

# CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS EMERGENCY PLAN



Enacted Under By-Law # 2005-112 as amended  
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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Municipal emergencies could be defined as situations caused by the forces of nature, an accident, an intentional act or otherwise, that constitutes a danger to the City of Niagara Falls, its residents and visitors. These situations require a controlled and coordinated response by a number of agencies, both government and private, under the direction of the appropriate elected or appointed officials, as distinct from routine operations carried out by an agency or agencies as normal day to day procedures (e.g., firefighting, police activities, normal hospital routines.)

Whenever an emergency occurs, the initial and prime responsibility for providing immediate assistance and control rests with the affected departments within the municipality.

Where a situation cannot be adequately dealt with under existing division of statutory responsibilities and areas of mutual cooperation, the Chief Administrative Officer, in accordance with By-law 2005-112, as amended, shall coordinate and control all departments of the City of Niagara Falls that may be required to deal with a situation.

Where the resources of the City of Niagara Falls are insufficient to cope with the situation, assistance will be requested of the Regional Municipality of Niagara.

As enabled by *The Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, 2006*, this Emergency Response Plan and its elements have been:

- Adopted by the City of Niagara Falls by a duly passed by-law.
- Filed with Emergency Management Ontario, Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services and the Regional Municipality of Niagara.

## 2.0 AIM

The aim of this plan is to make provision for the extraordinary arrangements and measures that may need to be taken to protect the health, safety, welfare, environment and economic prosperity of the residents, businesses and visitors of the City of Niagara Falls when faced with an emergency.

It enables a centralized, controlled and coordinated response to emergencies in the City of Niagara Falls and meets the legislated requirements of *The Emergency Management Act and Civil Protection Act, 2006*.

Objectives:

1. To prepare and maintain an emergency plan for the efficient training and deployment of all personnel and services required in an emergency situation in the City of Niagara Falls.
2. To authorize employees of the municipality to take action under the emergency plan, including the state prior to formal declaration of the emergency.

### 3.0 AUTHORITY

*The Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, 2006 (EMCPA)* is the legal authority for this Emergency Response Plan.

The EMCPA states that:

**“Every municipality shall formulate an emergency plan governing the provision of necessary services during an emergency and the procedure 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.” [Section 3 (1)]**

**“The head of council of a municipality may declare that an emergency exists in the municipality or in any part thereof and may take such action and make such orders as he or she considers necessary and are not contrary to law to implement the emergency plan of the municipality and to protect property and the health, safety and welfare of the inhabitants of the emergency area.” [Section 4 (1)]**

#### **3.1 Definition of an Emergency**

The EMCPA defines an emergency as:

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

The Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) can be activated for any emergency for the purposes of managing an incident, maintaining essential services to the community and supporting emergency site operations.

### **3.2 Tiered Response**

For the purpose of this Plan, the above definition of emergency is further refined within the following contexts:

#### *3.2.1 Tier One: Local Municipal Emergency*

Any emergency occurring within the boundaries of one or more Niagara Region Local Area Municipalities that is within the combined capabilities of the Local Area Municipality / Municipalities and the Niagara Region to cooperatively respond to, effectively manage and recover from as declared by the Local Head of Council.

During such emergencies, Niagara Region will provide assistance as requested to the affected municipality/ municipalities to support municipal emergency operations. This may include staff / resources to an emergency site, municipal operations centre or any other location as required. In addition, Niagara Region may activate the Region's Emergency Management Structure to better coordinate regional support to multiple municipalities, multiple support locations and/or to ensure essential regional service provisions apart from the area(s) affected by the emergency.

#### *3.2.2 Tier Two - Regional Emergency*

Any large scale or widespread emergency occurring within the boundaries of Niagara Region impacting multiple municipalities that is within the combined capabilities of the Local Area Municipalities and the Niagara Region to cooperatively respond to, effectively manage and recover from as declared by either the Local Municipal Heads of Council and/or the Regional Head of Council.

In rare situations, a Regional Emergency Declaration may be required to best facilitate region-wide coordination of emergency support. These large scale or widespread emergencies could include:

- Public Health & Safety Emergency (Disease Outbreak / Environmental Hazard)
- Critical Infrastructure Failure (Utility Outage / Water Supply Disruption)
- Natural Disaster (Severe Weather / Large Scale Flooding / Winter Storms)

During such emergencies, Niagara Region will activate the Region's Emergency Management Structure to best coordinate regional operations and to support multiple municipalities, multiple support locations and/or to ensure continuity of essential regional service provisions apart from the area(s) affected by the emergency. In addition, Niagara Region will continue to provide assistance as requested to the affected municipalities to assist with municipal emergency operations. This could include staff / resources to support emergency operations at emergency sites, municipal operations centres or at any other location as required.

### 3.2.3 Tier 3 - Provincial Emergency

Any widespread emergency, which impacts large portions of the Province of Ontario that is within the capabilities of the Province of Ontario and its collective Municipalities to effectively respond to, manage and recover from (assisted or otherwise) as declared by the Premier of Ontario. Provincial emergencies could also include local emergency declarations by either the Local Municipal Heads of Council and/or the Regional Head of Council.

During such emergencies Niagara Region may activate the Region's Emergency Management Structure / Emergency Operations Centre to better coordinate regional support to either local municipalities and/or externally impacted municipalities. In addition, Niagara Region will continue to provide assistance as requested to the affected municipalities to assist with municipal emergency operations should the event impact the local area. This could include staff / resources to support emergency operations at emergency sites, municipal operations centres or at any other location as required.

### **3.3 Declaration of Emergency:**

The *EMCPA* states that:

**"The head of council of a municipality may declare that an emergency exists in the municipality or in any part thereof and may take such action and make such orders as he or she considers necessary and are not contrary to law to implement the emergency plan of the municipality and to protect property and the health, safety and welfare of the inhabitants of the emergency area." (4.1)**

### **3.4 Action Prior to Declaration**

The Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act authorizes any employee of the City of Niagara Falls to take any actions required as described in this Plan where an emergency is imminent, exists but has not yet been declared to exist in order to protect property and the health, safety and welfare of the City of Niagara Falls. **An emergency declaration is not required to activate this Plan and activation of this Plan does not in itself constitute an emergency declaration.**

## **4.0 EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION AND ACTIVATION PROCEDURES**

### **4.1 Plan Activation**

#### *4.1.1 Reporting an Emergency*

A responding agency or municipal department is likely to be the first on site authority to an emergency. The ranking officer for fire, police or a senior municipal official (or their designate) should personally assume control at the site of an emergency or arrange for someone on-site to take charge immediately until an Emergency Site Coordinator is appointed.

If, in the judgment of the senior on-site official, the situation requires a more coordinated response or resources are required beyond their immediate control, the senior on-site official must contact their most senior departmental official in accordance with any existing departmental reporting procedure.

#### *4.1.2 Emergency Activation Procedure*

If a CCG member discovers that an emergency situation has occurred or is likely to occur in the City, they will immediately notify the On-Call Fire Chief who may alert the Community Control Group and activate the Emergency Operations Centre.

### **4.2 Activation Call-out Levels**

#### *4.2.1 Full Activation*

When the Niagara Falls Fire Department Communications staff is directed to carry out a "Full Activation", all members of the Community Control Group will be contacted and instructed to respond to the Emergency Operations Centre at a designated time.

#### *4.2.2 Partial Activation*

When the Niagara Falls Fire Department Communications staff is directed to carry out a "Partial Activation", only selected members of the Community Control Group, depending upon the emergency situation, will be contacted and instructed to respond to the Emergency Operations Centre at a designated time.

#### *4.2.3 Full Alert*

When the Niagara Falls Fire Department Communications staff is directed to carry out a "Full Alert", **all** members of the Community Control Group will be contacted and advised of a situation or pending situation that may affect the City of Niagara Falls and require your potential attendance in the Emergency Operations Centre.

### *4.2.4 Partial Alert*

When the Niagara Falls Fire Department Communications staff is directed to carry out a “Partial Alert”, **selected** members of the Community Control Group will be contacted and advised of a situation or pending situation that may affect the City of Niagara Falls and require their potential attendance in the Emergency Operations Centre.

Unless otherwise directed, Niagara Falls Fire Department will alert personnel, alternates and agencies required to form the Community Control Group in the following order:

1. Fire Chief/CEMC
2. Mayor or his duly authorized representative
3. Chief Administrative Officer
4. Niagara Regional Police Representative
5. Public Information Officer
6. Emergency Medical Services (NEMS) Representative
7. Director of Municipal Works
8. Director of Transportation Services
9. Health Program Director

The above listed personnel are responsible for arrangements to notify agencies and other personnel under their control as they deem appropriate.

Note: Names and Telephone Numbers of Emergency Control Group are listed in Annex A (Confidential)

### **4.3 Requests for Assistance**

Emergency assistance is structured at four levels of government in Canada, progressing from the local municipality up to Federal Government level using a “bottom up” approach.

Assistance from the Regional Municipality of Niagara can be requested by the Mayor or designate to the Regional Chairman or by the City CAO or designate to the Regional CAO. This assistance could include personnel with special expertise, specialized equipment with trained operators, and/or any other type of service/expertise required to support emergency operations. Assistance may be requested from the Regional Municipality of Niagara without any loss of control or authority.

A request for assistance from the Government of Ontario would be made by contacting the Provincial Emergency Operation Centre, Emergency Management Ontario regardless if the Plan has been activated or not. Once the request for emergency assistance has been received by Emergency Management Ontario, it is their responsibility to determine their capability to offer the assistance requested and/or coordinate the assistance request through to the appropriate Provincial/Federal Ministry and reply to the City of Niagara Falls on the status of the request.



### **4.4 Declaring a Community Emergency: Authority to Declare**

The Mayor (or the Acting Mayor) has the legislative authority under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, 2006* to declare an “Emergency to Exist” within the boundaries of the City of Niagara Falls. The decision to declare an emergency to exist is made by the Mayor, preferably in consultation with the members of the Community Control Group. The Mayor does, however, have the ultimate authority whether or not to make an emergency declaration.

A sample emergency declaration is attached as Annex C to this Plan.

The Mayor or Acting Mayor may declare that an emergency exists in the City of Niagara Falls or in any part thereof, and may take such action and make such orders as he/she considers necessary and are not contrary to law to implement the Emergency Response Plan for Niagara Falls, and to protect the property and the health, safety and welfare of the inhabitants of the emergency area.

Declaring an emergency to exist within the City of Niagara Falls is not required, prior to activation and implementation of this Emergency Response Plan, nor does it give the City any extraordinary powers that they are not already granted through activation of the Emergency Response Plan. However, an emergency declaration may create greater understanding and promote a sense of urgency to the public regarding the severity of an emergency situation and encourage greater public compliance. Therefore, an emergency declaration may be useful if the Community Control Group will be requesting the public to do something out of the ordinary, such as evacuate.

In addition, an emergency declaration grants the City the power to protect volunteer emergency workers under the provision of the Occupational Health and Safety Act 1990. If a volunteer is participating in a Declared Emergency and is registered with the City, they are then considered “City Workers” and protected under the provisions of the Act. Should that volunteer be injured, the City submits the insurance form to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board. Registration of volunteers will be coordinated by the City’s Human Resources Department.

Upon declaring an emergency, the Mayor will notify:

- City Council
- Emergency Management Ontario
- Public
- Neighbouring community officials, as required
- Regional Chair
- Local Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP)
- Local Member of Parliament (MP)

### **4.5 Terminating an Emergency**

The Mayor, his duly authorized representative, or Council (by a majority vote) may at any time, declare that an emergency has terminated. An Emergency Termination Form is provided in Annex C.

When terminating an emergency, the Mayor will notify:

- City Council
- Emergency Management Ontario
- Public
- Neighbouring community officials, as required
- Regional Chair
- Local Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP)
- Local Member of Parliament (MP)

Section 7.0.1 of the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, 2006* states that the Lieutenant Governor in Council or the Premier, if in the Premier's opinion the urgency of the situation requires that an order be made immediately, may by order declare that an emergency exists throughout Ontario or in any part of Ontario. An emergency declared under Section 7.0.1 is terminated at the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> day following its declaration unless the Lieutenant Governor in Council by order declares it to be terminated at an earlier date.

## 5.0 THE COMMUNITY CONTROL GROUP

An emergency requires a controlled and coordinated response by multiple departments/agencies under the direction of appropriate officials – members of the Community Control Group. This group is responsible for coordinating the provision of the essential services necessary to respond to and minimize the effects of an emergency on the community.

### **5.1 Core Members**

The CCG consists of the following officials and their alternates:

- Fire Chief/CEMC
- Mayor of the City of Niagara Falls
- Chief Administrative Officer
- Niagara Regional Police Representative
- Public Information Officer
- Emergency Medical Services (NEMS) Representative
- Director of Municipal Works
- Director of Transportation Services
- Health Program Director

Note: The Community Control Group may function with only a limited number of persons depending upon the emergency. While the Community Control Group may not require the presence of all the people listed as members of the control group, all members of the Community Control Group should be notified.

### **5.2 City Emergency Support Group**

The City Emergency Support Group shall be composed of persons, or their designates, holding the following appointments:

- Director of Finance
- City Solicitor
- Human Resources Manager or Representative
- Administrative Resource Officer
- Information Systems - Network, Communications, and GIS
- Region of Niagara Community Services
- Director of Planning & Development
- Director of Buildings Services
- Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES)

As required, identified members of the Emergency Support Group will join the Community Control Group.

### **5.3 Other Agencies/Stakeholders**

The following services, agencies or officials will operate in support of the CCG as a liaison when/if required.

- Emergency Management Ontario
- Canadian Red Cross
- Regional Niagara Emergency Management Co-ordinator
- Ontario Provincial Police
- Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority
- Liaison staff from provincial ministries
- Enbridge Consumers Gas
- Bell Canada representatives
- District School Board of Niagara and Niagara Catholic District School Board
- Office of the Fire Marshal
- Ontario Power Generation
- Niagara Falls Hydro
- Niagara Falls Bridge Commission
- Niagara Parks Police
- Any other officials, experts or representatives from the public or private sector as deemed necessary by the CCG

### **5.4 Emergency Operations Centre**

The CCG will report to the Primary Emergency Operations Centre or the alternate if the Primary is unavailable for use. Details of the EOCs including equipment and set-up are outlined in Annex D (confidential)

### **5.5 Critical Infrastructure**

Critical Infrastructure is the network of systems that deliver essential services that our community depends on. This includes electricity, gas, telecommunications systems, transportation and water/sewage. See Annex E (Confidential) for critical infrastructure type, primary components, owner/operator, location and primary contact information.

### **5.6 Community Risk Profile**

See Annex F (Confidential) for the Niagara Falls Community Risk Profile which ranks potential hazards by type, probability and consequence.

### **5.7 Operating Cycle**

Members of the CCG will gather at regular intervals to inform each other of actions taken and problems encountered. The Chief Administrative Officer will establish the frequency of meetings and agenda items. Meetings will be kept as brief as possible thus allowing members to carry out their individual responsibilities. The Administrative

Resource Officer will maintain a status board and maps, which will be prominently displayed and kept up to date.

### **5.8 Community Control Group Responsibilities**

The actions or decisions which the members of the CCG are likely to be responsible for but not limited to are:

- (a) Declaring an 'emergency' to exist
- (b) Coordinating and directing their service and ensuring that any actions necessary for the mitigation of the effects of the emergency are taken, provided that they are not contrary to law
- (c) Determining if the location and composition of the CCG are appropriate.
- (d) Advising the Mayor as to whether the declaration of an emergency is recommended
- (e) Designating any area in the municipality as an "emergency area"
- (f) Ensuring that an Emergency Site Manager (ESM) is appointed
- (g) Ordering, coordinating and/or overseeing the evacuation of inhabitants considered to be in danger
- (h) Discontinuing utilities or services provided by public or private concerns, i.e., water, hydro, gas, closing shopping plaza/mall, and arena
- (i) Calling out and mobilizing their emergency service, agency and equipment
- (j) Arranging for services and equipment from local agencies not under municipal control i.e., private contractors, volunteer agencies, service clubs
- (k) Notifying, requesting assistance from and/or liaison with various levels of government and any public or private agencies not under municipal control, as considered necessary
- (l) Determining if additional transport is required for evacuation or transport of persons and/or supplies
- (m) Ensuring that pertinent information regarding the emergency is promptly forwarded to the Public Information Officer for dissemination to the media and public
- (n) Relaying information on the emergency situation to the Regional Niagara Emergency Operations Centre, as required, through the Regional CEMC
- (o) Determining the need to establish advisory group(s) and/or sub-committees
- (p) Authorize the expenditure of monies required to deal with the emergency
- (q) Notifying the service, agency or group under their direction, of the termination of the emergency
- (r) Maintaining a log outlining decisions made and actions taken, and submitting a summary of the log to the CAO within one week of the termination of the emergency, as required
- (s) Establishing a reporting and inquiry centre under the direction of the Public Information Officer to handle individual requests for information concerning any aspect of the emergency
- (t) Ensuring a supply of fuel is maintained
- (u) Participating in the debriefing following the emergency

- (v) Each member of the Control Group is responsible for coordinating and directing their service and ensuring that any actions necessary for the mitigation of any of the effects of the emergency are taken
- (w) Each member is responsible for providing clerical support staff (scribes) where needed

## **6. PLAN MAINTENANCE, REVISION, TESTING AND INTERNAL PROCEDURE**

### **6.1 Plan Maintenance and Revision**

- The City of Niagara Falls Emergency Plan will be maintained by the Emergency Management Coordinator.
- This plan will be reviewed annually by the Emergency Management program committee and revised as required. The plan will also be reviewed as a result of each emergency or planning/training exercise.
- The EMC will print and distribute the revised plan in accordance with the distribution list.
- Each time the plan is substantially amended, it must be forwarded to City Council for approval. However, minor editorial revisions and updates to maintain the currency of the plan may be made without resubmitting the plan to City Council each time for approval. The CEMC will be responsible for the updates to and distribution of the plan.
- It is the responsibility of each person, agency, service or department named within this emergency plan to notify the CEMC forthwith of any revisions to the appendices or administrative changes.

### **6.2 Testing of Plan**

The City of Niagara Falls Emergency Program Committee will test the City's Emergency Plan on an annual basis.

### **6.3 Internal Procedures**

Each department involved with this emergency plan shall prepare functional emergency procedures or guidelines outlining how it will fulfill its responsibilities during an emergency.