



MEDIA RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 14, 2014

HOUSEHOLD EMERGENCY PLANNING IS EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

[GRAVENHURST, ON] The time to plan for an emergency is when you have a clear mind and the luxury of time to consider the necessary action to be taken before an emergency actually occurs. Public Safety Canada suggests that every Canadian household have an emergency plan in place. Their website www.getprepared.ca will help you create your plan in about 20 minutes.

As extreme weather events occur, or a disaster is about to strike, whether man-made or of Mother Nature's doing we need to take steps to provide for our families in the event of an emergency. The Gravenhurst Fire Department routinely reminds homeowners to have a home fire escape plan in place and to practice it regularly in the hopes that everyone will instinctively know what to do and will get out of a house on fire quickly and safely.

Preparing an emergency plan is similar in that it will provide your family a guide to follow in the event that something happens beyond your control. When you are preparing your emergency plan, make sure that you take into account that your family may not all be together at the onset of an emergency. Have a pre-arranged meeting place, or a means of communication amongst yourselves.

The following is brief list of what you need to consider when preparing your home emergency plan.

1. Know the inherent risks in your particular area. Here in Muskoka we face a number of extreme weather events such as extreme cold or heat, strong winds, heavy snowfalls, accumulating rain storms, and severe electrical storms. You can utilize your home escape plan to start off the second step of emergency planning. That plan provides for two ways out of every room in your house to a safe place outside. Add in two escape routes from your neighbourhood in case you need leave in a hurry.

-more-

**MEDIA RELEASE
IMMEDIATE RELEASE
3/14/2014
Page 2 of 2**

2. Account as much as possible for where you and your children may be. If your children are in school or daycare you need to make sure they have current contact information for someone who can pick them up, and you need to have the most appropriate contact person at the school or daycare.
3. If you have to evacuate your home, you will have to consider accommodations for your pets. Some public shelters and hotels may not allow pets. If you have a relative or friend that will look after your pets in an emergency, include that in your plan.
4. Write out a list of any special health needs, such as dietary requirements, allergies, special accommodation needs, emergency contacts, family medical history, medical conditions and history, recent vaccinations or surgeries and health screenings. Make a list for each family member and keep it with your emergency kit.
5. Every household should have an emergency kit prepared well in advance of an emergency that will sustain the household for 72 hours. Examples of items your "kit" should contain include:
 - sufficient stores of clean drinking water,
 - a supply of dried goods and canned foods,
 - a means to cook food without electricity,
 - a manual can opener,
 - battery powered flashlights and a portable radio, and
 - portable heaters and extra blankets.Don't forget about special medical needs and those of pets as well.

For more information about becoming better prepared in the case of emergency visit:
<http://www.gravenhurst.ca/en/ourcommunity/personalpreparedness.asp>.

-30-

For additional information please contact:

*Candace Thwaites, Community Emergency Management Co-ordinator
Town of Gravenhurst
705-687-2230 Ext. 234, or cthwaites@gravenhurst.ca*

*Chief Larry Brassard
Town of Gravenhurst Fire Department
705-687-3414, ext. 238, or lbrassard@gravenhurst.ca*

*Geoff Carleton, Director of Infrastructure and Community Services
Town of Gravenhurst
705-687-2230 Ext. 243, or gcarleton@gravenhurst.ca*