

Corporation of the Township of Pelee Emergency Evacuation Plan

Aim

The aim of the Evacuation Plan is to effectively evacuate and care for the inhabitants of the Township of Pelee as required.

Purpose

An evacuation plan assists to streamline the evacuation process, particularly in little or no-notice situations, by providing an organized framework for the activities involved in coordinating and conducting an evacuation. This plan will identify the critical elements of an evacuation.

Authority

The Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, RSO, 1990, provides as follows:

- (1) Every municipality shall formulate an emergency plan governing the provision of necessary services during an emergency and the procedures under and the manner in which employees of the municipality and other persons will respond to the emergency and the council of the municipality shall by by-law adopt the emergency plan;

and

- (2) An emergency plan formulated under section 3, 6 or 8 shall,
 - (b) Specify procedures to be taken for the safety or evacuation of persons in an emergency area;

Types of Evacuations

Precautionary Evacuation occurs when it is recommended to evacuate within a certain perimeter usually a building or a block until the initial situation is contained.

Evacuation takes place when it is determined by the Emergency Control Group that on advice from public safety agencies there is a need to evacuate an area, usually on a large-scale, possibly for a long period of time (i.e. for more than 24 hours).

For the purpose of this Evacuation Plan, the definition that shall set the plan, or part of this plan, in motion shall be Evacuation.

Evacuation may result in a tremendous psychological effect on those persons directly affected. Adequate communication with the people involved is essential and shall include explaining that an evacuation is pending, what they shall be required to do and

when they shall be required to react if an evacuation is issued. The economic effect of closing down industry for even a short period of time is enormous and can be measured in the millions of dollars in lost revenue. A decision to evacuate should only be made when absolutely necessary.

Public safety agencies alone cannot be expected to deal with a large-scale evacuation and relocation of residents. An effective response will require participation and cooperation between municipal services, industry, and volunteer services as outlined in the Township of Pelee's Emergency Plan and this Plan.

Hazards

The following events which events are listed in order of risk - are considered potential community hazards within the Township of Pelee and surrounding areas which may require evacuation:

- severe weather
- major flooding
- utility and/or telecommunication failures
- uncontrollable fires
- explosions
- environmental pollution
- medical epidemics
- building or structural collapses
- radioactive materials release (secondary zone)

Public Education Strategy [pre-emergency/evacuation]

- Personal preparedness message, including contents of an emergency kit for short-notice evacuations;
- Preparedness for pets;
- Where to access information during an emergency/evacuation
 - Online: www.pelee.org
 - Door to Door warnings
 - Radio Announcements
 - CKLW (AM 800)
 - CHYR (FM 96.7)
 - CBC Radio (FM 97.5)
- Follow the advice of First Response personnel when directed to evacuate

Considerations & Assumptions:

[Threat Assessment]

- The area of potential danger given the emergency situation;
- Factors that may make an evacuation difficult, i.e. severe weather, limited road network, large numbers of summer residents who are unfamiliar with the area, etc.
- The time required to safely evacuate inhabitants vs. the time remaining before the impact of the emergency is experienced;
- The availability, suitability and capability of evacuation centres and associated equipment to handle the expected number of evacuees;
- Duration of evacuation.

[Types of evacuations]

- **Full Evacuation:** the entire Island needs to be completely evacuated and moved off of the Island and will then seek shelter in mainland Kingsville, Leamington and/or Windsor;
- **Partial Evacuation:** residents need to be evacuated from one area of the Island, but can seek shelter on alternate areas of the Island;
- **Shelter in Place:** in case of biological agents or radioactive material, residents may be required to shelter in their homes, with no use of utilities and the house under full lockdown.

Population Profile

The approximate number of persons to be evacuated:

- Winter (Year Round Residents): 220
- Seasonal (Tourists and Cottagers): 1500

Vulnerable Population requirements:

- Permanent Residents with Mobility Issues: 20 (approximate) (Appendix E-1)

Considerations During an Evacuation:

- Transportation out of the area may be difficult. (Congestion can occur on major routes). Damage to bridges. Blocked roads from debris.
- Families may be separated during the evacuation, possibly resulting in emotional trauma and evacuation problems.
- Individuals may refuse to leave because they fail to perceive any threat, fear for the security of their property, or are worried about absent family members or pets. In such instances, instruct these individuals as to the severity of the problem and the need for evacuation. It should be stressed that these individuals should not expect to be rescued if they remain there.

- Adverse weather conditions especially in combination with a limited road network may adversely affect evacuation procedures and the operation of the ferry and flight service.
- People unfamiliar with the area (i.e. tourists, visitors) may have difficulty evacuating.
- Evacuation of large groupings of people, i.e. community centres, schools, institutional settings may be difficult.
- Evacuated buildings must be searched for persons remaining on the premises and all potential utility hazards must be eliminated by the utility companies in the evacuated buildings, i.e. turn off hydro and propane. Utility companies must also restore services at the termination of the emergency.

Notification

Notification should be consistent with the process and protocols recognized in your Emergency Response Plan for purposes of convening a team to carry out elements of the evacuation process.

Public Alerting

The Evacuation Co-ordinator or Emergency Information Officer or *other* is responsible for alerting the public of an existing or impending emergency or arranging for notification through the media, as required. In the first moments of an emergency and at times requiring immediate evacuations, this responsibility falls to the Police/Fire Department and municipal employees.

Notification may encompass a warning that an emergency exists followed by instruction on the appropriate action to take, i.e. evacuation, sheltering, etc. The initial alert may advise the public where additional information can be obtained (i.e. radio).

Notifying the evacuees of required information by:

- Media (Radio and Television)
- Use of Loud Hailer/Flashing Lights
- Door to Door notification

Once a premise has been evacuated, then mark the premise with chalk or orange tape on the front door or the most visible location, stakes can also be used in areas with long laneways or hidden homes to signify the area has been cleared.

Steps for Activating the Township of Pelee Evacuation Plan

This plan will be activated as soon as it becomes apparent that due to an emergency of such magnitude as to warrant its implementation, evacuation and relocation of people within the Township of Pelee is necessary. Should a major incident occur in the Township of Pelee, a member of the Emergency Control Group, on the advice of first

response agencies, will activate the Township of Pelee Emergency Plan. This official will then ensure that all members of the Emergency Control Group are alerted and instructed to report to the Emergency Operation Center. If the need to evacuate and relocate residents of the affected areas is apparent, the provisions of the Pelee Island Evacuation Plan will be implemented. In such events, the Mayor must declare a state of “local emergency” before the evacuation is carried out.

The Ontario Provincial Police will have the primary responsibility for implementation of evacuation, consistent with their operating procedures. All other services and agencies will be prepared to support police evacuation activities.

The exception to the above is where an evacuation site is under the management of a department other than the police service. In this instance, the Site Manager has the responsibility for the evacuation of people within the danger area. The Site Manager will advise the Emergency Control Group of any evacuation arrangement made. The Emergency Control Group will then ensure that coordination takes place through the Ontario Provincial Police Services and other involved agencies.

EVACUATION OPERATIONS – Roles & Responsibilities in an Evacuation

Once the decision has been made to evacuate an area of the Township of Pelee, the Emergency Control Group (ECG) will determine the following:

- boundaries of area to be evacuated;
- main evacuation route(s) to be used, and identify necessary traffic control points;
- assembly areas to be used;
 - Royal Canadian Legion: 1169 West Shore Road
 - Pelee Island Sportsman’s Club: 2875 West Pump Road
 - Pelee Island Public School: 40 North Shore Road
- location of facilities within the evacuation area to be notified, and how notification will be carried out;
- time of the evacuation start, and if necessary, who will be evacuated first (stages of evacuation); vulnerable population, children etc.;
 - and shall proceed with the following:
- alert of the evacuation order to all concerned including the Province of Ontario through Emergency Management Ontario;
- preparation of media release for immediate broadcast to the public;
- activate fan-out notification system for affected residents;
- if necessary, appointment of a Emergency Site Manager to direct the evacuation and relocation.

The ECG will proceed with the following:

- Alert of the evacuation order to all concerned including the Province of Ontario,
- Preparation of a media release for immediate broadcast to the public,
- If necessary, appointment of a Site Manager to direct the evacuation and relocation.

Evacuation Co-ordinator:

Co-ordination of evacuation and sheltering may be directed by an Evacuation Co-ordinator, who will ensure residents are taken to safety or sheltered with minimum delay and confusion in the event of an emergency. This will be done under the overall direction of the Community Control Group.

The Evacuation Co-ordinator is responsible for making arrangements for accommodation, feeding, clothing and other essentials necessary for the support and well being of the evacuees.

Emergency Information Officer:

Alerting messages, Fact Sheets and pre-prepared media releases are essential to ensure all members of the public receive notification and information on procedures; the following mechanisms are available:

- Radio messages
- Door to door notification
- Mobile public address systems
- Internet postings
- CB radio nets operate in some areas

The warning should be:

- Accurate
- Consistent
- Clear
- Repeated
- With as much prior notice as possible

Tell the community:

- What to take (toiletries, clothing, medication, bedding, food, recreational items, etc.)
- Where to go
- Route to take

- Transportation available/collection points
- Lock doors
- Turn off stove, utilities, etc.
- Drain water systems in winter
- What to do about pets and livestock

Police:

The OPP representative shall perform the duties and responsibilities described in the Township of Pelee Emergency Plan, and in particular, with regard to the evacuation plan:

- (a) Assist in the evacuation of buildings as required and when possible;
- (b) Assist in evacuation of buildings where special equipment available to the OPP is required;
- (c) Provide security for evacuated areas and guard against unauthorized re-entry;
- (d) Execute other actions as outlined by the Township of Pelee Emergency Plan.

Volunteer Fire Department and Fire Chief:

The VFD Fire Chief or his designate shall perform the duties and responsibilities described in the Township of Pelee Emergency Plan and in particular with regard to the evacuation plan:

- (a) Assume the lead in evacuation planning within the Emergency Operations Centre;
- (b) Enlist the assistance of other agencies and/or volunteers to assist in the evacuation process;
- (c) Determine where police or other personnel are needed and where barricades can be used;
- (d) Liaise with the Emergency Information Officer to ensure appropriate information is being released to the public;
- (e) Execute other actions as outlined by the Township of Pelee Emergency Plan.

Road Superintendent:

The Road Superintendent or his designate shall perform duties and responsibilities described in the Township of Pelee Emergency Plan, and in particular, with regard to the evacuation plan:

- (a) Provide barricades and flashers at the request of the Pelee Volunteer Fire Department or the OPP;
- (b) Liaise with the OPP to assist in regulating traffic flows by providing road signs, clearing emergency routes, etc;
- (c) Advise on alternate traffic routes and establish detours during the emergency/evacuation;
- (d) Arrange for other personnel and equipment requested by the ECG in support of evacuation and relocation;
- (e) Arrange for transportation (i.e. buses, vans, trucks, farm equipment, etc.) as required and when possible;
- (f) Execute other actions as outlined by the Township of Pelee Emergency Plan.

Emergency Information Officer:

The Emergency Information Officer or his/her designate shall perform duties and responsibilities described in the Township of Pelee Emergency Plan, and in particular, with regard to the evacuation plan:

- (a) Establish the Media Centre under the direction of the Emergency Control Group for the preparation and release of all news bulletins; depending on the use of assembly areas the Media Centre may be designated to the Pelee Island Sportsman's Club, the Royal Canadian Legion or an alternate location to be determined by the circumstances;
- (b) Advise the media and the public on the location of reception centres and assembly areas;
- (c) Execute other actions as outlined in the Township of Pelee Emergency Plan.

Traffic Management

Due to the geographical make up of the Island, with higher ground being on the outside of the Island, particularly on the Northwest side, with lower lying areas in the centre of the Island may result in difficulties with transportation should flooding occur. Routes will have to be determined based on water levels to avoid areas of concern and reroute individuals to the perimeter of the Island and areas of higher ground.

Transportation Modes:

Consider all transportation options, including all modes, as viable alternatives. Although roadway and highway networks will be principal conduits for moving large number of people, the assessment of events will dictate what transportation options are best. The possible means for evacuation modes and networks include:

- Private vehicles: highways & local roadways
- On-road transit (school bus, farm equipment)
- Ferries
- Pedestrian movement (walking and cycling)
- Air Service

Tactics:

- What routes are available for the most expedient movement of at-risk populations from their originating points to the highway network? (Route determination will vary depending on the emergency and use of assembly areas).
- How to deliver evacuees to final destinations?
- Expedite the movement of individuals who are most at risk, including members of the vulnerable population.
- Whether to dedicate lanes for high occupancy vehicles and any others requiring moving certain special population groups?

Evacuation Destinations

In the event that the Island must be completely evacuated, residents who have access to family members or accommodations on mainland Essex County will be encouraged to take shelter with these individuals. In the case that there are no alternate accommodations for Island residents, discussions have taken place with neighbouring municipalities (Kingsville, Leamington) to confirm the presence of lodging facilities until alternate arrangements have been made or it is safe to return home. (Appendix E-2)

Registration & Enquiry:

The purpose of registering all evacuees is to determine the well-being as well as the location where the evacuees are presently staying. The registration should take place at the reception center. The evacuee may then choose to stay at a reception center, or may find refuge at another location (e.g.: relative)

It is important for all to register as emergency services may be trying to determine a person's location. Family and friends may also be seeking information about an evacuee.

A citizen's inquiry phone number should be established and published for those seeking information about the evacuees.

Returning Evacuees (Repatriation)

Before re-Entry:

The decision to re-enter an area that has been evacuated is based on numerous public safety factors. The impacted area must be safe for residents and business owners to return. Below is a list of some of the activities in which a jurisdiction is responsible:

- Inspection of the affected area;
- Restoring utilities and basic services to the area;
- Assisting any victims who did not evacuate;
- Removing any deceased victims from the area;
- Performing an initial assessment of damage to homes and businesses;
- Moving debris.

Repatriation

Once the emergency is over and it is safe for evacuees to return home, a re-entry plan must be prepared. Some of the tasks that should be considered include:

- Ensure evacuees are notified that they can return home;
- Determine if any work must be done before residents can return home, i.e. switch utilities back on, test drinking water, check for extent of damage, etc;
- Determine if basic foods and clothing are required, i.e. if hydro has been off or houses have been damaged, and arrange for supplies to be sent to the community with the returning evacuees;
- Make transportation arrangements for those requiring assistance to return home;

- Prepare list of people to be transported;
- Ensure registration and inquiry services are available for a period of time after the emergency is over to provide people with post emergency information;
- Where required provide access to Critical Incident Stress councillors, or other counselling services.

Cost Recovery

Remember that ODRAP is an option to assist with cost recovery, however; it only pertains to natural disasters of a sudden and unexpected nature. Extraordinary costs relative to other emergency events may be subject to financial assistance through MMAH as an Ad Hoc or Special Circumstances program. Contact your Municipal Service Advisor at the earliest opportunity.