



Sq'ewqel

Seabird Island



COMMUNITY EVACUATION GUIDE



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Prepared by [Red Dragon Consulting](#)

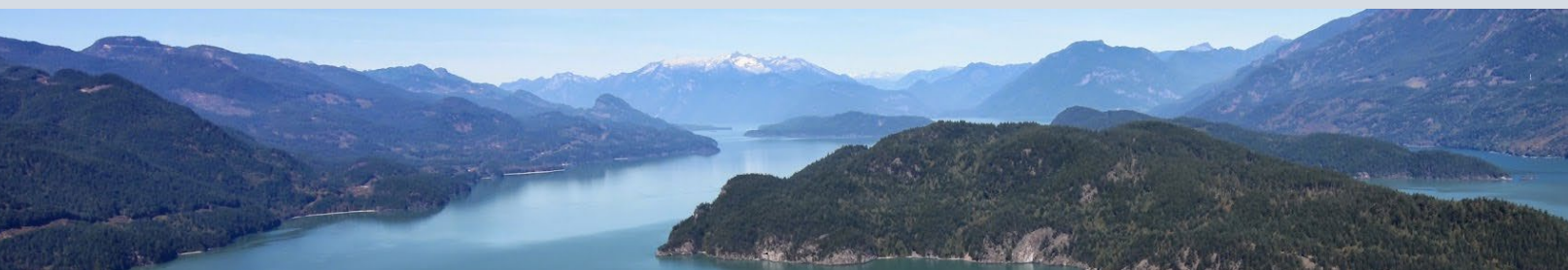
ACTION PATH

Emergency events and disasters may be beyond our control, but there are ways to reduce the risk and impact of any emergency we might face, whether natural events or human caused. We encourage you to take a few simple steps to better prepare for a range of emergencies:

- **Know the risks.** Although the consequences of disasters can be similar, knowing the risks specific to your community and region can help you better prepare.
- **Make a plan.** It will help you and your family know what to do.
- **Get an emergency kit and grab-and-go bag.** During an emergency, you will need some basic supplies. Prepare to be self-sufficient for at least 72 hours in an emergency.

Use this guide to become more aware of evacuation activities surrounding the area of Sq'ewqel (Seabird Island).

Learn what they mean and what you need to do to become better prepared. Remember, preparedness starts with your actions.



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STAY INFORMED



In the event of an emergency in Sq'ewqel, stay up to date with official information by registering for emergency alerts

[Sign Up for Alertable](https://alertable.ca/signup/index.html?site=BC28)

(<https://alertable.ca/signup/index.html?site=BC28>)



Learn how to be prepared for emergencies

www.seabirdisland.ca/emergency-preparedness



Learn more about volunteering for Emergency Support Services at www.seabirdisland.ca/emergency-preparedness

[Sign Up for Alertable](https://www.seabirdisland.ca/emergency-preparedness/alertable)



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Sq'ewqel (Seabird Island) follows a **three-stage evacuation process** - the goal is to move people, pets, and livestock away from danger and get them to a safe place.

We understand that evacuation can be stressful, especially for vulnerable community members, and it may also impact local businesses. That's why we aim to plan ahead, communicate clearly, and support everyone through each step of the process.

THE 3 STAGES OF EVACUATION

Stage 1: Evacuation Alert

An **evacuation alert** is a warning that there may be a need to leave your home due to a nearby threat. It gives you time to get ready in case an evacuation is ordered.

- **Sq'ewqel (Seabird Island)** issues evacuation alerts to help people prepare in an organized and safe way. This gives you time to pack important items, plan where you'll go, and make sure your family is ready.
- Stay informed by checking www.seabirdisland.ca/emergency-preparedness and following **Sq'ewqel social media** and emergency notification – **Alertable app**.
- An alert means **prepare now**. Sometimes, emergencies happen quickly, and an evacuation order may be issued without an alert first.

Stage 2: Evacuation Order

An **evacuation order** means there is an immediate threat to your safety, and you must leave the area right away.

- **Sq'ewqel (Seabird Island)** will issue an **evacuation order** for specific homes or areas based on the threat.
- The order may be delivered by **RCMP, Fire & Rescue Services**, or **Search and Rescue** teams.
- Once an evacuation order is in place, the area becomes a **controlled zone**. Access will be restricted and monitored by RCMP or security through the Emergency Operations Centre.
- **Emergency Support Services (ESS)** will set up Reception Centres where you can register, get help, and access supports like shelter, food, and other assistance.

Please leave immediately if you receive an evacuation order. Your safety and the safety of emergency crews depends on a quick and orderly evacuation. See also: Tactical Evacuation (page 4) for specific procedures in high-risk situations.

STAGE 3: Evacuation Rescind

An **evacuation order is lifted** when it's safe for you to return home or to your business. This means the immediate danger has passed and the area is considered safe.

- **Sq'ewqel (Seabird Island)** will issue an official notice when it's safe to return.
- At that time, you'll be allowed to go back and check your home, property, or business.
- Depending on the situation, we'll provide guidance to help you return safely and understand any steps you may need to take.

Please note: If conditions change, an evacuation alert or order may be issued again for your safety.

BAND COUNCIL RESOLUTION: STATE OF LOCAL EMERGENCY

A **Band Council Resolution** and **Declaring a State of Local Emergency** enables the Chief and Council to exercise emergency powers to align with the Emergency and Disaster Management Act. The **Sq'ewqel (Seabird Island) emergency plan** will be activated during an evacuation. Evacuation orders are issued under a declared state of local emergency with two exceptions:

- **Tactical Evacuation** — an evacuation directed by Emergency Services on-scene for an event with no warning.
- **Shelter-in-Place** — an event with no warning and no time to undertake an evacuation before the hazard arrives. Evacuation would expose the residents to greater harm or dangerous conditions, or the immediate risk is unclear.



Shelter in Place

Staying Safe Where You Are

In some emergencies, it may be safer to **stay where you are** rather than evacuate. This is called **shelter in place**.

You may be asked to shelter in place if:

- It's too dangerous to travel (e.g. wildfire smoke, hazardous spills, active police events)
- Roads are blocked or unsafe
- The risk is expected to pass quickly, and leaving could increase danger

What to Do if Told to Shelter in Place:

1. **Stay indoors** — Bring people and pets inside right away.
2. **Close all windows and doors** to keep outside air from getting in.
3. **Turn off fans, air conditioners, and ventilation systems** (if instructed).
4. **Stay tuned** — Follow updates from the Sq'ewqel (Seabird Island) through official emergency channels, website, or social media.
5. **Keep emergency supplies nearby** — Have water, food, medications, flashlights, and a battery-powered radio ready.

Useful items to have ready:

- Drinking water and snacks
- Flashlight and batteries
- First aid kit and medications
- Phone charger or battery pack
- Radio (battery-operated or hand-crank)

How Long Will It Last?

Most shelter-in-place advisories are temporary. You'll be given instructions when it's safe to move around or if evacuation becomes necessary.

Sheltering in place helps protect you when moving could put you at greater risk. Always follow official instructions and stay informed.

SUPPORT DURING AN EVACUATION

If an **evacuation order** is issued, the **Sq'ewqel (Seabird Island)** will provide a range of support services to help keep community members safe and cared for. Here's what you can expect:

 Reception Centres

- The Band has identified safe locations to serve as **Reception Centres**, where trained **Emergency Support Services (ESS)** volunteers will welcome and support evacuees.
- You will be told where to go if a Reception Centre is activated.
- If it is not safe to open a Reception Centre on Sq'ewqel (Seabird Island), you may be directed to a nearby community through our mutual-aid agreements.

 Food, Clothing & Shelter

- If you need **emergency help**, the Band will coordinate **food, clothing, shelter, transportation, and medical support** through the ESS program.
- If you're able, we encourage households to use their own resources at first, such as staying with friends or family, to help ensure emergency services are available for those most in need.

 Transportation

- If you or someone in your household does not have access to a vehicle, the Band will coordinate **emergency transportation** out of the area when possible and safe.
- Transportation needs will be managed by the **ESS or Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)**.

 Traffic Control

- The **RCMP, Band staff, or contracted security** will manage traffic and evacuation routes to keep things moving safely.
- Routes will be based on avoiding hazard locations.
- Additional support may be called in from partner communities if needed.

 Pets & Livestock

- We want your animals to be safe too. Here's how you can prepare:
- **Family pets** can go with you to Reception Centres but must stay in a **separate area** from people.
- Please bring a **kennel or cage**, and **enough pet food for at least 3 days**.
- Livestock producers need to have a pre-planned strategy to manage their specific risks. Those with livestock are strongly advised to develop an emergency plan for their farm.

- If you have **livestock**, plan ahead by arranging transportation and stabling options in advance. The EOC can provide support and advice as needed.
- The BC Ministry of Agriculture has worked with livestock industries to develop Emergency Management Guides for producers who would like to be as prepared as possible for such events.
- Please see the [Ministry Emergency Response Plans And Roles In Agriculture](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/business-market-development/emergency-management/emergency-response-planning) (<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/business-market-development/emergency-management/emergency-response-planning>)



If you have questions about any of these services, or if you need help with planning ahead, please contact the **Sq'ewqel (Seabird Island) Emergency Program** or visit

 www.seabirdisland.ca/emergency-preparedness.

BCEMS RESPONSE GOALS

The **Sq'ewqel (Seabird Island) Emergency Management Team** follows the principles set out in the British Columbia Emergency Management System (BCEMS) during a response. BCEMS is a comprehensive management structure that provides a framework for a standardized, coordinated, and organized interagency response and recovery to all levels of emergencies and disasters. The BCEMS response goals are listed below.

1. Ensure the Safety and Health of Responders
2. Save Lives
3. Reduce Suffering
4. Protect Public Health
5. Protect Critical Infrastructure
6. Protect Property
7. Protect the Environment
8. Reduce Economic and Social Losses

In addition, the following are included:

- **Protect Traditional Knowledge and Cultural Values and Infrastructure**
- **Ensure Cultural Safety and Security**

Evacuation Can Be Challenging — We're Here to Support You

We understand that evacuation is stressful. Emergencies can unfold quickly or over many days, and you may be facing difficult decisions — like caring for children, elders, pets, or protecting your property.

Evacuations often involve many people at once, and traffic can be a challenge. Social media and personal circumstances may also influence how people respond.

That's why **planning ahead together** — as a community — is so important. By working with families, local businesses, and emergency partners before a crisis happens, we can reduce stress, improve safety, and make evacuations go more smoothly for everyone.

Sq'ewqel (Seabird Island) follows a step-by-step process to guide decisions and actions, summarized in *Figure 1*. Although this process is presented in a logical flow, every emergency will differ; therefore, each situation will dictate the actions and order of implementation.

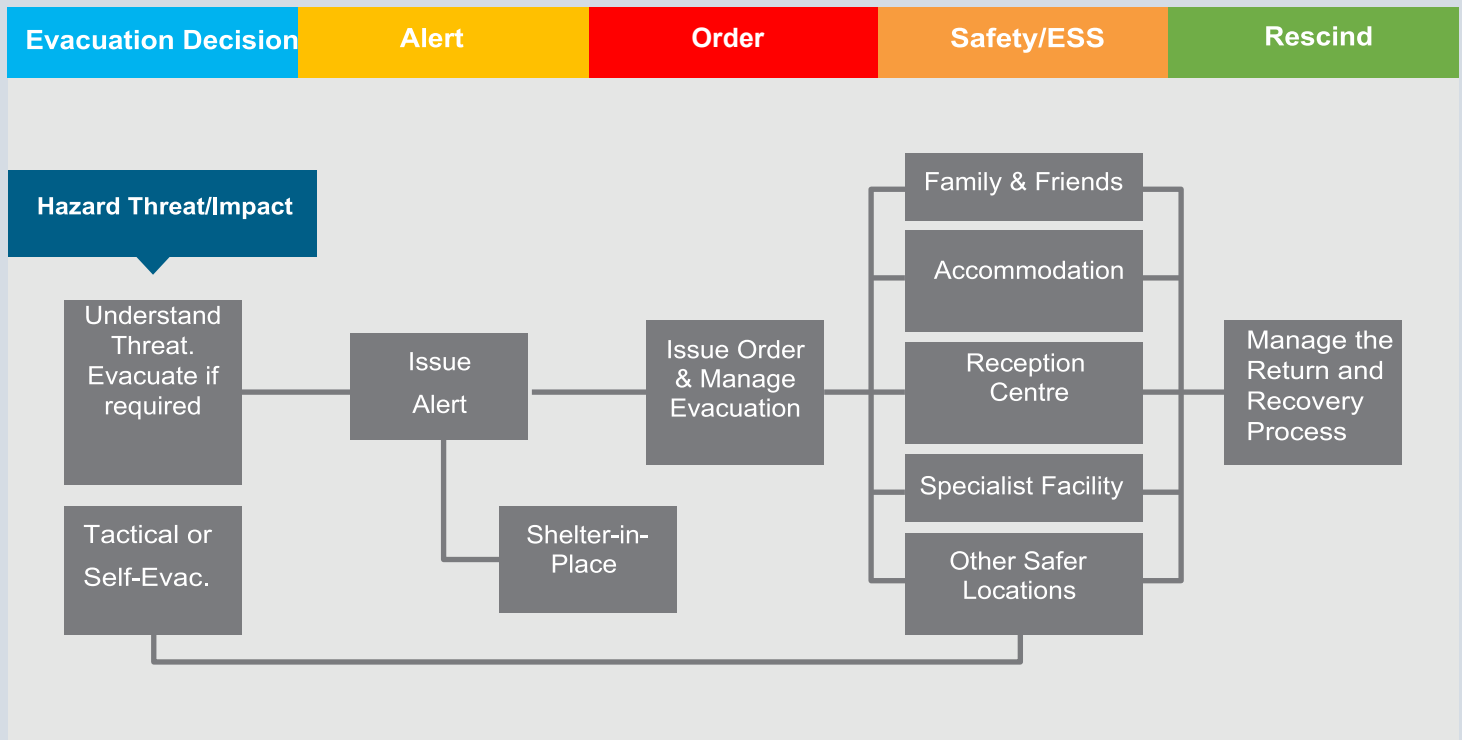


Figure 1 — Decision Points & Evacuation Process

WORKING TOGETHER

The Sq'ewqel (Seabird Island) emergency preparedness and evacuation management activities include:

- **Pre-Planning** — train for and then exercise the plan; emergency plans need to be associated with training. The emergency personnel, strategies, and capabilities are consistently exercised and validated.
- **Safety First** — public and responder safety comes first in all planning and operational decisions during an evacuation.
- **Coordination** — liaise with partner organizations and all levels of government, emergency responders, and emergency organizations, to prepare according to the emergencies at hand with necessary flexibility and scalability.
- **Communications** — think broadly about public communications to consider the full range of channels in reaching those affected; the speed of warning and informing the public, as well as public response, is critical.
- **Recovery** — considerations for returning home need early and sustained attention; the direction and coordination of recovery activity will be a priority from the outset. In some cases, the recovery can be a long process and even more traumatic than evacuation during an emergency.

The Sq'ewqel (Seabird Island) uses a set of carefully developed tools to help guide safe and timely evacuation decisions. These include:

- Clear criteria and trigger points to know when to act
- Plans for traffic control and assembly points
- Time estimates for how long it may take to evacuate each area

These tools are customized with important local knowledge to support the best decisions during an emergency.

To stay prepared for the future, the Band has also planned for up to 10% more people in its evacuation strategy — this accounts for seasonal events, visitors, and future community growth.

Our goal is to make sure every household has enough time and clear information to evacuate safely if needed.

DYNAMIC FACTORS

There are many dynamic factors relative to any emergency event that are required to be considered, and the Sq'ewqel (Seabird Island) plans and tools should reflect such variables.



Public Preparedness

- The readiness of the public
- Being prepared
- Keeping up to date through the Sq'ewqel (Seabird Island) website



Population

- Number of people to be evacuated
- Vulnerable populations
- Complex sites such as daycare and education facilities



The Incident

- The expected duration of the incident
- Additional considerations and risks associated with the incident



Timing

- The notice period before the risk (the incident) occurs
- The time of day



Evacuation

- Evacuation Alert or Order for residents and businesses
- Tactical Evacuation with no warning
- Shelter-in-place — dependent on type of incident



Evacuation Route

- Distance and route to a place of safety
- The capacity of the evacuation route
- Traffic control requirements
- Alternative emergency routes



Resilience

- The impact on local infrastructure and services
- Emergency Planning
- Availability of emergency services and provincial resources

Evacuation Zones

The Sq'ewqel (Seabird Island) has been divided into planning zones (see map) to assist in planning an all-hazard evacuation event. This information is a foundation of efficient evacuation planning

and management. Some areas have been split to account for local geography, such as the highway and the landscape.



The **primary evacuation route** is **Highway 7**.

Depending on the event, the Sq'ewqel (Seabird Island) and the Ministry of Transportation and Transit will collaborate to assess and maintain the viable route, Highway 7.

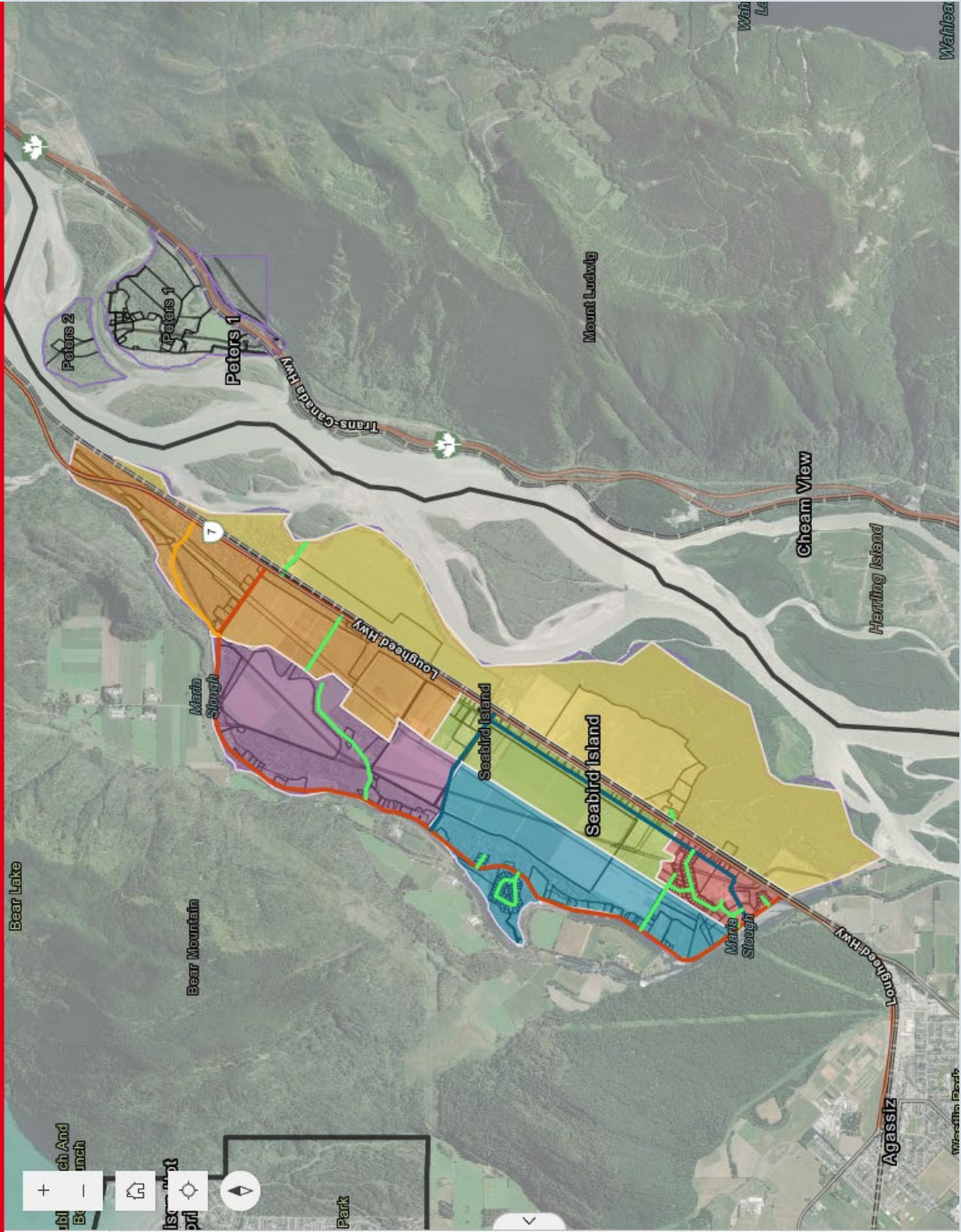
Emergency shelter in place instructions will cascaded as appropriate.

[Sign Up for Alertable](https://alertable.ca/signup/index.html?site=BC28)

(<https://alertable.ca/signup/index.html?site=BC28>)



Seabird First Nation Evacuation Mapping 2025



WHAT CAN YOU DO?

You, the Sq'ewqel (Seabird Island) members and businesses, should think about emergencies and disasters because it's always better to be prepared. Being a homeowner or running a business includes the responsibility of developing an emergency preparedness plan for you, your family, and your business operations. Be familiar with evacuation zone information and routes.

What Should I Prepare For?

Learn about the potential hazards around you to plan appropriately. Hazards are not consistent all year and are not the same for everyone. For example, if you live in a flood-prone area you may want to be prepared for flooding during freshet season. On the other hand, flood emergency planning may not be useful during wildfire season. Regardless of the type of emergency, you should always have a 72-hour emergency kit and a grab-and-go bag for you and your family.

Make a Plan

Depending on the disaster, you may be ordered to evacuate. It is helpful to know how to safely exit your home from multiple places to avoid scrambling for a solution in the middle of an emergency.

Having **contact numbers** is important for all **family members** and out-of-area close contacts. In an emergency, use text messaging, email, or social media to connect. These services are less likely to be disrupted and provide more options for connecting to everyone. Your plan should include important information, such as medications, names and contact information for doctors, copies of important documents, etc.

Pick a Meeting Place

Whether you need to evacuate or shelter-in place, think about a **safe place** where you and your family can hunker down if an emergency occurs.

In the event you need to evacuate your home, decide on somewhere nearby — on your street or in the community — that is relatively easy to access. Families often select a specific neighbour's door or yard that may be a safe distance from the emergency. Outside your neighbourhood, choose an identifiable place in the Sq'ewqel (Seabird Island) or neighbouring area; this could be a school, store, or local gym.

Unfortunately, emergencies happen everywhere — even on vacations. When you're travelling with family for an extended amount of time, agree upon a place to gather should you get separated. This can be especially useful for anyone who doesn't have a cellphone; you'll immediately know where to look if you can't find them.

Plan for Your Family

If you have **young children**, you need to consider what will happen if you can't pick them up from **school** or **daycare**. Notify the school or daycare about who is authorized to pick up your children and make sure your kids know as well.

Your family may include special considerations such as additional preparedness for vulnerable family members and, of course, for pets. Consider their specific needs and how to provide for them for at least 72 hours.

Utilities

Do not shut off your natural gas when you receive an evacuation order. If requested by emergency officials, FortisBC will turn off natural gas services as a precautionary measure or if there is an immediate threat to infrastructure.

If you suspect a gas leak, turn off the gas valve and leave immediately. Don't try to turn it back on; only a registered gas contractor can do that safely.

Know Where to Get Information

In an emergency, look for updated information on the Seabird Island website, Facebook page, and Alertable app. These systems will share alerts and instructions during emergencies. The radio, and television can share valuable information. Ensure you seek out credible sources so you can make informed decisions during a disaster.

Practice the Plan

Having a plan is a great start, but you're doing yourself a disservice if you don't practice. Running through the process of safely evacuating your home and gathering in your meeting spot could point out flaws in your exit strategy, as well as provide a sense of how long it would take. This is a great time to make sure everyone understands their roles in an emergency; better to double check everything now!

Make a Grab-and-Go Bag

A grab-and-go bag is a small emergency kit that's easy to take with you, in case you need to leave right away. It's a good idea to make grab-and-go bags for your home, workplace and vehicle.

Source: PreparedBC

Items to include in your Grab-and-Go Bag:

- ☐ Food (ready to eat) and water
- ☐ Phone charger and battery bank
- ☐ Small battery-powered or hand-crank radio
- ☐ Battery-powered or hand-crank flashlight
- ☐ Extra batteries
- ☐ Small first-aid kit and personal medications
- ☐ Personal toiletries and items, such as an extra pair of glasses or contact lenses
- ☐ Copy of your emergency plan
- ☐ Copies of important documents, such as insurance papers and identification
- ☐ Cash in small bills
- ☐ Local map with your family meeting place identified
- ☐ Seasonal clothing and an emergency blanket
- ☐ Pen and notepad
- ☐ Whistle



Build a 72 Hour Emergency Kit

Following a disaster, you may need to stay at home and be self sufficient. Part of being personally prepared for an emergency is being able to be sufficient for up to a minimum of 72 hours. To ensure you are ready, build a 72-hour emergency kit. You may need to evacuate and be self sufficient elsewhere, so it is important to ensure these kits are in mobile containers. Keep them somewhere accessible if you must evacuate. Keep your kit in a backpack, suitcase or tub, and ensure it is light enough to lift it into your car. Make sure to keep enough gas in your tank to make it out of the surrounding area at all times.

Items to include in your 72 hour Emergency Kit:

- ☐ Six litres of water per person (include small bottles)
- ☐ Copy of your emergency plan, including emergency contact numbers
- ☐ Prescription record from your pharmacist, as needed
- ☐ Three-day supply of non-perishable food per person (replace once a year)
- ☐ Change of clothing, including winter clothing (hat, mittens)
- ☐ Extra set of car keys

- ☐ First aid kit
- ☐ Flashlights for each family member
- ☐ Battery-powered radio and extra batteries or wind-up radio
- ☐ Three-day supply of non-perishable food per pet (replace once a year)
- ☐ Six litres of water per pet
- ☐ Cash

Items to take at the last minute:

- ☐ Wallet: identification, credit cards and cash
- ☐ Mobile phone and charger
- ☐ Glasses and contact lenses
- ☐ Medications
- ☐ Car keys
- ☐ Copies of important documents (birth certificates, passports, insurance and bank records)

Additional supplies to consider:

- ☐ Candles and matches or lighter
- ☐ Toiletries and personal hygiene items, hand sanitizer, toilet paper
- ☐ Garbage bags
- ☐ Activities for children (books or toys)
- ☐ Basic tools and duct tape
- ☐ Small fuel-operated stove and fuel
- ☐ Other camping supplies

If time allows, consider packing family photos and other irreplaceable items, personal computer(s), information on hard drives, laptop(s), tablets and charge cord(s), and easily carried valuables.

Business: What can you do?

⚠ Think about the **critical activities** your business depends on every day. These are the things you **can't afford to lose** — like:

- Access to your building or workspace
- IT systems and customer data
- Key staff being available
- Reliable suppliers or delivery networks

Understand Your Risks

Ask yourself: What would happen if these parts of your business were disrupted? Consider risks like:

- Fire, flood, or power outage
- Road closures or transportation issues
- Loss of internet or phone service
- Major supplier going out of business

You can rank these as **high, medium, or low risk** to help you focus on what matters most.

Reduce Your Risks

Once you know where you're vulnerable, take steps to reduce the impact. For example:

- Back up data regularly
- Make sure more than one staff member can perform critical tasks
- Have alternate suppliers or delivery options
- Prepare an emergency grab-and-go kit for your business

(Use the checklist provided in this guide to help you get started.)

Create a Business Emergency Plan

Your plan should include:

- **Primary and backup contacts** who will lead your emergency response
- **Clear triggers** for when the plan should be put into action
- A simple, written plan that is reviewed **at least every six months**

Train, Communicate, and Test Your Plan

- Introduce your emergency plan to **new staff**

- Include it in **regular staff training**
- **Test** your plan occasionally so everyone knows what to do
- Share your plan with **neighbouring businesses or suppliers** so you can support each other

 Build an Emergency Communications Plan

Make sure you have:

- A list of **key contacts**
- A simple **chain of command**
- A way to **track and share information** with your team and customers during a disruption

Talk to other businesses around you — a connected community is a resilient community

Business Checklist:

- ☐ Check your insurance policies and keep copies secure
- ☐ Check your fire risk and fire procedures

People

- ☐ Identify and document key procedures and details of staff who have key skills and knowledge
- ☐ Consider options for you and your staff “working from home” during and after an emergency
- ☐ Nominate primary and deputy contacts to implement your Emergency Plan Communicate your Emergency Plan to staff and rehearse Include evacuation or muster points - just like your fire alarm procedures

Premises

- ☐ Understand site evacuation routes and practice weekly security checks: IT / Fire Alarm / Security System
- ☐ Create an emergency contacts list for tradespeople such as glaziers, carpenters and electricians
- ☐ Prepare a Kit with copies of key documents including your Emergency Plan and contact lists – and supplies for a minimum of 72 hours

Data

- ☐ Use secure devices and software which are kept up to date and backed up
- ☐ Scan paper copies/key documents, financial information and store copies off-site

Services and Suppliers

- ☐ Consider backup services, energy, water, and telecommunications
- ☐ Create a contact list of current and alternative suppliers and diversify suppliers where possible

- ☐ **Communication**
- ☐ Create contact lists for all staff, their emergency contacts and key suppliers
- ☐ Electricity, gas, and water (24-hour emergency)
- ☐ Be prepared to use social media to communicate with stakeholders about your business disruption

CONTACT INFORMATION

Sq'ewqel (Seabird Island) Band Office – 604-796-2177

To report an emergency, call 911 first.

To learn more about emergencies and how you can be prepared, visit

www.seabirdisland.ca/emergency-preparedness

Our **Emergency Operations Centre** (commonly referred to as the **EOC**) is **activated when an emergency is declared**. During an emergency event, such as flooding or wildfires, updated information, including EOC contact information, will be shared using the Seabird Island website, Seabird Island Facebook page, and the Alertable app

RESOURCES

Alertable (emergency alerts from across Canada) <https://www.alertable.ca/#/>

BC Wildfire Services <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/wildfire-status>

Drive BC Visit drivebc.ca to subscribe to and view road and weather conditions.

Evacuation Stages Explained

Four-minute video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2uYoA_SmNDw

First Nations' Emergency Services Society <https://www.fness.bc.ca/>

Get Prepared <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared.html>

Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR)
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-management>

Prepared BC <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-management/preparedbc/guides-and-resources>

Sq'ewqel (Seabird Island) www.seabirdisland.ca/emergency-preparedness