

## **EMERGENCY & DISASTER PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE**

## **ONGOING OPERATIONS**

As we learned in the past few years, emergencies and natural disasters can occur anytime, anywhere. Hotels face numerous challenges to ensure the safety of their employees, their guests, and their property. Being prepared for such emergencies helps management and employees respond calmly and safely in these situations.

## ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

### Objectives

Safety of guests, employees & management  
Preservation of buildings, facilities & equipment  
Hotel reputation & business continuity

### Contact the AHLA

**Phone:** 1-888-436-6112

**Email:** [wehelphotels@ahla.ca](mailto:wehelphotels@ahla.ca)

## POTENTIAL/IMMINENT THREATS

1. Monitor weather channels and subscribe to provincial alerts:
  - a. [Alberta Emergency Alert](#)
  - b. [Alberta Wildfire](#)
  - c. [Air Quality Health Index](#)
  - d. [Environment Canada Weather Alerts](#)
2. Know the difference between an [Evacuation Alert and Evacuation Order](#)
3. Review and update your property's [Crisis Communications Plan](#)
4. Provide timely communications to employees
5. Contact your local emergency response team to review/verify response plans and role of property in community emergency response
  - a. Advise team of any key dates for events at your property
  - b. Arrange to provide accommodations for first responders
  - c. Donate goods (e.g. food, water, blankets, pillows, etc.) and/or services (e.g. conference room space, paid volunteer time for employees, etc.).
6. Ensure back-up generators, etc. are available/in-place. Clarify what areas of the hotel will continue to have power.
7. Ensure offsite back up of guest and employee data
8. Advise staff to prepare by stocking up on drinking water, food, medications, fuel for transportation
9. Review cross-training if hotel may operate with limited staff:
  - a. Ensure clearly defined roles and responsibilities
10. Review and communicate evacuation procedures to staff and guests as appropriate
11. Create a "Go Box" to take with you on the possible evacuation:
  - a. Emergency reports
  - b. All guest registration cards
  - c. Building keys
  - d. Cash floats
  - e. Hotel cell phone
  - f. Team member phone list
12. Print signs for the entrance doors "Property closed due to evacuation. For information call, [hotel number]. No cash on premises."

***If there is an active fire within 30 m (100 ft) to your property, call 911, and let them know you are in the fire zone. A fire crew will be sent to your location.***

## ONGOING OPERATIONS IN MIDST OF EMERGENCY

1. Monitor weather channels and subscribe to provincial alerts:
  - a. [Alberta Emergency Alert](#)
  - b. [Alberta Wildfire](#)
  - c. [Air Quality Health Index](#)
  - d. [Environment Canada Weather Alerts](#)
  
2. Communicate with local emergency response team:
  - a. Provide accommodations for first responders
  - b. Donate goods (e.g. food, water, blankets, pillows, etc.) and/or services (e.g. conference room space, paid volunteer time for employees, etc.).
  - c. Provide accommodations for those evacuated from other locations
  - d. Receive and provide timely updates of current situation
  
3. Consider what-ifs:
  - a. No power, cell phone service or water
  - b. Limited supplies
  - c. Limited transportation routes
  
4. Support your guests:
  - a. Ensure timely communications, especially alerts for evacuation notices
  - b. Extend your very best rates to evacuees and those affected by wildfires, floods or other disasters
  - c. Remember that Alberta's *Consumer Protection Act* prohibits businesses from inflating prices during an emergency. This legislation allows provincial authorities to seek orders to cease the conduct and potentially impose significant fines for charging prices that are deemed to take unfair advantage of the situation.
  - d. Work with guests who may be without identification due a sudden evacuation.
  - e. Relax 'no pets' policies for evacuees travelling with animals.
  - f. Remember that guests and staff alike may feel the emotional strain of the current situation.
  - g. Stay in touch with your fellow hoteliers to ensure you can help travelers find accommodation in the event you are full.
  - h. Provide [guidelines for water conservation](#) to guests if appropriate:
    - **Reuse Towels:** To minimize water usage and reduce the frequency of laundering, we encourage you to reuse towels during your stay. Simply hang them up if you are willing to use them again.
    - **Take Shorter Showers:** Consider taking shorter showers to conserve water. A brief shower can still be refreshing, and this small change can have a significant impact on water consumption.
    - **Turn Off Faucets When Not in Use:** Remember to turn off the faucet while brushing your teeth or lathering your hands with soap.
    - **Report Leaks Promptly:** If you notice any leaks or plumbing issues in your room, please inform our front desk staff immediately. Timely repairs help prevent unnecessary water usage.

5. Communicate with and support your staff:
  - a. Ensure timely communications, especially alerts for evacuation notices
  - b. Clearly define and communicate roles and responsibilities:
    - i. If limited operations, determine who will be onsite and what their roles and responsibilities will be.
    - ii. Communicate with all staff (onsite and offsite).
  - c. Determine if staff will need onsite accommodations and meals
  - d. Cross-training if operating with limited staff
  - e. Support and resources for mental health
  
6. Implement staff supports for those not working:
  - a. Ensure your employees have [registered with the Alberta government](#) so they have access to available supports.
  - b. Issue Records of Employment (ROEs) to your employees so that they can access Employment Insurance and other supports as soon as possible.
  - c. Provide Employment Insurance information for your employees so they can make a claim.
  - d. Provide Emergency Financial Assistance information to your employees.
  
7. Notify the AHLA of your current property status at [wehelhotels@ahla.ca](mailto:wehelhotels@ahla.ca) or 1-888-436-6112
  - a. Request additional information, resources if necessary, from the AHLA
  
8. Be prepared to close and evacuate your property

**QUESTIONS? Call 1-888-436-6112 or email [wehelhotels@ahla.ca](mailto:wehelhotels@ahla.ca)**

## ONGOING OPERATIONS IMPACTED BY SMOKE

Poor air quality may impact your business, even if you are not in the near vicinity of a wildfire. The smoke from a wildfire, or other major fires, may impact your staff and your guests.

1. Monitor weather channels and subscribe to provincial alerts:
  - a. [Alberta Emergency Alert](#)
  - b. [Alberta Wildfire](#)
  - c. [Air Quality Health Index](#)
  - d. [Environment Canada Weather Alerts](#)
2. Review the guidelines from Alberta Occupational Health & Safety for [working in smoky environments](#)
3. Lower the risk of poor air quality in your hotel:
  - a. Close windows and doors
  - b. Clean fresh air intakes and make up air intakes if possible
  - c. Turn on the HVAC and set it to recirculate
  - d. Install the highest quality HEPA filters you can
  - e. Do not use air cleaners that may produce ozone
  - f. Use humidifiers if possible
4. Consider the health of your staff:
  - a. People with breathing difficulties may need to take additional precautions.
  - b. Limit outdoor work
  - c. Provide face masks
5. Consider implications for your guests. Outdoor activities, particularly sporting events, may need to be rescheduled or permanently cancelled.
  - a. Be flexible. You may need to relax your cancellation policy.
6. Remember that guests and staff alike may feel the emotional strain of the current situation.
7. For more information visit <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Alberta/Pages/wildfire-smoke-health.aspx>

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## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

1. TourismWorks Training Platform <http://tourismworks.ca>
2. Alberta Hotel & Lodging Association <http://ahla.ca>
3. Insurance Bureau of Canada <http://www.ibc.ca/ab/disaster/wildfires/>
4. Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo <https://www.rmwb.ca/en/fire-and-emergency-services/fire-prevention-and-safety.aspx>
5. FireSmart <https://www.alberta.ca/firesmart.aspx>
6. Government of Alberta <https://www.alberta.ca/government-emergency-plans>
7. Government of Alberta 211 <https://ab.211.ca/>
8. Alberta Health Services Wildfire <http://www.ahs.ca/wildfire>
9. Alberta Health Services Mental Health Help Line 24/7 at 1-877-303-2642
10. Business Development Bank of Canada <https://www.bdc.ca/en/articles-tools>
11. Business Development Bank of Canada <https://www.bdc.ca/en/articles-tools/business-strategy-planning/manage-business/business-continuity-8-steps-building-plan>
12. Incident Command System Canada <https://www.icscanada.ca/>

### DISCLAIMER

*This information is provided as a guideline only.  
Users should customize this resource based their property's operations and the nature of the situation.*

*The Alberta Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA) disclaims any liability with respect to  
the use of the information or reliance thereon contained in this document.*