



# **HOME & COMMUNITY CARE GUIDE: PLANNING FOR AN UNEXPECTED INTERRUPTION IN CARE**

**For additional copies of the handbook, go to  
[www.viha.ca/hcc](http://www.viha.ca/hcc)**

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## Introduction

Disasters and other events that interrupt the continuity of your care strike quickly, and without warning.

Disasters and events that will require planning on the part of you, the client, and your family and personal support network are:

- ❑ Natural disasters
- ❑ Extensive/prolonged utility outages
- ❑ Water supply interruptions or contamination
- ❑ Environmental events such as severe weather
- ❑ Public Health emergencies/Epidemics
- ❑ Job action
- ❑ Unplanned staffing shortages e.g. illness
- ❑ Pandemic emergencies: A Pandemic is an epidemic that occurs worldwide or over a very broad area, crossing international boundaries and usually affecting a large number of people. They only occur as the result of a major shift in a type “A” Influenza virus.

This booklet provides some helpful ideas on how to manage for the first several days during crisis conditions until normal conditions can be restored. Families and personal support networks should make themselves familiar with the contents of this booklet.

**Preparation may seem like a lot of work. It is. Preparing takes time and effort. So do a little at a time, as your energy and budget permit. The important thing is to start preparing. The more you do, the more confident you will be that your needs can be met during unexpected events.**

If you need assistance with completing your personal plan speak to your Home & Community Care Health Care Provider.

**Additional information can be found in the “Individual & Neighbourhood All-Hazard Emergency Preparedness Workbook” from the BC Provincial Emergency Program at**

[www.pep.ca](http://www.pep.ca)

**Keep this booklet in your Grab and Go Bag**

# Earthquake Survival Instructions

Here are some simple instructions.

## Pre-Earthquake:

Ensure that bookshelves are stabilized by being attached to the wall.

Store heavy items near or on the floor of cupboards with lighter items stored in the overhead spaces.

Do not hang mirrors or pictures on the walls near your bed unless they are mounted in an earthquake proof manner

## Earthquake:

The first indication of an earthquake

A low or loud rumbling noise.

A sudden violent jolt.

A shaking or moving of objects.

Any combination of the above.

## What to do immediately:

Protect yourself.

If possible **DUCK – COVER – HOLD**

Move away from large windows and objects that may fall. If you are able, drop to the floor and cover the back of your neck with your hands. If you are able, get under a heavy table or desk.

If inside, stay there! If outside, stay there!...Take cover...or get close to an inside wall

Protect head and face...

Don't attempt to move down stairs.

When the shaking stops:

Turn on your battery operated radio to hear the up to date status of your town/city/municipality. See Appendix A for radio channels and frequencies.

In the event that you have the dial tone on your portable phone, use a plug in phone if one is available.

If you must go to an emergency shelter, tell the person in charge about your special needs.





## Your Medical Condition and History

If you need to go to a hospital or clinic in the event of a disaster, or if your records are unavailable or destroyed, this information will help any temporary care givers in understanding your special needs. You should update this annually and when medications or your health condition changes. Please consider also giving a copy of this information to your designated contact person.

Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Health Problems: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Allergies: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Blood Type (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

Current Treatment(s) : \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Special Needs – Please see the next page Self Assessment and Back-up Plan**

**Do you have an Advance Medical Directive or a Do Not Resuscitate Request?**

Yes  No

If yes, where is it located and/or who has a copy? \_\_\_\_\_



## YOUR SELF ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST AND BACK-UP PLAN (CLIENT COPY)

I am able to:       Hear       See       Speak      If no I communicate by: \_\_\_\_\_

Walk without help       Walk with help       Transfer myself       Prepare my meals \*\*       Feed myself

Dress myself       Sit without help       Sit with help       Wash/Bathe without help

Wash/Bathe with help       Use toilet without help       Use toilet with help

Your back up plan takes effect if someone who usually provides care for you is unexpectedly unable to do so. This may be a family member, friend or health care provider such as a home care nurse or community health worker. Your plan should be updated anytime your care needs change.

Tasks I cannot do	How often do I need help	Usual Helper	Phone number	Back Up Helper	Phone number

\*\* If help with meal prep is needed or the client receives 'Meals on Wheels', the client should have pre-prepared meals on hand. For example: Canned or frozen with canned being the preference.

**PLEASE COMPLETE WITH YOUR BACK-UP HELPER'**



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## YOUR SELF ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST AND BACK-UP PLAN (BACK-UP HELPER COPY)

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## Medications

- Know what medications you are taking, their names, strength, and how often you take them (for example: Tums one with each meal and at bedtime). Include eye drops, inhalers and all prescribed medications.
- Know which medications are absolutely necessary for your survival.
- Carry a list of medications (amount, frequency) with you at all times. Ask your Pharmacist to give you a printout each time your current medications change and insert it behind this page in your information guide.
- Take your medications with you if you are evacuated.

## Survival Diet for One Day

Breakfast	1/2 cup canned fruit, drained 1/2 cup cold cereal (shredded wheat, puffed wheat or puffed rice) 5 low salt crackers + 2 tbsp. jelly 1/2 cup Rice Dream Cup of water
Snack	Hard candy
Lunch	15 low salt crackers 6 tbsp jelly 1/2 cup canned fruit, drained 1/2 cup juice Hard candy Cup of water
Snack	4 cookies 1/2 cup canned fruit, drained
Evening	1 cup canned stew or macaroni and cheese 10 low salt crackers 4 tbsp. jelly 1/2 cup canned fruit, drained 1/2 cup juice Cup of water

Hydration is very important. You should drink 2 – 3 eight (8) ounce glasses of water a day. See Appendix D for water disinfection instructions.

## Supplies for Three Days Survival Diet

Keep these supplies in your “Survival Diet” pack.

### FOODS:

- 12 4 ounce cans of fruit (applesauce, pears, peaches, pineapple only)
- 1 Package of (3) shredded wheat biscuits or 2 cups of puffed rice or puffed wheat
- 6 4 ounce boxes of juice (apple or cranberry)
- 1 Box low salt crackers
- 1 Box low salt cookies
- 2 Bottles jelly
- 2 Bags hard candy (barley sugar, humbugs, peppermints, hard fruit candies)
- 3 8 ounce cans of stew or macaroni and cheese
- 1 Small jar of peanut butter (optional)
- 12 500 ml Bottles of water

### EQUIPMENT:

- 1 Can opener (small, hand operated)
- 1 Sharp penknife
- 1 Small piece of aluminum foil
- 1 Container with lid
  
- Ziploc bags
- Paper towels
- Disposable plates, bowls and plastic knives, forks and spoons
- Waterproof matches and candles
- Flashlight and battery operated radio
- Copy of “Survival Diet” information

## Appendix A – CBC Frequencies by Community

<b>COMMUNITY</b>	<b>RADIO FREQUENCY</b>
ALERT BAY	101.5 FM
BAMFIELD	540 AM
CAMPBELL RIVER	104.5 FM
CHEMAINUS	90.5 FM
COAL HARBOUR	540 AM
COMOX	92.5 FM
COURTENAY	92.5 FM
NORTH END CORTEZ ISLAND	104.5 FM
SOUTH END CORTEX ISLAND	92.5 FM
CROFTON	90.5 FM
CUMBERLAND	92.5 FM
DENMAN ISLAND	92.5 FM
DUNCAN	90.5 FM
GOLD RIVER	860 AM
HORNBY ISLAND	92.5 FM
LADYSMITH	90.5 FM
METCHOSIN	99.5 FM
NANAIMO	105.7 FM
PARKSVILLE	92.5 FM
PORT ALBERNI	98.1 FM
PORT ALICE	1170 AM
PORT HARDY	95.5 FM
PORT MCNEILL	105.1 FM
QUADRA ISLAND	104.5 FM
QUALICUM BEACH	92.5 FM
SALT SPRING ISLAND	90.5 FM
SAYWARD	630 AM
SOINTULA	105.1 FM
SOOKE	99.5 FM
TAHSIS	1240 AM
TOFINO	91.5 FM
UCLUELET	540 AM
VICTORIA	90.5 FM

Clients should check and if local radio will be broadcasting they may choose to tune into that station:

Local Station frequency: \_\_\_\_\_

It is a good idea to preset your portable, battery operated radio to the frequency of your choice.

## **APPENDIX B - Personal Preparedness Supplies in Case of Evacuation - Grab and Go Bag**

These should be a small backpack that can be placed over shoulders or in a walker basket. It should be kept under or in your bedside table for easy access at all times.

- A litre bottle of drinking water
- A can of Ensure and three nutrient bars
- Flashlight and batteries
- Small radio with batteries
- Medications as noted before
- Extra prescription eyeglasses protected in bubble wrap
- Family photographs
- Medical information
- Family contact information
- Equipment – Power operated equipment ( mobility or oxygen compressor) and the appropriate battery pack. List your specialized equipment below:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

If you live in an area where local authorities call for an evacuation, be prepared to be evacuated/transported by other means than an ambulance, e.g. military vehicles, volunteers, or air evacuation. Bring your medications with you. See the section on Medications for more details.

Please notify the Home & Community Care Program of address and telephone changes.

## APPENDIX C      Medical Alert

### ***How does it work?***

Your Medical Alert is worn as a bracelet or necklace and bears an internationally recognized symbol.

If needed, your computerized medical data you made available will be accessed within seconds to medical professionals...anywhere in the world. Your vital data will help medical personnel to provide proper diagnosis and care...and could save your life.

Realistically, in a disaster, the phone lines would probably be down. However, the alert will at least inform medical personnel about your special status.

### ***Who should wear a medical alert identification?***

You should consider Medical Alert if:

You have a severe drug or food allergy

You take medication regularly,

You have an implant such as a pacemaker or coronary stent.

You have any other medical condition that could impact your treatment in an emergency

Usually your medical alert is custom engraved with your primary medical conditions, personal ID number and a 24-hour hotline number.

Medical Alert: Personal I.D. Number: \_\_\_\_\_

24 Hour Hot Line Number: \_\_\_\_\_

If you do not have a Medical Alert Identification device, but are interested in obtaining one refer to :

[www.medicalert.ca](http://www.medicalert.ca)

or

1-800-668-1507 Monday to Saturday 6: 00 am to 2:00 pm Pacific Standard Time



## APPENDIX D      Water Disinfection

1. Before attempting disinfection, first strain water through a clean cloth or handkerchief to remove any sediment, floating matter or glass.
2. Water may be disinfected with **5.25%** sodium hypochlorite solution (household chlorine bleach). Do not use solutions in which there are active ingredients other than hypo-chlorite. Use the following proportions:

One drop = .05 mL    1 tsp. = 5 mL

Clear Water:	One litre	2 drops
	Four litres	8 drops
	20 litres	1/2 teaspoon

Cloudy Water:	One litre	4 drops
	Four litres	16 drops
	20 litres	1 teaspoon = 5 mL

3. Mix water and hypochlorite thoroughly by stirring or shaking in a container. Let stand for 30 minutes before using. A slight chlorine odor should be detectable in the water. If not, repeat the dosage and let stand for an additional 15 minutes.

**Note:** Water may also be purified by bringing it to a rapid boil for 5 minutes. Due to its chemical content, swimming pool or spa water should not be used as a primary source of drinking water.

## APPENDIX E SPECIAL NEEDS

*The information in Appendix E is provided by the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, Provincial Emergency Program. The tips that appear here were created in partnership with the BC Coalition of People with Disabilities.*

## **E.1 PERSONAL PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST FOR SENIORS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

- ❑ Establish a personal support network. More information on page 17.
- ❑ Customize an emergency health information sheet on page 5.
- ❑ Keep a copy in your Grab and Go Bag and an extra in your purse/wallet.
- ❑ Complete your emergency contact information on page 5.
- ❑ Collect important documents: Identification, Health Care Cards, Medical Documents; Insurance policies, Contact information, etc.
- ❑ Conduct an Ability Self Assessment and prepare your Back Up Plan on page 7.
- ❑ Collect Grab and Go Bag supplies and keep with you at all times. Reference page 12, Appendix B.
- ❑ Maintain a seven-day supply of essential medications.
- ❑ Collect any disability related supplies and place with your Grab and Go Bag.
- ❑ If you use a Service animal see Appendix E.7 on page 24.

## **PERSONAL SUPPORT NETWORKS:**

A person support network is made up of individuals who will check with you in an emergency to ensure you are all right and give assistance if needed. This could be friends, roommates, family members, neighbours personal attendants or co-workers. Do not depend on one person. Work out support relationships with a minimum of three people.

### **ITEMS TO DISCUSS GIVE TO AND PRACTICE WITH YOUR PERSONAL SUPPORT NETWORK:**

- Exchange important keys.
- Share where you keep your emergency supplies.
- Share copies of relevant emergency documents.
- Agree on and practice a communications system regarding how to contact each other in an emergency. Do not count on telephones working.
- You and your personal support network should always notify each other when going out of town and when you will return.
- The relationship should be mutual. Learn about each other's needs and how to help each other in an emergency.

## E.2 TIPS FOR PEOPLE WITH MOBILITY DISABILITIES

- Store emergency supplies in a pack or backpack attached to your walker, wheelchair, scooter.
- Store needed mobility aids (canes, crutches, walkers, wheelchairs) close to you in a consistent, convenient and secured location.
- Keep a pair of heavy gloves in your supply kit to use while wheeling or making your way over glass and debris.
- If you use a motorized wheelchair/scooter consider having an extra battery available. Check with your vendor to see if you will be able to charge batteries by either connecting jumper cables to a vehicle battery or by connecting batteries to a special type of converter that plugs into a vehicle cigarette lighter in the event of loss of electricity.
- Arrange and secure furniture and other items to ensure paths of travel and barrier free passages.
- If you spend time above the first floor in an elevator building plan and practice alternate methods of evacuation. You may need to enlist the help of your personal support network.
- If you cannot use stairs discuss lifting and carrying techniques that will work for you. There will be instances where wheelchair/scooter users will have to leave their transportation behind in order to safely evacuate a structure.
- Sometimes transporting someone downstairs is not a practical solution unless there are at least two or more strong people to control the chair. Therefore it is very important to discuss the safest way to transport you. If you need to be carried alert the helpers to any areas of vulnerability. For example the traditional “Fire fighter’s carry” may be hazardous for some people with respiratory weakness. You will need to be able to give brief instructions regarding how to move you.

## **E.3 TIPS FOR PEOPLE WITH VISUAL DISABILITIES**

- If it will help label emergency supplies with Braille, large print or fluorescent tape as appropriate for you.
- Keep a spare cane in your Grab and Go Bag.
- If you have some vision place security lights in each room to light paths of travel. These lights plug into electrical outlets and light up automatically if there is a loss of power. They, depending on the type, continue to operate automatically for 1 to 6 hours and can be turned off manually and used as a short lasting flashlight.
- Store high-powered flashlights with wide beams and extra batteries.
- If you wear contact lenses or glasses, make sure to have an extra pair, with cleaning solutions secured in protective wrapping (bubble wrap).
- If you have a Service animal, know that they may become confused, panicked, frightened or disoriented in and after a disaster. It may be advised to keep them confined or securely leashed/harnessed. Be prepared to use alternative ways to negotiate your environment.
- Store extra food and supplies for your Service Animal.
- Plan for losing auditory clues you usually rely on after a major disaster.
- Anchor special equipment such as computers. Create a back-up system for important data and store it off site.
- Advocate that TV and radio news broadcasts not only post important phone numbers, but also announce them slowly and repeat them frequently for people who cannot read the screen.

## E.4 TIPS FOR THE HEARING IMPAIRED

- Store extra batteries for hearing aids and implants. If available store an extra hearing aid suitably protected. In your Grab and Go Bag.
- Maintain TTY batteries. Store extra batteries for your TTY and light phone signaller. Check manuals for maintenance.
- Store hearing aids, when not in use, in strategic, consistent and secured locations so they can be found and used after a disaster or emergency. Example: consider storing in a container by the bedside that is attached to a nightstand or bedpost using Velcro or string.
- Install both audible and visual battery operated smoke alarms.
- Determine how you will communicate with emergency personnel. Store paper and pens/pencils.
- Consider carrying pre-printed copies of key phrase messages with you such as: “I speak American Sign Language (ASL) and need an ASL Interpreter.” “I do not write or read English”. “If you make announcements, I will need to have them written or signed.”
- Consider the use of a small portable, battery-operated television, with a decoder chip for access to emergency broadcasts that may include captioned and sign language instructions during an emergency.
- Determine which broadcasting systems will be accessible in terms of continuous news that will be captioned or signed. Advocate so television stations have a plan to secure emergency interpreters for on camera duty.
- Advocate that Municipal Emergency Social services volunteer teams recruit interpreters and the Television stations broadcast emergency information in open caption format.
- Ensure commercial accommodations have access packages for deaf and hearing-impaired persons, including audible alarms, when you travel. Ask for them when you check in.

## **E.5 TIPS FOR PEOPLE WITH COMMUNICATION AND SPEECH RELATED DISABILITIES**

- Determine how you will communicate with emergency personnel if you do not have your communications devices (augmentative communication device, word board, artificial larynx).
- Store copies of word or letter board, paper and writing materials, pre-printed messages and key phrased specific to an anticipated emergency in you Grab and Go Bag and purse/wallet.
- Make sure your emergency health information sheet explains the best method to communicate with you i.e. written notes, pointing to letters, words, pictures, finding a quiet place.
- Alternate power source (power converter, batteries) if you use a laptop or computer as a means of communication.
- Secure your laptop/computer against potential damage during an emergency.



## E.6 TIPS FOR PEOPLE WITH COGNITIVE DISABILITIES

Cognitive disabilities are defined as developmental disabilities, brain injury, stroke and other conditions that reduce the ability to process information.

- Practice what to do during and after a disaster. Practice leaving places where you spend time until you feel comfortable and confident that you will know what to do.
- Keep a written emergency plan with you for reference. Provide copies for your personal support network and in your emergency supplies. It should be easy to read and understand.
- After a disaster, information often comes at you quickly. Think through ways to do things you will need to do after a disaster. Small tape recorder, calendar with room for notes, to do list will all help you remember things.
- Think through what a rescuer might need to know about you and be prepared to say it briefly, or keep a written copy with you, examples:
  - “I cannot read. I communicate using an augmentative communication device. I can point to simple pictures or key words which you will find in my wallet/purse or Grab and Go Bag.”
  - “I may have difficulty understanding what you are telling me, please speak slowly and use simple language”
  - “I forget easily, please write down information for me.”

## **E. 7 TIPS FOR SERVICE ANIMALS AND PET OWNERS**

- Identifications and Licenses are current.
- Plan how your pets will be cared for if you have to evacuate. Pets in contrast to service animals, may not be allowed in Reception Centres or Group Lodging facilities due to health regulations, so have some animal shelters identified. Contact your local Emergency Social Services team or Emergency Program Coordinator's office for guidance.
- Establish relationships with other animal owners in your neighbourhood. In case you are not home, there will be someone to help your pet.
- Pets and service animals may become confused, panicked, frightened or disoriented in and after a disaster. It may be advised to keep them confined or securely leashed/harnessed. Be prepared to use alternative ways to negotiate your environment.
- Prepare an Animal earthquake kit for seven (7) days.
  - Pack supplies in a pack that your animal can carry in case of evacuation.
  - Kit should include:
    - Bowls for water and food
    - Food
    - Blanket for bedding
    - Plastics bags and paper towels for disposing of feces
    - Neosporin ointment for minor wounds (Animals can easily get cut after an earthquake. Ask your Vet if there is anything specific you should include for your animal.)
    - A favourite toy
    - Extra harness and leash

**“PREPARE FOR THE WORST - HOPE FOR THE BEST”**