

# COMMUNITY EMERGENCY GUIDE

## IN AN EMERGENCY DIAL 911

KEEP INFORMED  
MONITOR SOCIAL MEDIA  
AND ALBERTA EMERGENCY  
ALERTS

## THICKWOOD



August 2019

C. Gillan



**THIS COMMUNITY EMERGENCY GUIDE WAS PUBLISHED  
BY REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WOOD BUFFALO EMERGENCY SERVICES**

Regional Emergency Services works closely with municipal, industrial and local community partners in ensuring the safety of our community.

The types of activities include, but are not limited to:

- Creating and maintaining the Regional and Community Emergency Plans
- Conducting training and exercises
- Implementation of the Fire Prevention and FireSmart programs

This Community Emergency Guide provides you with easy to understand information on home and personal emergency preparedness. It has been designed to be unique to your community and includes guidance on dealing with the likely hazards that have been identified by your community.

Emergency prevention, preparedness and response are responsibilities we all share. We encourage you to review the Community Emergency Guide annually with your family and keep it in a place where it can be easily accessed.

To request additional copies or for permission to reproduce this guide in whole or in part, please contact Regional Emergency Services at 780-792-5500.



REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY  
OF **WOOD BUFFALO**

# PREPARE NOW



Sign up for Alberta Emergency Alert!



Know your community's evacuation routes and shelter locations. Have a plan for pets and livestock.



Be prepared to evacuate with very little notice.



Reverse park near your front door. This will make leaving easier.



Ensure your vehicle has at least a half-tank of fuel at all times.



Gather emergency supplies, including breathing masks.



Keep important documents in a fireproof safe and create password-protected digital copies.

## WILDFIRE

THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WOOD BUFFALO IS AT RISK OF WILDFIRE EVERY YEAR.

**IF YOU ARE UNDER A WILDFIRE WARNING, GET TO SAFETY RIGHT AWAY.**



Leave if told to do so. Do not delay when evacuating as roads may become blocked.



Listen for emergency information and alerts.



If trapped, call 911.



Use a breathing mask to keep particles out of the air you breathe.

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# FLOODS

**DURING MAJOR RAINSTORMS OR RAPID SNOWMELT, THE SHEER VOLUME OF WATER CAN BACK UP DRAINAGE AND SEWER SYSTEMS, RESULTING IN FLOODED BASEMENTS. IN MOST CASES, YOU CAN PREVENT THIS FROM HAPPENING BY TAKING A FEW SIMPLE, YET EFFECTIVE STEPS:**

## PREPARE NOW



Waterproof cracks in your foundation walls or sidewalks with silicon every three to five years.



Purchase or renew a flood insurance policy.



ALBERTA  
EMERGENCY  
ALERT

Sign up for Alberta Emergency Alert!



Have an Emergency Kit prepared in the event you must leave your home on short notice.



Install a flood-proofing device, such as a backwater valve to keep rainwater and sewage from backing up into the basement.



Extend downspouts at least 1.8 metres (6 feet) from basement wall and drain towards a street or back lane (not toward your neighbour).



Check eavestroughs regularly for debris, leaks, poor connections, or sagging.

**WITHIN THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WOOD BUFFALO THERE ARE A NUMBER OF WATERWAYS AT RISK OF FLOODING EACH YEAR DURING THE SPRING RIVER BREAKUP OR DURING TIMES OF HEAVY RAINFALL.**

**Listen for emergency information and alerts and follow instructions.**



**If told to evacuate, do so immediately. Get to higher ground.**



**Never drive around barricades/fences. Obey all signs.**



**If trapped in a building, then go to its highest level.**



**Avoid already flooded areas and fast-flowing waters.**



**Immediately get out of a stalled vehicle in rising water.**

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# TRANSPORTATION ACCIDENT DANGEROUS GOODS / HAZMAT / FLAMMABLES

## PREPARE NOW



ALBERTA  
EMERGENCY  
ALERT

Sign up for Alberta Emergency Alert!



Build an Emergency Kit that includes:  
Water - at least 5 litres per person per day for 3 days, for drinking and sanitation.  
Food - at least a 3 day supply of non-perishable food.



Know how to operate your home's ventilation system.



Know your community's evacuation routes and shelter locations. Have a plan for pets and livestock.



Be prepared to evacuate or shelter-in-place with very little notice.



Ensure your vehicle has at least a half-tank of fuel at all times.

A WIDE VARIETY OF TRANSPORT VEHICLES FREQUENTLY TRAVEL HIGHWAY 63. A TRANSPORTATION ACCIDENT INVOLVING DANGEROUS GOODS, HAZARDOUS MATERIALS OR FLAMMABLES ALONG THIS ROUTE HAS THE POTENTIAL TO IMPACT THE COMMUNITY (FIRE AND/OR AIR QUALITY).

### IN THE EVENT OF A TRANSPORTATION ACCIDENT INVOLVING DANGEROUS GOODS / HAZARDOUS MATERIALS OR FLAMMABLES:

Listen for emergency information and alerts and follow instructions.



If you are asked to evacuate, do so immediately.



If you are requested to stay indoors:

- Bring pets inside.
- Close all exterior doors and windows.
- Turn off air conditioners and ventilation systems so no outside air is drawn inside.



If you are caught outside:

- Stay uphill and upwind.
- In general try to go at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  km from the danger area.



If you are in a motor vehicle:

- Stop and seek shelter in a permanent building. If you must remain in your car, keep car windows and vents closed and shut off the air conditioner and heat.

Do not leave the safety of a shelter to go outdoors to help others until authorities announce it is safe to do so.

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# NATURAL GAS & ELECTRICITY

NATURAL GAS ACTUALLY HAS NO ODOUR! A PUNGENT, ROTTEN EGG ODOUR IS ADDED AS A SAFETY PRECAUTION. IT'S THERE TO LET YOU KNOW WHEN NATURAL GAS IS IN THE AIR.

## IF YOU SMELL GAS INSIDE A BUILDING:

-  Evacuate people and pets from the building immediately.
-  Leave the doors open as you exit.
-  Do not smoke, light matches or lighters, operate electrical switches, appliances, phones, vehicles, or create any other source of ignition or sparks.
-  Call 911 once you are outside.

**AVOID DAMAGING GAS, ELECTRIC AND UTILITY LINES THAT MAY BE BURIED A FEW INCHES UNDERGROUND.**

## IF YOU SMELL GAS OUTSIDE A BUILDING:

-  Evacuate people and animals from the area immediately.
-  Do not smoke, light matches or lighters, operate electrical switches, appliances, phones, vehicles, or create any other source of ignition or sparks.
-  Shut down equipment (such as lawn mowers, vehicles, and power tools) if it is safe to do so. Alert anyone who is nearby and stay upwind.
-  Call 911 immediately.
-  Keep people away from the area.

Click or call Alberta One-Call at least two working days before digging in your yard.



Toll Free  
1 800 242 3447



Website  
[www.alberta1call.com](http://www.alberta1call.com)

## TO REPORT A DOWNED POWER LINE, CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY WITH INFORMATION ON THE EXACT LOCATION OF THE LINE.

- Always assume downed lines are energized.
- Keep back a minimum of 15 metres (50 feet) from the wires or anything in contact with the wires.
- Warn others in the area of the danger and have them stay back.

## TIPS FOR AN EXTENDED POWER OUTAGE



Disconnect all electrical appliances and equipment to avoid damage from electrical surges.



Keep fridge and freezer closed. The refrigerator will keep food cold for about four hours and a full freezer will keep the temperature for about 48 hours.



Stay warm. Gather family members in the warmest room in the house. Dress in layers, draw drapes or cover windows to prevent heat loss.



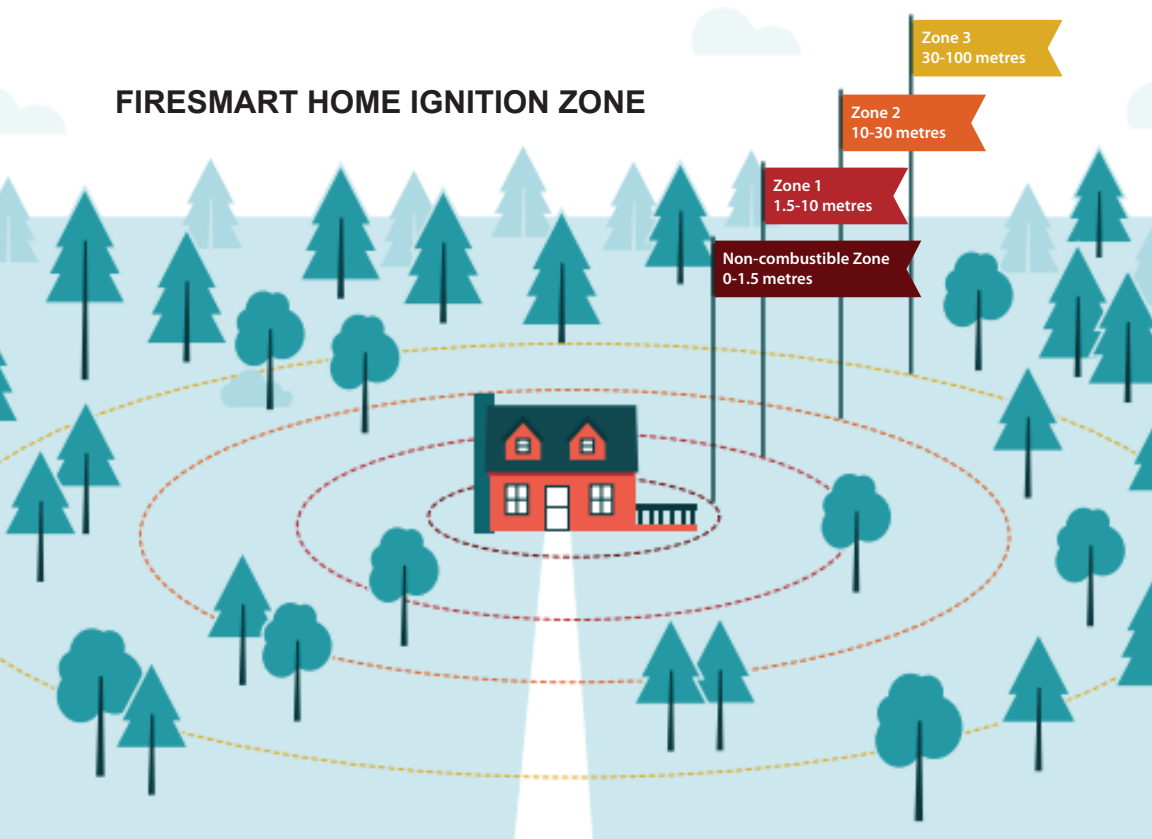
Do not use camp stoves, kerosene heaters or barbecues indoors as they emit carbon monoxide. Gas stoves used as a heat source for long periods without ventilation will do the same. Ensure generators are placed outside and are well ventilated.



Check on neighbours.



If safe, go to a community location with power if heat or cold is extreme.



# FIRESMART

**FIRESMART IS A NATIONAL PROGRAM THAT HELPS COMMUNITIES MITIGATE THEIR RISK OF WILDFIRE.**

## FIRESMART IN WOOD BUFFALO

In the RMWB, we have a shared responsibility to protect our homes, our properties, and our communities from the threat of wildfire.

On a municipal-level, FireSmart vegetation management projects are conducted across the region to help manage densely forested areas near developed communities.

As a resident, you can help protect your home and community by:

Removing leaves, pine needles, and other debris from your roof and gutters

Creating a 1.5 metre non-combustible zone around your home and deck

Moving combustible items such as propane tanks and firewood piles at least 10 metres away from your home

Considering non-combustible building material for your home such as asphalt shingles, stucco siding, and composite decking

When we all work together to mitigate our surroundings, we can significantly reduce the risk of wildfire in our region.

## MORE INFORMATION

Learn more about FireSmart, and find helpful resources online at [rmwb.ca/FireSmart](http://rmwb.ca/FireSmart).

# FIRE PREVENTION

## PERSONAL HOME SAFETY CHECKLIST ☒



Do you have a working smoke alarm on every level of your home? ☐



Have you tested your smoke alarms monthly to ensure they are working? ☐



Do you have a working carbon monoxide alarm in your home? ☐



Do you have a home escape plan? ☐



Have you practiced your home escape plan with your family? ☐



Do you have a portable fire extinguisher in your home? ☐



Do you know how to use a portable fire extinguisher? ☐



Is your home address clearly visible during the day and night from the street? ☐



Are candles on a sturdy base, and away from combustible materials? ☐



Do you blow out candles before leaving the room? ☐



Are matches and lighters out of reach of children? ☐



Are products like gasoline and propane stored safely outside? ☐



Are space heaters located a safe distance from combustible materials? ☐



If you have a fireplace, is it properly screened? ☐



Do you have a permit from the Fire Prevention Branch for your stationary backyard fire pit? ☐



Are gas appliances routinely and properly maintained? ☐



Are you aware of the hazards of overloading electrical outlets? ☐



Is the kitchen area free of hazards? ☐



Do you stay in the kitchen while cooking, never leaving your pan unattended? ☐

IF YOU HAVE ANSWERED NO TO ANY OF THESE QUESTIONS, FIND SOLUTIONS AT [WWW.RMWB.CA/FIREPREVENTION](http://WWW.RMWB.CA/FIREPREVENTION) OR CALL THE FIRE PREVENTION BRANCH AT 780-792-5519

**Get the information you need, when you need it!**



The **Alberta Emergency Alert** app can be downloaded to your smart phone or tablet, on either Apple or Android. Emergency information will be sent directly to your device, television or radio.

Available on the **App Store**

ANDROID APP ON **Google play**

**MORE INFO @** [emergencyalert.alberta.ca](http://emergencyalert.alberta.ca)

# EMERGENCY ALERTS

THE ALBERTA  
EMERGENCY  
ALERT SYSTEM  
DELIVERS  
CRITICAL,  
LIFESAVING  
NOTIFICATIONS  
ABOUT AN  
EMERGENCY.

## DOWNLOAD!



Alberta Emergency Alert  
[www.emergencyalert.alberta.ca](http://www.emergencyalert.alberta.ca)

You can also tune into  
any of RMWB's social  
media accounts:



RMWoodBuffalo



@RMWoodBuffalo



rmwb.ca

# MAKE A PLAN



If you have special health needs establish a personal support network of people who understand your special needs. Write down details such as health information and locations of medication, medical equipment and your grab-and-go bag.



Identify more than one evacuation route from your neighbourhood.



Consider landmarking your home by picturing where your furniture lies in your home, identifying how many steps from the bedroom to the stairway or door, etc.



Make sure you have home or tenant's insurance. It can help recover the cost of damage and/or replace your belongings if they were lost and help cover living expenses when you are displaced.



Always keep your gas tank at least half full.



Prepare your child by teaching them about natural hazards and what to do when they occur.



Ask your child's school or daycare about their emergency policies. Find out how they will contact families during an emergency and what type of authorization is required to release your child to a designated person if you can't pick them up.



Make a list, take photos or a video of the key details about your home and belongings and back up this inventory list.



Read your insurance policy and insurance renewal to ensure you have the proper coverage! If you visit [www.IBC.ca](http://www.IBC.ca) or contact IBC at 1-844-227-5422 they will provide you guidance about your insurance policy (they do not sell insurance).



Work with your neighborhood to identify people who may need extra help during an emergency. Assign block buddies to help make sure everyone is taken care of. As well, if you have a friend or relative that lives in the affected area, check in with them.



Draw up a floor plan of your home showing all possible exits from each room and plan a main and an alternate exit route from each room.



Tell your friends and family where you are going and how long you will be gone.



Your family may not be together when an emergency occurs. Identify a safe meeting place near your home and outside your neighbourhood. Establish how to contact one another and what you would do in different situations.



Check with your employer about workplace emergency plans, including fire alarms, emergency exits, meeting points, and designated safety personnel or floor wardens. Keep some basic supplies at work.



Understand the risks in your region, how to prepare for them and what to do in the event they happen.



Learn about first aid. You could save a life.



Make sure your child's school or daycare has updated contact information for each parent, caregivers and designated persons.



Program into your child's phone at least 3 emergency contacts! Bonus, if they can remember them!



Be prepared to take care of yourself and your family for a minimum of 72 hours. It may take emergency workers some time to reach you.



Keep a list of emergency contact information in your emergency plan, close to your home phone, and program into your cell phone.



Take the time to plan for your pet(s) – identify who will grab the pet(s) and the pet evacuation kit, and what family/friend, boarding facility, or hotel that can shelter your pet(s) or is pet-friendly. Remember that pet(s) are not always welcomed in emergency shelters and hotels.



Text messages, email or social media use less bandwidth than voice calls and may work even when phone service has been disrupted.

# GET A KIT

**TIP:**  
Attach a luggage tag to your kit identifying items you can't pack right now but need to take when you go.

- Consider your personal needs
- Assess annually
- Check for expiration dates

## Basic Items



## Additional Items



## THINGS TO CONSIDER

### Children/Infants

- Diapers, wipes, and change of clothes
- Formula, bottles, food, and extra water
- Children's medication
- Comfort items and toys
- Portable sterilization tools if formula fed

### Special Needs/Seniors

- Special items according to your needs (i.e., cane, glasses, hearing aid, tire patch kit, batteries, denture care, orthotics, wheelchair, sleep apnea machine, can of seal-in-air product, insulin, blood glucose testing kit, etc.)
- Written instructions for medical or mobility equipment

### Pets

- Food and water for at least 72 hours (4L/day per average dog, 1L/day per average cat)
- Pet file (including recent photos of the animal, your emergency numbers, copies of any licenses, and vaccination records, and contacts of where your pet can be taken in case you need to evacuate such as hotels that are pet friendly, animal boarding facilities, animal clinics and family members/friends)
- A sturdy crate or carrier
- Blanket and toy
- A strong leash or harness
- ID tag and collar
- Bowls and can opener for food
- Special medications, dosage, and veterinarian's contact information
- Newspaper, paper towels, plastic bags, litter, and/or litter box
- Pet first-aid kit

## EMERGENCY CAR KIT

- ☐ Blanket
- ☐ Candle in a sturdy base and matches
- ☐ Extra clothing and shoes
- ☐ First aid kit with seatbelt cutter
- ☐ Flashlight (crank or battery-powered)\*
- ☐ Food that won't spoil (such as energy bars)
- ☐ List of contact numbers
- ☐ Radio (crank or battery-powered)\*
- ☐ Small shovel, scraper, and snowbrush
- ☐ Warning light or road flares
- ☐ Water
- ☐ Whistle
- ☐ Antifreeze & windshield washer fluid
- ☐ Fire extinguisher
- ☐ Road maps
- ☐ Sand, salt or cat litter (non-clumping)
- ☐ Tow rope and jump cables

\* replace batteries once a year

# EVACUATION

A wide range of emergencies may cause an evacuation. In some instances you may have a day or two to prepare, while other situations might call for an immediate evacuation. Planning ahead is vital to ensuring that you can evacuate quickly and safely, no matter what the situation.

## BEFORE AN EVACUATION



Plan how you will leave and where you will go if you are advised to evacuate.



Develop a family/household communication and re-unification plan.



Assemble supplies that are ready for evacuation, portable emergency kit.



Tune into social media, the radio or TV and follow instructions.



Shut off utilities if instructed to do so.



Take your evacuation kit.



Take your pets and pet evacuation kit with you.



Close your windows and shut off your ventilation system. Lock up your home.



Register at the Reception Centre even if you choose not to stay there. In addition, First Nation and Métis Nation members should register with their respective leadership.

## DURING AN EVACUATION

# SHELTER-IN-PLACE

IF AIR QUALITY IS AFFECTED IN YOUR COMMUNITY, YOU MAY BE INSTRUCTED TO "SHELTER-IN-PLACE."

Take immediate shelter where you are - at home, work or school.

WHAT  
TO  
DO



Bring your family and pets inside.



Lock doors, close and seal all windows and doors using duct tape, and plastic. Place wet towels along the base of doors.



Close fireplace dampers, turn off fans, air conditioning and forced air heating systems.



It is important that you stay in shelter until local authorities say it is safe to leave.



Tune into social media, the radio or TV and follow instructions.

## REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WOOD BUFFALO



RCMP Administration Line (non-emergency)  
Phone: 780-788-4040

Bylaw (complaints/inquiries)  
Phone: 780-762-5858

ATCO Gas 24-Hour Emergency Services  
- Municipal Region of Wood Buffalo  
Toll Free: 1-800-511-3447

ATCO Electric Emergency  
Toll Free: 1-800-668-5506

Northern Lights Regional Health Centre  
Phone: 780-791-6161

Emergencies – fire, ambulance and police  
Phone: 9-1-1

Emergency Management Information  
Hotline During Emergencies  
Phone: 780-799-8000

Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo  
PULSE (24/7)  
Phone: 780-743-7000  
Toll Free: 1-800-973-9663  
Website: [www.rmwb.ca/pulse](http://www.rmwb.ca/pulse)

Regional Emergency Services  
Phone: 780-792-5500

## PROVINCIAL



Alberta Emergency Alert  
Website: [www.emergencyalert.alberta.ca](http://www.emergencyalert.alberta.ca)

Click Before You Dig  
Toll Free: 1-800-242-3447  
Website: [www.alberta1call.com](http://www.alberta1call.com)

Alberta Road Conditions and Construction  
Information  
Phone: 5-1-1  
Website: [www.511.alberta.ca](http://www.511.alberta.ca)

Alberta Health Link 24/7  
Phone: 8-1-1  
Website: [www.MyHealth.Alberta.ca](http://www.MyHealth.Alberta.ca)

Alberta Health Services  
Website: [www.albertahealthservices.ca](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca)

Alberta Poison and Drug Information Service  
Toll Free: 1-800-332-1414  
Website: [www.padis.ca](http://www.padis.ca)

## NATIONAL

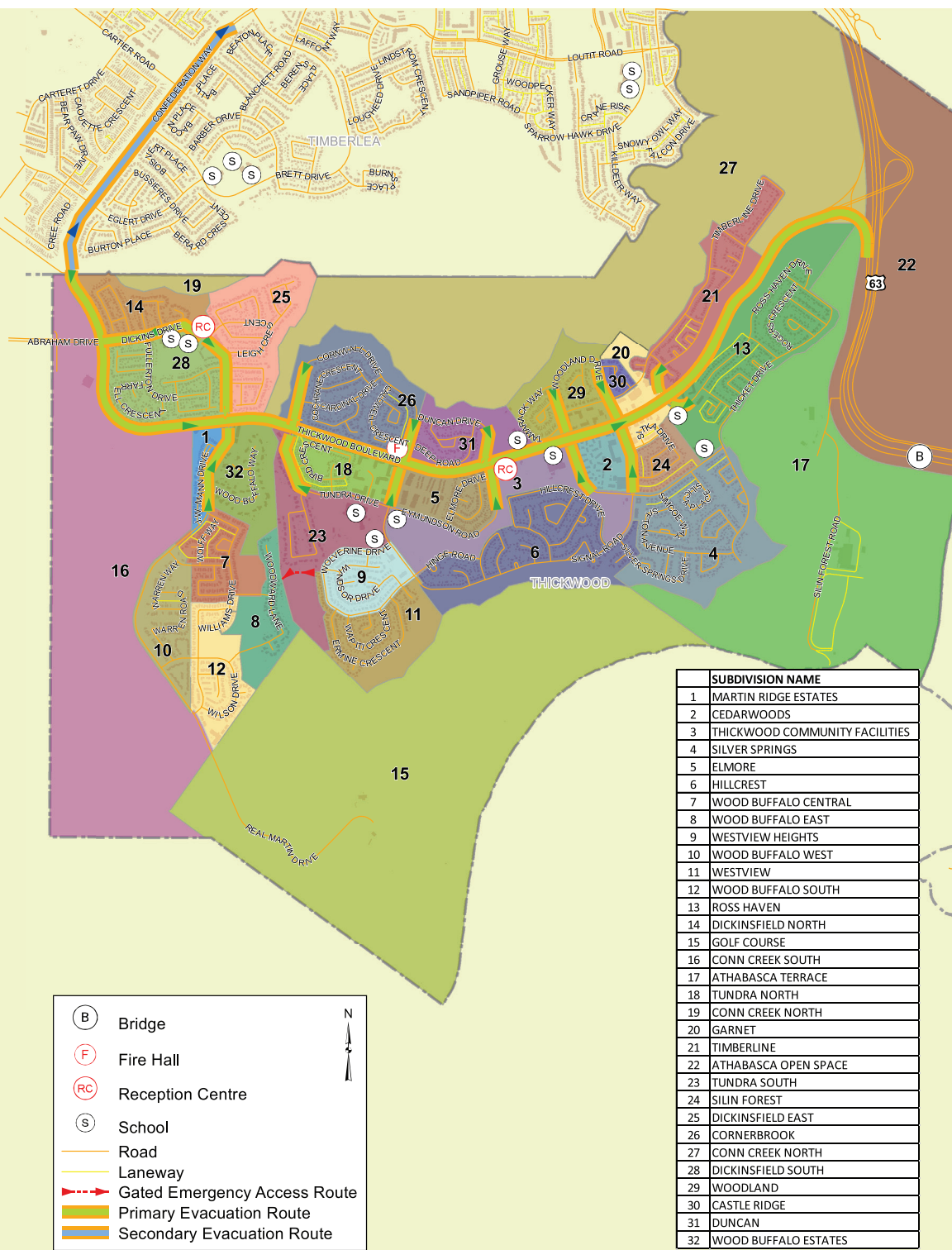


Insurance Bureau of Canada  
Toll Free: 1-844-227-5422  
Website: [www.ibc.ca](http://www.ibc.ca)

Weather Network:  
Website: [www.theweathernetwork.com](http://www.theweathernetwork.com)

Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness:  
Toll Free: 1-800-622-6232  
(1-800-O-CANADA)  
Website: [www.getprepared.gc.ca](http://www.getprepared.gc.ca)

Canadian Mental Health Association  
– Wood Buffalo Region  
Phone: 780-743-1053  
Website: <http://woodbuffalo.cmha.ca>



# MENTAL HEALTH

**TAKE BREAKS:** Make time to unwind and remind yourself that strong feelings will fade. Try to take deep breaths and to do an activity that you usually enjoy, this may help keep your mind off the crisis.

**PRIORITIZE:** Common tasks may seem overwhelming when we're under stress so make a list of things that need to be done, do them one at a time, and try not to be too hard on yourself if you are having troubles focusing or getting motivated.

**STAY INFORMED:** When you feel that you are missing information, you may become more stressed or nervous. Watch, listen to, or read the news for updates but be aware that there may be rumors during a crisis, especially on social media so always turn to reliable sources of information like your local government authorities. At the same time limit the amount you spend reading or watching about the event because it can be upsetting to hear about the crisis and seeing images repeatedly.

**DO GOOD:** Helping others during times of crisis can give you a sense of purpose in a situation that feels "out of your control" so seek opportunities to help others. Volunteer at an emergency Reception Centre or Group Lodging facility.

**TAKE CARE:** Take the time for rest and physical activity and try to ensure proper nutrition and hydration.

**ASK:** If you feel like you're not coping as well as you'd like or if you're unable to function in daily life, talk with someone you trust, make an appointment with a mental health professional, or join a support group.

**CONNECT:** Build a strong support system by sharing your concerns and how you are feeling with a friend or family member and ensure your children have had a chance to share and connect as well. Stay connected in person, by phone, email, etc., because these people can help support you during the tough times.

# RETURNING HOME



Inspect your home carefully before entering. Walk carefully around the outside to check for loose power lines, gas leaks, and structural damage. If you have doubts about safety, have your home inspected by a qualified building inspector/structural engineer before entering.



Be wary of wildlife as you return home after a disaster. Disasters and life threatening situations will worsen the unpredictable nature of wild animals.



Prevent carbon monoxide poisoning by placing generators, pressure washers, charcoal grills, camp stoves, or other fuel-burning devices outside and away from open doors, windows, and air vents.



Do not enter a building if you smell gas or an unusual odour, exit immediately and call 911.



Call your insurance company.



Document with photos and written notes on what the damage looks like and what you lost. For insurance purposes, the more documentation you have the better.



Keep records of all clean up and repair costs, including hotels, meals, and travel expenses.



Wear waterproof boots and gloves to avoid floodwater touching your skin.



Clean your home as recommended. Never mix bleach and ammonia because fumes are toxic.



Eat and drink only food and water that you know are safe.



Tune into social media channels / radio for any emergency updates, news, reports, or resource identification.



Contact PULSE Wood Buffalo Call Line [780-743-7000] or [1-800-973-9663] or online at [www.rmwb.ca/PULSE](http://www.rmwb.ca/PULSE) to seek assistance or guidance on how to decontaminate and clean after an emergency – flood, fire, etc.

**RETURNING HOME CAN BE BOTH PHYSICALLY  
AND MENTALLY CHALLENGING.  
ABOVE ALL, USE CAUTION.**

# COMMUNITY SAFETY



1. Always wear a helmet and proper protective equipment.



2. Pack the necessary tools and gear and keep your vehicle well-maintained both on and off the trail.



3. Don't ride alone. Use the buddy system!



4. Know your limits and the terrain – ride within your abilities, in a controlled manner, and with common sense.

## ATV/ SNOWMOBILE



## BOAT



1. All operators of powered boats used for recreational purposes must carry proof of competency on board, typically the Pleasure Craft Operator Card.



2. Wear a properly fitted lifejacket or personal floatation device. It must be approved for use in Canada!



3. Ensure that you have all legally required safety equipment on board.



4. Never drive your boat while impaired or under the influence of alcohol or cannabis.



1. Do not panic and try to control your breathing. You will have some buoyancy at first.



2. Turn towards the direction you came from and place your hands and arms flat on the unbroken surface.



3. Kick your feet and try to push/pull yourself up on top of the unbroken ice on your stomach, like a seal.



4. Once you are lying on the ice, don't stand up. Roll away from the break until you are on solid ice.

## ICE



## RIVER



1. Wear a lifejacket or a personal floatation device! It is the most effective piece of safety equipment you can use while on the water.



2. Do not swim or boat while impaired or under the influence of alcohol or cannabis. You must be alert, attentive, and responsive.



3. Be aware of the weather and temperature of the water. The immediate effects of cold-water immersion can be life threatening.



4. Trip planning is the best way to let loved ones know where you are going, when to expect you back, and who they need to call in case of emergency.



1. Wear a properly fitted and secure helmet.



2. Wear and have the right gear! For example, wear a reflective vest or a clothing article that has a reflective strip and use a flickering light to make your bicycle more visible to motorists.



3. Obey traffic rules when cycling on the road.



4. Learn and use bicycle hand signals – turning right, left, and your intention to stop.

## BIKE



## BEAR



1. Make your yard Bear Smart between April and October by getting rid of or reducing attractants such as bird feeders, pet food, garbage and ripening fruit.



2. Prevent bear encounters when enjoying natural areas by going out in a group, keeping your dog on a leash, and making noise.



3. Watch for bear signs such as scat and overturned logs. If the signs look like they were made recently, quickly and calmly leave the area.



4. Know what to do if you see a bear – don't attract attention, retreat slowly, remain alert and calm.



5. Be prepared for a bear encounter – always carry bear spray and know how to use it.

