



Get Ready Guide

NAME





PreparedBC

Ministry of
Education and
Child Care



**First Nations'
Emergency Services Society**
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

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KNOW YOUR HAZARDS

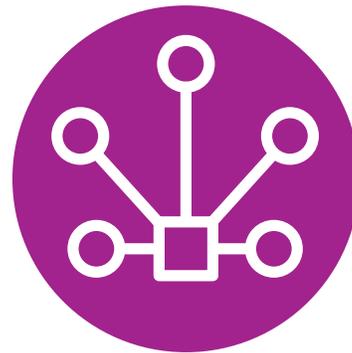
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Learn about the most common hazards in BC and the hazards that are most important where you live.

GATHER YOUR SUPPLIES

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Learn about the supplies you'll need during an emergency and how to gather and store them.



MAKE YOUR PLAN

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Learn how a Home Emergency Plan can help you stay connected, safe and calm.



WELCOME TO MASTER OF DISASTER!



Let's face it—emergencies and disasters can be scary. The secret is to learn as much as you can, so you're prepared and know what to do in a difficult situation.

Are you ready to become a Master of Disaster? It's easy! Just follow these 3 steps:



Know
Your
Hazards



Gather
Your
Supplies



Make
Your
Plan

LET'S GET STARTED! →

Know Your Hazards



Before you learn about the common hazards where you live, let's review some key words.

What is a hazard?

A **hazard** is a dangerous event that can lead to an **emergency** or a **disaster**. Hazards may come from nature and our environment or they may be caused by people.

What is an emergency?

An **emergency** is a serious situation that requires immediate action to keep people, animals or land safe.

What is a disaster?

A **disaster** is a large emergency that has harmed people, animals or land.

WHAT HAZARDS DO YOU KNOW?

You probably already know about a lot of hazards. Can you think of some?

HAZARDS THAT ARE

NATURAL

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HAZARDS CAUSED BY

PEOPLE

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WHICH OF THESE

HAZARDS COULD OCCUR IN BC?

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MOST COMMON HAZARDS IN BC

BC is home to many different landscapes. We have beaches, rivers and lakes, mountains, deserts and even rainforests! We also have big cities, small communities and a lot of wilderness.

It's a big place, so there are a lot of different hazards to learn about. Of course, the hazards that might affect you will depend on where you live.

Here are the most common hazards that can occur in different areas across BC:



Avalanches



Earthquakes



Disease Outbreaks



Floods



Hazardous Material Spills



Landslides



Power Outages



Severe Weather



Tsunamis



Water shortages/
drought



Wildfires

Had you already thought of some of these?

Which hazards do you know a lot about?

Which ones would you like to learn more about?

Next, let's learn about each of these hazards, including the warning signs or causes, how you can prepare for them and how you can respond if they happen to you.



Avalanches

Did you know mountains cover more than 75% of BC? Mount Fairweather is the tallest measuring 4,671 metres high. That's about 40 times as tall as the Great Pyramid of Giza!

Quick question: Has an avalanche ever occurred near your community?

Learn more about avalanches, including how to prepare for backcountry adventures, at avalanche.ca and adventuresmart.ca

An avalanche is a mass of snow sliding rapidly down a slope, like a hill or a mountain.

WHY DO AVALANCHES HAPPEN?

Avalanches are caused by four factors: a slope, snow cover, a weak layer in the snow and a trigger. The trigger is usually a person—like a climber, snowboarder, skier or hiker. Animals, as well as drifting or melting snow, can also trigger an avalanche.

Dry slab avalanches are the most dangerous. These occur when a chunk of solid snow slides on top of weaker, softer snow. The dry slab often shatters like glass, sending heavy, thick chunks of snow rocketing down the slope. Once triggered, these avalanches can travel up to 130 kilometres per hour!

People caught in avalanches can be hurt by the fast-moving snow, or by dislodged trees and rocks. Once the snow stops sliding, it's very hard for anyone trapped inside to move. A person caught in an avalanche usually needs help to get out from under the snow.

HOW CAN YOU GET PREPARED?

Preparing for an avalanche is all about being smart while in backcountry areas or on the slopes. Obey safety boundaries, always travel in groups, and look for avalanche information before you go. Each member of your group should also have avalanche training and carry rescue gear like a shovel and a probe.





Earthquakes

Did you know the five biggest earthquakes in BC occurred in 1700, 1946, 1949, 1970 and 2012? They ranged in magnitude from 7.3 (1946) to 9.0 (1700).

Quick question: What should you do if an earthquake happens while you're in bed?

Learn more about earthquakes, including information on recent earthquakes, by visiting earthquakescanada.ca and usgs.gov

An earthquake is a sudden and sometimes powerful shaking of the ground due to movement in the Earth's crust.

WHY DO EARTHQUAKES HAPPEN?

The Earth's crust is made up of plates that are like puzzle pieces. They can slide past one another, collide or move apart. These plates are constantly moving at speeds of 2-12 centimetres per year. That's about as fast as your fingernails grow! When pressure builds up in the Earth's crust, the stress of the plates sliding against each other can make them shift or break suddenly. When this pressure and energy are released, seismic waves travel through the Earth and make the ground shake. It's these waves of energy that create earthquakes.

On average, there are 3,000 earthquakes recorded in BC every year—most are just too small to feel! Why so many? Our coast is part of the Pacific Ring of Fire—a large arc around the Pacific Ocean where about 90% of the world's earthquakes occur. The ring is made up of several active plate boundaries and other faults, or breaks, in the Earth's crust. On average, an earthquake large enough to cause structural damage occurs about once each decade in BC.

HOW CAN YOU GET PREPARED?

Earthquakes cannot be predicted—they happen very suddenly. You can prepare for an earthquake by creating a Home Emergency Kit and by making a Home Emergency Plan. If you feel an earthquake, follow these 3 steps:

1. **Drop** onto your hands and knees.
2. **Cover** your head and neck (and your body if possible) under a table or desk.
3. **Hold** on to your shelter until the shaking stops. Count to 60 before moving from your shelter.

After a strong earthquake, smaller earthquakes called aftershocks can continue for many days and even for years. You need to **drop**, **cover** and **hold** on during aftershocks, too.





Disease Outbreaks

Did you know about 80% of common infectious diseases, like colds and flus, are spread by people's hands? Washing your hands at least 5 times a day will lower your chances of catching these common diseases.

Quick question: Can you think of 5 times each day when you could wash your hands?

Learn more about different diseases and how you can protect yourself by visiting bccdc.ca

Diseases occur when small organisms like bacteria, viruses, fungi or parasites cause damage to a plant, animal or person. When many people are infected by the same disease it's called a disease outbreak.

WHY DO DISEASE OUTBREAKS HAPPEN?

Infectious diseases are dangerous because they can spread from person to person. Many infectious diseases spread through physical contact between people or through bodily fluids like saliva or blood. Some spread to people through insects, animals, food or water. Other times infectious diseases may be spread through accidents or even intentional, criminal acts.

Disease outbreaks can happen suddenly and without warning. They can also spread very quickly. An outbreak might only affect a small group of people or it might spread between communities and even across countries! The signs and symptoms of an outbreak vary depending on what causes the infection, but often include feeling very tired or having a fever. Some disease outbreaks can be treated with rest or home remedies, while others are very serious and require immediate medical care.

HOW CAN YOU GET PREPARED?

Prevention is the key when it comes to disease outbreaks. Many diseases, like measles and chickenpox, can be prevented using vaccines. Washing your hands often and carefully can also help protect you from most infectious diseases. Making sure you keep your body and your home clean, and that you follow good food safety, are other ways to help stop the spread of disease.

KNOW YOUR HAZARDS

GATHER YOUR SUPPLIES

MAKE YOUR PLAN



Floods

Did you know each cubic metre of water weighs about 1,000 kilograms? If a house is exposed to floodwater just 2 metres deep and 20 metres wide, travelling at 1 metre per second, it's like the house is being hit by a semi-truck every 15 seconds!

Quick question: Have floods ever happened in your community?

Learn more about what you can do before, during, and after a flood at preparedBC.ca/floods

Floods occur when water overflows onto land that is normally dry. Floods can happen anywhere in the world it can rain and may involve a few centimetres to many metres of water.

WHY DO FLOODS HAPPEN?

Floods are common in BC and can happen at any time. In the spring and early summer (April to July), melting snow can lead to flooding. Heavy rain at the same time can make the flooding worse. In the fall and winter (September to February) extreme rain is the main cause of flooding. Floods can also be caused by storm surges, ice jams or damage to structures like dikes or dams.

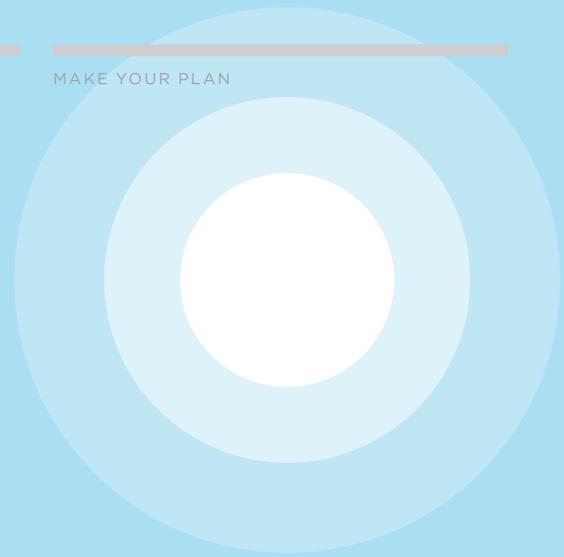
Most floods develop slowly, but flash floods can happen in just a few minutes and without any signs of rain. These are the most dangerous floods because they happen quickly and are very unpredictable.

Climate change and related extreme weather events have increased the risk of flooding in some areas of BC. Rising average temperatures, changes to freeze-thaw cycles, increased rain and rising sea levels can all contribute to floods.

HOW CAN YOU GET PREPARED?

Floods can cause power outages, disrupt transportation, damage buildings and create landslides. The fast-moving water can also harm people. Staying safe during a flood means staying away from the water. During a flood, never go down to watch the rushing water as river banks can become very unstable. Also, never walk, swim or drive through flood water. Just 15 centimetres of moving water can knock you down and just 30 centimetres can sweep away a vehicle.

If you're in a vehicle that is trapped in rapidly moving water, stay inside. If the water is rising inside the vehicle, seek refuge on the roof. During a flood, stay away from bridges over fast-moving water, as some bridges can get washed away without warning. If you're told to evacuate your community, take your Grab-and-Go Bag and leave immediately.





Hazardous Material Spills

Did you know “hazmat” is short for hazardous materials? A “hazmat suit” is a special piece of clothing that covers your whole body and protects you from hazardous materials.

Quick question: If you see a hazardous material spill, how should you report it?

Learn more about how to report spills and how to shelter-in-place at preparedBC.ca/hazardousmaterial

A hazardous material is any substance that has the potential to cause harm to people, animals or the environment. A hazardous material spill occurs when things like chemicals, oil and gas, or radioactive waste escape onto land or into water.

WHY DO HAZARDOUS MATERIAL SPILLS HAPPEN?

Hazardous materials are all around us. Many products containing hazardous materials are used and stored in our homes. Other materials are safely transported every day on highways, railroads, waterways and through pipelines. However, due to accidents, natural hazards, and even criminal activity, sometimes these materials spill from their containers and enter our environment. The consequences can be very serious. Some spills can cause fires or explosions. Other spills can poison the land or cause health problems for people and animals.

HOW CAN YOU GET PREPARED?

When it comes to hazardous material spills, listening carefully to authorities is the most important step. If a spill happens in your community, you may be told to evacuate your home. Take your Grab-and-Go Bag and leave immediately.

In other cases, hazardous materials could enter the air and you may be asked to shelter-in-place. This means staying inside and sealing off doors, windows and vents. To shelter-in-place, follow these steps:

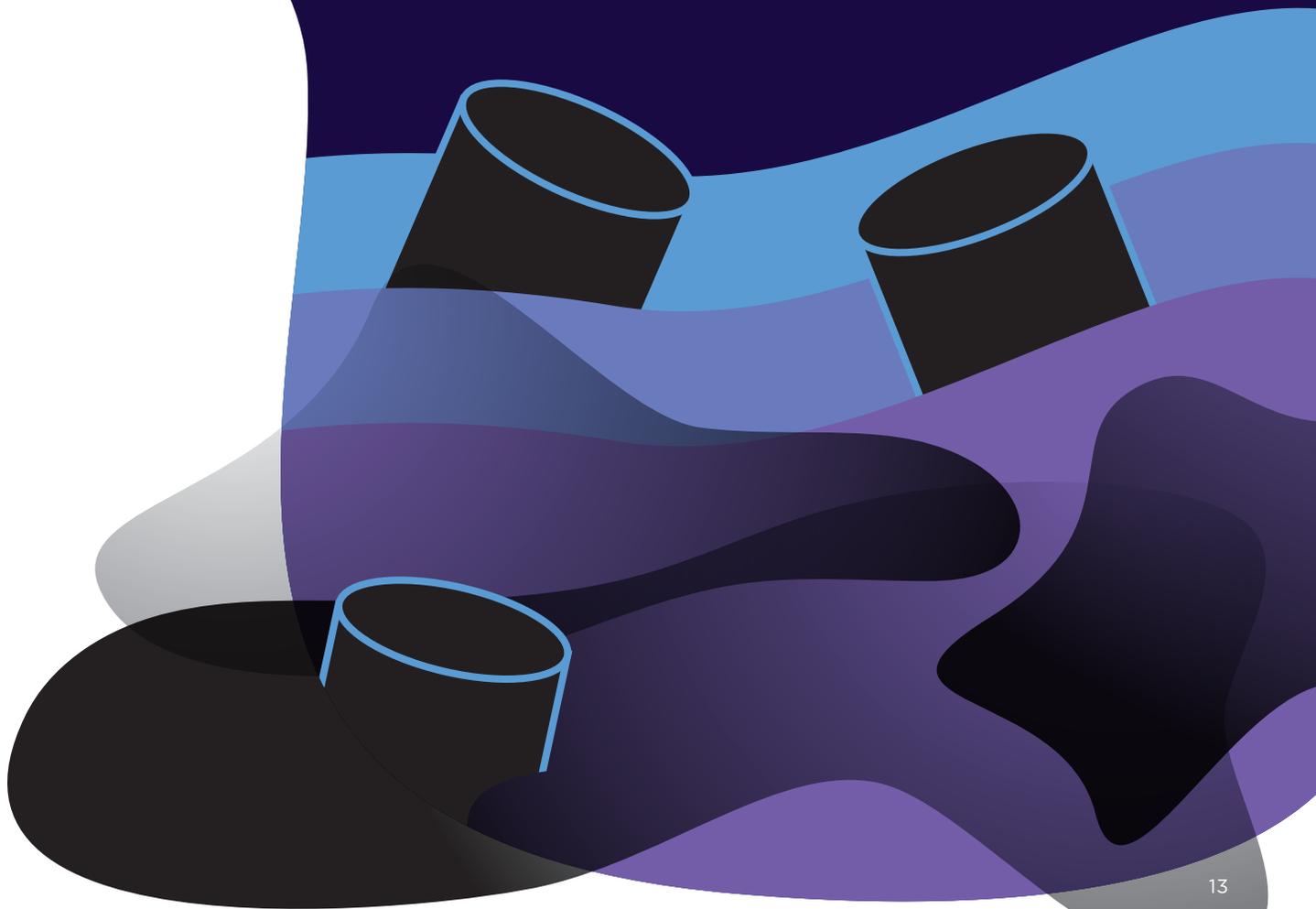
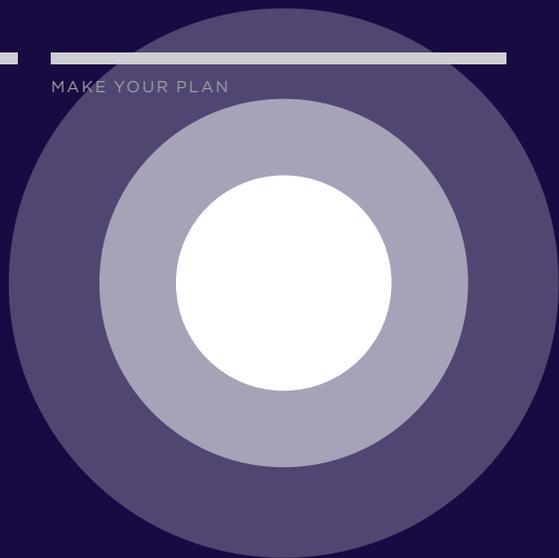
1. Go indoors immediately and stay there.
2. Close all windows and doors.
3. Have an adult turn off the furnace, air conditioners and other exhaust systems in your home.
4. Listen to the radio or TV for more information.

If you have been told to shelter-in-place, don't go outside until your local government says it's safe.

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Landslides

Did you know landslides can reach speeds greater than 100 kilometres per hour? That's almost as fast as an Olympic downhill skier!

Quick question: Has a landslide ever happened in your community?

Learn more about landslides by visiting preparedbc.ca/landslides

During a landslide, pieces of rock, soil or other debris move down a slope, like a mountain or hillside. Landslides occur most frequently, and are most destructive, in steep, mountainous areas.

WHY DO LANDSLIDES HAPPEN?

Landslides can occur when the soil and rock that makes up a slope starts to shift. The volume of a single landslide can range from a few cubic metres (enough to fill about 5 bathtubs) to more than 10 cubic kilometres (enough to fill about 65 billion bathtubs!).

Like avalanches, landslides require a trigger to start. The most common triggers for landslides are natural events, like earthquakes or heavy rainfall. They can also be caused by human activities like road construction, building projects, or the redirection of waterways that then undercut slopes. In projects that involve steep slopes, lines of gravel or rock are often used to help drain away water and reduce the risk of landslides.

Trees help prevent landslides. When they grow on steep mountains, their root structures help keep rocks and soil in place. Tree roots also absorb water, so it doesn't stay in the soil. The branches and leaves of trees slow down and spread heavy rainfall before it hits the ground. Removing too many trees from a mountain or hill can make the area more prone to landslides.

HOW CAN YOU GET PREPARED?

The best way to prepare for a landslide is to be aware of the warning signs. Warning signs include: sudden changes in how much water is flowing in streams and rivers; normally clear water turning murky; cracks near the top of a slope; sliding soil; and tumbling rocks or boulders. If you see any of these warning signs, leave the area immediately and tell an adult.

If you're ever caught in a landslide, curl up in a tight ball and protect your head and neck with your arms.





Power Outages

Did you know close to 95% of BC's electricity is generated from renewable sources? Hydroelectricity is the largest source of power, followed by biomass, natural gas, wind and oil.

Quick question: What are some fun ways you could pass the time if the lights go out?

Learn more about what to do before, during and after a power outage at bchydro.com

A power outage, also known as a blackout or power failure, is a short or long-term loss of electric power.

WHY DO POWER OUTAGES HAPPEN?

There are many causes of power outages, including windstorms, lightning and heavy snow. Car accidents and animals can also cause damage to electrical structures like power lines. Power outages occur often in some communities and very rarely in others. They can last from a few hours to many days.

HOW CAN YOU GET PREPARED?

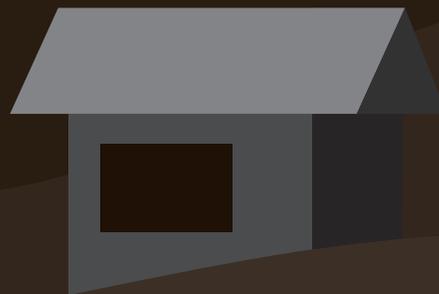
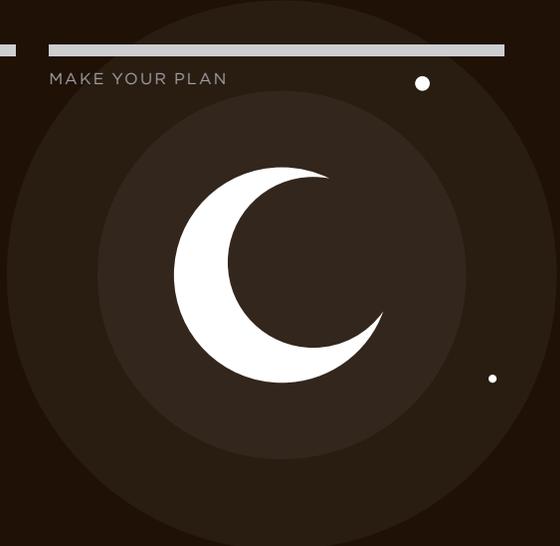
Power outages can happen at any moment. To stay safe during a power outage, make sure you have a flashlight in your Home Emergency Kit. Avoid using candles since they can cause fires. Having a battery-powered radio in your Home Emergency Kit is also a good idea, so you can listen for advice and updates on local radio stations.

Food safety is also important during power outages. If the power is out for less than 4 hours, the food in your refrigerator and freezer will still be safe to eat. If the power is out for longer than 4 hours, you'll need a plan to move your food. Fireplaces, woodstoves, barbecues and camp stoves can be used for emergency cooking, but never use a barbecue or camp stove indoors.

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Severe Weather

Did you know the lowest temperature ever recorded in BC was a chilly -58.9°C ? It was recorded on January 31st, 1947 in Smith River. At that temperature, exposed skin will freeze in less than 3 minutes!

Quick question: Climate change and severe weather can increase the risk of other hazards. Can you think of some?

Learn more about public weather alerts for BC and the rest of Canada at weather.gc.ca

There are many kinds of severe weather, including rainstorms, heat waves, blizzards and tornadoes.

WHY DOES SEVERE WEATHER HAPPEN?

Severe weather events have happened throughout history. Many are part of the natural weather cycle. However, climate change is increasing the risk of severe weather in BC.

From 1900 to 2013, the average annual temperature in BC warmed by 1.4°C . Over the same period, the night-time average temperature in the winter warmed by 3.1°C . As a result, some lakes and rivers now become free of ice earlier in the spring. Water is also warmer in the summer. Average annual rainfall has also increased across BC.

Extreme weather events can hurt people, damage property and even reshape our communities. For example, long heat waves can make people sick and heavy rains put pressure on our roads and sewers.

HOW CAN YOU GET PREPARED?

Severe weather can develop quickly and last a long time, so it's important to be prepared at home. Power outages are common during severe weather events. Get prepared by making a Home Emergency Plan and creating a Home Emergency Kit with everything you need to be on your own for 3 to 7 days.

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Tsunamis

Did you know in 1964 a major earthquake near Alaska sent a series of seismic waves down the coast of North America? On the west coast of Vancouver Island, multiple tsunami waves travelled up the narrow Alberni Inlet and caused a lot of damage!

Quick question: If you live near the ocean, do you know the best route to high ground?

Learn more about tsunami science and how we can detect tsunamis before they reach the coast, by visiting oceannetworks.ca

A tsunami is a natural hazard made up of a series of long, surging ocean waves. The word tsunami is Japanese and means “harbour wave.”

WHY DO TSUNAMIS HAPPEN?

Tsunamis are most often generated by huge earthquakes beneath the ocean floor that displace water and create big waves. They can also be caused by landslides or volcanic eruptions. The height of a tsunami wave can range from a few centimetres to several metres. These waves can occur within minutes of each other, or they may be hours apart.

HOW CAN YOU GET PREPARED?

Tsunamis may be rare, but if you live in a coastal community it's important to be prepared. One way to prepare is to know the warning signs. Since earthquakes often cause tsunamis, the first warning sign could be the ground shaking. However, tsunamis can start very far away in the Pacific Ocean, so you may not always feel an earthquake. Other warning signs are the ocean pulling away from the beach, a sudden rise or fall in the sea level, or a roaring sound coming from the ocean.

Another way to prepare is to know where to go and how to get there quickly and safely. If you're told there is a tsunami warning, move to higher ground or the designated safe zone in your community. Remember to take your Grab-and-Go Bag and stay in the safe zone until you get the “all clear” message from your local government.

Never go to the beach to watch the waves. A tsunami can move faster than you can run! In the deep ocean, waves can travel about 800 kilometres per hour—that's as fast as a commercial jet!





Water shortages and drought

Did you know that turning off the tap while you brush your teeth can save up to 30 litres of water per day? That's about three large bathtubs of water saved per month!

Quick question: What do you already do to save water?

Learn more about water shortages at PreparedBC.ca/ExtremeHeat, gov.bc.ca/Drought and ClimateReadyBC.gov.bc.ca/pages/drought-water-scarcity

A water shortage is a loss of water that can impact homes, businesses, neighbourhoods, communities, large regions and natural environments for days, weeks or longer.

Why do water shortages happen?

When there isn't enough water to meet a need, we call it a water shortage. They can happen in homes, schools, businesses or farms. They can impact people, plants and animals.

Water shortages can happen for many reasons. Some examples include pipe breaks, water utility repairs, plumbing leaks, contamination of drinking water or overuse of the water supply.

Drought

A lack of rain and snow (precipitation), hotter temperatures, faster spring snowmelt and glacier loss over extended periods of time can cause drought. Water shortages resulting from drought are an impact of climate change.

Drought conditions make it easier for wildfires to start and spread. Fish may be unable to swim through spawning grounds. Farmers' crops may not grow well or farm animals might need to be moved closer to water.

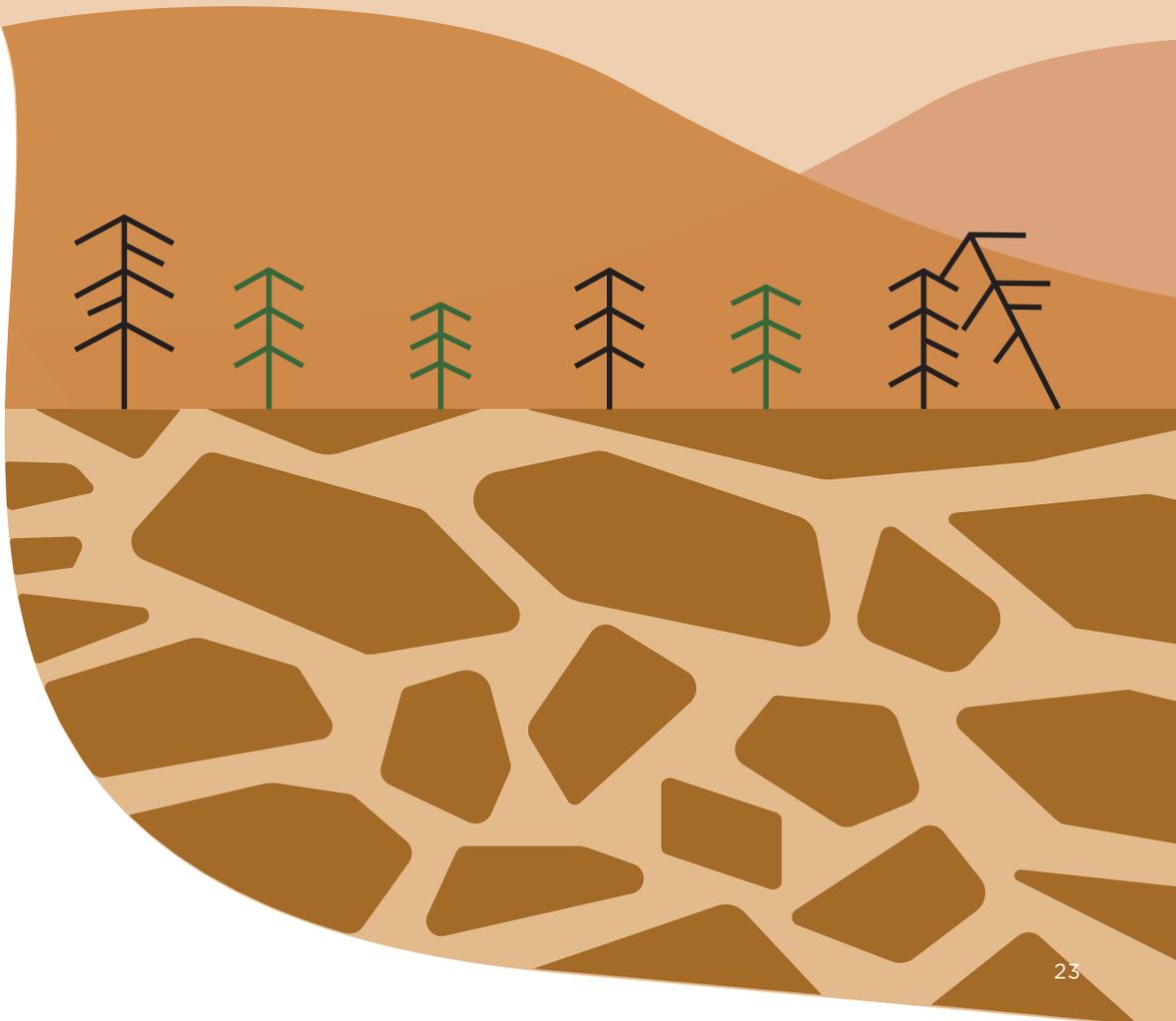
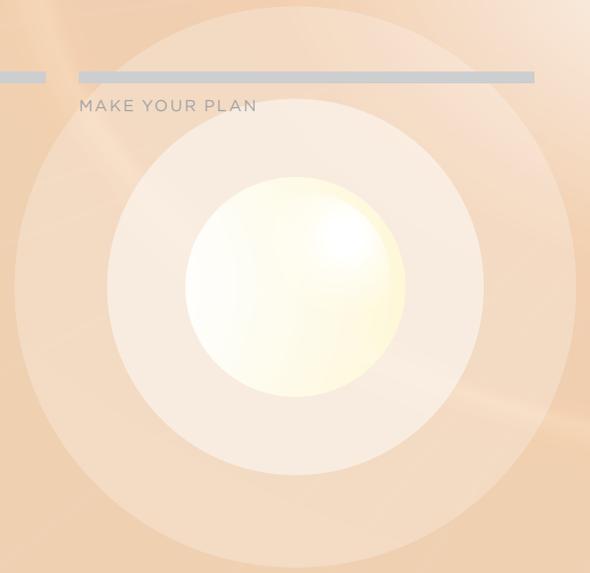
How can you get prepared?

Saving water is a shared responsibility. Small changes can make a big difference.

Take shorter showers, run full loads of laundry and dishes, collect rainwater or reuse cleaning water for outdoor plants, put a jug of water in the fridge to cool instead of running water and explore other ways you can save water.

Follow community water restrictions.

During an emergency, everyone you live with, including your pets, will need water for drinking, cooking and hygiene. Plan for 4 litres per person daily, for 3 to 7 days. Check your emergency supplies regularly for expired bottled water. Use the expired water for washing, gardening and cleaning.





Wildfires

Did you know on average there are 1,600 wildfires in BC every year?

Quick question:

What can you do to help reduce the risk of wildfires in your community?

Learn more about how you can prevent wildfires at firesmartbc.ca and bcwildfire.ca

Wildfires happen in or near forests or grassy areas. They can spread quickly through trees, brush, and sometimes through homes and properties. When it's hot and dry, wildfires can grow fast and be very hard to put out.

WHY DO WILDFIRES HAPPEN?

More than half of all wildfires in BC are started by lightning. A single strike can ignite a tree or a field of grass. Natural wildfires can be good for the environment. They burn away dead plants, remove diseased plants and harmful insects, and help release nutrients into the soil. Some plants, trees and insects even depend on wildfire to reproduce.

However, many wildfires in BC are caused by people. Some start because of unattended campfires, sparks from machinery or vehicles, and other careless behaviour. Since they're caused by people, these preventable wildfires often start near communities and can be very dangerous for people and animals.

Due to climate change and warming temperatures, the threat posed by wildfires is increasing. Warmer weather can create more dry fuel to burn and more frequent dry, windy days can make wildfires spread quickly.

HOW CAN YOU GET PREPARED?

The first step is to help prevent wildfires from starting at all. Do this by following fire bans and fire restrictions. If you have a campfire, always keep a shovel or water nearby and make sure your campfire is completely out before you leave. If you see smoke, flames or an unattended fire, report it by calling 1-800-663-5555 or *5555 on a cellphone.

If a wildfire threatens your community, your local government may issue an evacuation order. Be sure to have your Home Emergency Plan and Grab-and-Go Bag ready, so you can leave quickly and safely.



Indigenous traditional knowledge

Long before European explorers and traders arrived in the late 1700s, Indigenous people in BC told stories and practiced traditions to share important knowledge about natural hazards. By repeating these stories, Indigenous people passed on valuable information about how to prepare for and survive disasters across time and across generations.

The examples recorded here were shared by Elders and Knowledge Keepers from different communities. These stories and traditional practices can help all of us understand past and present natural hazards in BC. They can also help us recognize and respect the long history and rich traditions of First Nations communities on this land.



The Story of the Great Tsunami

“On January 26, 1700 at about 9 pm, a powerful magnitude 9 earthquake struck off the coast of BC, and without warning was followed by a catastrophic tsunami that devastated the village of Loht’a. With no time to respond, all 5,000 residents of Loht’a were lost to this devastating event.

This is the story of the Great Tsunami that was told to me by my grandparents, George and Louisa Johnson. For generations, Elders in our community as well as other First Nations along the coast have maintained this legend, and others like it, as an oral history of our people.

Today, our people call Anacla (Pachena Bay) home and this oral history plays a central role in how we understand tsunami risks in our community. We are able to use our history to learn from the past and prepare for future tsunamis.”

**Robb Johnson,
Huu-ay-aht First Nation**

The Story of the Great Flood

“Way saamis mas patsalhtulhs ta Manlh t’ax wics kstum ala tsay ats alh lhmilh.”

“Long, long ago—but many generations after the first ancestors settled in Nuxalk territory—a catastrophic event took place, changing the peoples of the coast forever. Our Lhikw’lcaaxta, our Elders, taught us about the Great Flood, S-qw’sm, and its relevance to our lives today.

When the world flooded the rains came and the waters rose. Water was pouring down the mountains. The rivers and the streams overflowed and the valleys began to fill up. Even the islands were flooded.

Many lives were lost. But some of the people latched their canoes together, forming a huge raft. These people floated up to the mountain tops and anchored themselves with rope. In each of the four Nuxalk territories, the survivors roped themselves onto various mountains. In the Bella Coola valley the people tied up to mount Nusq’lst. In the south, at Talyu, they tied up to Asts’lniiklh. They tied up to the mountain called Pakwana at Kw’alhna in the west. In the north at Nutl’l (Kimsquit) they fastened themselves to Swak’c. And our neighbours, the Heiltsuk Nation, they were able to tie themselves to Yalac’hay. They all survived by working together and were able to safely wait out the flood.

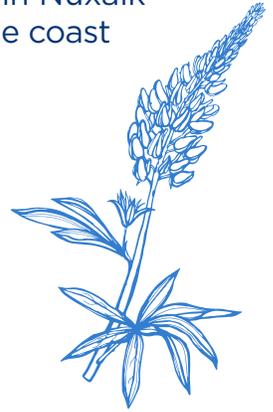
After the flood waters receded, the creator was said to have gifted the land with a flower—Q’akwts, the lupin flower. It is a symbol of unity. If you pluck one flower petal, and look at it by itself, it is nothing extraordinary. It is a lone canoe. But when you look at all the petals together, you see this beautiful network, this beautiful flower, with each petal being a part of the greater whole.

The flower reminds us that when we are in hard times, we need to remember our neighbours and those around us. And we need to work together, and come together, to help one another.”

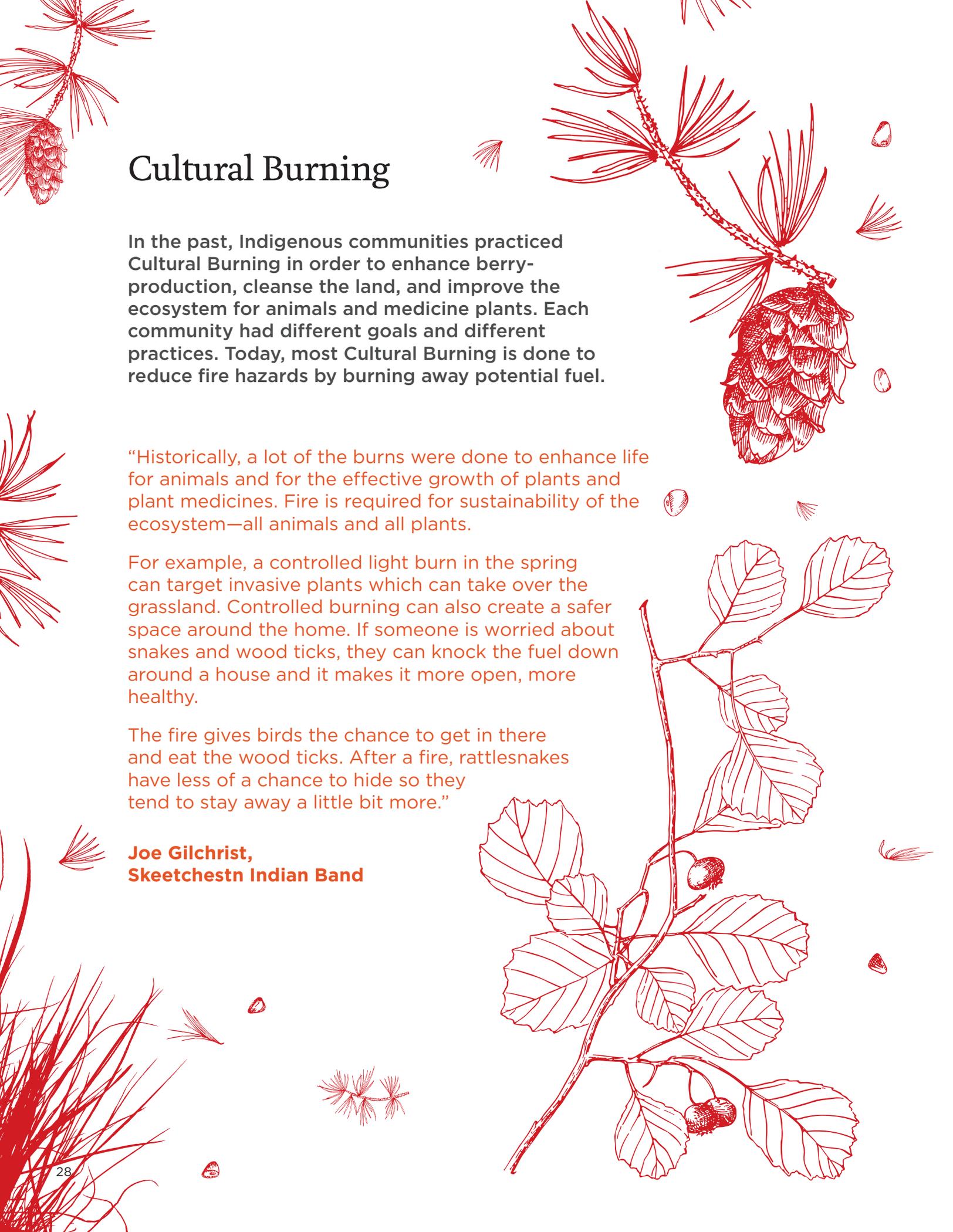
Story shared by: Snxakila Clyde Tallio, Alkw: potlatch speaker, historian and language teacher, Nuxalk Nation

Permission to use this story was given by the Staltmc of the Nuxalk Nation

Nuximlayc (Noel Pootlass), Staltmc, Nuxalk Nation



* Nuxalk Nation is proud to share the story of the Great Flood for the Master of Disaster program. Permission is required from Nuxalk Nation for use of the whole or parts of the story outside of the context of the program, including for conference papers, presentations, workshops, and art installations. It’s important to recognize storytelling as a tradition practised on the coast - this story is the intellectual property of the Nuxalk Nation and permission is used in this context as a teaching tool for youth. This story cannot be used in any other way.



Cultural Burning

In the past, Indigenous communities practiced Cultural Burning in order to enhance berry-production, cleanse the land, and improve the ecosystem for animals and medicine plants. Each community had different goals and different practices. Today, most Cultural Burning is done to reduce fire hazards by burning away potential fuel.

“Historically, a lot of the burns were done to enhance life for animals and for the effective growth of plants and plant medicines. Fire is required for sustainability of the ecosystem—all animals and all plants.

For example, a controlled light burn in the spring can target invasive plants which can take over the grassland. Controlled burning can also create a safer space around the home. If someone is worried about snakes and wood ticks, they can knock the fuel down around a house and it makes it more open, more healthy.

The fire gives birds the chance to get in there and eat the wood ticks. After a fire, rattlesnakes have less of a chance to hide so they tend to stay away a little bit more.”

**Joe Gilchrist,
Skeetchestn Indian Band**

Indigenous traditional knowledge

“For me, Cultural Burning means a form of land and resource management. It means a large impact with the least amount of exertion.

If we wanted to clear an area, there weren't big machines to do it, so we would burn it. We didn't have other sources of fertilizer, so if we wanted to enrich or rejuvenate an area, we would burn it.”

**Lennard Joe,
Shackan Indian Band**

“In the past the brush never got as thick as it does now. Overgrowth can make the fire burn at 2,000 or 3,000 degrees. It didn't used to grow that thick because when it started to overgrow it would be properly burned again by our people. The snowline was the fireguard. If burning is done properly, everyone benefits: people, the animals, the trees, the leaves.”

**Albert Joseph, Xwisten
(Bridge River) First Nation**

“Way back in the early 1940s the land was getting so sick that we could not find the right plants for the medicines. Medicine plants are small and the bushes got too big. So we started a fire down below and followed the sides up until it reached the snow. About 5 years later there was a good show of the medicinal plants.”

Carl Alexander, Xwisten (Bridge River) First Nation

ARE THERE OTHER HAZARDS WHERE YOU LIVE?

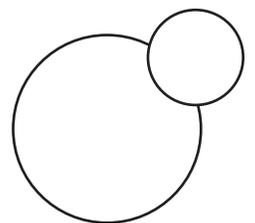
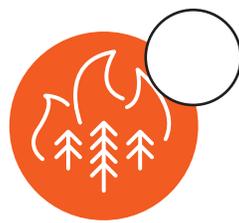
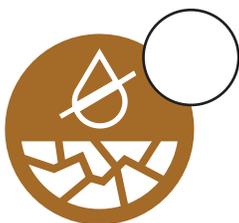
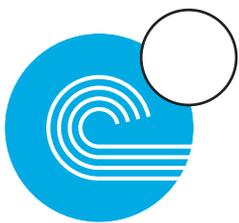
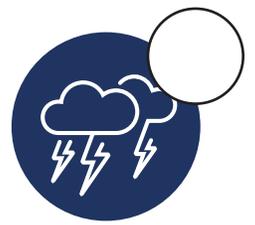
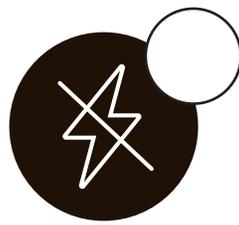
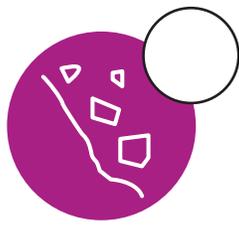
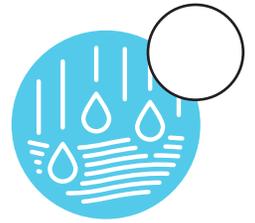
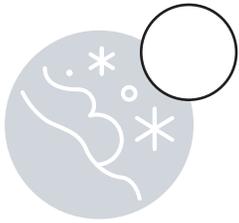
Each community is unique. Beyond the most common hazards in B.C., what other hazards could happen where you live?



.....
.....
.....

NOW YOU KNOW THE MOST COMMON HAZARDS!

Great job! You just learned a lot about the most common hazards in BC. Can you remember them all and rank your hazards from most to least important for your community?



.....

WHICH HAZARDS ARE MOST IMPORTANT WHERE YOU LIVE?

#1 HAZARD	#2 HAZARD	#3 HAZARD
CAUSES	CAUSES	CAUSES
HOW TO PREPARE	HOW TO PREPARE	HOW TO PREPARE

WHERE DO YOU LIVE IN BC?

MARK IT WITH A STAR ★

COLOUR IN THE HAZARDS FOR YOUR AREA

Colour the dots near your home to represent the most important hazards.

- AVALANCHES
- EARTHQUAKES
- DISEASE OUTBREAKS
- FLOODS
- HAZARDOUS MATERIAL SPILLS
- LANDSLIDES
- POWER OUTAGES
- SEVERE WEATHER
- TSUNAMIS
- WATER SHORTAGES/DROUGHT
- WILDFIRE
- _____

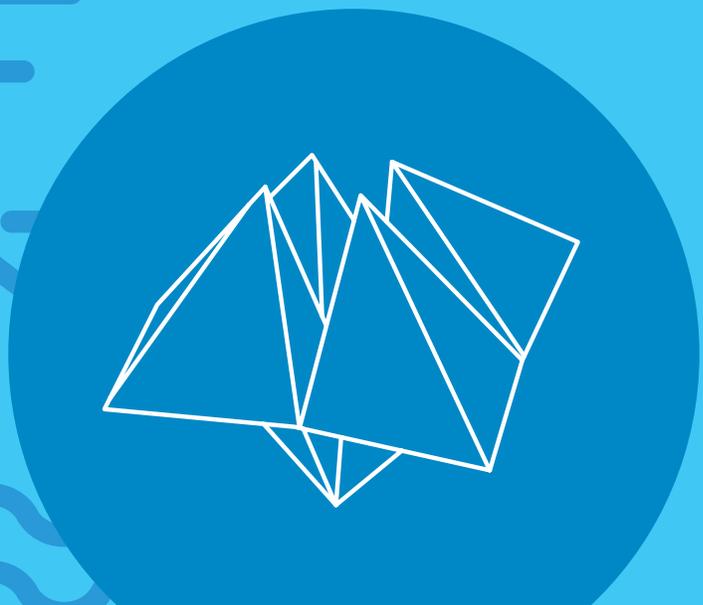
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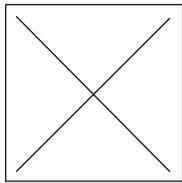


DISASTER CATCHER

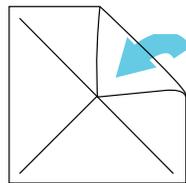
SEE BACK FOR TEMPLATES



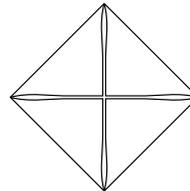
STEP 1



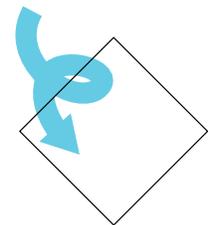
STEP 2



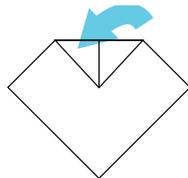
STEP 3



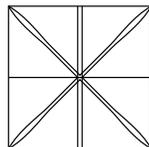
STEP 4



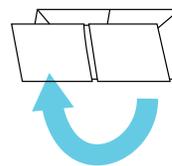
STEP 5



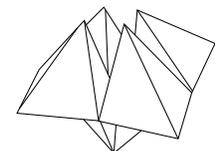
STEP 6



STEP 7



STEP 8



STEP 1 Fold your square diagonally into a big triangle by taking one corner and meeting it with the opposite corner. Unfold. Now fold it in a big triangle the other way. Unfold. You now have a giant X folded in your paper with a centre point in the middle.

STEP 2 Start with one corner. Fold the corner of your paper to meet the centre.

STEP 3 Continue folding each corner into the centre. Make sure not to overlap your corners.

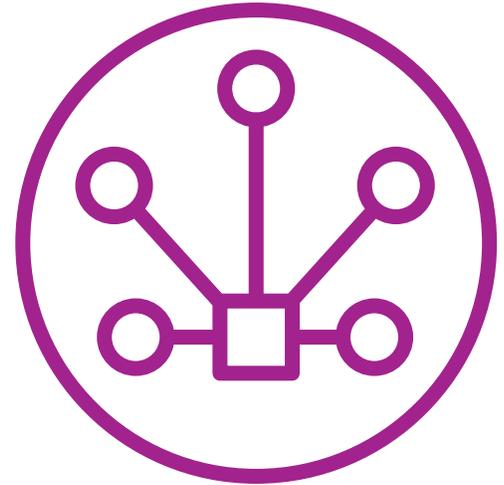
STEP 4 Flip your paper over so the folded sides are face down.

STEP 5 Fold the new corners to the centre diagonally, one by one.

STEP 6 Fold your square in half horizontally to form a rectangle. Unfold. Now fold the square in half the other way.

STEP 7 You're ready to play! Place your thumbs and index fingers inside the open corners so you can open and close the catcher in both directions. It should look like a mouth that you can make talk.

Gather Your Supplies



The second step in getting prepared is to gather the supplies you might need during an emergency. Emergency supplies include things like food, water and shelter.

During an emergency there are many needs to consider:

- How will you see in the dark?
- How will you stay warm?
- How will you get information without the Internet or TV?
- What will you eat and drink?
- If someone gets hurt, how will you help them?

Gathering supplies in advance will help you take good care of yourself and the people you live with. Being prepared can also help you support other people in your community, like your friends and neighbours. Emergency supplies can also help you care for animals, like your pets.

To be fully prepared, you need to gather supplies for two things:

Your Home Emergency Kit



Your Grab-and-Go Bag



EMERGENCY KITS

"camping at home"

A Home Emergency Kit is a collection of tools and supplies to help keep everyone in your home comfortable and safe for 3 to 7 days. It's important to gather these items before you need them and to keep them together in a place you can access easily.

A Home Emergency Kit is an important way to prepare for hazards that might force you to stay at home, like:



Earthquakes



Hazardous
Material Spills



Power
Outages



Severe
Weather

Pack your Home Emergency Kit like you're preparing to go camping at home. What do you need?

BASIC SUPPLIES

UNIQUE NEEDS

**Draw or
write the items
you would include
in your Home
Emergency Kit!**



HOW TO BUILD YOUR HOME EMERGENCY KIT

Building your Home Emergency Kit doesn't need to cost a lot of money or take a lot of time. To build one, all you need to do is follow these 3 steps.

- 1 Find a simple container to hold everything.** You can use a plastic bin or a large duffel bag. Try to use something waterproof.

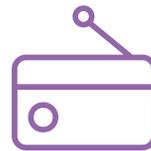
- 2 Gather some basic emergency supplies.** Important items include:



FOOD



WATER



RADIO



FLASHLIGHT



BATTERIES



FIRST-AID KIT



GARBAGE BAGS



SEASONAL CLOTHING



BLANKETS



WHISTLE

MONEY
(IN SMALL BILLS)CHARGING
CORDS

WHAT OTHER ITEMS CAN YOU THINK OF?

3

Prepare for any unique needs in your home.

Your kit should help everyone in your home during an emergency, so try and think about yourself and each person you live with. To help you think of some unique needs, answer these questions:

**Does anyone need special medications?
What do they need?**

Does anyone need glasses or contact lenses to see?

**Do you have animals to care for, like pets?
What do they need?**

How will you all stay calm and pass the time?

Once you've included any special items you might need, store your Home Emergency Kit somewhere that's safe, dry and easy to get to, like a hall closet, spare room or garage.

TIPS



Be sure to ask permission before you start gathering items from around your home. Building a Home Emergency Kit is a great group activity, so why not ask for help!

Your Home Emergency Kit should contain food for everyone in your home for 3 to 7 days.

Your Home Emergency Kit should contain water for everyone in your home for 3 to 7 days. You'll need 4 litres per person, per day.

Remember to update your Home Emergency Kit twice each year. To help you remember, try and check on it each spring and fall.

GRAB-AND-GO BAGS

“leave in a hurry”

A Grab-and-Go Bag is a smaller version of a Home Emergency Kit designed to carry with you if you need to evacuate. During some emergencies, you may not be able to return to your home or you may need to leave with very little notice. To be ready, each person in your home needs their own, customized Grab-and-Go Bag, just for them.

Grab-and-Go Bags are an important way to prepare for hazards that might force you to leave your home, like:



Floods



Landslides



Tsunamis



Wildfires

Pack your Grab-and-Go Bag like you're preparing to leave home in a hurry. What do you need?

BASIC SUPPLIES

UNIQUE NEEDS

Draw or write the items you would include in your Grab-and-Go Bag!



HOW TO BUILD YOUR GRAB-AND-GO BAG

Building a Grab-and-Go Bag is also as easy as 1, 2, 3. You probably already have most of the items you need! The key is to bring them all together, so they're ready to go if you need to leave in a hurry. Just follow these 3 steps:

1 Find a good, sturdy bag to hold everything. Use a strong backpack or sports bag so you can grab it easily and carry it with you. Choose a bag that fits your body well and has lots of pockets.

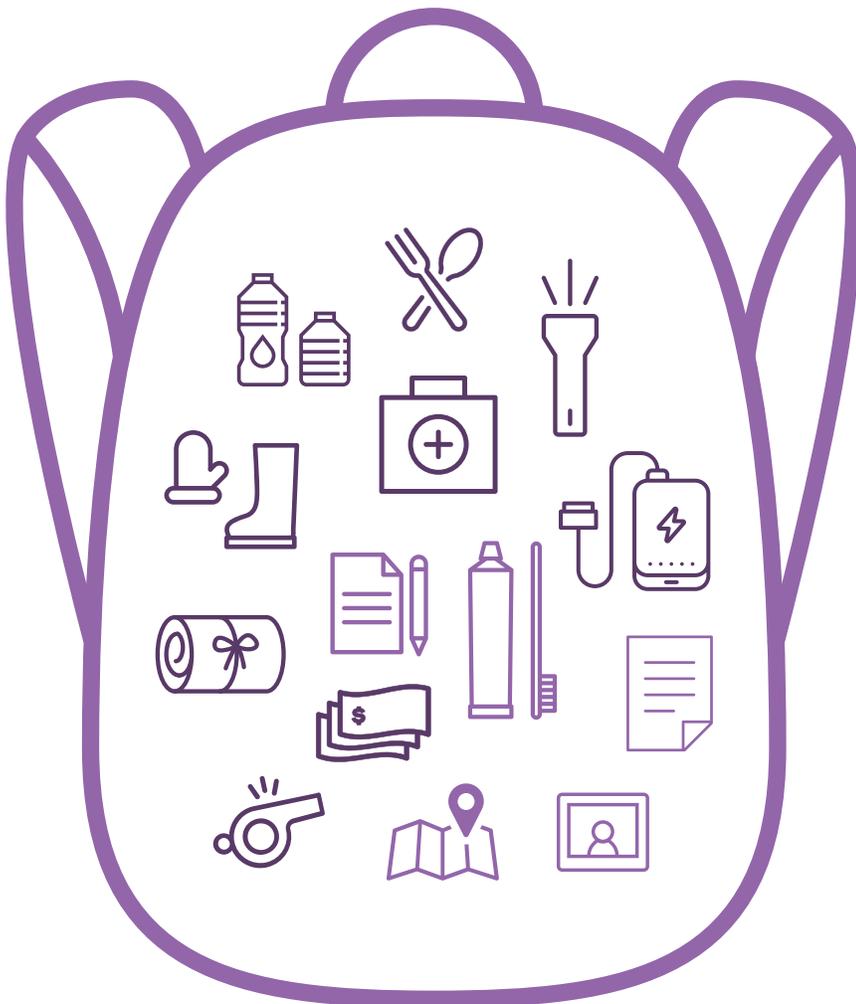
2 Gather some basic emergency supplies. Important items include:

- Food
- Water
- Flashlight
- First-aid kit
- Seasonal clothing
- Blanket
- Whistle
- Money (in small bills)
- Charging cords for electronics

Since you'll be on the road when you need your Grab-and-Go Bag, you'll want a few extra items like:

- Toothbrush & toothpaste
- Pen & paper
- Local map
- Photos of important people
- Copies of important documents

What other items can you think of?



3

Think about personal items you might want to include.

Remember, your Grab-and-Go Bag is just for you! To help you think of personal items to include in yours, answer these questions:

Do you take special medications?

Do you need glasses or contact lenses to see?

How will you entertain yourself if you're away from home for a long time?

What other items could you need to stay clean and comfortable?

Once you've included other items you might need, decide where you'll keep your Grab-and-Go Bag. Choose somewhere that's safe and easy to get to, like a closet.

TIPS



If you can, it's a good idea to have a Grab-and-Go Bag at home, at school and even in your vehicle.

If you have animals to care for, like pets, consider making a special Grab-and-Go Bag for them too!

Remember to check your Grab-and-Go Bag every spring and fall. Replace any expired food and make sure your extra clothing suits the season.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Do you know what to include in a Grab-and-Go Bag? Play the Grab-and-Go Game and build a poster as you go!



Make Your Plan



A Home Emergency Plan is a playbook for how you and the people you live with are going to respond during an emergency. Every household in BC needs a Home Emergency Plan because it will help you:

**Stay connected
to each other**

Stay safe

**Stay calm
and focused**

WORKING TOGETHER ON A HOME EMERGENCY PLAN

A Home Emergency Plan contains a lot of information. It holds important details about everyone in your home, who you will turn to for support and how you'll communicate with each other. There's a lot to think about.

You probably don't have all the answers right now, and that's ok. Since a Home Emergency Plan is for you and everyone you live with, making one is a group activity. You'll need to talk to the people you live with to gather and share information.

At the end of this lesson you'll receive a fill-in-the-blanks Home Emergency Plan to take home and complete as a group.



YOU CAN GET STARTED
BY THINKING ABOUT

3 THINGS

YOU'LL NEED TO KNOW
DURING AN
EMERGENCY

01 WHERE WILL
YOU MEET?



02

WHO WILL YOU CONTACT?



03

HOW WILL YOU FIND INFORMATION?



01 WHERE WILL YOU MEET?

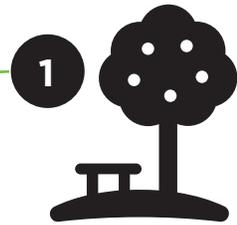
During an emergency, it's important to gather with the people you live with to make sure everyone is safe. It's possible that you won't all be together when disaster strikes.

You can make it easier to find each other by choosing Emergency Meeting Places ahead of time.

EVERY DISASTER IS DIFFERENT
You need at least
2 Emergency Meeting Places



Your home



A meeting place near your home.



A meeting place away from your home.

EMERGENCY MEETING PLACE #1 NEAR YOUR HOME

Choose a place where everyone you live with can gather if you're near your home during an emergency.

A good choice is a place that is:

- Familiar
- Close enough to walk
- Easy to access for everyone you live with

Make sure the Emergency Meeting Places you choose are accessible for everyone you live with, including people with special needs.

Draw and label the route from your home to your first Emergency Meeting Place.



For example: a big tree, a nearby hill, the mailbox at the end of your driveway or your neighbour's house.

Our Emergency Meeting Place near home is:

EMERGENCY MEETING PLACE #2

AWAY FROM YOUR HOME

Choose a place in your community where everyone you live with can gather if you're not together when a disaster happens, and you can't access your home.

A good choice is a place that is:

- Safe and familiar
- Away from your immediate neighbourhood
- Easy to access

If you have pets, make sure your Emergency Meeting Places are animal-friendly.

Draw and label the route from your home to your second Emergency Meeting Place.



For example: a library, a community building, your favourite restaurant or a friend's home.

Our Emergency Meeting Place away from home is:

02 WHO WILL YOU CONTACT?

During an emergency, you may need to contact an adult you trust for information and support. You'll probably try to contact the people you live with first. If you can't reach them, then you need a backup plan. You need Emergency Contacts.

Your Emergency Contacts are the people you can call if you need support during an emergency and you're unable to reach the adults you live with.

You need at least 2 Emergency Contacts:

1. A person who lives nearby.
2. A person who lives outside your community, far away.



You can also set up a social media page or online conversation to keep everyone you live with connected during a disaster.

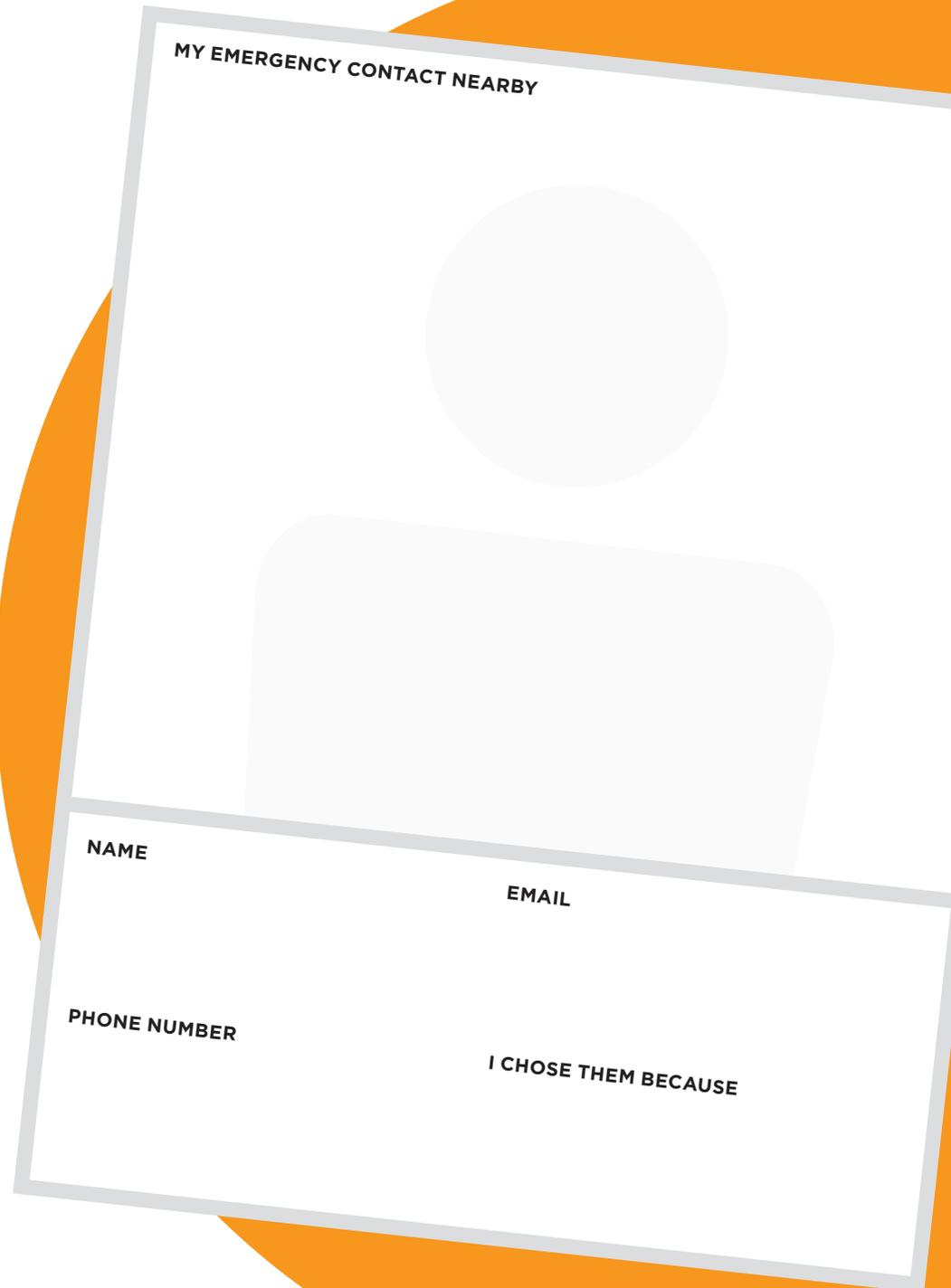


EMERGENCY CONTACT 01 NEARBY

Choose someone who lives in your community, who you know well, and who you love and trust. You could choose a good friend, a relative or a neighbour.

Make sure you discuss your choice when you complete your Home Emergency Plan as a group at home.

MY EMERGENCY CONTACT NEARBY



NAME

EMAIL

PHONE NUMBER

I CHOSE THEM BECAUSE



If you're not able to reach your Emergency Contact, there are other adults who can help you during an emergency, like teachers, firefighters and community leaders.

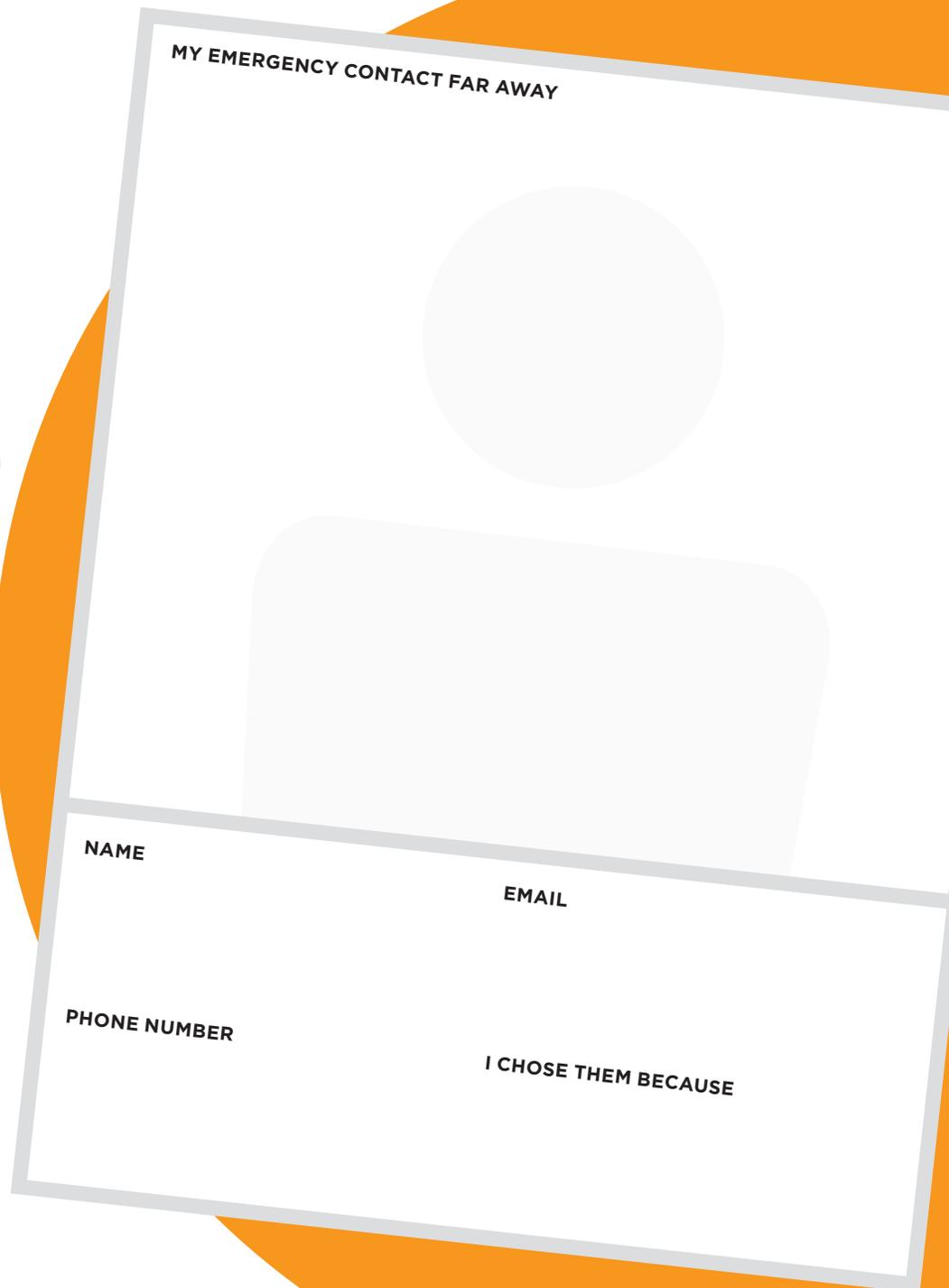
EMERGENCY CONTACT 02 FAR AWAY

Choose someone outside of your community who can be a central point of contact for everyone you live with. During a disaster, local communications networks may not work. Phone lines can also get jammed when many people try to place calls at the same time.

It may be easier to make a long-distance phone call than to make a call within your community. In these situations, call your Emergency Contact outside your community. Tell them how you are, where you are, and what you plan to do next.

By choosing a central point of contact, everyone in your home can call the same place, gather information, and check in. It's important that this contact person lives far enough away that they won't be affected by the same emergencies.

MY EMERGENCY CONTACT FAR AWAY



NAME

EMAIL

PHONE NUMBER

I CHOSE THEM BECAUSE

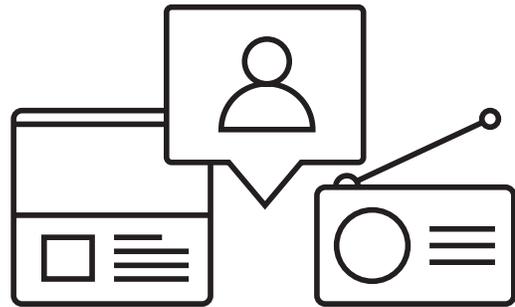


Data-based services, like text messages, email and social media are less likely to experience major disruptions during an emergency.

03 HOW WILL YOU FIND INFORMATION?

START LOCAL

When it comes to finding information during an emergency or disaster, always start with local sources. This could be your local government, like your town or city, your regional district or your band council. It could also be a local emergency service, like a fire department. In general, the people working closest to the emergency will have the most current and reliable information.



During an emergency or disaster, phone lines may be down or they may be jammed by too many people trying to make a call. It's best to try mass communication sources.



WEBSITES



SOCIAL MEDIA



RADIO

THEN GO BROADER

There are many provincial and federal sources of emergency information. EmergencyInfoBC is one very broad source of emergency information, covering a lot of different hazards.

The EmergencyInfoBC website also includes EmergencyMapBC, a map of ongoing emergencies, like wildfires and floods.

The map also shows where recent earthquakes happened and shows public safety conditions like park closures and evacuations.

 @EMERGENCYINFOBC

EMERGENCYINFOBC.CA

EmergencyInfoBC shares information about emergencies that require support from the provincial government—often these are large emergencies that involve helping a lot of people quickly.

Other provincial and federal agencies also share information about specific hazards:



Wildfires: BC Wildfire Service

bcwildfire.ca

facebook.com/BCForestFireInfo

twitter.com/BCGovFireInfo



Earthquakes: Earthquakes Canada

earthquakescanada.nrcan.gc.ca

twitter.com/CanadaQuakes



Floods: River Forecast Centre

bcrfc.env.gov.bc.ca



ACTIVITY

To capture what you've learned, create your own Emergency Plan Poster! See back for template.

YOU DID IT!

You've learned a lot about the
3 steps to being prepared
for emergencies and disasters.

Can you remember
what they are?

1

.....

2

.....

3

.....

FINAL STEP

SHARE WHAT YOU'VE
LEARNED WITH
THE PEOPLE YOU
LIVE WITH

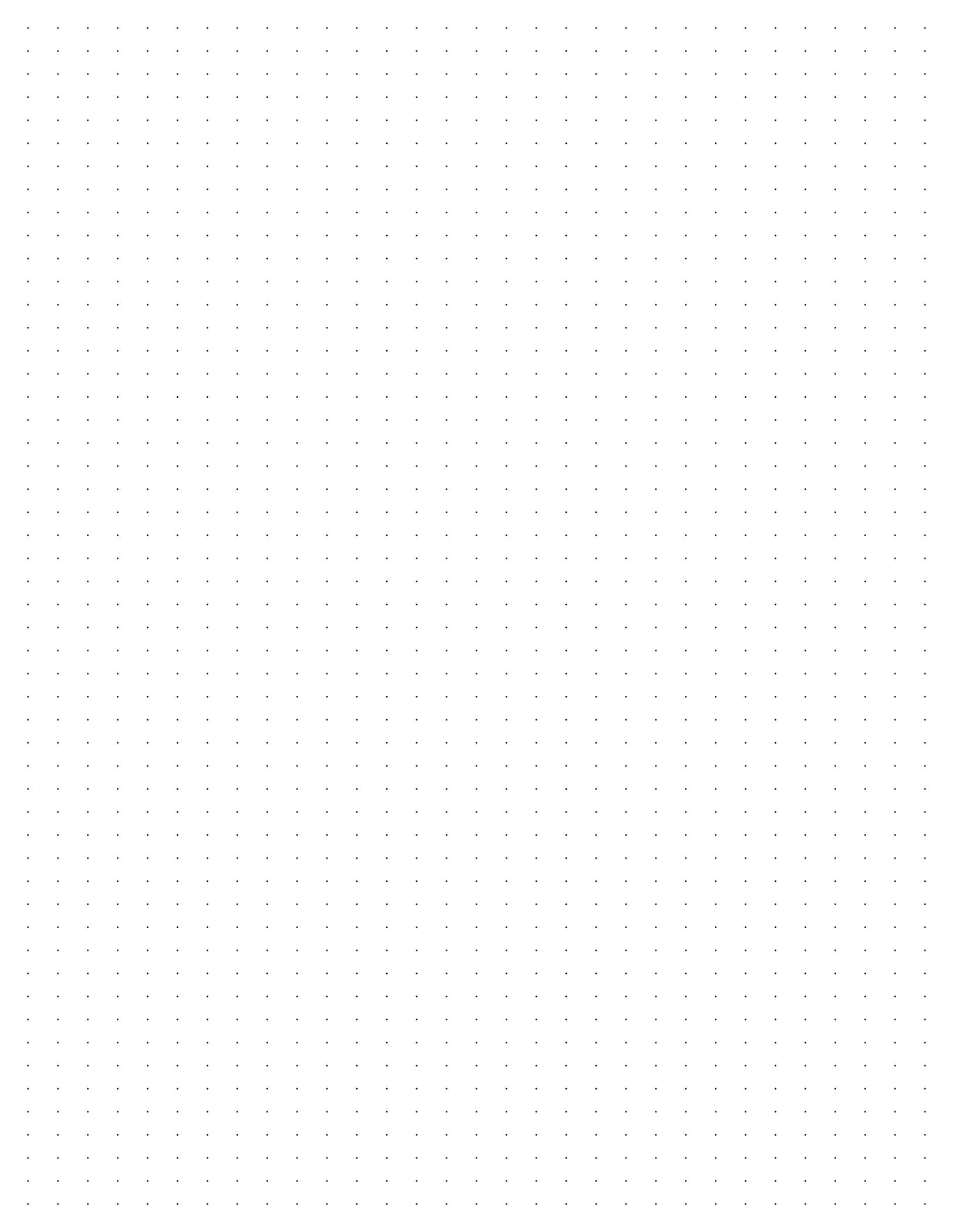


To help everyone get prepared at home, you now have a fill-in-the-blanks Home Emergency Plan.

Fill out the first page to help get things started. Then, complete the Home Emergency Plan as a group.

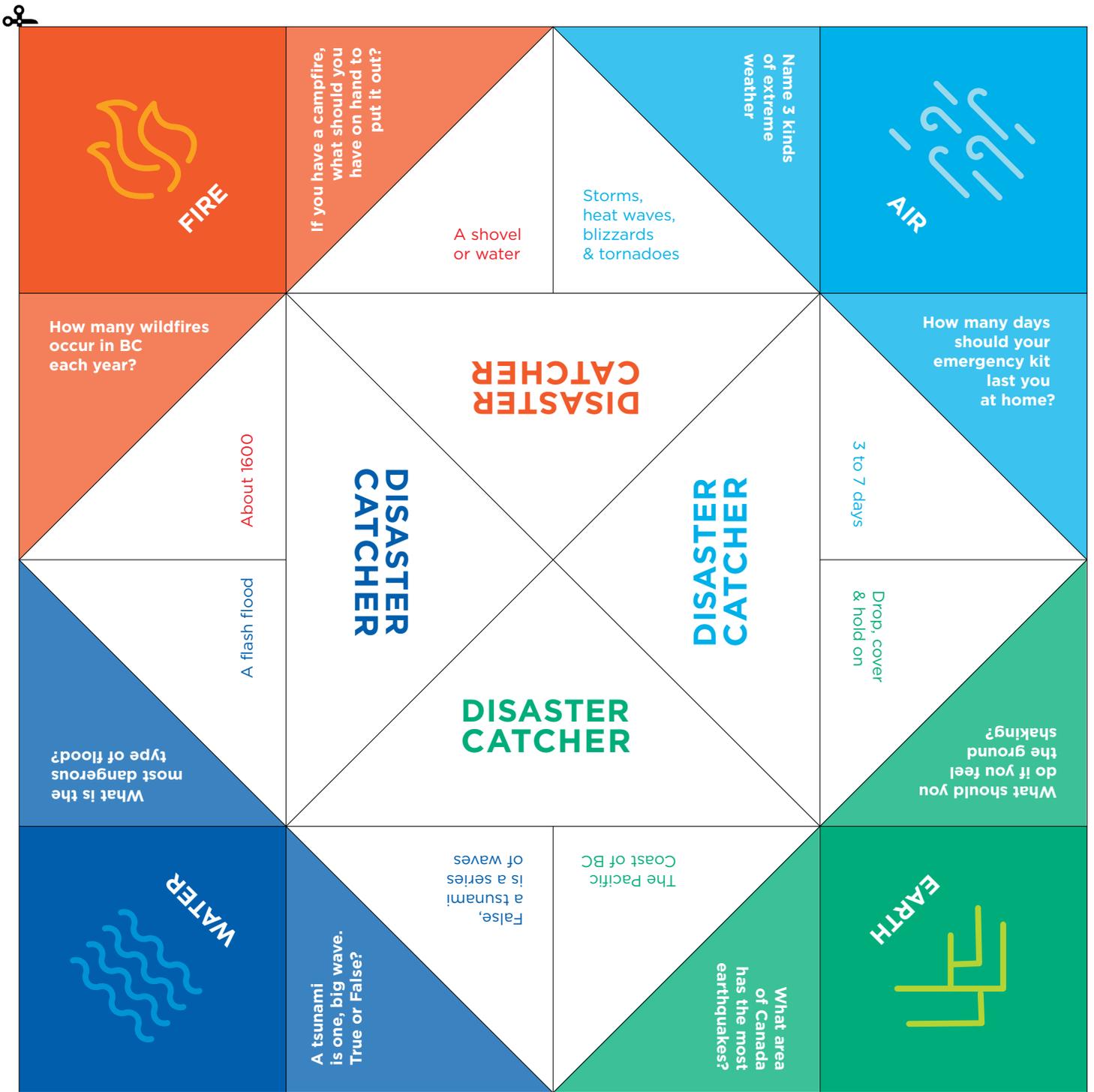
When you're done, keep your completed Home Emergency Plan with your Home Emergency Kit, so you know exactly where to find it. You can also make copies to include in each person's Grab-and-Go Bag. If you use a cellphone or a computer, you can also make copies or take photos of your Home Emergency Plan to keep with you.

NOTES









HOW IT WORKS!

Test your disaster knowledge! First find a partner with a different version of the Disaster Catcher. Then, follow the steps to the right:

1. Ask your partner to choose an element—earth, fire, water or air.

2. Spell out the element as you move the catcher in and out and side to side. Make one move for each letter. You can start in any direction.

For example: AIR would be 3 moves: A-I-R.

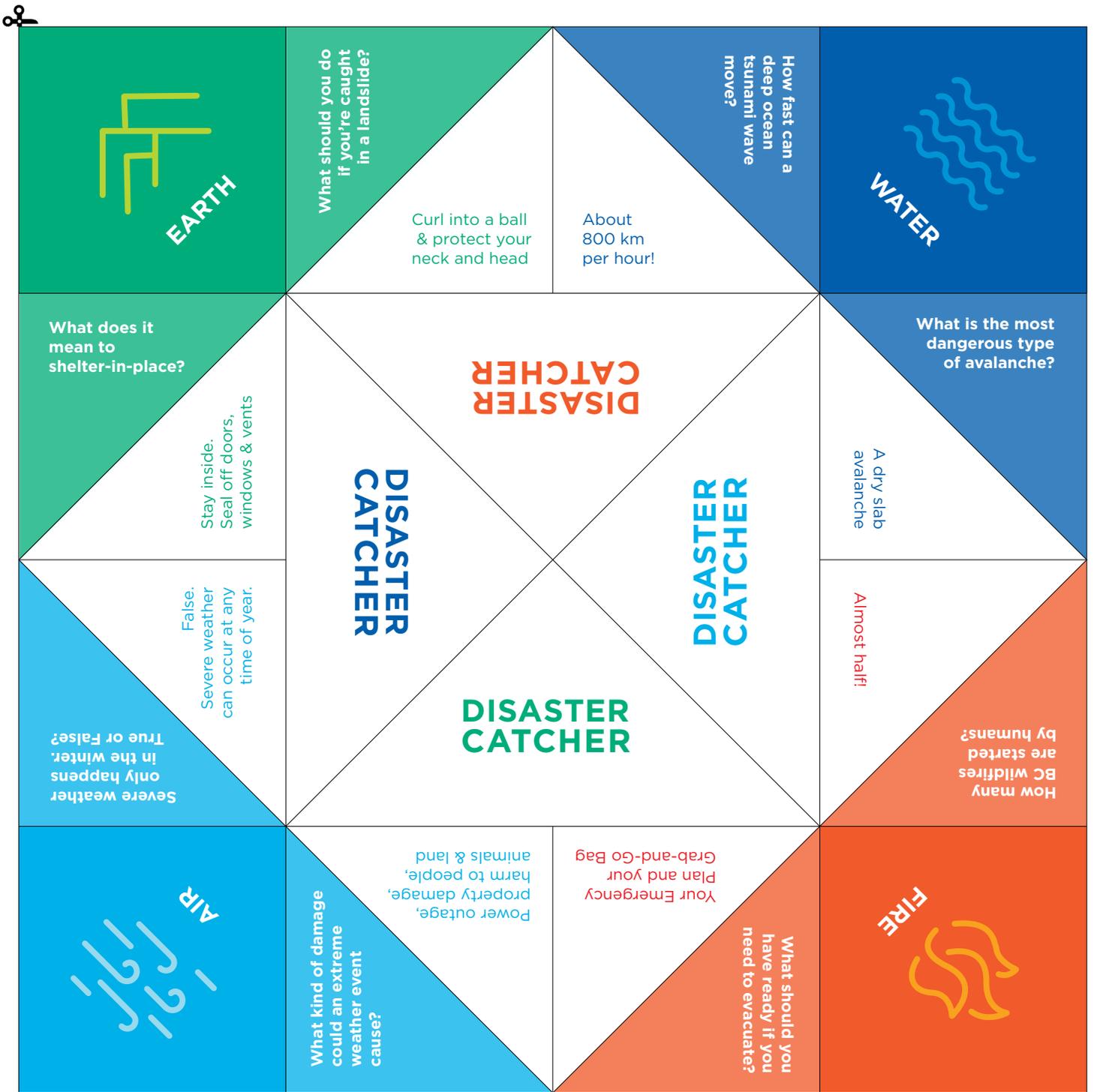
3. Ask your partner one of the questions inside your catcher.

4. Open the flap to check their answer. Did they get it right?

5. Fold your catcher back together and trade places.

Now it's your turn!
Return to step 1.





HOW IT WORKS!

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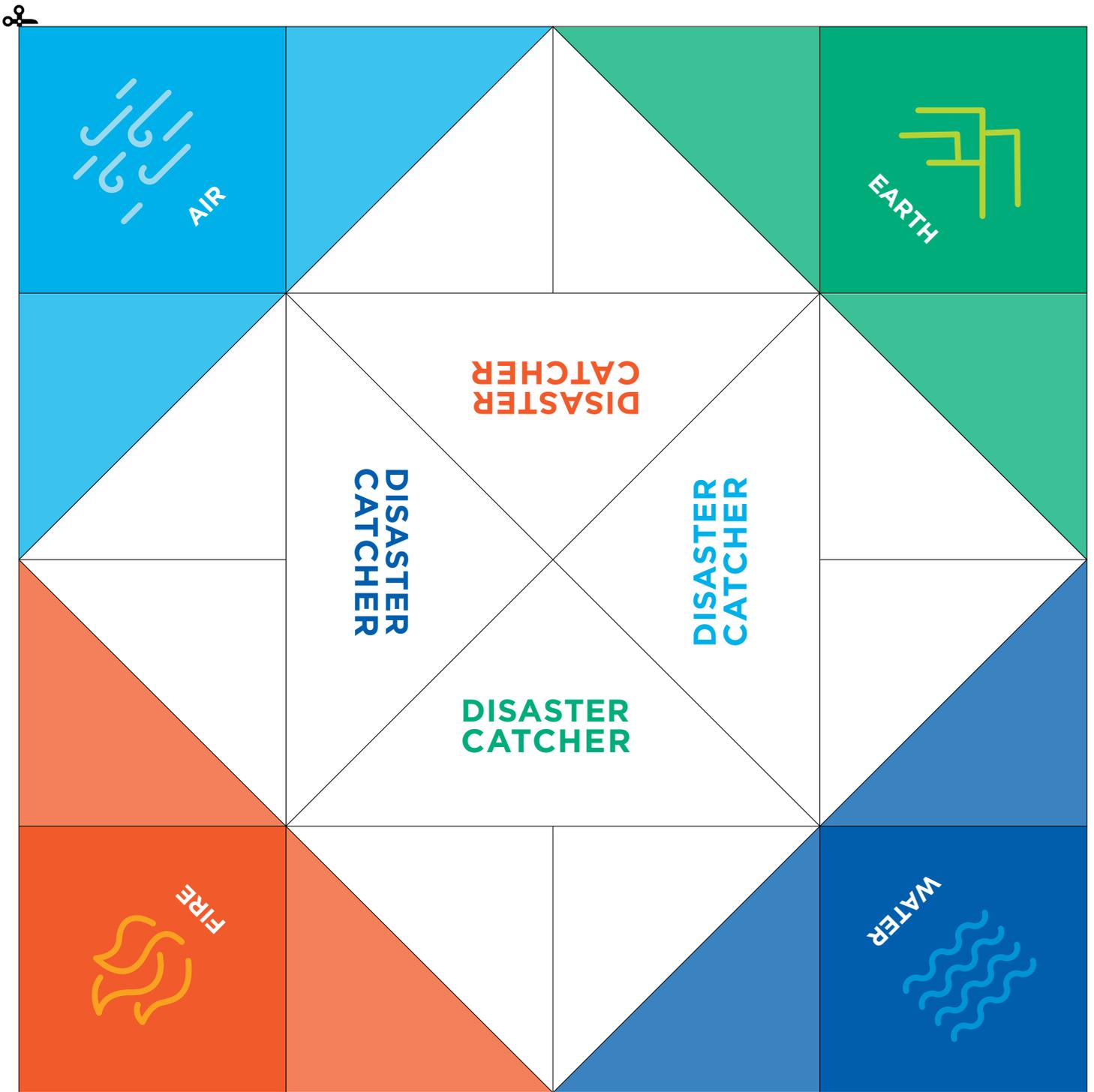
3. Ask your partner one of the questions inside your catcher.

4. Open the flap to check their answer. Did they get it right?

5. Fold your catcher back together and trade places.

Now it's your turn!
Return to step 1.





IT'S YOUR TURN!

Create your own Disaster Catcher! First, write your own trivia questions and answers. Then, follow the steps to the right:

1. Ask your partner to choose an element—earth, fire, water or air.

2. Spell out the element as you move the catcher in and out and side to side. Make one move for each letter. You can start in any direction.

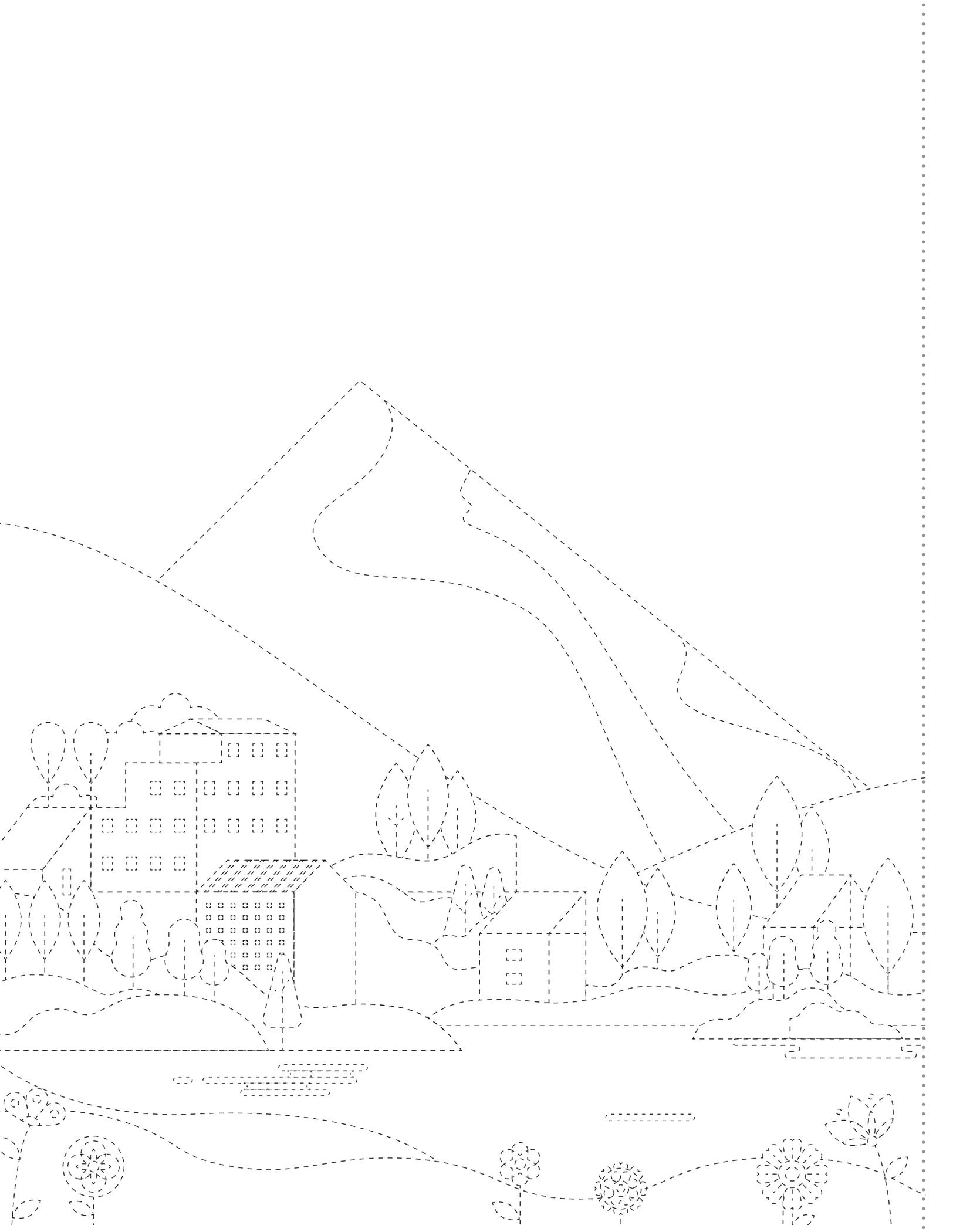
For example: AIR would be 3 moves: A-I-R.

3. Ask your partner one of your trivia questions.

4. Open the flap to check their answer. Did they get it right?

5. Fold your catcher back together and trade places.

Return to step 1.





CONNECT WITH US

Do you have suggestions for how we could improve this program?
Do you want to tell us about your learning experience?

If you have thoughts, ideas or feedback to share we'd love to hear from you!
Send us an email at:
masterofdisaster@gov.bc.ca

Preparing for
emergencies
starts with **youth.**

