

# Evacuation Guide



Some hazards will necessitate the declaration of an evacuation order because it has been deemed too dangerous to stay in the area. The authority to order an evacuation can rest with different levels of government (local, provincial or federal), and a standard three-stage evacuation process has been adopted by all levels of government, described below:

## Stage 1: Evacuation Alert

Individuals are advised of the potential need to get ready for evacuation. The alert highlights the nature of the danger and that evacuation may be required at any time. Information will be provided on where to go if the evacuation is ordered. Whenever possible, emergency officials will provide as much notice as possible so people have time to get ready.

Evacuation alerts do not require a declaration of a state of local emergency. In some instances an Evacuation Order is immediate and no evacuation alert is given.

## Stage 2: Evacuation Order

All persons in the affected area are told that, in the interest of their own safety and considering the risk, they are now ordered to leave the area. At this time any related information, such as a specific evacuation route or the location of an Emergency Reception & Information Centre will be provided.

A declaration of a state of local emergency must be declared for an evacuation order to be valid.

## Stage 3: Evacuation Rescind

All persons in the affected area are advised that the emergency is under control and the area has been declared habitable and safe and the evacuation order has been rescinded.

## How will you know if there is an evacuation alert or order?

Various methods will be used to advise residents and businesses in the event of an evacuation alert or an evacuation order, such as: going door-to-door (if applicable), patrol cars or fire vehicles using PA systems, alerting the media (radio, TV, internet), and social media (Emergency Management BC, Regional Districts, RCMP, etc.).

## Before an Evacuation Alert

- Designate an individual as the Evacuation Lead
- Devise a system for accounting for all personnel during the evacuation

## Evacuation Alert

- Collect and organize the important items already identified at the start of your Business Continuity Plan, under “locations of important items”
- Ensure all employees and visitors are aware of the evacuation alert information
- Start to implement any communications strategies if applicable
- Consider taking pictures of assets for insurance claim purposes

## Evacuation Order

- Take all important items and critical assets already identified
- Carry out emergency shutdown procedures for utilities, equipment, etc. if necessary
- Secure the building by closing and locking windows and doors
- Set out your First Responder Package if applicable

## Evacuation Rescind

- Monitor trusted communications channels to identify when it is safe to return and if there is anything you need to do to ensure it is safe to re-enter your place of work
- Wrap up any communications strategies if applicable