

ONTARIO REGION UPDATE



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For newsletter questions, ou pour recevoir une version française, please email Ontario Region Communications:
[**ontario-communications@sac-isc.gc.ca**](mailto:ontario-communications@sac-isc.gc.ca)



Preparing for the 2024 Emergency Management Season

As we saw in 2023, natural emergencies are on the rise and are becoming more intense due to climate change. Last year brought an unprecedented number of wildfires, sending response and recovery costs across Canada soaring to [\\$266 million](#).

We expect 2024 will be another challenging year due to the effects of climate change, particularly after a milder winter and quickly rising spring temperatures. [Budget 2024](#) announced additional funding for First Nations emergency management and preparedness. More information about Ontario allocations will be available in the coming weeks.

We know you are concerned about how this emergency season will impact your communities and we will continue to meet and prepare with you. We are here to support you, and the safety of your community members is our top priority. On the last two pages of this newsletter, you will find a list of contacts who are available to help you navigate this emergency season, as well as key websites and other resources.



If your emergency management coordinator funding commitment has ended, you can reapply now for 2024-25 funding by contacting emergencyon-urgenceon@sac-isc.gc.ca.



Current Funding Opportunities for Emergency Preparedness and Response

- **Prepare:** [Emergency Management Non-Structural Mitigation and Preparedness stream](#). Applications are open.
- **Prepare:** [Emergency Management FireSmart stream](#). Applications are open.
- **Reimburse:** [Emergency Management Assistance Program](#). There is no deadline to apply for reimbursement for disaster recovery, evacuation costs and emergency planning.
- **Innovate:** Contact us with your proposals for Indigenous-led approaches to emergency management. Please email us at: emergencyon-urgenceon@sac-isc.gc.ca.

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About the Emergency Management Assistance Program

The [Emergency Management Assistance Program \(EMAP\) continues to be available](#) to support you in your planning and recovery efforts. There is no deadline to submit proposals or requests for reimbursement. The Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) Ontario emergency management team is here to help with any questions you have about the program. For questions about funding, please contact the Ontario Region central inbox at emergencyon-urgenceon@sac-isc.gc.ca or Sunil Bajaj at sunil.bajaj@sac-isc.gc.ca. The EMAP [application form can be found here](#), along with an [application guide](#).

EMAP provides funding to help you navigate extreme weather and health emergencies, like wildfires, flooding, seasonal storms, and pandemics. Funding covers four major areas of emergency management: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. In addition to providing reimbursement for emergency response, EMAP also offers funding through two proposal-based streams to support you in preparing for and managing emergencies: [Non-Structural Mitigation and Preparedness](#) and [FireSmart](#).

About Non-Structural Mitigation and Preparedness funding

Funding is available for you through the [Non-Structural Mitigation and Preparedness](#) (NSMP) proposal-based stream, which has no deadline. The NSMP stream can provide funding for practical tools and services that can help your community prepare for and manage extreme weather events.

For example, ISC supported Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation in an exercise that simulated a community emergency and activated multiple agencies, including the Treaty 3 Police and the Office of the Fire Marshal Advisor.

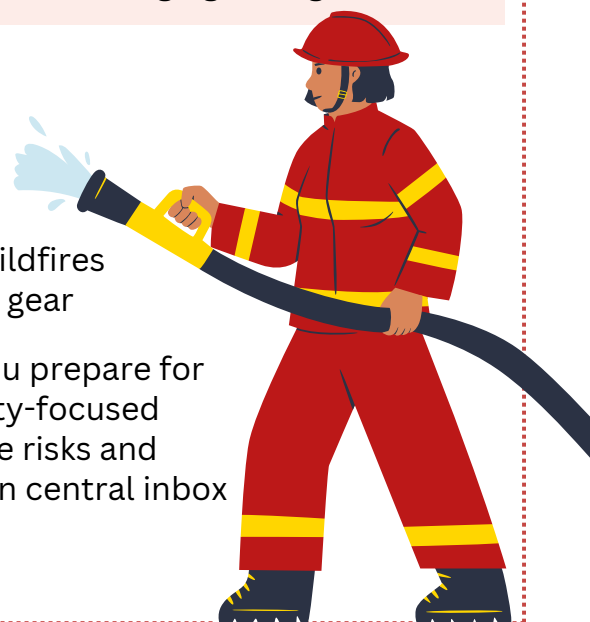
After the simulation, a debrief reviewed the effectiveness of the community's Emergency Management Plan and identified necessary adjustments for the 2024-25 wildfire season. This exercise helps ensure ongoing preparedness and success in managing emergencies.

About FireSmart

Funding is available through the [FireSmart](#) proposal-based stream. FireSmart can help you:

- Train teams in wildfire suppression
- Clear vegetation to reduce the intensity and spread of wildfires
- Fund low-value equipment such as firefighter protective gear

We encourage you to think about how FireSmart can help you prepare for and respond to wildfires. We welcome innovative, community-focused proposals for initiatives that would best address your unique risks and circumstances. Please contact us through the Ontario Region central inbox at emergencyon-urgenceon@sac-isc.gc.ca.



Supporting Indigenous-led Approaches to Emergency Management

We know that First Nations communities are best positioned to identify their emergency management needs. That is why we continue to encourage proposals for innovative First Nations-led service delivery models.

We invite you to share your ideas with us for community-led approaches to emergency management and evacuations. We are here to support you in making them a reality. Below are some amazing examples of creative, community-led initiatives that provide more options for communities facing evacuation.



Indigenous Emergency Operations Centre

With support from Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), Missanabie Cree First Nation built an Indigenous Emergency Operations Centre (IEOC), providing Indigenous-led and -managed command, control and information-sharing services during emergency events. In operation since April 2022 and accessible 24 hours a day, the IEOC provides critical co-ordination services to First Nations leaders on request.

Indigenous-led host site

ISN Maskwa, owned by Missanabie Cree First Nation, is building an 800-bed hosting facility in Kapuskasing to provide a culturally relevant, Indigenous-led host site as an alternative option for communities under evacuation.

On the Land Initiative

Every year since 2012, Kashechewan First Nation has been evacuated because of flooding or as a precaution because of the risk of spring flooding. For the last five years, rather than exclusively relying on host communities, the First Nation requested and received ISC funding to move to their traditional hunting camps on higher ground, a community-led initiative to provide an alternative for members who do not wish to relocate to a host community. Fort Albany First Nation has also created their own On the Land initiative, Pey-Tah-Kay-Pin, as an alternative to support the needs of their community members during seasonal evacuations. For the first time this year, Attawapiskat First Nation will participate in an On the Land initiative with support from ISC.

✦ Please get in touch with Sunil Bajaj at sunil.bajaj@sac-isc.gc.ca if you would like to discuss how to prepare your community for possible evacuations. ✦

Seasonal Evacuations and Measles

As measles cases are rising around the world, we encourage you to continue educating your community members about the risks of getting sick and how vaccination can protect against infection. Prevention is our best tool to fight measles. You can access a toolkit with [shareable resources here](#). An example of an image resource is pictured to the right.

Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) is preparing resources and supports to help protect your community members if they need to evacuate for a natural emergency while there are active measles cases in your First Nation. Your community members' health and safety is our top priority. We will share more information as it becomes available.



* Supporting Community Health During Evacuations *

Preparation is key to looking after your community health needs during an evacuation. This [First Nation Health Inventory form](#) is an easy way to take stock of your unique needs. Some suggested preparation steps include:

- Have a **list of vulnerable individuals who should be prioritized for evacuation**. The list can help make transportation efficient and less stressful for everyone.
- Keep a **list of key contacts and your community's emergency protocols** handy at all times so you can quickly grab it and go, if needed.
- **Encourage community members to prepare a list of their medications and bring it with them during an evacuation**. This helps with any potential health needs they may have.
- **Share resources and information about how to prepare for a possible evacuation with your community** members, like [this list of health-related supports](#).

Find **more resources to help you and your community prepare on page 7 of this newsletter**. For questions on preparing for your community's health needs during an evacuation, please email urgencesanitaireon-healthemergencyon@sac-isc.gc.ca.

Designing Multilateral Agreements

In March, ISC Ontario Region held an Emergency Management Multilateral Roundtable with Chiefs and partners, including the Province of Ontario, to discuss multilateral agreements and ongoing concerns around emergency management. Going forward, multilateral agreements will play an important role in improving emergency management services and transferring control of emergency management programs to First Nations partners.

We will continue to work with you and our provincial colleagues to look at all options for effective multilateral agreements that tackle issues you raised in this discussion. We heard that you want emergencies addressed more holistically, with better coordination between jurisdictions; clarity on how Indigenous-led approaches could look; and more accessible information on available funding.

We are in the process of planning additional roundtable discussions. If you would like to join an upcoming engagement sessions on multilateral agreements, please contact Sunil Bajaj so we can ensure you are included. Sunil can be reached by email at sunil.bajaj@sac-isc.gc.ca.

Key Contacts

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**Sunil Bajaj**

Director, ISC Ontario Region

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- Contact for any questions related to emergency management.

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Director of Client and Community Response, ISC Ontario Region

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**Emergency Management Central Inbox**

ISC Ontario Region

- Email: emergencyon-urgenceon@sac-isc.gc.ca
- Contact the inbox for specific questions about emergency management-related funding and projects.

**Health Emergency Management Inbox**

ISC Ontario Region

- Email: urgencesanitaireon-healthemergencyon@sac-isc.gc.ca
- Contact the inbox for help with health emergencies.
- Emails are automatically forwarded to the on-call duty officer.

**Non-insured Health Benefits Contact List**

ISC Ontario Region

- PDF: [NIHB Ontario Contacts](#)

Websites and Other Resources



Webpages

- ISC: [Emergency evacuation information for Indigenous peoples](#)
- ON Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry: [Forest fires information](#)
- Environment & Climate Change Canada: [Local Air Quality Health Index](#)
- Environment & Climate Change Canada: [Wildfire smoke exposure symptoms](#)



Maps

- ON Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry: [Wildfire risks](#)
- Environment & Climate Change Canada: [Recent weather alerts](#) (regional)
- ISC: [Wildfire risks and Indigenous communities](#)
- ON Ministry of Transportation: [Local 511 information](#) (closures, weather)



Posters & Graphics

- ISC: [Emergency evacuation information for Indigenous peoples in Ontario](#)
- Health Canada, Public Health Agency of Canada: [Mental health and Extreme Weather- Communications Toolkit](#)
- Health Canada: [Protecting your indoor air from outdoor pollutants](#)



Templates for Emergency Preparedness Planning

A family emergency plan is sometimes called a “family preparedness plan.”

- ISC: [First Nation Health Inventory for Evacuations 2024](#)
- Emergency Management ON: [Community Evacuation Management Toolkit](#)
- Public Safety Canada: [Make an emergency plan](#)
- Public Safety Canada: [Family Emergency Plan](#)
- Public Safety Canada: [Emergency Preparedness for People with Disabilities](#)
- Public Safety Canada: [Emergency kit checklist](#)



You can **download any of these templates to use offline or print.** If the website does not provide a PDF version for the template you want, follow these steps:

1. Open the page you would like to use offline.
2. Press the CTRL and letter P keys on your computer at the same time.
3. A box will pop up. Look for a drop-down list that has the option you would like- to **Save as PDF** or **Print**. Then, select which action you want.
4. Once you have selected, follow the prompts to complete your task.