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Emergency Preparedness: Be Prepared. Know Your Risks.

From the record breaking 2023 wildfires, the devastating 2021 atmospheric rivers, and the deadly heat dome, we have seen how the climate crisis has worsened natural disasters in BC and requires that we adapt to keep our loved ones and communities safe. With the number of climate-related disasters increasing, the financial cost to families, communities, and governments is increasing. The federal government has spent \$7.9 billion in financial support since the creation of the Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements program in 1970, with three quarters of funding distributed in the past 10 years alone. It is more important than ever to mitigate risks and ensure we are all prepared for the natural disasters and emergencies we may face.

This newsletter will help you **Be Prepared. Know Your Risks** by highlighting the federal government's emergency preparedness programming and outlining local community resources on the Sunshine Coast that you should be aware of. Visit our website at patrickweiler.ca or scan the QR Code for links to all of the resources listed in this newsletter.



FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

\$6.5B

Launching Canada's First National Adaptation Strategy, supporting flood mapping, funding climate resiliency infrastructure, and more



Investing in Canada's Humanitarian Workforce to ensure our ability to rapidly mobilize and deploy support to Canadians in need

2x

Doubling tax credits for volunteer firefighters and search & rescue volunteers from \$3,000 to \$6,000, saving them up to \$900 per year



Funding the training of over 1,000 firefighters in 2023 while investing in firefighting equipment procurement and satellite monitoring of fires

Federal-Provincial-Municipal Emergency Coordination

The Government of Canada is committed to working with all orders of government on emergency preparedness. Last September, I welcomed the Honourable Harjit Sajjan, Canada's Minister of Emergency Preparedness, to the Sunshine Coast to meet with local government leaders, including the Mayors of Sechelt and Gibsons, fire chiefs, the RCMP, and local regional district officials to discuss how the Coast can best be prepared for emergencies.



Photo: Meeting with emergency preparedness officials on the Sunshine Coast

3 Steps to Get Prepared



1. KNOW THE RISKS

Knowing the risks in your region can help you prepare, including wildfires and earthquakes. For more information on federal resources, please visit GetPrepared.ca



2. MAKE A PLAN

Every household needs an emergency plan. When an emergency occurs, your family may not be together so plan how to meet or contact each other, and discuss what you would do in different situations.



3. BUILD A KIT

In the case of an emergency, you will need some basic supplies. Be prepared to be self-sufficient for at least 72 hours. Include water, canned and packaged foods, flashlights, cash and IDs. Make sure it is easy to carry.

GOVERNMENT EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS RESOURCES

Sunshine Coast Emergency Program

The Sunshine Coast Regional District’s Emergency Program is the lead agency for emergency management on the Sunshine Coast. They are responsible for coordinating the response with all local districts and municipalities.

Sign up for the **SCRD Emergency Alert System called Voyent Alert!** which is used to send alerts to residents, businesses, and visitors on the Sunshine Coast. During a major event, the SCRД will communicate important information through multiple channels, including Voyent Alert!, online at scrd.ca/emergency-alerts and via radio on 91.7 FM.

BC Provincial Government Resources:

- **EmergencyInfoBC.ca** for emergency updates
- **BCWildfire.ca** or the BC Wildfire app for wildfire and fire ban information
- **DriveBC.ca** for road conditions
- **ESS.gov.bc.ca** for evacuation and emergency support services
- **PreparedBC.ca** to help you prepare for emergencies
- **PreparedBC hazard map** to see what emergencies could happen near you
- **Interactive Emergency Ready Planner** for customized home emergency plans

LOCAL COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS & RESOURCES

Sunshine Coast Search and Rescue

Budget 2024 is doubling the volunteer firefighter and search and rescue (SAR) tax credits, for organizations such as Sunshine Coast SAR, which is a volunteer team serving the lower Sunshine Coast. They comprise of a team of about 35 volunteers and are trained to respond to a variety of emergencies.

RULES FOR STAYING SAFE IN THE MOUNTAINS

- Do your research before you head out in the mountains.
- Even though it feels like summer, the mountains could still be very cold, so prepare accordingly.
- Call 911 early if you are in danger or hurt.

Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue on the Sunshine Coast (RCMSAR)

The tax credit will also benefit RCMSAR Stations 12, 14, and 61 who are there to respond to marine emergencies on the Sunshine Coast and are on call 24/7, 365 days a year. Station 12 for example participates in around 15-35 marine incidents that occur on the coast every year with a team that has dedicated on average over 1500 volunteer hours each year.

RULES ON STAYING SAFE ON THE WATER:

- Always wear a lifejacket
- Always boat sober
- In an emergency, call on VHF radio channel 16 or phone #SAR/#727 or *16



Photo: With RCMSAR in Pender Harbour

STAYING FIRE SMART OUTDOORS AND WHILE CAMPING

- Get educated by visiting firesmartbc.ca and adventuresmart.ca
- Download the BC Wildfire Service mobile app to get up to date information on wildfire risks and alerts
- Follow local fire bans and restrictions at BCWildfire.ca
- If you see signs of wildfire, report it on the BC Wildfire Service app, dial *5555 on a cellphone or call 1 800 663-5555

STAYING FIRE SMART AT HOME

- Test your smoke alarms monthly
- Close your doors before you doze; this could save your life in the event of a fire while you're sleeping
- Carbon monoxide detectors in your home could save your life; carbon monoxide is odourless and colourless
- Regular maintenance and cleaning removes potential fire fuels; this includes keeping grass lawns shorter than 10 centimetres, cleaning under decks, and storing firewood and flammable material away from your home, ideally 10 metres