

Schedule A to By-Law 75-2008

NIAGARA REGION

Emergency Management Plan

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Niagara Region Emergency Management Plan

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Niagara Region Emergency Management Plan

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Emergency Management Plan will serve the Corporation of the Regional Municipality of Niagara as an operational guideline for managing an appropriate response to any emergency situation either occurring within or impacting within regional boundaries. This Plan will:

- *Define an emergency within the Regional context,*
- *Describe emergency control and incident management structure to be used by the Region,*
- *Describe the procedure for declaring an Emergency to exist, and*
- *Define the emergency assistance structures that may be employed during any event*

This Plan has been designed to be flexible and adaptable to any emergency or crisis situation that may impact Niagara Region. However, in order for it to be operationally sound, identified regional departments, emergency services and other key stakeholder agencies must:

- *Maintain familiarity with the Plan contents*
- *Remain committed to participation in annual mandated training and exercises*
- *Ensure any required emergency supporting / departmental plans are in place as required*
- *Contribute to the annual Plan review to ensure it's contents remain current and appropriate*

This Plan outlines how Niagara Region as a corporation will notify and assemble key executive / senior staff to communicate, collaborate, coordinate and manage Niagara Region's response to and recovery from the impact of any major crisis and/or emergency event.

This Plan should be interpreted as the primary tool for the strategic incident management of any major event impacting Niagara Region and as such it must be supported by operational emergency plans / procedures / protocols as developed on an as required basis by regional corporate departments / emergency services and / or associated boards / agencies.

1.1 Legal Authority

The legislation that both empowers and mandates Niagara Region to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergency situations is as follows:

1.1.1 Emergency Management & Civil Protection Act

The Emergency Management & Civil Protection Act requires that municipalities within the Province of Ontario have both an Emergency Management Program and an Emergency Plan (Sections 2.1 and 3.1 respectively) that are empowered by municipal by-law.

1.1.2 Ontario Regulation 380/04

Ontario Regulation sets in place the standards for both Provincial Ministry Emergency Management Programs and Municipal Emergency Management Programs. These standards describe the minimum provisions that must be provided to constitute an emergency management program at the essential level.

1.1.3 Regional By-Law 75-2008

The Council of the Regional Municipality of Niagara has empowered both the Regional Emergency Management Program and this Emergency Management Plan by Regional By-Law.

1.2 Definition of Emergency

The *Emergency Management & Civil Protection Act* defines emergency as:

“a situation or an impending situation that constitutes a danger of major proportions that could result in serious harm to persons or substantial damage to property and that is caused by the forces of nature, a disease or other health risk, an accident or an act whether intentional or otherwise.”

Therefore, any situation occurring within / impacting within Niagara Region that meets the above definition may precipitate the activation of this Plan.

An emergency according to the above definition is usually the result of an existing hazard, a transitional hazard or the threat of an impending hazard abnormally impacting the life, health, safety, well being and/or property of Niagara’s communities. Regardless of the specific hazard that results in an emergency situation, it is essential to recognize that emergency events as defined in this Plan are different and distinct from what would be considered normal daily operations carried out by professional / volunteer emergency first response agencies within regional boundaries. These agencies include (but are not limited to) the Niagara Regional Police Service, Niagara Emergency Medical Services, the twelve Local Municipal Fire Services, the Public Health Department, the Community Services Department and/or the Public Works Department.

1.3 Emergency Plan Alignment

Because Niagara Region is an upper tier municipality and acts as a service provider to twelve local area municipalities, it is essential that the Emergency Plans of those twelve municipalities align with this Emergency Plan specifically as it relates to how Niagara Region services are provided during emergency situations.

To this extent it is a requirement of the *Emergency Management & Civil Protection Act* that the emergency plans of a lower tier (local area municipality) conform to the emergency plan of the upper tier municipality and are to have no effect to the extent of any inconsistency (Section 5).

1.4 Activation of the Emergency Management Plan

This Plan is considered activated at any time the members of the Regional Emergency Control Group (RECG) are alerted and instructed to assemble at any Regional Emergency Operations Centre (REOC) location.

1.5 Emergency Planning Assumptions

This Plan has been developed based on the following assumptions:

1.5.1 Normal Emergency Operations

In the course of normal business operations, various regional departments may be required to respond to an impending threat and/or hazardous situation. A normal emergency event is one that can be effectively managed and mitigated by a department operating independently or in coordination with other departments. When these events occur, normal emergency operations are conducted according to departmental emergency plans / procedures / protocols and may not require activation of this Plan.

1.5.2 Rapid Escalation Emergencies

An emergency event within the definition and purview of this Plan may occur with little or no warning and escalate in short order. When these events occur, immediate management of the event rests with emergency services and/or regional departments with jurisdiction over the response to the event where it occurs. Control of these events and their impact on the community at large remains with the site response personnel until such a time that this Plan is activated. Once activated this Plan operates in support of the emergency site and/or one or more local area municipalities.

1.5.3 Extra-Ordinary Emergency Measures

An emergency event that overwhelms or threatens to overwhelm regional resources (response capacity) and that has a significant impact on the community at large will precipitate the activation of this Plan. When these events

occur, the overarching aim of this Plan is to provide the foundation for effective and appropriate regional control of extra-ordinary actions and measures that must be taken to mitigate the emergency.

2.0 EMERGENCY CONTROL STRUCTURE

An emergency precipitating the activation of this Plan will require that extra-ordinary actions and measures be taken under the direction of appropriate senior officials. Those senior officials will collectively make up the membership of an Emergency Control Group that implements an Emergency Control Structure.

2.1 Municipal Emergency Control Groups

Each of Niagara Region's twelve local area municipalities has an Emergency Management Program and an Emergency Response Plan. Within each Plan the municipality designates the members of their respective Emergency Control Group / Community Control Group.

2.2 Regional Emergency Control Group (RECG)

The Regional Emergency Control Group (RECG) membership includes (but is not limited to) the following positions:

- *Regional Chairman*
 - *Executive Officer (to the Regional Chairman)*
- *Chief Administrative Officer*
 - *Director of Administration Services*
- *Medical Officer of Health*
 - *Director of Emergency Services (Niagara Emergency Medical Service)*
 - *Director of Health Protection and Promotion*
- *Chief of Police (Niagara Regional Police Service)*
- *Commissioner of Community Services*
- *Commissioner of Public Works*
- *Commissioner of Corporate Services*
- *Commissioner of Integrated Community Planning*
 - *Regional Clerk*
 - *Associate Director, Regional Emergency Planning*
 - *Senior Manager Corporate Communications*
 - *Program Development Manager, Regional Emergency Planning*
- *Regional Fire Coordinator*
- *General Manager Niagara Regional Housing*

2.2.1 RECG Collective Responsibilities

During any emergency event, the RECG members are collectively responsible for the direction and coordination of the regional emergency response and recovery operations within Niagara Region. Their collective goals are to:

- *Preserve life, health and safety*
- *Reduce human suffering*
- *Protect, maintain and/or restore essential services*
- *Mitigate the impact of the emergency on the community*
- *Minimize property damage where capable*

In order to accomplish the above goals, the RECG member responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- *Mobilization of staff, resources and equipment in response to the emergency event, emergency support operation and/or in response to human suffering*
- *Directing regional resources tasked to hazard mitigation and ensuring necessary actions are taken that are not contrary to law*
- *Facilitating procurement of non-regional resources as required and appropriate in support of an emergency site, local municipality or other necessary emergency operations*
- *Ensuring appropriate messaging to the public, staff and the mass media*
- *Notifying and requesting assistance from and/or liaison with higher levels of government and/or cross border partners*
- *Approving the expenditure of financial resources in support of emergency operations*
- *Maintaining a log of decisions made and actions taken both collectively and in relation to their department, service or agency*
- *Participating in a post emergency debriefing and contributing to the post emergency report*

2.2.2 RECG Notification

This Plan is activated through notification of the RECG members of an impending, imminent or occurring emergency event that requires them to (in whole or in part) assemble at a predetermined Regional Emergency Operations Centre (REOC). RECG members are notified using telecommunications technology designed for the task, with various redundancies to ensure notifications are received.

- *All RECG members and designated alternates must be familiar with the Emergency Notification Operational Support Function (OSF-01)*

2.2.3 RECG Solidarity

At any time this Plan is activated, all decisions made and actions taken by the RECG members from that point forward are made under the authority of the Regional Chairman as empowered by the *Emergency Management & Civil*

Protection Act. The RECG members will advise and make recommendations to the Chairman and carry out emergency operations under that authority. All RECG members must accept this process and take a position of “RECG Solidarity” as follows:

During RECG meetings all members will provide advice and make recommendations regarding actions to be taken by Niagara Region. However, once a decision is approved by the Regional Chairman, all RECG members must collectively support under public scrutiny the actions taken / decisions made, whether opposed to those decisions at the discussion level or not.

2.2.4 RECG Staff Rotation

A staff rotation will be established if an emergency is expected to last greater than 12 hours in total duration. If a staff rotation is anticipated, each RECG member is responsible for arranging their own relief through one of their designated alternates to include an overlap allowing RECG members to bring their alternates up to speed on current emergency operations. RECG staff rotations may be staggered as required.

If an emergency occurs during regular business hours, RECG members must adapt a staff rotation as appropriate that takes into consideration time already worked that day. Under no circumstances should staff work longer than 12 consecutive hours under any circumstance and preferably no longer than 8 consecutive hours during intense emergency operations.

2.3 Niagara Incident Management System (NIMS)

The Niagara Incident Management System (NIMS) is the model employed by the RECG members to effectively manage any emergency situation precipitating the activation of this Plan.

- *All RECG members and designated alternates must be familiar with the Niagara Incident Management System Operational Support Function (OSF-02)*

3.0 EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

Emergencies require a controlled and coordinated response effort by multiple agencies, under the direction of appropriate officials. For these emergency operations to be successful, clear lines of control, communication and reporting must be established and maintained between the various locations and stakeholder groups. Emergency operations may be conducted at / as follows:

- *Emergency Operations Centre(s)*
- *Emergency Site Operations*
- *Emergency Support Operations*

3.1 Emergency Operations Centre(s)

An Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) serves as the nerve centre / communications hub for the control, facilitation and administration of any emergency response from multiple agencies. Emergency Operations Centre(s) can exist at three levels of government in the Province of Ontario applicable to Niagara Region as follows:

- *Municipal Emergency Operations Centre(s)*
- *Regional Emergency Operations Centre(s)*
- *Provincial Operations Centre*

3.1.1 Municipal Emergency Operations Centre

Each of Niagara Region's twelve local area municipalities has designated a Municipal Emergency Control Group that operates out of the Municipal Emergency Operations Centre to control and facilitate their response to any emergency occurring within municipal boundaries.

3.1.2 Regional Emergency Operations Centre

The Regional Emergency Control Group operates out of the Regional Emergency Operations Centre (REOC) to control the regional response to any emergency occurring within or impacting within regional boundaries.

- *All RECG members, designated alternates and other defined support staff must be familiar with the Regional Emergency Operations Centre Operational Support Function (OSF-03)*

3.1.3 Provincial Emergency Operations Centre

The Provincial Emergency Operations Centre is located in Toronto and maintained by Emergency Management Ontario. This is the location where Provincial Government staff and Provincial Ministry Actions Groups (MAG) co-ordinate the Provincial response and support to any localized emergency and facilitate Federal government support.

3.2 Emergency Site Operations

During any emergency situation where the hazard location is specific and identifiable emergency responders will congregate where the emergency exists and work together to accomplish the following:

- *Protect the life, health and safety of emergency response personnel*
- *Protect the life, health and safety of the public*
- *Mitigate/remove the danger/hazard presented by the emergency*
- *Where possible minimize damage to personal property*
- *Restore the site to its pre-emergency condition*

These emergency site operations are controlled and coordinated to make the most efficient use of personnel and equipment, and are operated under the support of an Emergency Operations Centre(s).

3.3 Emergency Support Operations

During any emergency situation various emergency support operations may be required based on the hazard and its impact on the community. These support operations may be located within the emergency site, adjacent to the emergency site or at other locations within the community and may include:

- *Evacuation / Reception Centre(s)*
- *Departmental Operations Centre(s)*
- *External Emergency Operations Centre(s)*
- *Equipment Staging Areas*
- *Other support locations as required*

4.0 EMERGENCY DECLARATIONS

An emergency declaration promotes a sense of urgency to the community regarding the severity of an emergency situation and the danger it presents. An emergency declaration should be made if any Ontario Municipality must take “extraordinary” actions to protect life, health, safety and property of residents and to formally engage the powers granted through the *Emergency Management & Civil Protection Act*. The *Act* empowers emergency declarations at three levels of government in the Province of Ontario as follows:

- *Municipal Emergency Declarations*
- *Regional Emergency Declarations*
- *Provincial Emergency Declarations*

4.1 Municipal Emergency Declaration

The Mayor / Lord Mayor (or designated alternate) of any Niagara Region local area municipality has the power under the Act to declare an emergency to exist within the boundaries of their respective municipality.

4.2 Regional Emergency Declaration

The Regional Chairman (or designated alternate) has the power under the Act to declare a Regional Emergency to exist anywhere within the boundaries of Niagara Region.

4.2.1 Regional Emergency Declaration - Jurisdiction

Although the Regional Chairman is empowered to declare a Regional Emergency at any location within regional boundaries, the Chairman does NOT

have the power to declare an emergency on behalf of any local area municipality. That power rests only with the Mayor / Lord Mayor of each specific municipality and their respective designated alternates.

4.2.2 Regional Emergency Declaration - Consultation

Any decision by the Chairman to declare a Regional Emergency will be done in consultation with the members of the RECG. However, the Chairman does have the ultimate responsibility for deciding to (or not to) declare a Regional Emergency.

- *All RECG members and designated alternates must be familiar with the Regional Emergency Declarations Operational Support Function (OSF-04)*

4.3 Provincial Emergency Declaration

The Premier of the Province of Ontario (or designated alternate) has the power under the Act to declare a Provincial Emergency to exist within the boundaries of the Province of Ontario.

4.3.1 Provincial Emergency Declaration - Jurisdiction

In addition to a provincial declaration, the Premier has the power to declare an emergency **on behalf** of any community within provincial boundaries and may at any time declare that an emergency has terminated **on behalf** of any Ontario municipality.

5.0 EMERGENCY INFORMATION

At any time this Plan is activated there will be the need to communicate appropriate and factual information to area residents, local area municipalities, strategic partner agencies and / or regional staff directly or through the media. This information may include issuing public / staff action directives, responding to requests for information from the public / staff / partner agencies, and providing information to the mass media.

5.1 Municipal Emergency Information

Each of Niagara Region's twelve local area municipalities has designated an Emergency Information Officer to facilitate emergency information functions during municipal emergency operations.

5.2 Regional Emergency Information

The Region has designated the Senior Manager, Corporate Communications to facilitate emergency information functions during regional emergency operations.

5.2.1 Communications Team

The Senior Manager, Corporate Communications leads the members of the Communications Team as described within the Niagara Incident Management System.

- *All emergency information team members must be familiar with both the Niagara Incident Management System Operational Support Function (OSF-02) and the Regional Emergency Information Operational Support Function (OSF-05)*

5.2.2 Designated Spokespersons

In addition to the Communications Team members the following RECG members are designated as media spokespersons during regional emergency operations:

- *Regional Chairman*
- *Regional CAO*
- *RECG Members (subject matter experts as required)*
- *All designated spokespersons must be familiar with the Regional Emergency Information Operational Support Function (OSF-05)*

6.0 EMERGENCY RECOVERY

Emergency recovery operations commence once the emergency has been successfully mitigated (danger/hazard removed). At that time emergency operations shift from the management of the emergency itself to management of the impact / aftermath of the emergency.

6.1 Recovery Structure

To ensure the progression to recovery operations occurs in a seamless and coordinated manner, the RECG members will determine the appropriate time to define the members of an Emergency Recovery Structure as follows:

- Recovery Committee
- Human Needs Sub-Committee
- Infrastructure Sub-Committee
- Financial Management Sub-Committee
- *All designated RECG members and designated alternates must be familiar with the Regional Emergency Recovery Operational Support Function (OSF-06)*

7.0 EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

During emergency operations the RECG members will determine the allocation of and/or appeals for assistance in support of an emergency site(s), municipal emergency operations or other emergency support functions within the boundaries of Niagara Region.

7.1 Types of Assistance

The above emergency assistance may include the following types:

- Personnel with special expertise
- Specialized equipment with trained operators
- Any other type of service / expertise required to support emergency operations

7.2 Assistance Between Levels of Government

During emergency operations Niagara Region may requested to provide emergency to local area municipalities, critical infrastructure partners, critical business, industry and/or non-governmental community support agencies. It is also possible that Niagara Region may make appeals for assistance from Provincial & Federal government agencies, neighbouring communities and/or cross-border partners to support regional emergency operations.

- *All designated RECG members and designated alternates must be familiar with the Regional Emergency Assistance Operational Support Function (OSF-07)*

8.0 TRAINING / EXERCISE STRUCTURE

This Plan details the Niagara Region response structure for managing any emergency occurring within or impacting within regional boundaries. Therefore in order for this Plan to be effective:

- *All key Regional staff with responsibilities defined in this Plan must be trained in its content, its implementation and emergency operations (incident management system), and*
- *Regular exercises must be conducted to ensure the Plan provisions remain current and appropriate*

8.1 Training Responsibility

The Regional Emergency Planning staff is responsible for facilitation of emergency management training opportunities and promoting other external training opportunities that support the professional development of Regional Emergency Management stakeholders.

In addition, all Regional Emergency Management stakeholders are responsible for making Emergency Management Program staff aware of training opportunities that present themselves, so that they may be promoted as appropriate.

8.2 Training Products / Strategies

Training will be provided using a variety of training products. Training may be delivered in-house or through external opportunities including:

- *Mandatory Training (as approved by the RECG members)*
- *Other Internal Training Courses / Seminars*
- *Provincial / Federal / Cross Border Training Courses*
- *Local Municipal Training Opportunities*
- *Other Specialty Training Opportunities*

8.3 Exercise Responsibility

The Regional Emergency Planning staff is responsible for coordination of the annual emergency exercises to test the provisions of this Plan and/or test the provisions of any other component of the Regional Emergency Management Program.

8.4 Exercise Types / Strategies

Exercises simulate emergency conditions that require activation of this Plan (in whole or in part) and assembly of key Regional staff. The basic types of exercises are:

- *Static (Case Study / Paper / Tabletop)*
- *Telecommunications Functional (Alerting / Equipment)*
- *Field Functional (General / Specialty)*

Exercises vary in duration and complexity by type beginning with the basic Static Exercises to the most complex Field Functional Exercises. Regional Emergency Planning staff will provide / promote a variety of exercise opportunities using a variety of products that may be delivered in-house or through external opportunities including:

- *Regional Exercise (of varying complexity)*
- *Area Municipal Exercises (of varying complexity)*
- *Department / Service Specific Exercises*
- *Other External Emergency Exercises*
- *Cross Border Exercises*
- *All designated RECG members and designated alternates must be familiar with the Regional Emergency Training & Exercises Operational Support Function (OSF-08)*

9.0 – PLAN MAINTENANCE / DISTRIBUTION

This Plan is considered a living document. Therefore, it must remain current and be reviewed and updated on a regular basis to ensure operational sustainability. In addition all key regional stakeholders must have access to the most current plan document and ensure that any personal paper plan copies reflect the most current information.

9.1 Annual Plan Review & Revisions

This Plan will be reviewed and updated annually. Attachments (including Operational Support Functions) will be reviewed and updated on an as required basis to ensure the operational effectiveness of this Plan.

9.1.1 Maintenance Responsibility

It is the responsibility of Regional Emergency Planning staff to maintain this Plan and to facilitate all revisions to it and the attached Operational Support Functions.

9.1.2 Stakeholder Responsibility

It is the responsibility of all stakeholders to ensure that Regional Emergency Planning is notified of changes, revisions or additions that affect the contents of this Plan or its attachments.

9.2 Plan Distribution

This Plan is considered public information as per the provisions of the Emergency Management & Civil Protection Act and therefore must be accessible to the public. The public document does not include any Plan attachments (including Operational Support Functions) which are considered restricted information.

9.2.1 General Circulation

The general circulation copy of this Plan (public document) is available for viewing and can be downloaded on the Niagara Region public access website. Paper copies of this Plan can be made available through the Office of the Regional Clerk. General Circulation Plan copies are not subject to document control procedures and recipient names are not recorded nor are they informed of future updates to any Plan contents.

9.2.2 Restricted Circulation

Restricted Circulation copies of this Plan include all attachments and Operational Support Functions. Restricted circulation plan copies are maintained on the Niagara Region Intranet (SHERPA) within the Emergency Management Collaboration site.

- *Access to this site is only permitted to specific users (RECG members / alternates)*

Numbered electronic copies of the restricted circulation Plan are provided to the designated Community Emergency Management Coordinators (CEMC) for the twelve local area municipalities within Niagara Region in a read only format. The local CEMC is responsible for managing internal document control of this Plan for use within the local Emergency Operations Centre only.

Limited numbers of paper copies of the restricted Plan are located at the Regional Emergency Operations Centre sites and maintained by Regional Emergency Planning staff.

10.0 GLOSSARY OF ATTACHMENTS

This Plan is considered both a living document. Therefore, it must remain both current while allowing for sensitive information to be restricted and operational information to be maintained on an as required basis. To accomplish the above, operational information is not contained within this Plan itself, but within the Plan attachments.

10.1 Operational Support Functions

An Operational Support Function (OSF) is an attached document that details how specific emergency functions / operations / procedures are conducted. Each OSF is maintained on an as required basis because the information contained within is operational in nature and may change / require amendment as required. They also contain information that is considered sensitive, restricted and not open to the public.

The attachments to this Plan are as follows:

OSF 01 – Emergency Notifications

- Details the procedure through which the members of the Regional Emergency Control Group (RECG) will be alerted to an emergency event and instructed to assemble at a Regional Emergency Operations Centre (REOC) location.

OSF 02 – Niagara Incident Management System

- Describes the foundational model of emergency operations that Niagara Region will employ within a Regional Emergency Operations Centre (REOC) at any time this Plan is activated

OSF 03 – Regional Emergency Operations Centre

- Details the design, layout and operational infrastructure of all designated Regional Emergency Operations Centre (REOC) locations

OSF 04 – Regional Emergency Declarations

- Describes the decision making and communications process to be employed when an emergency declaration is made by the Regional Chairman

OSF 05 – Regional Emergency Information

- Describes the process for proactive dissemination of information and media relations operations at any time this Plan is activated

OSF 06 – Regional Emergency Recovery

- Describes the model of emergency recovery operations that Niagara Region will employ within a Regional Emergency Operations Centre (REOC)

OSF 07 – Regional Emergency Assistance

- Details the procedure through which Niagara Region will provide assistance during emergency operations and/or the procedure through which emergency assistance would be requested by Niagara Region

OSF 08 – Emergency Training & Exercises

- Describes the strategy for ensuring the basic training of all regional emergency management stakeholders, provision of advanced emergency preparedness training and the for the development / execution of practical emergency training exercises