



Simply Halton

Your Halton
Connection
May '06

Emergency Preparedness Begins with You



Joyce Savoline
REGIONAL CHAIRMAN

My primary responsibility as Regional Chairman is the safety and well-being of our community. Planning, prevention, coordination and education are integral to our work. For this reason, we look for opportunities to provide information to residents such as during Emergency Preparedness Week and Health & Safety Week, held annually each May. Throughout the year, we also recognize our paramedics, police officers, public health nurses and public works and planning staff during other dedicated weeks. While our current focus is on emergency preparedness and response, we should never forget that these professionals contribute to our safety and well-being 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Information sharing and best practices are also integral to emergency preparedness and I am pleased to advise that our Halton Regional Police Services Board will host the annual Ontario

Association of Police Services Boards conference May 4-6 in Burlington. This year's theme, "Managing Crisis: Future Solutions Now," underscores our community's dedication to planning for future emergencies. Speakers will include Dr. James Young, Special Advisor to the federal Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness; Julian Fantino, Commissioner of Emergency Management; and Dr. Sheela Basrur, Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health.

In Halton, we work extensively with our community partners to ensure an effective and coordinated response to any disaster. Our most important partner, however, is you. There are many steps that individuals and families can take before a crisis happens. Having a survival kit on hand, knowing how to "Shelter in Place," and talking to your children about what to do during an emergency can greatly reduce the stress on you and your family in the event of a disaster. Find out more by visiting our website at www.halton.ca/BePrepared.

Some emergencies are unavoidable, but our continued commitment to work together is what will make Halton Region a disaster resilient community.

Know what to do during an Emergency Shelter in Place

In the event of a hazardous spill or fire in your community, emergency response officials may instruct you to "Shelter in Place." Shelter in Place is the practice of remaining indoors because of the release of an airborne hazardous material. What you should do:

- If you are outside, move out of the path of smoke or fumes. Never attempt to go through smoke or flames. Seek shelter in a house or automobile and remain inside.
- Close all doors and windows, and shut down air conditioners and fans that bring in outside air. Do not use bathroom or kitchen vents. Do not operate a clothes dryer.
- Set thermostats so air conditioners, furnaces and hot water heaters will not come on.
- Do not use fireplaces. Close all dampers.
- Close all interior doors to "compartmentalize" your house.
- Cover window openings with plastic held by duct-tape. You may want to have pre-cut pieces on-hand.
- Monitor your radio, television or the Internet for more information and instructions.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a wet handkerchief or towel if threatened by fumes.
- Evacuate only if you are told to do so by emergency response personnel. In the short term, remaining indoors in a sealed environment is the most effective action you can take.

Prevent, Prepare, Respond and Recover: Halton's Emergency Management Program



A. Brent Marshall
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

No-one is immune from disasters. Millions of people worldwide have been affected by the catastrophes of the past 12 months – flooding in Calgary, hurricanes and tornadoes in the United States and earthquakes in Pakistan.

What have we learned from these events? In a recent study released by Georgetown University in Washington D.C., experts have identified some important lessons. Good disaster management must consider not only immediate response to an emergency, but also steps to prevent, prepare for and recover from emergencies. The sharing of information across jurisdictions and establishing partnerships is critical. Finally, individuals need to be more engaged in their personal emergency preparedness.

Fortunately, these principles already form the foundation of Halton's emergency management program. We are continuously collaborating with emergency responders, volunteer groups, businesses and industry to enhance the safety of our community. We develop plans, test our collective response capabilities and continually train and educate both our emergency response professionals and the public.

Recent worldwide emergencies have been devastating. We can never assume that such a catastrophic event will never happen in Halton, but we can always prepare ourselves. Learning from the experiences of others will help ensure that Halton is ready to respond to any disaster.



Halton Meetings & Events

May Meetings at Regional Headquarters

Tuesday, May 2	9:30 a.m. Health & Social Services Committee
Wednesday, May 3	9:30 a.m. Planning & Public Works Committee 1:30 p.m. Administration & Finance Committee
Wednesday, May 10	9:30 a.m. Regional Council Meeting
Monday, May 22	Offices closed for Victoria Day
Wednesday, May 24	9:30 a.m. Planning & Public Works Committee 1:30 p.m. Administration & Finance Committee
Thursday, May 25	9:30 a.m. Health & Social Services Committee
Wednesday, May 31	9:30 a.m. Regional Council Meeting