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EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT IN MANITOBA

Message from Christine Stevens, Assistant Deputy Minister, Manitoba EMO

During emergencies and disasters, our collective strength and resilience are often put to the test. It is during these moments that the importance of communication and collaboration in emergency management becomes most evident.

Effective emergency management requires a coordinated effort across all levels of government. Working together, we harness our strengths, enhance resource sharing, streamline communications, and implement an organized approach to managing emergencies. Through joint planning and training, we create a robust framework capable of addressing any emergency or disaster.

Working together plays a critical role in safeguarding our communities. Let us all continue to foster these relationships as we work to build a more resilient Manitoba.



This issue

- Flood Insurance
- Emergency Preparedness in Provincial Parks
- Summer Safety
- New Funding Opportunities

Is Your Insurance Covering Your Risk?

Severe weather is becoming more common in Manitoba, making it critical for homeowners to be properly protected against flooding. Overland flood coverage is offered by many insurance providers and is typically combined with sewer backup and groundwater seepage. You do not have to live beside a river or lake to experience flooding. Heavy rains, snowmelt, water main breaks, and blocked ditches can also lead to flooding.

All Manitobans are reminded to review their home insurance to see if they are eligible. Here are some essential questions to ask your insurance provider to ensure you are adequately covered:

1. **What water-related damages does my insurance cover?** Understand the specifics of your insurance. Verify if overland flooding, sewer backup, and groundwater seepage are included.
2. **What is the cost and coverage limit?** Overland flood insurance usually costs between \$100 and \$300 annually. Confirm the exact cost for your situation and what your coverage needs are. For example, those with a finished basement may require higher coverage.
3. **How can my property risk be reduced?** Insurance providers use a variety of criteria to assess risk. Ask about what factors may influence your premium, such as installing a sump pump or backwater valve or repairing foundation cracks. Learn about more proactive approaches with this [checklist](#).

Some properties may be considered too high-risk to obtain overland flood insurance. The Manitoba government is committed to supporting Manitobans facing disasters. If you cannot purchase insurance and experience damages from overland flooding, your damages may be covered if a Disaster Financial Assistance program is announced.

The federal government, with provinces and territories, is developing a national flood insurance product to address this gap in overland flood insurance availability. The Insurance Bureau of Canada's [news release](#) provides more information.

Emergency Preparedness in Manitoba's Provincial Parks

Information provided by Manitoba Parks.



Every year, Manitoba's provincial parks manage emergencies like wildfires, floods, and windstorms. To handle these situations, Manitoba Parks works closely with the Manitoba Wildfire Service, Conservation Officer Service, Manitoba EMO, and other agencies as required to effectively manage these situations.

Operating under The Provincial Parks Act, Manitoba Parks has the authority to enforce closures or initiate evacuations within provincial parks during emergencies. This spring, such measures were put in place due to wildfires at Bakers Narrows and Grass River provincial parks, as well as for snowstorm cleanup at Turtle Mountain and William Lake provincial parks over the winter.

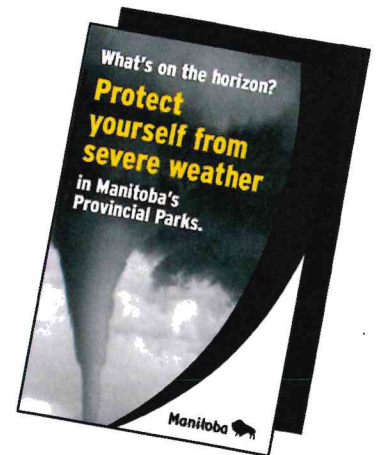
To stay prepared, regular training exercises are conducted. Recently, park managers participated in a tabletop exercise with Manitoba EMO focusing on tornado and wildfire response. Additionally, ongoing efforts are underway to update emergency plans for each provincial park.

Manitoba's provincial park system includes 93 parks, of which 70 are operational, offering amenities like campgrounds, cottages, beaches, and trails. The remaining parks are non-operational, characterized by wilderness and backcountry settings without infrastructure. Within provincial parks, there are over 6,100 campsites within 57 campgrounds, more than 6,300 cottagers, and over 100 businesses such as lodges, resorts, and commercial operators. Manitoba's provincial parks serve over 5.5 million visitors annually.

In the event of an emergency, park staff will do their best to inform visitors of the situation along with any evacuation and post evacuation instructions through park offices, information boards, at cabins, campsites, and businesses, if possible. Evacuation routes will be clearly communicated to campers and cottagers.

Educating park visitors about severe weather is vital for preparedness. If you are planning a camping trip, hiking adventure, or paddling excursion this summer, review the *What's on the Horizon?* brochure, which provides valuable information on protecting yourself from severe weather in provincial parks. [You can find the brochure here.](#)

For further details about Manitoba's provincial parks, visit manitobaparks.com, and follow @MBGovParks on social media.



Did you know?

Tornado Watch vs Tornado Warning

A **tornado watch** is issued when the weather conditions are right for the development of severe thunderstorms and possible tornadoes. It is important to keep an eye on weather forecasts because a watch can turn into a warning quickly.

A **tornado warning** is issued when a tornado has been seen or detected by radar and is about to happen. This is a serious threat to your safety, so take action immediately!

To remember the difference between a watch and a warning, think of making a taco: A “Taco” watch: You have all the ingredients to make tacos, but they are not made yet. A “Taco” warning: The tacos are ready to eat now!

The ingredients represent the right conditions for severe weather, but when the taco is made, it means the severe weather is happening.



New Funding Opportunities

There are two new funding opportunities that provide local authorities with access to funding for resilience and emergency management programs.

Green Municipal Fund – Adaptation in Action

The Adaptation in Action funding streams provides over 60% funding, up to \$70,000 for feasibility studies and up to \$1,000,000 for implementation projects. These projects can include cooling and warming centres, backup power, relocation, wildfire vegetation management, structural flood protection, wetlands, and shoreline stabilization. To qualify, applicants must have a climate adaptation plan or a community-scale climate change risk assessment.



Wawanesa Climate Champions

The Wawanesa Climate Champions program dedicates a total of \$250,000 for climate adaptation and mitigation. One of the program’s streams is for Community Protectors, also known as disaster preventers. These are responders and rebuilders working to protect our members and communities from climate-related disasters, before and after they occur.

For more details on these two great funding opportunities, visit our [Mitigation Funding Webpage](#).

Summer Safety Tips – For Kids

Summer is a wonderful time for kids to enjoy the outdoors, but safety must be top of mind. Here are some creative summer safety tips for kids:

Protect Their Skin: Sunburns are possible during summer adventures. Make sure your little ones wear sunscreen with at least SPF 30, and reapply every two hours, after swimming, sweating, or toweling off. For babies under six months, consult with your doctor about sunscreen use, dress them in lightweight clothing and keep them in the shade. Remember, harmful ultraviolet rays are strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Stay Hydrated: Hydration is key! Encourage kids to drink water throughout the day and avoid sugary sodas and energy drinks. Kids can easily get distracted by fun summer activities and not realize they are thirsty. Don't wait, hydrate!

Healthy Eating Habits: Stick to healthy eating habits. Fuel their summer fun with vitamins and nutrients by balancing your family's meals with fruits, veggies, protein, whole grains, and, of course, the occasional ice cream treat!

Be Prepared on Vacation

For many of us, summertime is associated with outdoor activities, road trips, and beach days on one of Manitoba's many lakes. While many of us do not like to think about what may go wrong while on vacation, it is always important to be prepared.

Imagine these situations:

- Your car breaks down on the way to the beach. Do you have food, water, and other supplies to stay safe?
- A storm hits while you are at the cottage, cutting off the power. Do you have a flashlight or candles? Do you have a plan if your mobile device were to run out of power and you need to make a phone call?
- You get injured while hiking in a remote area. Did you bring a first aid kit?

Whatever the situation may be, and whether you are at home or on vacation, being ready for the unexpected is crucial.

Manitoba EMO has created resources to help you and your family stay safe this summer. Check out our downloadable infographics which includes important items to have available in your home, your Emergency Go-Kit, your vehicle, and your first aid kit:

- [Home Emergency Supplies](#)
- [Emergency Go Kits](#)
- [Emergency Vehicle Kit](#)
- [First Aid Kit](#)

By taking these proactive steps, you can ensure a safe and enjoyable summer adventure!

Family cool-down game ideas

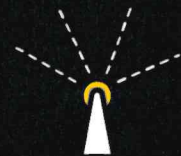
Water Balloon Toss!

Beat the heat with a water balloon toss game! Fill balloons with water, grab a partner, and see who can catch the most balloons without popping them. It's a fun way to stay cool and active.



Sprinkler limbo!

Set up a sprinkler and play limbo! Take turns bending backward under the water stream. Lower the sprinkler gradually to make it more challenging.



Empower kids this summer to make smart and healthy choices while having a blast! Remember to protect their skin, stay hydrated and promote healthy eating habits.