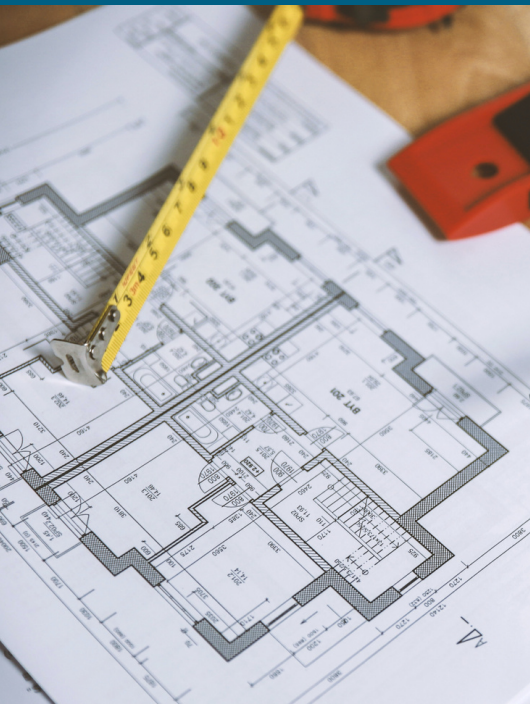


September 2023



ONTARIO CAMPS
ASSOCIATION

Risk, Emergency and Crisis Resource Guide



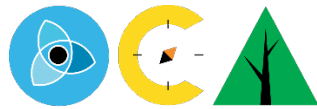
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The Ontario Camps Association (OCA) is a voluntary, non-profit membership organization that works to make Ontario a premiere destination for camp and outdoor education. We aren't the government – we're an association of camp professionals committed to maintaining the highest standard of camp! Keeping the Ontario camp tradition alive is at the heart of everything we do. That's why our Members adhere to more than 600 Health and Safety Standards designed to ensure the safety of campers and staff.

Today, 400+ Member camps and outdoor education centres serving more than 357,000 campers and participants have adopted our Standards.

Parents, caregivers, and educators look for the OCA Accredited Member logo on a camp or outdoor education centre's promotional material. That logo tells them that an operation continuously meets and exceeds industry safety standards and provides participants with quality camp and outdoor education centre experiences.

If you're looking to invest in your camp or outdoor education centres' future, OCA has resources to help you. Head to our website, ontariocamps.ca to learn more about becoming a member!

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Introduction

Purpose and structure

Risks are inherent in operating a camp¹ or outdoor education centre (OEC). Understanding these risks and planning for emergencies and crises are necessary to ensure that your camp/OEC is safe. This can include:

- identifying hazards and assessing risks
- managing hazards and mitigating risks
- establishing written policies and procedures for responding to emergencies and crises
- preparing supplies and equipment that you may need
- communicating about response plans and effectively training all who might need to respond
- using drills and exercises to test your plans and procedures
- knowing and applying policies from government and other external agencies
- reviewing the Ontario Camps Association (OCA) Standards regularly and complying with them
- establishing a growth mindset towards responding to these situations.

This resource guide helps you do this planning. The focus of this document is preparing camps and OECs to be ready to respond to emergencies and crises.

The guide focuses on hazards that can lead to emergencies or crises because they can cause harm to people, property, or the environment. The plans that you develop may be helpful for other kinds of hazards.

This guide raises questions for your camp/OEC to consider as you do this planning. It provides some frameworks for your planning. Every camp/OEC faces different risks and has different resources available. As a result, every camp/OEC will have to factor their own situation into their planning.

This guide takes an all-hazards approach. This approach recognizes that the actions required to mitigate the effects of emergencies and crises are essentially the same, irrespective of the nature of the incident. The intention of an all-hazards approach is to use generic emergency and crisis planning methods, modified as necessary according to the circumstances.

¹ This resource guide uses the term *camp* throughout to refer to any program offered by a member of the Ontario Camps Association

The document includes several sections

1. The [risk assessment](#) section provides information on how camps/OECs can identify hazards and assess risks. It also guides you through identifying and assessing your camp/OEC's critical infrastructure, and action planning for increasing your critical infrastructure resilience.
2. The [emergency response planning](#) section provides guidance on how camps/OECs can develop an all-hazards emergency response plan and specific response procedures. It provides guidance for some common response procedures that camps/OECs have.
3. It briefly provides additional considerations for creating a crisis response plan in a [crisis response planning](#) section.
4. Finally, it provides information on how to make sure all the work you've done stays current in a section about [maintaining a risk, emergency & crisis program](#) section.

Here are some ideas on how your camp/OEC can use this document:

- **Determine who will lead** the process of developing or updating your risk/ emergency/ crisis program. This will vary greatly depending on your camp/OEC. You may wish to consider including key decision makers, health care professionals or first aiders, people responsible for site and facilities and people involved in workplace safety.
- **Pull together all the information you already have**, including relevant plans, policies, procedures, emergency equipment & supplies lists, your camp safety plan, contact lists and Standards. As you work through this document, you can keep, update, or add to what you already have in place.
- **Use the whole guide in order.** There is a logic to the document, with each section building on the previous one.
- **Revisit this resource regularly** based on new information, changes in your risks and resources, and things you learn from emergencies and crises.

Definitions²

- All-hazards approach*
 - An emergency management approach that recognizes that the actions required to mitigate the effects of emergencies are essentially the same, irrespective of the nature of the incident
 - The intention of an all-hazards approach is to employ generic emergency planning methods, modified as necessary according to the circumstances.
- All-hazards emergency management plan*
 - A generic emergency management plan based on an all-hazards approach
- Continuity of operations (business continuity)*
 - The programs, arrangements and/or measures that provide for the continuity of critical services in the event of disruptions or emergencies
- Crisis
 - A present or imminent event that requires prompt coordination of actions concerning persons or property to protect the health, safety or welfare of people, or to limit damage to property or the environment and overwhelms the resources of the responding camp/OEC
 - An emergency may become a crisis – for example a missing camper/participant is an emergency that may become a crisis after a period of time if the search overwhelms the resources of the responding camp/OEC
- Critical infrastructure
 - The buildings and other aspects of property, vehicles and equipment, and external infrastructure that a camp/OEC relies on for safe operations
- Disruption time*
 - The length of time that an incident compromises the availability, delivery and/or integrity of services of a camp/OEC
- Drill*
 - An operations-based exercise normally used to evaluate a specific operation, procedure or function, to provide training on new equipment or to maintain current skills
- Emergency*
 - A present or imminent event that requires prompt coordination of actions concerning persons or property to protect the health, safety or welfare of people, or to limit damage to property or the environment but does not overwhelm the resources of the responding camp/OEC
 - An emergency may become a crisis
- Emergency response plan*
 - An emergency plan that describes actions and procedures that apply to the response phase of emergency management
- Emergency response procedure
 - A written description of a particular kind of response (e.g., property search, restricting access, first aid / emergency health care, lockdown / shelter in place)

² Definitions with this symbol * are taken from or based on the Government of Canada's Emergency Management Vocabulary https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2012/tpsgc-pwgsc/S52-2-281-2012.pdf

- Exercise*
 - A simulated scenario in which a camp/OEC practises its response activities to test its emergency plan
- Hazards
 - Events, objects or locations that may lead to emergencies or crises because of their ability to harm people, property or the environment
- Hazard identification and risk assessment (HIRA)*
 - The process of identifying, characterizing and validating hazards and assessing the associated risks, including the likelihood of experiencing the hazards and the potential effects
- Hotwash*
 - A debriefing session held immediately after an exercise or incident to identify the strengths and weaknesses of plans, policies and procedures
- Incident action plan (IAP)**
 - A verbal or written plan which describes how an incident will be managed
- Incident report
 - A summary of an incident and the response to it
 - For example, records that are required under the [Recreational Camps regulation](#)
- Incident Response Team
 - The people who are tasked with responding to an emergency or crisis
- Maximum tolerable period of disruption
 - How long a camp/OEC can go without relying on an aspect of critical infrastructure before arranging external assistance
- Resilience*
 - The capacity of a system, community or society to adapt to disruptions resulting from hazards by persevering, recuperating or changing to reach and maintain an acceptable level of functioning
- Risk*
 - The combination of the likelihood and the consequence of a specified hazard being realized
 - Refers to the vulnerability, proximity or exposure to hazards, which affects the likelihood of adverse impact
- Scene response
 - An emergency or crisis with one particular location
- Tabletop exercise*
 - A discussion-based exercise in which participants review and explore the response to a specific emergency scenario, but do not perform any actions
- Workarounds
 - Interim strategies to maintain operations during disruptions to critical infrastructure

Risk Assessment

This section of the guide poses questions and provides information to help your camp/OEC assess the relevant risks it faces. This will set you up to manage the risks, including developing emergency response procedures. You may find that you have already done much of the work in this section for your camp safety plan.

Key parts of your risk assessment are to identify the critical infrastructure that you have and to assess the degree to which you rely on it for safe operations.

Critical infrastructure includes:

1. Buildings and other parts of the property
2. Vehicles and equipment
3. Community infrastructure that you aren't responsible for, but you rely on.

Your critical infrastructure may not all be things you use regularly – but you rely on them. An example may be emergency rescue equipment.

Completing an assessment of your critical infrastructure may be useful between emergencies or crises because it can help you to identify vulnerabilities that you may wish to address as part of your preparations. It can also be helpful during an emergency or crisis as it can help you to focus your efforts and resources where they are most needed and can help you to identify what may happen if some elements of critical infrastructure are not available or working.

Your camp/OEC may have different critical infrastructure lists for different times of year (e.g., off season / during staff training / during summer camp or outdoor education programming).

In the form on the next page, identify the critical infrastructure that your camp/OEC relies on.

Beware - it's easy to make a list in this step that is too long to manage. Remember the critical part of the critical infrastructure list that you are developing. If it weren't available, what would put your camp/OECs ability to run safely most in jeopardy?

Critical Infrastructure Identification Questions

Season/time of year:

1. Which buildings or aspects of the property would put our ability to continue operating safely most in jeopardy if they were significantly damaged or unavailable?
2. What vehicles or equipment would put our ability to continue operating safely most in jeopardy if they were significantly damaged or unavailable?
3. What aspects of local community infrastructure (under the control of other entities or government) would put our ability to continue operating safely most in jeopardy if they were significantly damaged or unavailable?

Buildings & property	Vehicles & equipment	Community infrastructure

Now that you've identified your critical infrastructure, you can assess it. Remember as you do this – we can all get very creative when we need to. Sometimes solutions aren't obvious until we need to put them in place. Complete the form below for each element of critical infrastructure that you identified.

Critical Infrastructure Assessment Questions

Critical infrastructure element:

1. How reliable do we think this critical infrastructure is? Aspects of reliability include how likely is it to breakdown? How many of them do you have? If you have multiple of them, are they stored in different locations? Rate the reliability from 1-3, where 3 is fully reliable and 1 is very unreliable.
2. What workarounds do we have if this critical infrastructure were not available to us? Workarounds are interim strategies to maintain operations during disruptions to critical infrastructure. How have we dealt with these disruptions before?
3. What concerns do we have about relying on those workarounds?
4. If relevant, what could we tolerate because of redundancy? (For example, could do without one set of washrooms, but not both)
5. How long could we go without this critical infrastructure before arranging external assistance? This known as the *Maximum Tolerable Period of Disruption*. This is not an exact science, and so it may be helpful to include a range (e.g., 0-4 hours, 4-24 hours, 24 hours – 72 hours)

You've done some thinking about each element of your critical infrastructure. The next step is to summarize this for each element.

Critical Infrastructure Assessment – Summary Questions

Critical infrastructure element:

1. Give each element of your critical infrastructure a rating out of three based on *your reliance*, giving the highest reliance ratings to infrastructure with fewest workarounds and shortest maximum tolerable period of disruption.
 - a. Tier 1: High reliance
 - b. Tier 2: Moderate reliance
 - c. Tier 3: Low reliance
2. Write a single sentence statement to summarize your assessment. This may include workarounds you have identified and the idea that some disruption is manageable while more extensive damage is not.

Now that you have identified and assessed your critical infrastructure, you can do some action planning to increase your camp/OEC's resilience. Complete the questions below **for each element** of critical infrastructure.

Increasing Resilience Questions

Critical infrastructure element:

1. What can we do to increase the reliability? (e.g., fireproofing, duplicates)
2. What can we do to develop effective workarounds or backups if the critical infrastructure were not available? Or what can we do to be less reliant on the critical infrastructure? (e.g., mutual aid agreements with community partners)

Example:

Camp Ready decides to do a critical infrastructure assessment. They start with a brainstorm of what their critical infrastructure is and come up with this initial list of their top critical infrastructure.

Buildings & property	Vehicles & equipment	Community infrastructure
Cabins	Camp van	Electricity
Dining hall	Megaphones & sirens	Hospital
Entrance / road in	Safety boat	Cell tower
Health centre	Satellite phone	
Kitchen	Telephone: landline	
Washroom / shower house	Water purification	
	Water rescue equipment (e.g., spinal board, buoys)	

Camp Ready goes through the critical infrastructure assessment process described above and comes up with this assessment of critical infrastructure during summer camp.

Critical Infrastructure Assessment: Camp Ready during Summer Camp							
Element	Reliability comment & score	Workarounds	Concerns with workarounds & backups	Redundancy	Maximum tolerable period of disruption	Reliance score	Summary statement
Kitchen	Only one kitchen, fire risk is quite high given use of gas, wooden infrastructure Reliability score = 2/3	We could do food preparation in the Activity Centre if we can get access to food and dishes We could get takeout food	Food safety may be compromised in these situations No ability to do dishes elsewhere	No redundancy	Very low: 0-4 hours	Very high: 3/3	Our kitchen is highly critical infrastructure, we have few viable options if the kitchen is unavailable for more than one meal Reliance rating: 3/3
Road into camp	Road into camp is prone to flooding and blockage from fallen trees Reliability score = 2/3	Could evacuate individuals by boat to town in urgent situations	Does not address ability for food and other deliveries and emergency vehicles to get in/out	No redundancy	Very low: 0-4 hours	Very high: 3/3	The road into camp is highly critical infrastructure; we must prioritize assessing and managing it with the municipality during emergencies Reliance rating 3/3

Element	Reliability comment & score	Workarounds	Concerns with workarounds & backups	Redundancy	Maximum tolerable period of disruption	Reliance score	Summary statement
Megaphones	We use these during emergency drills. They run on batteries. One time we ran out of batteries Reliability score = 2/3	We could use runners to communicate key information	This would compromise emergency response and could be dangerous for runners	We have megaphones in the lodge and by the pool. We could do without one but not both	During summer camp we need to have them available at all times 0-4 hours	Very high: 3/3	We use megaphones in our emergency procedures and they require batteries to operate
Water purification system	It is in excellent shape. We have it inspected regularly and water tested	We have a supply of bottled water sufficient for 12 hours	Water is all stored in one place	No redundancy	We could get by with bottled water for 6-12 hours	Very high: 3/3	Our water purification system is very reliable, but our backup plan is inadequate

Camp Ready had some follow up discussions on how to increase resilience. They put policies and procedures in place.

Element	Increasing the reliability	Workarounds
Kitchen	Improve fire safety in kitchen through training, audits & inspections	Explore catering options in the local community
Road into camp	Inspect weekly for trees at risk of falling	
Megaphones	Inspect battery supplies as part of weekly safety inspection Purchase two more	
Water filtration system		Store bottled water in two locations

Staffing

Another key step in the risk assessment process is to identify the critical functions that staff play. As in your critical infrastructure assessment, this may be because the functions are always important to safe operations (e.g., camper supervision, food preparation) or because you rely on these functions heavily for safe operations at specific time (e.g., first aiders).

Camps/OEC's can assess their reliance on these functions and determine how to increase resilience through strategies as identifying backups for key functions, cross training, and documenting important procedures.

Increasing Staffing Resilience Questions

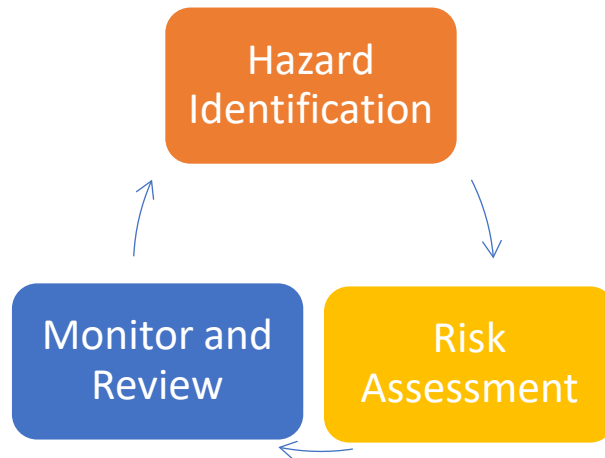
1. What staffing functions do we rely on for safe operations at all times? (e.g., camper supervision, food preparation) or at specific times (e.g., first aiders)?

2. What can we do to develop effective workarounds or backups if the people who usually do these functions were not available? (e.g., cross training, mutual aid agreements with community partners, documenting key procedures)

Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment

The next key parts of your camp/OEC's risk assessment process are to do a hazard identification and risk assessment (HIRA). These are the processes of identifying, characterizing, and validating hazards and assessing the associated risks, including the likelihood of experiencing the hazards and the potential effects.

A HIRA can be done at any point in your business cycle, for example before implementing a new program, during the program or after a program.



There are 3 steps in the HIRA cycle:

1. Hazard identification
2. Risk assessment
3. Monitor and review

Hazard Identification

In this step you identify as many hazards as you can think of and determine if they pose a threat to your camp/OEC. Hazards are **events, objects or locations** that may lead to emergencies or crises because of their ability to harm people, property or the environment.

For example, while many camps/OECs need a plan to deal with flooding, a flood may not be a risk to your camp/OEC. In this case you would not include flooding on your list of hazards.

Typically, a hazard is a source of direct harm (e.g., fire, high winds). Some hazards exist all the time (e.g., a pool) and others may present very rarely (e.g., earthquake). Including *events* in your hazard list (e.g., missing camper/participant, building collapse, drowning, cyberattack) that come about because of other hazards (large open spaces, foundational cracks, pools and lakes, computer viruses) can be useful.

Some of these events depend upon the population your camp/OEC serves. For example, consider the behaviours that some campers/participants may demonstrate – particularly during another emergency response.

Thinking broadly about hazards is important, without coming up with a list that is so long that it cannot be useful. What you decide to include in your hazard list will also depend on the scope of your emergency/crisis management program. Just like in identifying critical infrastructure, it's about balance in identifying a useful and manageable list. You may wish to do this step in stages over time, adding in new hazards each time you come back to the process.

Just as in your critical infrastructure assessment, you may wish to think about different times of the year in your hazard identification process, including your offseason.

For each hazard, you may wish to only consider the hazard being significant enough to activate your emergency response plan (e.g., campers go "missing" frequently, but it's only considered a hazard-scenario if they are missing for >15 minutes).

A good way to identify hazards is to review your recent incident reports, or brainstorm times when you have used your emergency response plans or processes.

In Ontario, municipalities are required to undertake a HIRA. You can find useful information about the hazards in your area by locating this information. For example:

- The [City of Toronto](#) identified its top hazards as energy emergency (supply), explosions/fires, winter weather, pandemic, cyber threats, terrorism, epidemic, flood, fuel/natural gas supply disruption, extreme heat.
- [Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit](#) identified its top hazards as infectious and contagious diseases, food-related hazards, zoonotic/vector borne disease, water related hazards, hazardous materials incidents, mass gatherings, bioterrorist events, environmental / weather related, technological / critical infrastructure failures, injury-related/public safety hazards.
- [The City of Greater Sudbury](#) identified its top hazards as tornadoes, windstorms, human health emergencies, lightning and thunderstorms, earthquakes, fires (forest/wildland), hazardous materials – fixed site, hazardous materials – transportation, energy emergency – hydro, air crash offsite – rural, critical infrastructure – telecoms, energy emergency – natural gas, explosions, or fire.

Creating categories of hazards may be helpful. Some possible groups of categories are:

[Canadian Centre for Occupation Health and Safety Groupings](#)

- Biological
- Chemical
- Ergonomic
- Physical
- Psychosocial
- Safety
- Workplace

[Risk Assessment & Safety Management \(RASM\) Groupings](#)

- Environment
- Equipment
- People

Hazard Identification Questions

What are important hazards that we face?

Risk assessment is the second step of a HIRA. In this step you assess the risk of each hazard you have identified. To do this you should look at the likelihood that a hazard may occur as well as the impact on all aspects of your camp/OEC.

One way you can assess the risk is to create a simple risk assessment matrix. Each hazard is assessed for the likelihood that it will occur and the impact the hazard will have. Below is a Sample Risk Assessment Matrix to help assess the risk a hazard poses as low, medium, high and extreme. Your camp/OEC's matrix might have a different number of impact and likelihood groups, and risk classifications. Create a matrix that works best for your camp/OEC.

	Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Almost Certain
Severe Significant injury or illness with permanent disability. Fatality.					Extreme
Major Major injury or illness. Requires long-term treatment or support.				High	
Moderate Moderate injury or illness. Require outside support.			Medium		
Minor Minor injury or illness. May require first aid. Return quickly to activity.		Low			
Insignificant Minimal impact. No interruption to activity.					

Monitor and Review

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Mitigation

Finally, just as in the work you did on identifying critical infrastructure, there is a step here about making your camp/OEC safer based on your analysis. How can these hazards be mitigated?

Example:

Camp Ready decides to do a HIRA. They start with identifying important hazards for them by reviewing recent incident reports, consulting with other camps in their area and consulting with their municipality.

They decide to focus on these hazards for their first HIRA

Environmental/Natural	Human caused	Technological
Animal attack (offsite) (based on hazard: animal)	Kitchen fire (hazard: gas stove)	Blackout > 6 hours (hazard: various)
Drowning (onsite) (based on hazard: pool)	Missing person (>15 minutes) (hazard: open spaces)	Cyber attack (hazard: computer virus)
High winds/tornado	Protests and threats	Water purification system failure (hazard: various)
Infectious diseases (based on hazard: virus)	Vehicle crash offsite (hazard: highway)	
Multiple people injured onsite event (based on hazards: various activities, hazardous materials)		

They assess the likelihood of these hazards:

Likely to occur every summer

- Blackout >6 hours
- Infectious diseases

Likely to occur every few years

- Cyber attack
- High winds/tornado
- Missing person >15 minutes

Unlikely to occur

- Animal attack (offsite)
- Drowning (onsite)
- Kitchen fire
- Multiple people injured onsite event
- Protests and threats
- Vehicle crash offsite
- Water purification system failure

For each hazard, they assess the consequences of the hazard as to its seriousness. The camp/OEC decides to assess hazards that can lead to death or serious injury higher than events that cannot. They decide to focus on the consequences of hazards that are most plausible. Most importantly, *they remember that this is not an exact science.*

High consequence hazards

- Animal attack (offsite)
- Drowning (onsite)
- High winds/tornado
- Kitchen fire
- Missing person >15 minutes
- Multiple people injured onsite event
- Vehicle crash offsite

Moderate consequence hazards

- Infectious diseases
- Water purification system failure

Low consequence hazards

- Blackouts
- Cyberattack
- Protests and threats

Throughout this process of assessing the likelihood and consequence, they make notes. For example:

Animal attack (offsite)

- Assessed as low likelihood and high consequence
- Most likely scenarios include bear attack and snake bite at provincial parks X and Y
- Bear attack could lead to serious injury and psychological trauma for multiple people
- Our current policies around wilderness first aid requirements on trip include XXX
- Our current procedures for communicating with groups on trip include XXX
- Getting additional emergency medical support to a group on trip would be very challenging

Camp Ready – Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment Summary Grid

Likely every summer	• Blackout >6 hours	• Infectious diseases	
Likely every few years	• Cyber attack		• High winds/tornado • Missing person >15 minutes
Unlikely to occur	• Protests and threats	• Water purification system failure	• Animal attack (offsite) • Drowning (onsite) • Kitchen fire • Multiple people injured onsite event • Vehicle crash offsite
	Low consequence	Moderate consequence	High consequence

Camp Ready notices that its highest risk hazards/hazard events are:

- Infectious diseases
- High winds/tornado
- Missing person >15 minutes

They keep this in mind as they start developing their emergency plan and response procedures. This is not to say that they ignore the other hazards/hazard events and do not plan for them. However, their emergency plan and response procedures may instead be geared primarily to address the highest risks.

Emergency Response Planning

This section provides ideas on content for your emergency response plan and guidance on other preparedness activities.

This guide recommends that your camp/OEC develop one emergency response plan that you use regardless of the hazard. In addition, you likely need some response-specific procedures.

Organizing an Incident Response Team

You may wish to identify potential roles in an emergency response plan that the lead person may choose to activate. Depending on the nature and severity of the incident, the following team members may or may not be required. Examples of roles include:

Incident Response Team Leader or Incident Manager

- Calls the Incident Response Team together to respond to an emergency
- Leads the emergency response and makes response decisions in consultation with others
- May be the contact person for various authorities

Staff Team Leaders or Operations Leads

- Leads various activities identified in the Incident Action Plan (e.g., searching specific areas, restoring critical infrastructure)

Healthcare Team Leaders

- Manages health care aspects of the response

Safety Team Leader

- Ensures that the camp/OEC is safe and secure during and after the incident
- Engages professional supports as needed

Documentation Lead

- Documents the incident and response (written, video, photographs, etc.)

Also see the information in the [examples of emergency response systems](#) section about the use of the Incident Management System.

Incident Assessment

The first step in an emergency response is always to assess the situation.

Not every emergency results in a crisis. Responding quickly to emergencies may help lessen the negative impact they have on your camp/OEC. Planning and thinking in advance decreases response time. Training and accessing the key support groups enables you and your camp/OEC to problem solve through the event.

Questions to consider in the incident assessment component of your emergency response plan

1. How do people who are responding to the emergency know who gathers information to inform the assessment?
2. Where does the assessment occur?
3. Who makes decisions about the assessment?
4. Who decides if this triggers your emergency plan, an emergency response procedure, or your crisis plan? How do they decide this?

Questions to consider including in your assessment at the time of an incident

1. What are the hazards that still are present?
2. Are there specific response plans, policies and procedures we have to activate?
3. Has this incident impacted our critical infrastructure? How? Could it still?
4. Has this incident impacted our ability to keep critical staff functions going (e.g., supervising campers, preparing food)
5. What could the consequences of this hazard/hazard event be? (Did we assess this in our HIRA?)

Your emergency response plan and any emergency response procedures should include important information about locations.

In an emergency where there is one location (a scene response), assessment often happens at that location (e.g., where the small fire is, where the injured person is, at the beach where the waterfront search is).

In an emergency with a larger geographic area, you can predetermine where the assessment occurs (e.g., at the office). This should be a place where:

- People can get to it easily and safely
- Emergency supplies and equipment can be stored
- There is space for private discussions
- Consider that a scene response may not be at the camp/OEC (e.g., injury on an out-trip or a vehicle crash)
 - In this scenario, there may be a scene response at the site and a designated coordination location at camp/OEC
 - The goal is to have one assessment (an integrated understanding of what is happening) to inform one action plan in the next section (one common understanding of who is doing what)

Action Planning

You've figured out how you establish your Incident Response Team and how they would complete an initial assessment. It's time to outline how you develop incident action plans (IAPs).

For some emergency responses, verbal IAPs are sufficient during the response. For some, however, having an IAP pre-written may be helpful (e.g., significantly stressful events; emergencies that last a long time).

In an emergency response, IAPs are usually established or approved by the response lead (see [organizing an Incident Response Team](#)).

Questions to answer in your emergency plan about your IAP

1. Who develops the IAPs?
2. Who approves an IAPs?

Questions to answer in an IAP during an emergency response

1. What is the assessment of the situation from the previous step?
2. What is the objective of the emergency response?
3. What activities will people do to meet that objective?
4. What safety precautions are in place for people responding to the emergency?
5. Who is doing those activities?
6. How long will it be until an IAP is reviewed and a new IAP released?

The following sections provide additional information about key response actions that are often part of an IAP.

- Internal and external communications
- Documentation
- Hotwash

Emergency Information and Communications

Internal Communications

Your plan includes information on how you will assess emergency situations and how you will determine how you will respond. Now it's time to figure out the various ways you will communicate these things to the people at camp/OEC who need to know (staff and/or campers/participant).

Questions to answer in your emergency plan about internal communications

1. How is key information about the emergency communicated (e.g., the IAP)?
 - a. How are key members of the response team alerted/instructed?
Consider use of alarms, bells, sirens, pagers, texts.
 - b. How does the person in charge at a scene response communicate with the most senior people onsite?
 - c. How do the people involved in the emergency response receive key updates? How do they know when the emergency response is over?
 - d. Does the response lead need support to do any of these communications? Who do they get that from?
 - e. What information needs to be ready to go?
 - i. Internal contact lists
 - ii. Checklists for key emergency response processes you have established
 - f. As needed, how do people who arrive onsite – including staff - during an emergency know what they should do (join in? stay away?)
 - g. If campers/participants or staff are confused about what to do, how can they get information or instructions? Consider use of centralized information stations, bulletin boards, use of apps, pre-created signage.
 - h. How can you ensure that communications are accessible for your whole community? See the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act](#) and the [Integrated Accessibility Standards](#) which include many requirements for ensuring communications are accessible.

External Communications

You may need external support to respond to an emergency. Or you may need to communicate what is happening to people who are not part of the immediate camp/OEC community. This may be one of the factors you include to trigger your crisis plan.

Preparedness tips:

- Have one contact list for external supports for emergency situations. Make it someone's job to maintain this list. Keep it in multiple locations. Outline clearly how these organizations or people can help during an emergency. Outline clearly what any contractual arrangements are with vendors.
- Have generic information about the camp/OEC ready and posted and/or secured for communicating (e.g., camp/OEC location and directions / instructions for access, key contact information, maps of the site to provide to responders)
- Establish mutual aid arrangements with other nearby camps/OECs and other organizations. How can you help each other during an emergency?
 - People?
 - Setting up an alternative location for response coordination or evacuation?
 - Bringing in emergency supplies?
 - Support when critical infrastructure is disrupted?

Questions to answer in your emergency plan about external communications

1. How is information about the emergency communicated to people outside the camp/OEC? Examples include
 - a. To external resources, such as emergency responders (police/fire/ambulance, insurance, lawyers, arborists, IT professionals, contractors, mental health professionals)
 - b. To family members/caregivers of campers/participants and staff (specific families/all families of people currently onsite)
 - c. To the broader camp/OEC community
 - d. To media
2. Who develops these communications?
3. Who approves written communications or key messages for verbal communications?
4. Are there designated spokespeople? What external people/groups should only be communicated to by the designated spokespeople? (e.g., families, media)
5. Are greeters needed as emergency supports arrive? Are multiple greeters needed?

Documentation

Documenting your response is a key step and should be done throughout the response. This may include taking notes/video of the emergency response. Some emergencies may need information documented that goes beyond your incident template.

As noted in the [organizing an Incident Response Team section](#), this may be someone's job – to document the emergency and the response

Hotwash

A hotwash is an important opportunity to make sure key components of the emergency are identified and reviewed during an ongoing emergency response or immediately afterwards.

You may wish to have someone not involved in the response to facilitate the hotwash. Consider multiple opportunities for input (verbal in a group, written in a survey).

A useful format for a hotwash is:

- What: What happened? What are the facts?
- Gut: How do we feel about it?
- So what? What went well? What could we improve?
- Now what? How can we improve our response?

Specific Response Procedures

Depending on the results of your HIRA, you may find that you want to be particularly ready for some emergency responses. One way to do this is to develop specific response procedures.

To avoid confusion, they should be consistent with your all-hazards emergency response plan.

Key questions for specific response procedures

1. What do campers/participants/visitors do during these procedures? How can camper/participant supervision continue?
2. What other key staffing functions need to be able to continue?
3. Who may need additional assistance during an emergency and how can you provide this?
4. How can responder safety be prioritized and monitored?
5. How can the senior management be kept informed if they are not leading the response?
6. How are the procedure beginning and ending communicated?
7. What should responders and non-responders do when the procedure has ended?
8. What supports might responders / non-responders need after the emergency, and how can you ensure those supports are available?

Five specific response procedures that you may wish to consider developing are outlined on the following pages. You likely have others that your camp/OEC needs.

- [Property search \(e.g., missing person\)](#)
- [Restricting access to an area of the property](#)
- [First aid and emergency health care](#)
- [Lockdown/shelter in place](#)
- [Restoring critical infrastructure](#)

Property Search (e.g., missing person)

Assessment

- Checking if the missing person's belongings are where they should be
- Identifying all the things known about the missing person (where last seen, clothing worn)
- Confirming whether any other people are missing
- Considering how many staff should participate in search (searches can be unsafe and very disruptive)

Action planning

- Gathering the missing person's health information so it is readily available if needed
- Having first aid equipment readily available
- Having a photograph of the person available
- Considering the need for flashlights or other safety equipment to perform a search at night or in inclement weather
- Identifying other ways to keep searchers safe, supervised and accounted for if the search includes being in or near water
- Determining triggers for calling in additional emergency support
- Determining triggers for notifying /seeking additional information from the family/caregiver
- Ensuring that other campers are safe and supervised

Communications

- Determining systems for communicating that search teams are needed and what how other campers/participants can be safe and accounted for
- Determining system for updating searchers for with new information (group texts, walkie-talkies, regular check-ins at centralized point)

Restricting Access to an Area of the Property

Assessment

- Identifying critical infrastructure in the restricted area and implement workarounds
- Confirming that all people have left the restricted area
- Determining how to monitor the area for breaches of the restricted area/further impact of the hazard

Action planning

- If the area includes areas with personal belongings, determining whether anyone can access these belongs (depending on the hazard, this assessment may require professional input)

Communications

- Using equipment such as pylons or ropes to designate the out-of-bounds area

First Aid and Emergency Health Care

Preparedness tip:

- Designate a vehicle as emergencies only – always in the same parking spot and keys available to designated drivers

Assessment

- Assessing the scene for hazards
- Identifying how many people are injured
- Determining how these injuries happened

Action planning

- Clarifying which first aider(s)/health staff are leading the response
- Clearing the area of other people and ensure that campers/participants are appropriately supervised
- Providing first aid/health care

Communications

- As needed, keeping camp/OEC senior management informed
- As needed, calling in back up staff/additional first aiders/health team/paramedic services to help with the situation
- As needed, arranging greeters to meet people arriving to provide additional support
- As needed, informing/updating family members/caregivers

Lockdown/Shelter in Place

Assessment

- Assessing the hazard that is leading to a lockdown/shelter in place response (e.g., risk of violence, offsite or pending environmental hazard)
- Determining whether the response requires people to be inside, or simply to stay on camp/OEC property

Action planning

- As needed, sealing off entrances to the camp facility/OEC (while allowing for emergency services to enter)
- Supervising campers/participants

Communications

- Determining how to communicate the need for lockdown (and scope of lockdown) to the camp/OEC community and how to keep them informed
- Determining how to keep track of all offsite staff/campers/participants and keep them informed
- As needed, calling 911 for police/fire/paramedic services

Restoring Critical Infrastructure

Assessment

- Determining what critical infrastructure is damaged/unavailable
- Assessing what the extent of damage is/how it can safely be fixed
- Estimating how long will the return time (may) be
- Determining if there is an assessment for how critical this infrastructure is as part of your HIRA
- Determining whether there any workarounds or alternates identified as part of your HIRA

Action planning

- Determining whether upcoming programs need to be/can be cancelled
- Putting workarounds into effect, including activating any mutual aid arrangements in place

Communications

- Determining how to keep community informed of workarounds/return time for the critical infrastructure
- Reaching out to external service providers for support
- As needed, keeping family members/caregivers of campers/participants informed of the situation

Other Emergency Preparedness Actions

You've assessed your hazards and risks. You've developed your emergency response plan. You've developed procedures for some responses you may need to activate. How else can you be ready?

Supplies and Equipment

Based on your HIRA and your response plan and procedures, determine what supplies and equipment may be needed. Every camp/OEC will be different. Consider:

- Battery powered/crank radios
- Bottled water
- Caution tape/pylons
- Cleaning supplies
- Contact lists
- Emergency response vests
- First aid equipment
- Flashlight
- Incident report and other forms
- Megaphones/sirens/airhorns
- Vehicle emergency supplies

Preparedness tip:

- Determine where emergency supplies should be kept. Keep an inventory of the supplies and audit regularly to ensure they are ready for a response.

Training, Certifications, Drills and Exercises

Your emergency plan and response procedures depend on people knowing what to do. Your camp/OEC can develop an emergency/crisis response training plan.

- Who needs what training?
- Where, when, and how often should training take place?
- Are drills necessary?
- Does training include the specific assistance that people will need in an emergency (for example, because of a disability)
- Do campers or other participants need any training?

Every training session should be documented.

The best way to find out if you are ready for an emergency response is to do a test. You can test your responses through several procedures, including:

- *A tabletop exercise:* Come up with a scenario and talk through how you would respond to it.
- *A drill:* Do a run through of one of your emergency response procedures.
- *An exercise:* A run through of an emergency or crisis for which you don't have a specific response procedure. You may do this after doing a tabletop exercise of the same or a similar scenario.

Drills and exercises can be stressful and dangerous. It's important to have systems in place to monitor for safety. As needed, have a way to communicate to people who arrive onsite during an emergency exercise what they should do (join in? stay away?)

Designate people to observe and debrief with observers and participants identifying what went well and how to improve. You can use the same format as a hotwash:

- What: What happened? What are the facts?
- Gut: How do we feel about it?
- So what? What went well? What could we improve?
- Now what? How can we improve our response?

Preparedness tip:

- Real emergencies can happen during an exercise. Have a way to differentiate real versus simulated problems. A common way of doing this is with the phrase "*No Duff*" to designate a real emergency is underway.

Camper/Participant & Staff Roles and Readiness

You have identified roles and responsibilities for staff and campers/participants during your emergency procedures. How else can you help them to be ready for (or help prevent) emergencies?

- Are there supplies/equipment you want campers/participants and staff to bring to camp/OEC?
- Are there supplies/equipment or information you want staff to keep in their personal vehicles?
- Is there information you want staff to keep in their wallets or phone numbers/information they should have in their cellphones?

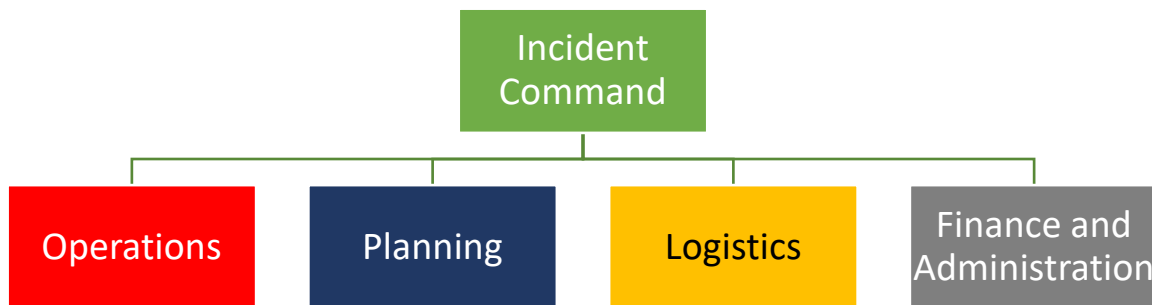
Examples Of Emergency Response Systems

Incident Management System

The Incident Management System (IMS) is a standardized approach to manage all stages of an incident. It provides camps/OECs a common framework to communicate, coordinate and collaborate during an emergency response. Some of the concepts in this guide are based on the Incident Management System.

Ontario has an established program that camps/OECs may wish to use.

A major component of the Incident Management System is the hierarchical chart that it uses to organize the response.



Incident Command = The deciders

Operations = The doers

Planning = The planners

Logistics = The getters

Finance & Administration = The payers

Guidance on how to implement the Incident Management System [is available from the Government of Ontario.](#)

Emergency Codes

Just like hospitals have emergency codes, camps/OECs can use a system to provide a colour for a particular kind of emergency response. [Benefits of an emergency code system](#) include:

- Succinctly providing key information about an emergency
- The ability to devise a specific plan for each code
- A uniform and preplanned response to various emergencies
- In some cases, the ability to alert staff without having everyone know what is happening

The [Ontario Hospital Association's codes](#) include:

Code	Situation
Yellow	Missing person
Orange	Disaster
Red	Fire
White	Violence/Other behavioural situation
Blue	Medical emergency
Green	Evacuation
Brown	Hazardous material
Purple	Hostage taking
Black	Bomb threat/Suspicious object
Grey	Critical infrastructure failure

Crisis Response Planning

This section builds on information in the emergency response planning section, with these key differences:

- Crises often are more complex and last longer
- There are often additional risks to consider in a crisis (e.g., reputational risks and legal risks)
- As a result, most decisions during a crisis should be made by the most senior people in a camp/OEC (depending on the structure of the camp)
- It may be helpful to get into a regular pattern of key decision makers meeting to share information, update assessments and update an Incident Action Plan (IAP)
- A crisis may involve all the staff in a response (e.g., a full camp/OEC evacuation or a major disruption of critical infrastructure) or it may only involve a small team of senior leaders (e.g., allegations of abuse, or follow up from a serious onsite incident)

Questions to answer in your crisis response plan

1. Who can activate the plan?
2. Who can make what kinds of decisions during a crisis?
3. What outside resources may be used?
4. Who are the designated spokespeople for the camp/OEC during / following a crisis?
 - a. For media
 - b. To approve message to go to camper/participant families/caregivers
5. Can you create information about the camp/OEC in advance for these communications?
6. What role does the board of directors or parent organization have in:
 - a. Developing / approving your crisis plan?
 - b. Participating in a crisis response?
7. What role do parents and other stakeholders play during a crisis?
8. Is there a need to monitor social media for reactions? Do you have a social media protocol to follow during a crisis?

Maintaining/Updating a Risk, Emergency and Crisis Program

A lot of work is done by all camps and outdoor education centres to make sure that their operations are the safest they can be. Keep your plan up to date, and consider these additional tips:

Preparedness tips:

- Think of this as a program that needs regular attention.
- Develop a policy, signed off by senior leadership, that demonstrates your camp/OEC's commitment to reducing the likelihood of emergencies and crises and being ready for them when they happen.
- Make it someone's job: Depending on how your camp/OEC is set up, make emergency preparedness part of someone's job.
- Set up a regular audit:
 - Have plans been reviewed?
 - Do all of the resources that are referred to in your emergency response plan, response procedures and crisis plan exist?
 - Have supplies and equipment been checked for expiry, damage or loss?
 - When were each of our emergency procedures tested through an exercise or drill?
- Have an external person audit your risk / emergency / crisis management program and make recommendations.