

ONTARIO REGION UPDATE

Please email the ISC Ontario Communications Team with any questions about or suggestions for this newsletter: ontario-communications@sac-isc.gc.ca.

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Help is here whenever you need it

Support is available 24/7 for all First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. Please find a list of mental health helplines below, able to provide culturally relevant support. To find more services and resources, [click here to go to the Indigenous mental health page](#).

Hope for Wellness Helpline

Phone: 1-855-242-3310

Online chat: www.hopeforwellness.ca

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Support Line

Phone: 1-844-413-6649

Indian Residential Schools Crisis Line

Phone: 1-866-925-4419

Emergency Preparedness and Evacuation Resources



Throughout the wildfire and flood seasons, the Ontario Region Update will update this box with any resources and information that could be helpful to communities at risk. The following resources are important for potential and recent evacuees.

NEW RESOURCES

- Non-insured Health Benefits (NIHB): **1-800-640-0642**. The Ontario Client Line can help refill/replace items covered under NIHB, such as prescription medication. For all NIHB numbers in the Ontario, [click here](#).
- Ontario 511: **Call 511 or go to 511on.ca** for recent road closures, weather, and other impacts on safe travel in your area during an evacuation.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Emergency evacuation information for Indigenous peoples webpage](#)
- [National emergency evacuation poster](#)
- Government of Canada resource: [Wildfires – Canada.ca](https://wildfires-canada.ca)
- Province of Ontario resource: [Forest fires | ontario.ca](https://forestfires.ontario.ca)
- [Wildfire risk map](#)



Preparing for an Evacuation

In the event of a possible emergency evacuation, [make sure you and your family are prepared](#). If there is an emergency event near your home or community, you should:

- Monitor the emergency through radio, television or local social media accounts for warnings or information about evacuation plans.
- Be ready to exercise your [emergency plan](#). Take your [emergency kit](#) and other essential items with you if an evacuation order is issued or you have to leave your home. **Essential items include Status Cards, OHIP cards, medications, and medical devices like walkers, crutches, etc.**
- Follow the routes specified by officials. Don't take shortcuts. They could lead you to a blocked or dangerous area.

For First Nations or Inuit who are evacuated, here are a list of [supports available](#) to you. [After you've evacuated](#), you should wait until local officials determine it is safe to re-enter your home and community. For more information, visit www.canada.ca/indigenousevacuations.

COVID-19 Vaccines in Fall 2023

On July 11, 2023, the Public Health Agency of Canada released guidance from the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) on the [use of COVID-19 vaccines in the fall of 2023](#). Fall COVID-19 vaccines are recommended for:

- Individuals for whom it has been at least six months since their last COVID-19 vaccine or COVID-19 infection.
- **Individuals at increased risk of COVID-19 infection or severe disease, including individuals in or from First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities.**

For more information on recommended vaccine products and dosages per age group, please see [NACI: Guidance on the use of COVID-19 vaccines in the fall of 2023](#).



New Poster: Misinformation and the Measles, Mumps & Rubella (MMR) Vaccine

Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) has created a **new infographic/poster to clear up common myths about the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine**. There is space to add your community or organization logo. It can help provide parents, guardians, and individuals with reliable information before getting the vaccine for themselves or their children.

The infographic can be found and downloaded on the [OneHealth Portal here](#). If you need an alternate version of this poster, please contact the ISC Ontario Comms Team if (e.g., ALT-text for screen readers, JPEG).

Project Update: Long-Term and Continuing Care engagement

ISC's engagement with communities and First Nations organizations to develop a Long-Term and Continuing Care framework has concluded. The findings of the engagement process will influence the next phase of this project. As a part of ISC's commitment to sharing updates on the process, a summary of the engagement process can be found on the OneHealth Portal. [Click here to read it in full](#).

These summary reports will be shared over the next few months when new developments become available. Any questions or feedback you have about this project can be sent to: lrcengagement-scmobilisation@sac-isc.gc.ca.

Implementing the *United Nations Declaration* on the *Rights of* *Indigenous Peoples Act*

CANADA.CA/DECLARATION



Developed in consultation and cooperation with First Nations, Inuit and Métis from across Canada, the [UN Declaration Act Action Plan](#) was released on June 21, 2023. The action plan includes 181 actions to help achieve the objectives detailed in the UN Declaration.

While the development of the action plan was led by Justice Canada, it represents a whole-of-government effort, with 28 federal departments and agencies identified as leads for different measures in the action plan.

Its release marks an important milestone in our collective journey of reconciliation and is a foundational step toward achieving lasting, transformative change for Indigenous peoples in Canada. To read and learn more about the action plan, visit www.canada.ca/declaration.



Call for Proposals: 2023 Emergency Management Assistance Program

The Emergency Management Assistance Program (EMAP) provides funding to First Nations communities so they can prepare for and respond to natural hazards using the 4 pillars of emergency management: mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. EMAP supports non-structural mitigation and preparedness initiatives through the Non-Structural Mitigation and Preparedness funding stream.

This stream is proposal-based and funds non-structural projects undertaken by First Nations communities on reserve to prepare for and mitigate emergencies caused by natural disasters, such as: flooding, landslides, tsunamis, severe weather and drought.

For more information and [how to apply](#), please visit the [Emergency Management Non-Structural Mitigation and Preparedness program](#) online. **Project proposals will be considered on an ongoing basis until the funds are exhausted or until March 31, 2024.**

Community Story: ISN Maskwa's specialty graduates



Pictured: 2023 Ontario Incident Management Specialist Training graduates. Operated by Mississauga Cree First Nations ISN Maskwa, an Indigenous-led organization owned by Mississauga Cree First Nation.

Mississauga Cree First Nations ISN Maskwa recently celebrated their second ever graduating class from their Ontario Incident Management Specialist (IMS) Training. So far, 48 Indigenous members from 24 First Nations communities from Ontario and Manitoba have completed the IMS Training.

The training for this course is free and open to all Indigenous community members across Ontario. ISN Maskwa created the first of its kind Indigenous Emergency Operations Centre located in Sault Ste. Marie which is where the training takes place. Indigenous Services Canada provides support for this exemplary initiative that provides Indigenous-led solutions to emergency management.

Read more about ISN Maskwa's initiatives and training, [here](#).

We're looking for stories to share in upcoming newsletters! if your community has completed a unique project or initiative, or if you have another success story to showcase, we'd love to hear more about it and help you spread the word. Email us at: ontario-communications@sac-isc.gc.ca.