

# Community

## Be prepared for emergencies with proper supplies

On December 18 last year, an arctic storm bringing record cold temperatures struck the lower mainland of British Columbia and Vancouver Island. The gale-force winds toppled trees and brought down hundreds of power lines, cutting electricity to thousands of homes and leaving some people without power for up to 48 hours.

Imagine for a moment that you were one of those home owners. With no power would you have been able to look after your family? Feed them and keep them

warm? Know what was going on outside and what emergency crews were doing? Know what to do if you had been ordered to evacuate?

If you answered no to any of these questions then you should act now to help safeguard your safety and that of your family. One of the most effective things you can do is also one of the most simple. Sit down and think about the types of disasters that could affect you and your family. What the threats are will depend on where you live. For some people

floods may be a greater threat than winter storms, but once you have an idea of what can happen you can start to develop a family emergency plan. Once your plan is complete, rehearse it and ensure that each family member knows what his or her part is in the plan. Developing and practising such a plan should only take about 30 minutes of your time each year.

To complement your planning Emergency Preparedness Canada, the federal agency responsible for advancing civil emergency preparedness in Canada for emergencies of all types, has prepared the following list of emergency supplies that you should keep on hand at all times. The items listed will stand you in good stead no matter what the emergency, be it a toxic spill, tornado or winter storm.

### EMERGENCY SUPPLIES

- battery-powered radio, flashlight and spare batteries for both
- first-aid kit
- extra clothing and sleeping bags

### FOOD

Every family should have an emergency supply of food and water on hand sufficient for at least three days. You should also consider the special needs of family members on diets and small children and infants. Canned foodstuffs and dry goods should be used and replaced once a year. Good to have on hand are:

- canned food: stews, baked beans, spaghetti, meat, poultry, fish, vegetables (carrots, corn, peas, etc.)
- freeze-dried products (available at most camping stores)
- biscuits, crackers (graham crackers, melba toast, etc.)
- canned and dehydrated soups
- miscellaneous: salt and pepper, sugar, instant coffee, tea bags, honey, peanut butter, jam and syrup.

### WATER

Water is essential to survival. Adults need a minimum of one litre (2.2 pints) of water per day for drinking. Water should be stored in clean, tightly covered containers such as thermos jugs, large vinegar bottles, camping water containers, etc. Change the stored water at least once a month. Other beverages you might want to consider are:

- bottled water
- canned milk
- soft drinks

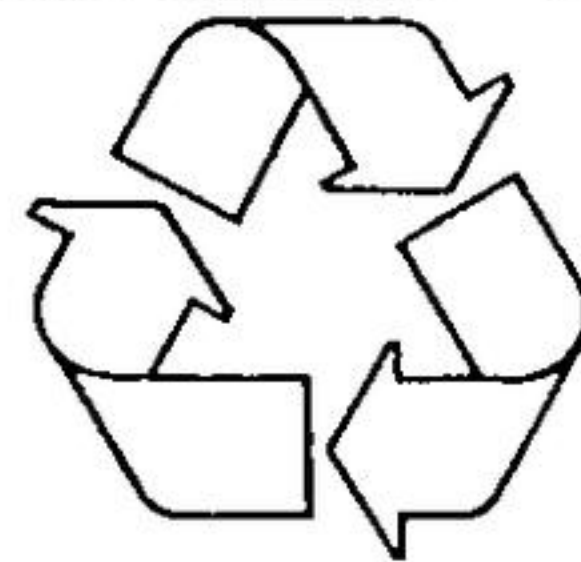
• canned fruit juices.  
Remember that in an emergency you can also use the water in your hot water or toilet tank.

### EQUIPMENT

- bottle and can openers
- knives, forks and spoons
- cups and plates
- fuel stove with supply of fuel
- waterproof matches and plastic garbage bags

### EVACUATION KIT

- first-aid kit
- flashlight, radio and spare batteries
- important papers and cash
- food
- sleeping bags/blankets
- extra clothes
- toiletries and personal items
- medication and baby supplies if necessary.



Please remember to recycle this newspaper along with your

- glass bottles and jars
- aluminum and steel food and beverage cans
- plastic soft drink containers

## RECYCLING.

It only works if we all do our part!

### Phil's Basement

It's funny how to us 'oldsters', showers are just a way to get clean as quickly as possible. I swear that I can get in and out of there in 10 minutes and so can Em, my wife. But we have 14-year-old twins, Belinda and Kyle, who have made shower-taking an art form. They get in there and boldly stay where no one has stayed before — for hours.

"In any case, these kids seem to need hot showers like the cat needs kibble. They need 'em hot, and they need 'em often. If you have kids who have suddenly discovered the need to be squeaky-clean 24 hours a day, here are some ways to help you handle it, courtesy of The Hydro.

Water heating accounts for 20 per cent of your typical energy bill. And that isn't just from showers. One-quarter of the hot water our family uses is for laundry, so we make sure we adjust the water levels according to how much laundry we're doing. We also never run the dishwasher unless it's full. Not overloaded, just full.

We all take showers instead of baths and that helps, because with the energy-efficient showerhead I just installed we're reducing the amount of hot water we use by at least half. (The kids haven't noticed, and

I'm not telling them!) Em is our official leaky-tap fixer. She fixes them because the dripping drives her crazy, but here's an interesting fact: a tap leaking at one drop per second means 800 litres (175 gallons) of hot water a month. I figure that's six loonies a month slipping down the drain. That's 72 bucks a year.

I also insulated the hot water pipes. If you insulate the first one or two metres (three to six feet) of hot water pipe from the water heater, hot water will arrive at the faucet at higher temperatures and it'll also get there more quickly. It's easy to install and you can get it at your hardware or home improvement store.

So there you go. Even if our kids aren't the most perfect in the world, they're certainly the cleanest by far. Now, if we could just find some way for them to do their homework in the shower, we'd be off to the races!

*This newspaper, in conjunction with Ontario Hydro, is bringing you Phil's Basement to help "bring home" ideas on how to save energy. To receive a Water Heating Kit, call Ontario Hydro at 1-800-263-9000 and tell them Phil sent you.*

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