe to;
- credit card companies;
- utility companies (power, gas, telephone);
- family and friends

STEP THREE: Re-entering Your Home

If you have been forced to leave your home because of the disaster, you will want to go back in, if possible, to retrieve possessions and take stock of damage. Being well prepared and proceeding cautiously will help you stay healthy and avoid injury when you re-enter your home.

Stay out of damaged buildings. Return only when authorities say it is safe. Stay tuned to your local radio or television station.

Assemble the things you may need:

- ✓ Battery-powered lantern or flashlight (nothing flammable);
- ✓ Camera or video camera and notebook to record damage for insurance purposes;
- ✓ First aid kit (in case of injury);
- ✓ Tools: crowbar, hammer, saw, etc.;
- ✓ Drinking water;
- ✓ Trash bags;
- ✓ Hard hat and gloves (rubber and heavy gloves);
- ✓ Hard-soled boots or shoes;
- ✓ Large containers to soak bedding and clothing, and lines to hang them on to dry if your home was flooded;
- ✓ Pails, mops and sponges, if your home was flooded;
- ✓ Liquid chlorine bleach (household laundry bleach containing 5-6% chlorine).

Walk carefully around the outside of the house before going inside.

Carefully check for signs of damage or danger.

- Look for loose power lines. Stay away from fallen or damaged electrical wires.
- Call the gas company right away if you smell the “rotten eggs” odour that is the telltale sign of gas. If the gas meter is outside, turn it off at the main valve. Do not go inside.
- Check the foundation, roof, chimney and steps for damage. Look for broken or cracked basement walls.
- Unnoticed damage could lead to fire or injury from falling debris.
- Don’t go inside if there is standing water around the house. The water could carry electric current.
- Take pictures of the outside damage for insurance claims.

When entering the building, use extreme caution. Move carefully inside the house. Building damage may have occurred where you least expect it. Carefully watch every step you take.

Check for gas leaks. If you smell gas or hear a blowing or hissing noise, open a window and quickly leave the building. Turn off the gas, using the outside main valve if you can, and call the gas company.

NOTE: If you turn off the gas for any reason, only a professional must turn it back on.

Examine walls, floors, doors, staircases and windows to make sure the building is not in danger of collapsing.

Look for electrical system damage. If you see sparks or broken or frayed wires, or if you smell burning insulation, turn off the electricity at the main fuse box or circuit breaker—if you determine that it is safe to do so. If you have to step in water to get to the fuse box or circuit breaker, don’t do it—call an electrician or your local electric company for advice.

Check for sewage and water line damage. If you suspect sewage lines are damaged inside your property, avoid using the toilets and call a plumber. For damage outside your property, you may need to call the local authority. If water pipes are damaged, contact the local authority and avoid using water from the tap. See more on this topic, including well water and sewage disposal, in **STEP FOUR** in this booklet.

Take pictures of the damage inside, both to the house and its contents, for insurance claims. Watch for animals. Small animals that have been flooded or burned out of their homes may seek shelter in yours. Use a pole or stick to turn items over, watching for animals. Use caution when opening drawers and cupboards.

Disinfect standing water. If your home was flooded, it is important to disinfect all standing water in the home, including the basement. Measure 2 litres (2 quarts) of liquid chlorine bleach and distribute it evenly over any standing water. Stir the bleach and water together as much as possible. Repeat every four to five days for as long as the water remains.

Keep track of your expenses and time in cleaning up. Keep all receipts from cleaning supplies, rental equipment and any cleaning firms you hire. Record the number of hours you and your family or friends spend cleaning up the property each day. These records will be useful if you are making an insurance claim or applying for disaster financial assistance.

STEP FOUR: Foods and Medicines

The motto to remember is: IF IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT. Contamination from water, heat, smoke and fumes can spoil foods and medicines, making them dangerous to consume. It is cheaper to replace the item than to jeopardize your health by taking a chance.

- **Refrigerated food:** Refrigerators keep food at 4 degrees C (40 degrees F). If the temperature inside the fridge has gone above that level, discard all the food. If you are unsure about the temperature, throw the food out. If your fridge was exposed to floodwaters, throw out the entire contents, including all meats, fresh fruit and vegetables.

- **Frozen food:** Frozen food is probably safe, unless the freezer was exposed to heat from a fire, to floodwaters or has been without power for an extended period. If you are unsure about the exposure, throw the food out. If the electricity is off, keep the freezer closed. It has enough insulation to keep food frozen for up to three days without power.

It is considered safe to refreeze food that has partially thawed if it still contains visible ice crystals. However, partial thawing and refreezing will reduce the quality of the food. Discard anything that has completely thawed, has reached a temperature above 4 degrees C (40 degrees F), or has questionable colour or odour.

- **Canned food:** Tinned goods should be good for consumption unless the can has bulged, is badly dented or has rusted. Throw these ones out. All undamaged canned goods should be washed and disinfected if they have been exposed to flood waters or smoke. Food stored in glass jars that have been exposed to heat should be thrown out, as seals may have been broken.

- **Medicine:** Check with a doctor or pharmacist before taking any medicine that may have been damaged or exposed to flood waters. Ask him or her about how to properly dispose of medicine.

Water Safety

Water very quickly becomes a precious and rare commodity following major disasters. It is a good idea to shut off the water supply until you hear from the proper authorities that it is safe for drinking. Shutting off the main water valve will isolate your water system, eliminating loss of precious water and possible contamination from the public system. You can obtain safe water from undamaged water heaters or by melting ice cubes.

If you are on a well or cistern, and it has been flooded or damaged, assume that the water in your home is not safe to drink. You will probably need to disinfect the well or cistern, or have it repaired. Contact your public health inspector or local authority for instructions.

Water Purification

Until your water has been confirmed safe for drinking, you have three options:

Alternative water supply: Obtain bottled water or water from another source that is known to be safe. This is the best choice.

Boiling water: Keep the water at a rolling boil for at least six minutes.

Chlorination: Disinfect water with unscented liquid chlorine bleach. Add the bleach to the water using an eyedropper bottle, and use the eyedropper bottle only for disinfecting. Thoroughly mix the bleach with the water and allow it to stand for 30 minutes. The water should then have a slight chlorine odour. If it doesn't, repeat the process and allow it to stand for another 30 minutes.

How to treat water:

1 gallon (4.5 liters) of cloudy water = 16 drops of unscented liquid chlorine bleach

1 gallon (4.5 liters) of clear water = 8 drops of unscented liquid chlorine bleach

You can also purify water with chlorine tablets, available where camping supplies are sold. Follow the instructions on the container.

Sewage Disposal

Do not use your sewage disposal system until you know it is capable of handling waste. You will be notified when the system has been restored. As a temporary measure, you can line the toilet with a plastic trashcan liner and dispose of the bag as necessary.

STEP FIVE: Protect Your Home from the Cold

If there is a prolonged power outage during the winter, there are measures you can take to help protect your house from frost damage.

- Turn off all circuit breakers except one that controls a floor or table light. This light should be left in the "on" position. This light will signal the return of power.
- Turn down the thermostat on the hot water heater and furnace.
- Turn off the main water valve. Protect the valve inlet pipe and meter with blankets or other insulating material.
- Open all water taps until the water flow stops.
- Drain the water heater and flush toilets several times. Add some antifreeze to all drains and toilet bowls. (The antifreeze used in recreational vehicle systems is preferred.)
- Check the operating manual for the dishwasher, washing machine and other appliances for instructions on draining and frost protection.
- Block any drafts with blankets or towels.



STEP SIX: Cleaning Up—General

The kind of cleanup you face will depend on the type of natural disaster you survived. Your home and its contents may look beyond hope, but many of your belongings can be restored, whether they were damaged by floodwaters, or smoke and soot.

No matter what the disaster, if your house is livable, the first job is to give the house a thorough cleaning and drying. If you need help in cleaning up, contact a professional listed under “**Fire Damage Restoration**” in the Yellow Pages.



General Cleaning Tips

- Tackle one room at a time.
- Use the two-bucket approach: one bucket for cleaning solution and the other for rinse water.
- Change the rinse water frequently.
- Protect your hands – wear rubber gloves.
- Clean walls from the bottom up so you can easily see where you have already cleaned.
- Follow a three-step process. First, clean the room or item. Second, disinfect it to kill germs and the smell left by floodwaters or smoke. Third, if necessary, get rid of mildew, which shows as fuzzy splotches.

Cautions

- Carefully follow directions on cleaning products. When using them, wear rubber gloves and goggles, keep children and pets away, and keep the materials away from flames. Make sure you have proper ventilation.
- Never mix ammonia with bleach or any other cleaning products.
- Do not use bleach on aluminum or linoleum.

Flood Recovery Links

The City of Saskatoon for information on flood recovery

British Columbia Ministry of Health information on how to safely clean up following a flood
<http://www.bchealthguide.org/healthfiles/hfile20.stm>

STEP SEVEN: Cleaning Up—After a Flood

If you are insured, contact your insurance company. It may save you a great deal of wasted effort to consult a flood restoration specialist to judge what is worth saving and what isn't.

The basic steps to cleaning up after a flood are: remove standing water; remove mud; tear out any walls that need it; clean up; and disinfect.

Remove standing water slowly. It's important to get the water out of your home when floodwaters have gone down outside, but you must do so gradually to prevent the walls from cracking or buckling. Drain the water in stages, about a third of the volume of water per day.

Get rid of mud and hose down the house. The mud left behind by floodwaters contains most of the health hazards you will face. It is important to get rid of this mud as soon as possible—it's a lot easier to do before the mud dries out.

Shovel out as much mud as possible. Make sure the electricity is turned off, and then hose down any dirt sticking to walls or furnishings. Don't forget to hose out light sockets, electrical boxes, and heating and air conditioning ducts. Remove any remaining water with a mop, squeegee or, if you have an outside source of power, a wet/dry shop vacuum.

Remove all soaked and dirty materials, hose them off and put them in a safe, dry place until later. This includes furniture, carpets, clothing, appliances, bedding and dishes—everything that has been exposed to floodwaters.

Disinfect all surfaces in the home, whether or not they were soaked by floodwaters. This includes walls, ceilings, floors and any contents that remain in the home. Use disinfecting or sanitizing products at full strength, or a mixture of one part liquid chlorine bleach to four parts water. After cleaning, rinse all areas thoroughly.

Keep or Discard?

You will have to make difficult decisions about what to keep and what to throw out. Household goods that have been contaminated by sewage, or that have been wet for a long time, will have to be bagged, tagged and discarded according to local regulations.

You will have to use your judgment, depending on the severity of the flood. As a general rule, throw out anything that has been contaminated by sewage or soaked for a long time.

Keep:

Frames of good quality wood furniture;
Washable clothes;
Valuable papers; and
Appliances.

Discard:

Mattresses and pillows
Foam rubber
Carpets and carpet padding
Furniture coverings and cushions
Stuffed animals and baby toys
Food, cosmetics and medicines (see STEP FOUR)
Particleboard furniture and less expensive items

Take pictures or video of damaged items that must be thrown away. Get rid of garbage and food immediately. Don't let garbage build up

Cautions

If you are using electrical equipment to clean up in wet or damp location, use a ground fault circuit interrupter to prevent electric shock.

NEVER use a natural gas oven, range, barbecue, hibachi or portable propane heater to heat your home. These devices use up the oxygen you need to breathe and give off deadly carbon monoxide, which can kill you..

STEP SEVEN: Cleaning Up—After a Flood (continued)

Drying

Dry out the house and its contents quickly and thoroughly in order to prevent the growth of moulds and bacteria.

Increase ventilation and decrease humidity. Open doors and windows to allow moist air to escape. You may want to use dehumidifiers if you have an outside source of power, or if indoor electricity has been safely restored.

Heat your home, if appropriate. Again, if you have a safe source of power, consider using electric heaters to speed the drying process. Use a natural gas or propane furnace only after a qualified technician has checked it. But do not heat the home above the outdoor temperature until all the water has been removed.

Remove flood-soaked insulation in walls. Do this as soon as possible. Wet insulation holds moisture, encourages the growth of moulds and bacteria and keeps other building materials from drying out properly.

Remove insulation at least 50 cm (20 inches) above the high-water line. Batt and blown-in insulation cannot be reused. If rigid foam insulation can be removed without breaking, it can be disinfected by wiping with a chlorine solution and then rinsed.

Once it is completely dry, it can be reinstalled. If it breaks when being removed, it will have to be taken out, discarded and replaced, so you can reach the wall behind to disinfect it.

Clean the surface of all walls and ceilings, even those above the flood line. They will have been exposed to high humidity levels, which encourage the growth of mould.

Dry out and disinfect interior walls.

Plaster walls: Drain any water by removing the baseboard trim and drilling holes about 5 cm (2 inches) above the floor.

Wallboard: Flood-soaked sections must be removed and thrown away. Remove materials at least 50 cm (20 inches) above the high-water line.

Panelled walls: Pry out the bottom corner of the paneling and prop it away from the wall studs. Wipe all interior cavities with a disinfecting solution of one part liquid chlorine bleach to four parts water. Allow to dry thoroughly, checking often for mould. If you see or smell mould, wipe the area with the disinfecting solution again. Ensure that cavities are completely dry (this may take weeks) before closing them.

Dry out and disinfect floors. Check for wet floor insulation. If you find any, remove it, then disinfect and dry the floor framing in the same way as the walls (see above). Replace flooring that has been deeply penetrated by floodwater or sewage.

Wooden floors: Soaked floors may buckle, and hardwood floors are more vulnerable to buckling than softwood floors. Too much heat during the drying process may make buckling worse, so let floors dry at a normal temperature. This may take days or even weeks. A wood flooring professional may be helpful to determine the best course of action for preserving your wood flooring.

Linoleum, vinyl and tile floors: These coverings can slow down the drying of the sub-floor below. When water gets underneath linoleum, it can cause odours and warp the wood sub floor. If water has seeped underneath, remove the linoleum. Ask your flooring dealer to suggest a solvent to loosen the linoleum cement without damaging the flooring. Let the floor dry thoroughly before replacing the linoleum.

STEP SEVEN: Cleaning Up—After a Flood (continued)

Furniture and cabinets: Remove flood-damaged furniture to a dry, shady area and allow it to dry slowly. If the furniture is made of solid wood, the damage can usually be fixed, but veneered furniture may be beyond repair.

Remove all doors, drawers, slides and other working parts. Do not force open swollen doors and drawers. Remove the back, cutting it out if necessary, and push out the drawers. Clean drawers and store them away from heat to allow slow drying. If mould forms, wipe the wood with a cloth soaked in a mixture of boric acid and hot water (see package for amounts).

Use a cloth dampened with ammonia or essence of peppermint to remove white spots or scum on furniture exposed to high humidity.

Upholstered furniture, unless it is very valuable or antique, is probably not worth saving. If it is, have it cleaned and disinfected by a professional (**listed under Antique Repair & Restoration in the Yellow Pages**).

Rugs and carpets: Area rugs, carpets and padding that have been soaked with sewage or floodwaters should be discarded. Those that were exposed to floodwaters for only a brief time may be salvageable. Consult a professional cleaner.

Mattresses and bedding: Discard mattresses, bedding and pillows soaked by floodwaters.

Leather goods: It is best to have leather goods professionally cleaned. As a temporary measure, wash off any mud and dry them slowly away from heat or sunlight.

Wipe suitcases, shoes and purses with a damp cloth, then with a dry cloth. Stuff purses and shoes with newspaper so they retain their shape. Leave suitcases open. When leather goods are dry, clean with saddle soap.

Locks and hinges: Locks, especially iron ones, should be taken apart, wiped with kerosene and oiled. If locks cannot be removed, squirt machine oil through a bolt opening or keyhole and work the knob to distribute the oil. Hinges should also be thoroughly cleaned and oiled.

Clothing: Do not use your clothes washer until you are sure the water is clean and the sewer line is working. Before using, run the washer through one full cycle with hot water and disinfectant. Hose or shake off muddy items before washing. Cottons and linens soiled with red or yellow clay need to be cleaned carefully. Remove loose dirt, rinse and then wash in warm, soapy water. Do not use hot water, or the stains will set. Wash several times if necessary.

To remove mildew stains, wash the stain with soap and water. Rinse well and dry. If the stain remains, soak the item in a solution of 125 ml (1/2 cup) of household chlorine bleach and 3 liters (3 quarts) of warm water. Never use chlorine on wool or silk—it will dissolve them. Instead, use pine oil disinfectant or sprinkle salt on the stain and then squeeze lemon juice on it.

If you have any questions about cleaning clothing, contact a professional cleaning service (**listed under Cleaners in the Yellow Pages**).

Cooking utensils: Wash and sterilize dishes and utensils. Soak in boiling water for at least two minutes, or use a sterilizing solution of one part chlorine bleach to four parts water; then rinse dishes and utensils thoroughly, if you are sure household water is clean. Then let them air-dry.

Before using the dishwasher, clean and disinfect it, using water that has been declared safe for drinking. Use the hot water setting to wash pots, pans, dishes and utensils. If you have an energy saving setting, do not use it.

STEP SEVEN: Cleaning Up—After a Flood (continued)

Books, photographs and papers: Books may be salvaged by slow, careful drying. Do not squeeze. Fan open and air-dry, using fans, or freeze (see below). You may wish to consult a restorer (listed under Photographers in the Yellow Pages).

Most contemporary photographs, negatives and slides can be dried, face up. Remove from mounts or plastic sleeves. If stuck together, do not force apart. If they were frozen, thaw and then air-dry them.

To salvage important documents, sharp freeze them immediately. (Look in the Yellow Pages under Warehouses – Cold Storage.) Later, allow them to thaw and lift off each page as it thaws.

Once valuable papers and records are dry, photocopy them because substances in the floodwaters may cause them to deteriorate.

For advice on salvaging books, photographs or paintings damaged by flooding, contact:
Canadian Conservation Institute, 1030 Innes Road, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0M5
Telephone: (613) 998-3721

Computer records: Rinse the computer disks in clear water and place them in a plastic bag in the refrigerator. Later, send them to a specialist for restoration (**listed in the Yellow Pages under Computer Service, Repair & Cleaning**).

Appliances: Do not operate any electrical appliance, heating equipment or other device until it has been thoroughly cleaned, dried and inspected by a qualified technician. Motor windings must be thoroughly dried, and other motor components cleaned before use. You cannot practically change the insulation in most newer appliances or hot water tanks. However, if you decide the cost may be worth it, have an experienced service person replace wet insulation in insulated appliances such as refrigerators, freezers, dishwashers and microwaves. Thoroughly clean and disinfect appliances used in food preparation such as toasters, food processors and kettles.

Refrigerators and freezers: To remove odours from your refrigerator or freezer, wash the inside with a solution of baking soda and water, or use 250 ml (1 cup) of vinegar or household ammonia to 4 liters (1 gallon) water. Place an open box of baking soda or a piece of charcoal in the refrigerator to absorb odour.

CAUTION

When cleaning or discarding a refrigerator or freezer, be sure the doors or locks are removed or secured to prevent a child from being trapped inside.



STEP SEVEN: Cleaning Up—After a Flood (continued)

Yards: As you get rid of things from your house, avoid turning your yard into a dump. Record damaged belongings and determine which ones you need to keep for the insurance adjuster. Promptly remove any food or garbage that might attract animals or insects. If there are concerns about proper disposal of specific or large amounts of debris, contact your local authority.

Hazardous materials: Dispose of hazardous materials such as solvents, garden chemicals and home cleaning products that have been soaked or that show signs of water damage. Contact your local authority or appropriate provincial ministry to find out how to dispose of hazardous materials properly. Wear rubber gloves, goggles and protective clothing when handling hazardous materials.

Lawns: Lawns usually survive being underwater for up to four days. You may have to replace the lawn if it is covered by mud thicker than 2.5 cm (1 inch) or has been exposed to erosion.

Insect control: Floods can create ideal conditions for mosquitoes to breed. To reduce the problem, drain or remove standing water, clean ditches, empty barrels, old tires and cans, and make sure gutters and downspouts are clean and can drain properly.

Moulds

Moulds are a type of fungus that thrives in warm, moist conditions. They can aggravate allergies and asthma, and cause other serious health problems. Act quickly and persistently to get rid of moulds. The secret is to clean and dry all surfaces as soon as possible. Wipe the affected area with a solution of one part liquid chlorine bleach to four parts water, and dry it thoroughly.

Protect yourself by wearing rubber gloves and a facemask while cleaning, and wash your hands after with soap and warm water.



STEP EIGHT: Cleaning Up—After a Fire

Fire Extinguishment

After the fire has been extinguished, you may find broken windows and doors, or even holes in the roof. This damage is necessary during fire attack. Fire produces temperatures well over 1200°F along with smoke and hot gases. At times it is necessary to eliminate heat, smoke and hot gases by ventilation before firefighters can enter to extinguish the fire. Ventilation must be done quickly to help reduce fire spread. Often firefighters must forcibly open walls and ceilings, to find the 'hidden' fires, allowing for complete fire extinguishment. After the fire is out, this type of damage may appear unnecessary. However, without the use of these firefighting techniques, extinguishing the fire would be much more difficult and smoke and fire damage would be more extensive.

Property Insurance

Contact your local company or agent as soon as possible. If you are renting or leasing the property, you must also contact the owner. Your insurance adjuster may be able to assist you in making immediate repairs or helping to secure your home. If you are unable to contact your agent and need professional assistance in boarding up your home, a general contractor, or fire damage restoration firm can help. Check the Yellow Pages.

If your property is not insured or if your insurance will not cover all of your losses, contact your family lawyer for directions on what to do.

If You are Unable to Stay in Your Home

- Remove as many valuables as possible.
- NOTE: The home owner may temporarily be denied access to certain articles, areas, or the entire structure until the scene is studied and released by Saskatoon Fire and Protective Services. This does not imply suspicion; rather it is their policy to attempt to find the cause of all fires. Be sure to inventory what is removed.
- Check your residence for important legal documents that may have been damaged. Refer to the "Care of Documents and Books" section for more information.
- Contact the Saskatoon Police Service that will help keep an eye on the property during your absence.
- For those individuals in need, assistance from the Salvation Army is available. Temporary accommodations, emergency financial assistance and grocery assistance may be obtained. Call **Family Services** at **242-6833**. The **Catholic Women's League** clothing department at **619 20th St. West** has clothing and furniture for minimal cost to post-fire victims. Contact their office at **934-7016**. The **Red Cross** also has vouchers available by application. Call **975-8888**.
- Try to locate the following items to take with you: personal identification, eyeglasses, hearing aids, credit cards, cheque books, insurance policies, jewellery, vital medicines, such as blood pressure regulating medications or insulin. *Please check with your doctor or pharmacist before taking any medication. If it was exposed to heat it may not be safe.
 - notify Canada Post;
 - notify your bank;
 - notify credit card companies;
 - notify **Water Department** at **975-2400**;
 - notify **Engineering Department** at **975-2486**;
 - check with local school district; and
 - notify newspapers subscribed to.
- If the building is structurally damaged and not habitable, a Building Inspector must be called. After the building inspection is complete, a permit must be obtained prior to making repairs.
- **Building Inspection - 975-2400**
- **Building Permits - 975-3236**

STEP EIGHT: Cleaning Up—After a Fire (continued)

Utilities

Often Saskatoon Fire & Protective Services will have the utility services shut off or disconnected as a safety precaution and to prevent further damage to the structure and its contents. The procedures for re-establishing utility services are as follows:

Electricity: An Electrical Inspector must check the wiring to be sure it is safe before the power can be reconnected.

Saskatoon Light and Power - 975-2621 or SaskPower - 934-7737

* Do not operate wet or damp appliances. Have a serviceman check them first.

Water: The resident may turn this utility back on. Use caution because the fire may have damaged the plumbing, and this may cause water damage to occur when the pipes are filled again.

Water Department - 975-2400

Gas: DO NOT turn the gas back on. A Gas Inspector must check the piping, etc. to be sure it is safe before you restart gas appliances.

Gas Inspector - 934-7738

SaskEnergy - 975-8505

Telephone: SaskTel Business Office - 931-5252

Care of Documents

Documents are very important to your well-being and can be damaged or destroyed as a result of a fire or other disaster. Locating these documents will speed up the process of recovering from a disaster.

It is wise to store all-important documents in an approved fireproof container that is specifically designed for such purposes.

If paper documents are wet, consider freezing them immediately! When copies are needed, simply allow to thaw, lift off each page as it thaws, and photocopy. Contact any of the meat cutting firms listed in the yellow pages of the phone book for sharp (quick) freeze service. A list of important documents, and the associated organizations to contact has been included in **STEP NINE**.

Pets

As most people will agree, our pets are a very important part of our lives. After a fire strikes, don't assume that your pet has escaped unscathed just because it looks alright. Smoke can damage the lungs of a dog or cat in minutes, and sparks can cause painful burns that will stay hidden under the fur. As soon as possible, take your pet to a veterinarian.

If your pet has been lost in the chaos contact:

SPCA - 374-7387



STEP EIGHT: Cleaning Up—After a Fire (continued)

Salvage Hints

The following sections are designed to assist in the restoration of smoke and water damaged property.

Painted Walls: To remove soot and smoke from walls, mix together 4-6 tablespoons tri-sodium phosphate and 4.5 liters of water. The use of rubber gloves and goggles is suggested. Wash a small area at a time working from the floor up. Do ceilings last. Rinse thoroughly. Do not repaint until completely dry. It is advised that you use a smoke sealer (purchased in a paint store) before painting. Keep away from children and pets.

Wallpaper: Heat and ventilate room for several days to dry the plaster and paper. If mildewed paper is washable, wipe it with cloth wrung out of thick soapsuds. Rinse clean with clear water. Re-paste edges or loosened sections. When washing wallpaper, work quickly so paper does not become soaked. Work from the bottom to the top to prevent streaking.

Floors: Use flax soap on wood and linoleum floors. It will require four or five applications. Then strip and re-wax.

Wall-to-Wall Carpet: A wet/dry vacuum or water extractor carpet-cleaning machine is good for the job. They can be rented at most supermarkets or drugstores and they will remove the standing water and dirt. Then add carpet-cleaning detergent and clean the carpet as instructed on the machine. Rinse by using vinegar and water in the tank of the machine.

Rugs: Let rugs and carpets dry out thoroughly. Clean by sweeping or vacuuming. Shampoo with a commercial rug shampoo. Dry the rugs as quickly as possible by laying them flat and exposing them to warm, dry air. A fan will help. You can also contact any of the carpet-cleaning firms in the yellow pages of the telephone directory.

Mildew: Mildew is a mould growth. If it is allowed to continue to grow it will weaken or rot fabrics. To remove mildew, wash stain with soap and water. Rinse well and allow to dry. If stain remains, use lemon juice and salt, or a solution of a tablespoon of perborate bleach to a pint of lukewarm water. Or dilute with a solution of household chlorine bleach. Test coloured garments before using any treatment.

Upholstered Articles, Mattresses and Rugs: Remove loose mould from surfaces by brushing with a broom. Do this outdoors to prevent a scattering of mildew spores. Vacuum surface to draw out more of the mould. Thoroughly dry by using an electric heater or fan to eliminate moist air. If mildew remains, sponge lightly with thick detergent suds using only the foam; wipe with a clean, damp cloth. If mould has grown into the inner part of an article, send to a reliable dry cleaner.



STEP EIGHT: Cleaning Up—After a Fire (continued)

Clothing with Soot and Smoke Odour: Test coloured garments before using any treatment. Smoke odour and soot can sometimes be washed from clothing. The following formula will often work for clothing that can be bleached:

- 4 to 6 teaspoons tri-sodium phosphate (from a paint store)
- 1 cup Lysol or any household chlorine bleach
- 4.5 liters of warm water
- Mix well, then add clothes, rinse with clean water, and dry well.

OR

1/2 cup ammonia to 9 litres of water. Rinse in vinegar (use rubber gloves)

Refrigerator and Freezer Odour: Defrost and wash all surfaces with water and dishwashing detergent. Rinse with two tablespoons baking soda per litre of water, and re-rinse with clear water.

OR

Wash with solution of 1 cup vinegar to 4.5 liters of water.

What to do When a Freezer Stops: If your home freezer has stopped running, you can still save the frozen food by placing dry ice inside and keeping the freezer door closed.

Canned Foods, Medicines and Cosmetics: Do not use any canned foods if the can is bulged, badly dented or rusty. Discard medicines and cosmetics if contamination is suspected.

Cooking Utensils and Dishes: Your pots, pans, flatware, etc., should be washed with soapy water, rinsed and then polished with a finely powdered cleaner. You can polish copper and brass with special polish, salt sprinkled on a piece of lemon, or salt sprinkled on a cloth saturated with vinegar. Wash dishes in very hot, soapy water. Rinse in hot water. Dishwashers are excellent for cleaning dishes due to the high temperature.

Most dishes can be soaked in a solution of 1 tablespoon of bleach to 4.5 liters of water for 30 minutes prior to washing.



**"FOOD: IF IN DOUBT,
THROW IT OUT!"**

The City of Saskatoon Emergency Measures Organization would like to thank the Provincial Emergency Program of British Columbia for the information provided in the recovery section of this document.

STEP NINE: Replacing Documents and Money

Item	Missing	Saved		Done
Birth certificates Marriage certificates Death certificates			Provincial Government Website www.gov.sk.ca or 1-800-667-7551 (see note below)	
Divorce papers			Provincial Government Website www.gov.sk.ca or 1-306-787-4132	
Driver's licenses			Provincial Government Website www.gov.sk.ca or 1-800-667-9868 (see note below)	
Insurance policies and Auto Insurance Registration			Saskatchewan Government Insurance website www.sgi.sk.ca or Provincial Office at 1-800-667-8015. Or SGI Residential/Property Claims at 683-2110 or your private insurance agent	
Military discharge papers			Library and Archives Canada 1-866-578-7777	
Citizenship papers			Citizenship and Immigration Canada 1-888-242-2100 (see note below)	
Permanent Resident Card			Citizenship and Immigration Canada 1-800-255-4541 (see note below)	
Passports			Passport Canada at www.pptc.gc.ca or the Saskatoon Passport Office 1-800-567-6868 (see note below)	
Income tax records			Revenue Canada at www.cra-arc.gc.ca or 1-800-267-6999	
Wills			Your lawyer	
Medical records			Your family doctor	
Medical Services Plan			Saskatchewan Department of Health at www.health.gov.sk.ca or 1-800-667-7551 or Saskatchewan Blue Cross at www.sk.bluecross.ca or 244-2662	
Social Insurance cards Employment Insurance papers			Human Resources and Skills Development Canada 1-800-206-7218 (see note below)	
Canada Pension Plan papers Old Age Security cards			Human Resources and Skills Development Canada Income Security Programs 1-800-277-9914 (see note below)	
Land Titles			Provincial Government Website www.gov.sk.ca or 1-866-275-4721 (see note below)	
Animal Permits / Licences			City of Saskatoon Animal Services Pound/ Lost and Found Shelter at 374-7387	
Bank books			Your bank	
Money (partially or completely destroyed)			1-800-303-1282 www.bankofcanada.ca/en/banknotes/mutilated (see note below)	
Canada Savings Bonds (completely or partially destroyed)			1-800-575-5151 http://csb.gc.ca/?page_id=327&language=en (If your home was damaged by fire or water, gather up any remains and put them in a package to protect from further damage, as they may be useful for claim or reference purposes.)	
Credit cards			Issuing companies	
Stocks			Issuing company or your lawyer	

Note: A website with information on replacing a Social Insurance Number card is:
www.servicecanada.gc.ca/en/sin/lost/lost.shtml

STEP TEN: Insurance Matters

This section is for insured households.

Take an Inventory

You will need to provide a list of lost or damaged items as part of your insurance claim. Review your insurance policy so you understand what items to list. If you had a household inventory or video before the disaster, retrieve it for the insurance adjuster.

If you didn't, or if it was destroyed, ask your insurance agent for a blank inventory form—it will jog your memory.

Record serial numbers of appliances and household equipment, if possible. Note the approximate cost or value of each item. If possible, take close-up photos or video footage of damaged rooms, furnishings and property.

Once the inventory is complete, submit it, along with a proof of loss form, to your insurance company.

Be sure to prepare a new inventory once you move back in. It may be written, photographed or recorded on tape or video. Keep a copy away from home either in a safety deposit box or with another family member or in a fire and water resistant safe.

Keep All Receipts

Keep a copy of your inventory, all receipts related to living expenses and repairs, permits, inspection forms and any other papers in one place. You may need them for insurance purposes.

Notify Your Mortgage Company

You have a responsibility to tell your mortgage company about the results of the disaster and to keep them informed about what's being done to restore the property.

They may have forms for you to fill out, and they may want to inspect the property. It is to your mutual advantage to work together. This also applies to total loss of other items destroyed (i.e., a car with an outstanding loan guarantee).

Web Links to Additional Information

These websites will provide you with additional resources on personal preparedness

Government of Canada:

<http://www.safecanada.ca>

British Columbia Provincial Emergency Program

<http://www.pep.bc.ca/index.html>

Red Cross:

<http://www.redcross.org>

