A Guide to Preparing a Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Plan

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Contents

Executive Summary 4
Disclaimer 4
Record of Amendments / Changes 5
Acronyms/Abbreviations 5
SECTION ONE 6
1. Overview of the Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Program (NEPP) 6
2. Supporting Documents 6
3. Purpose and Objectives of This Guide 7
4. Roles of the people who develop and use the Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Plan 7
RDCK Emergency Program staff 7
Neighbourhood Emergency Teams (NETs) 7
Residents 8
5. Introduction to the Emergency Cycle 8
Mitigation 8
Preparedness 8
Response 9
Recovery 9
6. Regional Mitigation Efforts 9
FireSmart: 9
7. Emergency Preparedness 9
8. Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness 10
9. Emergency Response: In an Emergency 10
Emergency Incidents 10
State of Local Emergency 10
Evacuations 11
10. Recovery: After an Emergency 13
11. Voyent Alert! – RDCK Emergency Notification System 14
12. Community Engagement for the NEPP by NETs 14
RDCK Branding 15
SECTION TWO - Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Plan Template Instructions 16
1. Overview & Purpose of this plan 16

2. Community Overview 16
2.1 Demographics 16
2.2 Land Use 16
3. Emergency Plan Map 17
4. Community / Neighbourhood Risk Factors 18
5. Community / Neighbourhood Response Assets 18
5.1 Community Assets 18
5.2 In Case of Evacuation 18
5.3 Emergency Support Services (ESS) 19
6. Emergency Mitigation 19
7. Emergency Preparedness 19
7.1 Emergency Notification System 19
7.2 Personal & Home Emergency Preparedness 19
7.3 Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness 20
8. In an Emergency 20
9. Shelter In Place (SIP) 20
10. Evacuations 20
10.1 Evacuation Alerts 20
10.2 Evacuation Orders 21
11. After an Emergency 21

Executive Summary

In the Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK), and across the world, we have observed growth in the severity & frequency of major emergencies in recent years, and we anticipate that this will continue as we experience the impacts of climate change. As such, we all need to do more to protect ourselves from the impacts of emergencies. The RDCK Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Program (NEPP) supports neighbourhood groups in becoming more resilient in the face of emergencies.

NEPP provides guidance and tools to enable the members of the neighbourhood to develop their own local plans by considering the specific hazards that the neighbourhood may face, how these hazards may affect members of the neighbourhood, and the skills and equipment that are available that could be useful in times of emergency.

This guide provides basic information on emergencies, emergency management concepts and how to develop an effective neighbourhood emergency preparedness plan.

The guide is structured in two parts:

- **Section 1:** Information on emergencies and emergency management, and;
- **Section 2:** Step-by-step guide to complete the Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Plan template.

Disclaimer

This guide and the associated Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Plan template are provided to the public to assist in their emergency planning. The Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) accepts no liability for the correctness of any information contained within this guide, template, or any Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Plan completed by a neighbourhood or community.

It is the intention of the RDCK to provide assistance to the public in their emergency preparedness. Expert and scientific information can and will change from time to time and the RDCK provides no assurance that this guide or template will be kept updated with current industry practice.

Record of Amendments / Changes

DATE	CHANGES	PAGE #
March 2024	Initial Release V1.1	All
June 2026	New template, corrections, and additions. Release of V2.0	All
November 2026	Repaired website links	Pg 12 and Pg 13

Acronyms/Abbreviations

EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
EMCR	The BC Ministry of Emergency Management & Climate Readiness
ESS	Emergency Support Services
IC	Incident Commander
GIS	Geographic Information System
NEPP	Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Program
NET	Neighbourhood Emergency Team
SIP	Shelter-in-Place
SOLE	State of Local Emergency: an official condition that grants the RDCK special powers to respond to an emergency.
RDCK	Regional District Central Kootenay
RV	Recreational Vehicle

SECTION ONE

1. Overview of the Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Program (NEPP)

NEPP is a grass-roots program to support groups of residents to work together to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies that may occur in their local areas.

- Mitigation measures are those that eliminate or reduce the impacts and risks of hazards through proactive measures taken before an emergency or disaster occurs.

- Preparation refers to the steps you take to make sure you are safe before, during and after an emergency or natural disaster. These plans are important for your safety in both natural disasters and man-made disasters.

- Response is the process of actively addressing an active emergency. This could include things like fighting a wildfire or cleaning up a hazardous material spill, which usually require trained experts with special equipment. Residents may be evacuated to a safe place away from the hazard during this phase.

- Recovery consists of those activities that continue beyond the emergency period to restore critical community functions and begin to return to a stable condition.

Developing and maintaining neighbourhood emergency preparedness is a continuous process as hazards and circumstances constantly change. A key deliverable of neighbourhood preparedness is the Neighbourhood Preparedness Plan which documents the results of the analysis of the hazards identified in the local area, and the plans for how the neighbourhood will work together to deal with them. These plans are for community use, by the residents in your area.

The RDCK has created a template that can be used as a starting point, but it's only a suggestion, feel free to make it work for you. As the plan evolves, the most important parts of the planning process are the connections that form between community members and the discussions that take place when residents consider their hazards and think of ways that they can become more resilient together.

The NEPP is intended to equip and empower residents to become more resilient. As an individual, being prepared to take care of oneself and our families and loved ones in times of emergency is essential; by working together with our neighbours, we can increase our resiliency exponentially as we all share our own strengths, skills and knowledge.

A word of caution: The NEPP is not intended to encourage residents to put themselves at risk, or to place additional demands on emergency responders. We strongly recommend that residents recognize the expertise of emergency professionals and be guided by the direction provided during emergencies. Hazards are unpredictable and can change suddenly. Do not put your life, or the lives of others, at risk.

2. Supporting Documents

The following tools and guides have been developed to support residents with building and maintaining emergency preparedness.

- A template for a Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Plan to help NETs develop local plans with information and guidance for all members of the neighbourhood or community on how they will handle emergencies that could affect them.
- A guide to developing the Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Plan (this document).
- A website with links to these documents and where further information and NEPP updates will be posted from time to time. http://www.rdck.ca/NEPP.
- For more information on the work that the RDCK Emergency Program does, and for more information on any current emergencies, please visit our website at http://www.rdck.ca/Emergency.

Below are some external publications that provide guidance on the intentions and importance of neighbourhood emergency planning as part of a Whole-of-Society approach to Emergency Management:

- The Sendai Framework: published by the United Nations
- An extensive list of Provincial Emergency Plans can be found at https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-management/emergency-management/reports that help understand what the Province and Local Authority does before, during and after an emergency.

3. Purpose and Objectives of This Guide

This is a companion document to the Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Plan (NEPP) template, and it is intended that the two documents be used in conjunction. The guide provides information on emergencies, the planning process, and on how to use the template to build a local plan for emergency preparedness.

4. Roles of the people who develop and use the Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Plan

RDCK Emergency Program staff

RDCK staff develop and maintain the program, and support NETs with becoming prepared for emergencies by providing information on hazards, the planning process, and how to set up and run a NET.

RDCK Emergency Management Staff will:

- Provide, via our website, this Guide and the generic NEPP template,
- Assist in identifying general local area hazards, and
- provide guidance in the plan's development.

Neighbourhood Emergency Teams (NETs)

The NET is the group of volunteers that works together to:

- analyse the hazards that may affect their neighbourhood,
- develops the NEPP for the neighbourhood and /or community, and
- communicates the NEPP to neighbourhood and community members.

Participation in the NET is open to all residents of the neighbourhood. It is recommended that the NET brings the community together to discuss the plan, to help residents prepare for emergencies.

Residents

All RDCK residents are encouraged to prepare for emergencies at a personal and family level, and to contribute to their neighbourhood emergency plans as much as they are able. We're all in this together!

Residents should:

- Maintain awareness of current conditions and potential hazards through the various information channels
- Read and understand the Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness plan
- Commit to supporting your neighbours within your capacity, and
- Contact the NET with any concerns

5. Introduction to the Emergency Cycle



To help define some of the terms used in emergency planning, we should first look at how emergency professionals define our activities.

We typically break down the 'cycle' of an emergency into four phases: mitigation, preparedness, response & recovery, and this is a recurring loop, as illustrated in the graphic above. These phases are cyclical, and lessons learned from each phase should inform preparedness and mitigation efforts for future emergencies:

Mitigation

The first phase of the emergency cycle, where proactive, long-term measures taken before a disaster occurs to reduce or eliminate the risk of future injury, loss of life, and property damage. This will include actions such as: participating in the FireSmart program.

Preparedness

The second phase supports the proactive, continuous cycle of planning, training, equipping, and exercising to build, sustain, and improve capabilities to effectively prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from disasters. This phase is critical in reducing stress and worry, increases personal resiliency in dealing with

disasters, and helps us get back to 'normal' life more quickly.

Response

The third phase is the short-term phase involving actions taken immediately before, during, or directly after an emergency to save lives, reduce health impacts, ensure public safety, minimize property damage, and meet basic human needs. It acts on prepared plans to alleviate immediate hazards and includes activities like evacuation, search and rescue, and emergency medical care.

Recovery

The fourth and final phase includes the process of repairing, restoring, and rebuilding communities following a disaster, extending beyond immediate response to include long-term holistic rehabilitation. It is an all-of-society, community-endorsed process that begins during the emergency and may continue for years to restore economic, social, and physical health.

Also note that the cycle as illustrated in the graphic above is continuous, and efforts must loop back to Mitigation again after the Recovery phase.

6. Regional Mitigation Efforts

RDCK staff are actively working on several projects to mitigate specific risks. These are typically quite localized due to the nature of the hazards being addressed. Residents in the specific local areas are informed and consulted as part of the process.

FireSmart:

Region-wide, FireSmart Program is a key tool to mitigate the risk that wildfires pose to populated areas and centres around Wildfire Mitigation Program Home Assessments by a Wildfire Mitigation Specialist and the Neighbourhood Collective Program. Residents can call 1-250-352-1539, email firesmart@rdck.bc.ca or visit rdck.ca/FireSmart to find out more and book a home assessment.

7. Emergency Preparedness

Emergency Preparedness begins at home, with being ready for emergencies based on the principles of:



Know the risks



Have a Plan



Assemble a Kit

An important aspect of preparedness is for residents to plan for where they will stay in the event of an evacuation. This must include consideration for pets and other animals such as livestock.

The RDCK shares guidance for personal & family preparedness on our website, here: https://rdck.ca/EN/main/services/emergency-management/emergency-preparedness1/household-family-preparedness.html

Additional resources are provided by the Province of BC at PreparedBC.ca.

8. Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness

A cornerstone of community preparedness is an engaged and committed network of Neighbourhood Emergency Teams (NET's), made up of people who typically live near one another, and who will collaborate to support each other in the Emergency Cycle.

Remember that a Neighbourhood is geographically localized within a larger rural community area, town, village, or suburb. It usually combines two main aspects: a physical area defined by specific boundaries (like streets, rivers, or parks) and a social community where residents interact and share a local identity. The Social Community portion is important to remember when developing the NEPP, which is people living close to one another and having face-to-face interactions, shared values, and a sense of belonging. This is what makes the NEPP specific and individual to each neighbourhood and community that uses the Preparedness Program.

The RDCK supports the Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Program by posting updates and information on our website, at RDCK/NEPP.

9. Emergency Response: In an Emergency

Emergency Incidents

Emergency incidents are events that affect the local population and require the use of emergency services. An emergency incident can be anything from an individual experiencing a medical emergency to an interface wildfire threatening a community.
Residents experiencing an emergency incident should:

- Contact the appropriate emergency services for immediate help: Police/Fire/Ambulance by dialling 911;
- Report a wildfire by dialling *5555;
- Report a debris flood or debris slide by calling 1 800 663 3456
- Activate their home emergency plan;
- For a larger emergency, activate their NEPP;
- Residents in the affected area should recognize and follow the expert advice from the emergency responders and the Emergency Operations Center.

State of Local Emergency

A State of Local Emergency, or SOLE, is a legal instrument that is issued by the RDCK (or any Local Authority) in response to an incident or emergency that requires the use of Emergency Response or Recovery Powers. A SOLE must be declared by your Local Authority to issue Evacuation Orders.

Evacuations

Evacuations are an emergency measure that have a significant impact on people's lives. However, in some emergencies this may be the best way to protect the lives and wellbeing of residents and people in the area. If an evacuation is needed, the RDCK Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will issue an Evacuation Alert or an Evacuation Order to instruct residents in the affected area. The RDCK EOC will work collaboratively with the relevant officials to support the implementation of evacuation plans.

There are four widely used emergency evacuation notifications that the public may encounter in an emergency: Tactical, Alert, Order, Rescind.

Tactical Evacuations

Tactical evacuations happen when there is no notice or warning and there is an immediate need to evacuate an area or residence for life safety. Police, Fire Departments, and BC Wildfire Service are the organizations generally ordering a Tactical Evacuation. If possible, you will be provided with immediate lifesaving direction at the time of a Tactical Evacuation. If residents are expected to be evacuated for any length of time, this will be followed by an Official Evacuation Order by the RDCK.

Evacuation Alerts

If there is sufficient time, the RDCK Emergency Operations Center will issue an evacuation alert to notify residents in the affected area that there is an incident happening and that evacuation orders may be imminent. Evacuation Alerts are distributed via the RDCK Emergency Notification System, called Voyent Alert!. The information will also be posted on the RDCK Facebook page, website, and press releases. Alerts will include a map and a list of affected homes and detailed instructions.

See also paragraph 11 which has more information on the RDCK Emergency Notification System.

An Evacuation Alert means **be ready** to evacuate. This is the time for residents to activate their emergency plans, assemble family and pets, collect their emergency grab & go kit and be ready to evacuate to their prearranged destination. Residents should notify friends or family members that they may be evacuating.

Residents needing additional time to evacuate, such as those with medical conditions or limited mobility should do so at this stage (See Evacuation below).

Similarly, residents with hobby farms with large animals (horses, cows, llamas, etc.) should evacuate at the Alert stage, as priority will be given to human evacuees once an evacuation order is issued. Commercial farms should have a plan in place, following guidance from the Ministry of Agriculture. More information on this can be found at https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/business-market-development/emergency-management/livestock-relocation.

Evacuation Orders

An Evacuation Order is an official directive by the Local Authority stating that an imminent threat to life and property exists, requiring residents to leave the affected area immediately, and means **"go now"**. As discussed in "Evacuation Alerts" above, residents will need to go to their prearranged destination immediately (e.g. at a

friend's house or with family out of area).

Under an Evacuation Order, a notification will be delivered using the RDCK Emergency Notification system, "Voyent Alert!". The RDCK Emergency Operations Center will also post information on its Facebook page, through press releases, and our website (rdck.ca/EOCinfo). Residents may also be advised by emergency services personnel, who will go door-to-door in the affected area to deliver printed Evacuation Orders to the occupants.

Upon arrival at their prearranged destination, evacuated residents are asked to self-register online at ess.gov.bc.ca to receive benefits via the Province of BC Emergency Support Services (ESS).

Evacuees requiring assistance in registering for ESS or Lodging Assistance will be directed to an ESS Reception Centre designated by the RDCK Emergency Operations Centre and identified on the Evacuation Order. The evacuation order will provide specific instructions on emergency routes, assembly points, and reception centers.

All residents need to cooperate with the emergency services personnel for the safety and wellbeing of everyone involved. It is best to assume that residents will **not** be able to access the affected area while it remains on Order. This is for everyone's safety and security.

Evacuation Rescind

When it is safe for residents to return home, the RDCK Emergency Operations Center will issue a Rescind notice, which terminates an Evacuation Order, and allows residents to go home. The area may remain on Evacuation Alert in times when the potential for near-future Evacuations still exists. The Rescind notice will effectively terminate the availability of Emergency Support Services (see below) except under preapproved, exceptional circumstances.

Shelter-in-Place ("SIP")

For some types of incidents, it may be recommended for residents to Shelter in place, rather than to evacuate. This will be dictated by the assessment of the incident which has occurred and the need to minimize the exposure of residents to further hazards. E.g.: in the event of a hazardous material spill you may be safer in your home than having to pass through the affected area to evacuate.

The main steps to SIP are to:

- Make sure all family members and pets that are at home are inside. Then close and lock all doors and windows.
- Turn off air conditioners, fans, and furnaces. Close vents and fireplace dampers.
- Move to an inner room, preferably at or above ground level and without windows. If you have an emergency supplies kit, take it with you. At the very least, make sure you have a battery-powered radio and plenty of drinking water.
- Stay tuned in to the local news and stay inside until local authorities say that it is safe to come out.

Specific information on the steps residents will be required to take while sheltering in place will be delivered using the RDCK Emergency Notification system, "Voyent Alert!" or through First Responders. The RDCK Emergency Operations Center will also post information on its Facebook page, through press releases, and our

website (rdck.ca/EOCinfo).

Residents should be familiar with the steps necessary to shelter in place, as part of their household emergency plan.

Emergency Support Services

To access ESS support, evacuees can create a profile at ess.gov.bc.ca or can go to the Reception Centre identified on the Evacuation Order. **Primary services** include temporary lodging, food, clothing, and incidentals (such as toiletries). **Specialized services** include emotional support, health services (such as first aid), pet care, and transportation.

During evacuations, it is important to know that ESS services are **ONLY** available during an Evacuation Order, unless there are extenuating circumstances. If this is the case, you must contact the RDCK EOC for additional assistance.

ESS may also be available to residents that have lost their home due to a single fire or flood incident, or other type of emergency incident.

Evacuees should contact their insurance representative or broker as soon as possible. Standard insurance policies provide coverage for some expenses, including accommodation. If there are remaining needs that are not covered by insurance, depending on the need and the circumstances of the emergency event, ESS Support may be available.

ESS Support provided to those eligible are determined by a case-by-case basis. Services may be available for an extended period depending on the emergency and the circumstances of an evacuation.

More information on ESS is available on the Province of BC website, ess.gov.bc.ca.

Within the RDCK, ESS Support is provided by trained volunteers. We always need more volunteers to join our team. Residents wishing to learn more about how they can help people affected by disasters by being a part of ESS should contact the RDCK Emergency Program by any of the following:

- Email essrdck@rdck.bc.ca,
- Visiting RDCK.ca/joiness,
- calling 250-352-7701.

We encourage NETs to include planning on supporting ESS volunteerism in their community.

10. Recovery: After an Emergency

Recovery from a disaster consists of a range of activities which help to restore physical, social, and economic conditions to a stable, post-disaster level. It is important to realise that things will have changed, and the 'new normal' may not be the same as things were before the incident happened.

Recovery time can vary depending on the scale of the emergency event.

Care should be taken in returning home, as hazards relating to the emergency (such as flood water or burnt

debris) may still be present. RDCK emergency personnel will provide guidance on what to expect and the recommended precautions.
Residents who have been affected by a disaster will be contacted by the RDCK, who will provide further information and guidance to support their recovery.

11. Voyent Alert! – RDCK Emergency Notification System

The RDCK emergency notification system "Voyent Alert!" is a tool used to communicate emergency information such as Evacuation Alerts & Orders. The Emergency Notification System complements the formal evacuation alert and order process, and it has several major benefits:

- The alert system messages are virtually instantaneous and will reach residents who subscribe to the system earlier than the notifications delivered door-to-door.
- Alert system messages are focused; they are sent to the affected addresses only.
- Residents who are away from their homes can still receive the notifications.

The system can send messages to smartphones, email, landline phones and text messages. Residents must sign up to receive the messages from the emergency notification system.

To sign up to receive this service, register at this link: https://voyent-alert.com/community/ .

We encourage NETs to include information on how they will promote the RDCK Emergency Notification System in their Plans, and to include information on how to sign-up for the notifications.

12. Community Engagement for the NEPP by NETs

Local community members will form the Neighbourhood Emergency Teams (NETs), which will develop and communicate the NEPP to the neighbourhood or community. While they are accepting the responsibility of developing the NEPP, they do not need to do this in isolation. It is highly encouraged to talk to everyone in your community to help understand the local hazards, any historical context, what their needs will be, and what they may offer in knowledge and help.

The process you may use to engage your neighbourhood and community will be individual to each, but here are a few helpful tips:

- The NETs are strongly encouraged to reach out to the RDCK Emergency Program Coordinators for advice and guidance throughout the NEPP development. They can be reached at: emergency@rdck.bc.ca or 250-352-7701.
- Try to link it to existing community events, such as famer markets, FireSmart meetings, and regular community meetings / groups / events that are already established.
- Engage your neighbours in the conversation and ask them what matters to them while preparing the NEPP. What hazards are they worried or concerned about? If there was an emergency, would they be willing to lend assistance or resources?
- Distribute a draft of the plan during one of the community events (sometimes only in small sections if there isn't time to dedicate to the whole plan). Get feedback from the community members and make any correction your team thinks is appropriate.

- When you are ready to present the final plan, distribute a copy to everyone and set a meeting to discuss and get the communities approval. If the plan doesn't have the buy-in of the community, they will likely not use it when they need it.

RDCK Branding

As the finalized NEPP will be wholly produced by the neighbourhood or community, it is not an official RDCK document and therefore RDCK branding cannot be used in the template. Nor can RDCK branding be used to promote any Emergency Preparedness meetings or the advertisement of those meetings. If you wish to use RDCK Branding for promotional purposes, contact a RDCK Emergency Program Coordinator and request that they help set up an Emergency Preparedness meeting in your area.

SECTION TWO - Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Plan Template Instructions

Section two of this Guide is a paragraph-by-paragraph explanation of the Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Plan Template. The following paragraph numbers correspond to the paragraph numbers in the Emergency Plan template and provide suggestions for what to include in each part of the plan.

Remember: When you are done filling in your NEPP, ensure you Update your table of Contents to accurately reflect the page numbers / location of the information within the plan.

1. Overview & Purpose of this plan

This section describes the plan, and the factors that were considered by the team when they developed it. This information will be useful to residents reading and applying the plan.

2. Community Overview

This section describes the community and the neighbourhood for which the plan was developed. Considering this information will help the members of the NET to start thinking about the local area, and the hazards that may affect the residents, as well as any complexities that would need to be considered.

Examples:
Specific Hazards: Down Rd and Lake Ave are prone to flooding; Train route through community (Hazardous Materials); Bloggins Creek poses steep creek landslide hazard…
Local factors: Serviced by a ferry with no practical secondary evacuation route; Limited number of fire hydrants or access to water; one bridge services 60% of the community…

2.1 Demographics

This is a way to start thinking about the people in the neighbourhood, and any vulnerabilities (e.g. young children or seniors that may need more help in an emergency). This does not need to be exact and will provide a good starting point to determine the level of support your Neighbourhood needs.

Some descriptions that might be helpful are: Homesteaders, single families, retirement community, have industrial experience, etc. Use what makes sense for the community.

2.2 Land Use

This is to help the planners with thinking about the types of property or industry in the area. These things will need to be considered when building the plan.

For types of homes, it is not important to specify each type that could possibly be in the neighbourhood, but the general building styles found throughout and any that stands out needing special considerations, such as Some examples of ‘homes’ would include:

- Single family homes

- Multi-family homes
- High density complexes
- Trailer / RV parks

Sheltered care facilities are buildings or areas that may serve as a place where the community can gather to provide shelter and care to those who need it. Examples are Senior and Community Halls.

A local industrial operation might bring particular hazards but may also be a key asset in terms of personnel and equipment to support residents in emergencies. Their owners / operators can be key members and contributors to the NEPP and may be able to provide considerable support in times of need.

It is important to factor in any significant tourist populations or major events that may attract people from outside the area. Visitors will often be unfamiliar with the area, the local hazards, and what to do in the case of an emergency, so extra care will be needed to ensure that they are informed when the community activates the Plan.

If there are Hobby or Commercial Farms in the neighbourhood, list them here for visibility. During an Evacuation Alert, these farms may need extra assistance in evacuation.

Use the "Other Notes" box to list any other Land Use considerations or supports that may help the community. This can include local artisans, woodworkers, metal workers, Air BNBs, etc that may need to be considered or could provide specialized support in an emergency. Other important notes may list where extra farm feed, or supplies may be obtained to support local farms and their animals.

3. Emergency Plan Map

The map should show residents the area covered by the plan, and should highlight specific places of importance to emergency preparedness, such as:

- Assembly point/s:

If people are ordered to evacuate, **we strongly encourage** them to do so without delay as this helps to minimize their exposure to the hazard – **only in exceptional circumstances** should anyone need to meet at an assembly point. For example, residents who need help evacuating may plan with a neighbour to be picked up at a predetermined assembly point.

- Critical Infrastructure:

Infrastructure such as the local Fire Hall, Police station, medical facility / first aid stations, local government office, school evacuation route, etc. should be included on the plan to help residents identify these places prior to an incident occurring.

- Emergency Supply locations:

Caches such as First Aid / AED locations, public water sources, free wifi for emergency calling, or farm animal feed supply locations.

- Specific local hazards: (see also para. 4)

Any known local hazards (e.g. potential flood zone or source of hazardous materials) should be highlighted on the map to help guide the planning process and to make residents aware of the hazards.

You can use Google Maps or the RDCK Geographic Information System (GIS) Mapping located at https://gis.rdck.bc.ca/portal/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=e15a66aba317469481f584a71350f2ad/ to create a screen capture for the map. You can also simply draw it out freehand. The important point is to create a map that anyone can understand. Don't forget to add a legend if using icons or abbreviations.

4. Community / Neighbourhood Risk Factors

This section describes the kinds of hazards that may impact the neighbourhood. There are many different potential sources of this information, including the experience of local residents, historical reports of major incidents, Regional and Provincial Government risk assessment information.

To learn more on identifying hazards in your area, please see the Canadian Red Cross page "Know the Risks in your Community".

For more in-depth information, refer to EMCR HRVA hazards document library.

5. Community / Neighbourhood Response Assets

5.1 Community Assets

This section identifies what we call 'assets': equipment, facilities or local knowledge that might be useful when an incident takes place. NETs will need to identify the assets that exist in their neighbourhood through a combination of methods which might include brainstorming, personal knowledge and requesting information from other residents.

Note: the assets that you choose to include are **not** Government assets, such as RDCK Fire Services or BC Wildfire assets that may be stored in your local area. These are community or personal assets and will be up to the community to determine when they are to be used and for what purpose.

Examples of assets might include things like:

- Emergency accommodation: hotels or motels, campsites
- Local restaurants and grocery stores that could provide food or drink
- Clothing / Thrift stores
- Community halls or schools that may be utilized for any purpose the community so decides
- Local equipment such as generators, earthmoving equipment, communication equipment, sources of heat or cooling during inclement weather
- Where to go / who to call for livestock evacuation transport or where extra farm supplies may be obtained (you can list these under "Other Response Assets).

It is recommended to include information on emergency services for the area, and how to contact them.

5.2 In Case of Evacuation

This section covers the different notifications that may affect a community during an evacuation. It is

recommended to keep these in the NEPP as reminders of what they may see and what they should do when an Alert or Order is issued.

A neighbourhood may have one, or several routes that can be taken to evacuate an area. List the two or more routes that your neighbourhood can take to exit the community. Note that the nature of the emergency may dictate the evacuation route, which may be different than the pre-planned routes provided in the NEPP.

5.3 Emergency Support Services (ESS)

ESS is a volunteer driven program, funded and supported by the Province of BC and managed by the RDCK who have teams who can respond locally or regionally.

ESS provides assistance to people evacuated during an emergency and is activated by the RDCK EOC. Under an Evacuation Order, Reception Centres will be stood up to provide this assistance to a large group of people, the location of which will be given on the Evacuation Order.
For single incidents not involving Evacuations, the Incident Commander at the Incident Command Post (usually the Fire Chief) will contact the EOC to make a request for ESS assistance in most cases.

This section provides information on how to access ESS support and, if members of the neighbourhood wish to volunteer in ESS, how to contact an ESS representative for more information. Please consider recruitment for ESS as part of the plan.

6. Emergency Mitigation

At the time of writing, the main RDCK program for Emergency Mitigation is the FireSmart program. More information is available on our website at rdck.ca\FireSmart. If your neighbourhood is within a FireSmart Community, you can list it here or remove it when developing your plan. If not, consider contacting the local FireSmart Coordinator through the RDCK FireSmart Program to find out more on becoming a FireSmart Neighbourhood.

The RDCK is researching and developing additional hazard mitigation methodologies and will share that information on our website. We welcome NETs to share ideas for emergency mitigation with us for consideration.

7. Emergency Preparedness

7.1 Emergency Notification System

The RDCK Emergency notification system is called “Voyent Alert!”. The system requires residents to sign up to receive the messages, voice, text, or email. The neighbourhood plan should include endorsement of the system, to encourage people to sign up, and log in at least one per year to verify their contact and notification details. New residents to the area should also be made aware of the system. If there is a member who would like to assist in promoting the Notification System, please add it here.

7.2 Personal & Home Emergency Preparedness

Add info on the plan for Communication & promotion of preparedness. Consider having a preparedness talk at public meetings and neighbourhood events. List the ideas the NETs may have to promote Emergency Preparedness.

NETs should leverage PreparedBC.ca for information and materials to promote Personal and Home Preparedness.

For Farms in the area, consider promoting Registering for a Premises ID with the Government of BC at https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/programs/premises-id . Premises ID is an important tool for protecting the health and safety of your livestock. In the event of an emergency affecting livestock, premises ID improves the Province of BC's ability to rapidly identify and more effectively contain animal disease outbreaks or facilitate natural disaster response and recovery.

7.3 Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness

This section will list how you will communicate and distribute the NEPP throughout the neighbourhood. Add a contact person on the plan for Communication & Promotion of your NEPP within your neighbourhood. Update this section to maintain a list of active NETs in the community and include their contact info for any comments and questions. This is so residents can connect and contribute to the NEPP.

8. In an Emergency

This section should outline the information on emergency phone numbers, including immediate assets and resources available to assist with emergencies. An information checklist is also provided to help remind people on what information to collect / provide to the First Responders when making the calls.

This is general information that can be used on small- and large-scale incidents and what is needed will depend on the neighbourhood location and the emergency. List where people can access trained first aiders and provide information on the name and address of Fire Depts / medical services available in the community.

Under no circumstances should you place yourself or your family at risk trying to respond to an incident.

The best action you can take is to notify First Responders, and provide the correct information, so they can respond quickly with trained personnel as soon as possible.

9. Shelter In Place (SIP)

In this section, identify any local hazards that may require residents to shelter-in-place. Examples may include: Hazardous Materials spills, Air quality index's high, etc. Plan for how the NETs can support the process. This could include sharing information on how residents can prepare themselves and their homes or helping to communicate that an incident has occurred. It may be useful to discuss this with local first response personnel (the local fire department or brigade) if you have questions on what information you might want to provide.

10. Evacuations

10.1 Evacuation Alerts

Lists the immediate preparations that people need to do!

This section also explains how evacuation alerts will be communicated **in addition** to official channels: (e.g. phone tree to spread the word, etc.).

Identify vulnerable residents, or those needing more time to evacuate.
This is also the time to evacuate livestock. List the owner and location of livestock, type, number of each. If you can, add any notes on how to support their evacuation.

10.2 Evacuation Orders

Lists out the **immediate** actions that people need to do!

Other information includes the community assembly points where people can go to meet evacuation buses or obtain shelter and who would oversee coordinating assistance. This may simply be reporting to the RDCK EOC on the number of people needing evacuation assistance and their location. List out preferred primary and secondary evacuation routes (as per section 5.2). Location of Reception Centers, if opened, will be provided by the RDCK EOC.

11. After an Emergency

List information regarding local supports that may be able to assist in recovery and rebuilding. Some post incident recovery will come from the RDCK, and/or Provincial or Federal Government programs. Information on what will be available at the time of the emergency will be provided.

People's insurance companies will be a key resource to recovery, however, there may be local groups or non-profit organizations etc. that might be able to assist people following a disaster. Include this information in the plan. Examples may be: local industrial / construction services in the community, tradespeople, garbage removal, etc.

During the recovery period, the RDCK will be able to assist in contacting non-profit or other Non-Government Organizations that can aid in recovering from an emergency.