

# NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release: May 6, 2024

## Be Prepared and Know Your Risks This Emergency Preparedness Week

NORTH BAY, ON - Residents in the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit's (Health Unit) region are at risk of emergency events ranging from infectious diseases to extreme weather events and environmental hazards such as flooding and forest fires. Acknowledging emergencies can happen anywhere at any time, the Health Unit is promoting Emergency Preparedness Week, which encourages Canadians to take three simple steps to become better prepared to face a range of emergencies: know the risks, make a plan, and have an emergency kit.

Emergency Preparedness Week is a national awareness initiative that has taken place annually since 1996. It is a collaborative event undertaken by provincial and territorial emergency management organizations supporting activities at the local level, in concert with Public Safety Canada and partners.

Effective emergency preparedness ensures people are ready to cope with and recover from threats to public health or disruptions to public health programs and services. The Health Unit does this through a range of activities carried out in coordination with 31 municipalities and other community partners. Emergency management planning and its associated activities play a critical role in strengthening the overall resilience of communities and the broader health system. Basic emergency preparedness starts with each individual and it is recommended that every household has an emergency management plan.

### Considerations when Making an Emergency Management Plan

- Develop an emergency plan with family members and loved ones. Consider conducting drills to practice your plan.
- Know the risks. Consider that all municipalities are vulnerable to many potential emergencies like severe weather, chemical spills, or an influenza pandemic.
- Determine safe rooms in your home to use for shelter.
- Post emergency phone numbers and your address in a central location at your house.
- Choose an out-of-town contact every family member should call or email if the family gets separated in an emergency. An out-of-town contact is less likely to be affected by the same emergency.
- Ensure that even young children know their address and phone number.
- Locate gas, water heater and electrical shutoffs in your home and mark them with labels (colour-coded if possible).
- Prepare for family health needs (medication, medical supplies, etc.), make provisions for any special needs, and learn First Aid and CPR. Establish a meeting place if separated during an evacuation.
- To best protect pets, bring them with you; locate a shelter and pack supplies.

- Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors on every level of your home and check that they are working each month.
- Have a working fire extinguisher on hand.

For more information on emergency preparedness, including how to build an emergency kit, visit [www.GetPrepared.ca](http://www.GetPrepared.ca).

- 30 -

### Media Inquiries:

Alex McDermid, Public Relations Specialist

P: [705-474-1400](tel:705-474-1400), ext. 5221 or [1-800-563-2808](tel:1-800-563-2808)

E: [communications@healthunit.ca](mailto:communications@healthunit.ca)