

# The Stages of Evacuation

As the authority to order an evacuation can rest with different levels of government (local, provincial, or federal), a three stage evacuation process has been developed and accepted by all levels of government. The process includes:

**1 STAGE 1 - Evacuation Alert (*Prepare and Be Ready*)**  
Residents are advised of the potential need for evacuation. The alert highlights the nature of the danger and that evacuation may be required at any time. Information will be provided at that time on where to go if the evacuation is ordered. Residents should prepare to evacuate and gather personal supplies necessary for several days.

**2 STAGE 2 - Evacuation Order (*Leave*)**  
All persons in the affected area are ordered to leave the area and are provided again with the information required. Once evacuated you are not permitted to return until the order has been rescinded. **If an evacuation order is issued, please get out.**

**3 STAGE 3 - Evacuation Rescind (*Return*)**  
All persons in the affected area are advised that the emergency is under control and the area has been declared habitable and the evacuation order has been rescinded.

In the event of imminent danger to property or life, the emergency responders may go straight to an "Evacuation Order" without an alert. This is called a "Tactical Evacuation".

Once you are evacuated from your property you will not be able to re-enter until the evacuation order is rescinded. Security will be provided to the evacuation area to ensure no one re-enters until the order is rescinded.

## Stay Informed

Being aware and informed about what is going on in your area can help you be better prepared and ready to act in an emergency.

**When emergencies happen, it is CRITICALLY important that you trust only verified information sources.**

In emergency situations, residents should follow the local media and instructions of local emergency and transportation officials. While Provincial or National media may report on local emergencies, the local media live in our communities and should be your source of media information.

Emergency personnel work tirelessly behind the scenes and the task of getting information out to the public becomes so much more difficult when people start relying on and sharing information that is not verified or from a trusted source. In an emergency, the rumour mill can put lives at risk.

**If you want to share information, please be smart in what you share.**

## Emergency Social Services

Emergency Social Services (ESS) is a local volunteer based emergency response program, providing basic needs to people affected by an emergency or disaster.

When people are forced from their homes due to an emergency (like fires or flooding) ESS volunteers step in to provide basic needs, such as food, clothing or group lodging.

ESS is available for 72 hours immediately following the emergency, allowing affected residents the time to make more long-term arrangements and begin the recovery process. Depending on the situation / emergency, ESS can also be extended.

For large scale responses, in addition to providing basic needs, ESS may also assist with family reunification, emotional support, and transportation. The goal of ESS is to help people re-establish themselves as quickly as possible following a disaster.

**If you plan on moving RV trailers or boats, the ALERT STAGE is the time to do that.**

**Once an "Evacuation Order" has been issued there is no time to allow that to happen.**



# Ways to get Emergency Information

# 4

1. LOCAL MEDIA
2. RDEK FACEBOOK: [www.facebook.com/eastkootenay](http://www.facebook.com/eastkootenay)
3. RDEK EMAIL GROUP - email [lduczek@rdek.bc.ca](mailto:lduczek@rdek.bc.ca) to join
4. RDEK WEBSITE: [www.rdek.bc.ca](http://www.rdek.bc.ca)

## What is a Reception Centre?

In the event of an evacuation order, a Reception Centre is a designated site to receive evacuees.

- They register evacuees. This is critical even if you intend to leave the area. This gives us accurate information of numbers evacuated and serves as a point of contact for friends and family if they are trying to locate you. It also gives them information to contact you if required. **Please register if you are evacuated.**
- They can give you information on lodging options. If you are evacuated from your primary residence you may be eligible for up to 72 hours paid lodging.
- They may provide urgent supplies to evacuees.
- They work with the Information Officer to provide up-to-date information to the evacuees concerning the status of the event.



## Checklist to Prepare for an Evacuation

If time allows this is a good checklist to follow to prepare you and your home before you leave.

If time allows this is a good checklist to follow to prepare you and your home for an impending wildfire.

### **INSIDE THE HOUSE:**

- Shut all windows and doors, leaving them unlocked.
- Close metal shutters.
- Remove light weight curtains.
- Move flammable furniture to the centre of the room, away from windows and doors.
- Shut off your gas meter or propane. Turn off pilot lights.
- Leave your lights on so fire fighters can see your house under smokey conditions.
- Shut off the Air Conditioning.

### **OUTSIDE THE HOUSE:**

- Gather up flammable items from the exterior of the house and bring them inside (furniture, toys, door mats, trash cans, etc.).
- Turn off propane tanks.
- Move BBQ appliances away from structures.
- Connect garden hoses to outside water valves or spigots for use by firefighters. Fill water buckets and place them around the house.
- Leave exterior lights on so your home is visible to firefighters in heavy smoke conditions or the darkness of night.
- Put an emergency supply kit in your vehicle.
- Back your car into your driveway with the vehicle loaded and all doors and windows closed. Carry your keys with you.
- Have a ladder available and place it at the corner of the house for firefighters to quickly access your roof.
- Seal attic and ground vents with pre-cut plywood or commercial seals.
- Patrol your property if you feel threatened.
- Check on neighbours and make sure they are preparing to leave.

### **ANIMALS:**

- Locate your pets and keep them nearby.
- Prepare farm animals for transport and think about moving them to a safe location early.