

AFTER THE EVACUATION — help when you need it most General Information



WHERE TO TURN WHEN DISASTER STRIKES

Emergency Social Services — Emergency Social Services (ESS) provides assistance to people for the first 72 hours (3 days) after a disaster. Assistance includes assessment and referral to services you may need, short term help for food, clothing and shelter, emotional support and family reunification. Local ESS volunteers will be at the disaster site or at a safe, near-by location, such as a local gym or recreation centre. Local authorities and emergency officials will provide you with information about the location of the reception centre.

If, as a result of the disaster, you are temporarily in need of income assistance, you may contact your local Ministry of Housing and Social Development office, where staff will determine if you are eligible. For the office nearest you, call Service BC:

Victoria: (250) 387-6121

Vancouver: (604) 660-2421

Elsewhere in BC: 1-800-663-7867

FAMILY NOTIFICATION

Once you have registered with ESS after a disaster, volunteers will have information to let family and friends know where you are, and that you are safe. If your contact information changes, or if there is anyone who should not have access to your contact information, please inform the ESS volunteer immediately.

KEEPING YOU UPDATED

ESS volunteers will have up-to-date information, and understand that keeping you informed will help you cope with emotional responses such as frustration, anger or anxiety.

COSTS FOR IMMEDIATE ESSENTIALS

If you have insurance, it may cover the cost of your immediate needs. If you don't have insurance, or reasonable and ready access to your insurance, the provincial government will cover the cost of items essential to your immediate wellbeing for up to 72 hours — assessment and referral to services you may need, short term help for food, clothing and shelter, emotional support and family reunification. You are responsible for any items that are not essential, such as long-distance phone calls.

EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION FOR PETS

ESS will try to find emergency accommodation that will allow your pets to remain with you. However, not all hotels or motels accept pets, and priority must be given to people with guide or service dogs. You may have to board your pets at a kennel, veterinarian or the SPCA until you are more settled.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Take care of important details — Because this is an upsetting time, you may forget important details. Here are some important reminders:

- Contact your insurance company immediately
- Make plans for accommodation, food and clothing beyond the first 72 hours
- Advise your landlord and employer of your current situation
- Cancel appointments and let your children's teachers know what has happened
- If you are not returning home for an extended period of time you may want to redirect your mail
- Contact extended family and friends to let them know you are safe
- Contact your local Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance office or Enquiry BC if you have no other financial resources

Help yourself and others — It is natural to feel anxious after a crisis. You can help your-self by sharing your feelings, helping others, and passing on information about assistance and resources. You can help others by being patient when stress causes them to be short tempered or irritable. If you or someone in your family experiences a severe or persistent reaction to the disaster, seeking help is encouraged. For more information or to report a change in your location or contact information, please call:

Emergency Social Services
Provincial Emergency Program
Toll-free within B.C. 1-800-585-9559