

## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM ANNUAL UPDATE

<b>Recommendation</b>			
That the Municipal Emergency Plan 2024 as set out in Attachment 1 of the January 23, 2024, Office of the City Manager report OCM02287, be approved.			
<b>Requested Action</b>		Information only	
<b>ConnectEdmonton's Guiding Principle</b>		<b>ConnectEdmonton Strategic Goals</b>	
<b>CONNECTED</b> This unifies our work to achieve our strategic goals.		<b>Healthy City and Climate Resilience</b>	
<b>City Plan Values</b>	N/A		
<b>City Plan Big City Move(s)</b>	N/A	<b>Relationship to Council's Strategic Priorities</b>	Conditions for service success
<b>Corporate Business Plan</b>	Managing the Corporation		
<b>Council Policy, Program or Project Relationships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bylaw 19091 - Emergency Management Bylaw</li> </ul>		
<b>Related Council Discussions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>March 10, 2020, Citizen Services report CR_8014, Emergency Advisory Committee - Spring 2020 Update</li> <li>July 6, 2021, Citizen Services report CS00677, Emergency Management Governance and Risk Assessment - Audit Recommendations</li> <li>November 1, 2022, Office of the City Manager report OCM01541, Emergency Management Advisory Committee Annual Update - Verbal report</li> <li>May 8, 2023, Office of the City Manager report OCM01913, Emergency Management Agency Update - Verbal report</li> </ul>		

# EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM ANNUAL UPDATE

## Executive Summary

- The effectiveness of the City's Emergency Management Program relies on the relationships between three primary stakeholder groups: the Emergency Advisory Committee, the Emergency Management Agency, and the Office of Emergency Management along with compliance with provincial regulatory requirements.
- In 2024, the City's Emergency Management Program will continue to improve and mature by being prepared to:
  - help Edmontonians during significant emergency events, and
  - help to support Edmonton's regional and national neighbours through environmental emergencies such as wildfires and floods.
- Bylaw 19091 - Emergency Management Bylaw requires the Emergency Advisory Committee to approve the updated Municipal Emergency Plan. The City of Edmonton's Emergency Management Agency reviewed the updated plan.
- The Emergency Advisory Committee is requested to approve the 2024 Municipal Emergency Plan (Attachment 1). For 2024, there is an update to the titles of the Emergency Management Agency within the bulleted list under Section 1.4 on page 3.

## REPORT

An emergency management program includes an overview of the programs and strategies used to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from hazards and threats to the City of Edmonton and its residents, property, environment and economy. The program provides management and coordination of prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery activities for all hazards. It encompasses all internal and external organizations, agencies, departments and individuals having responsibility for these activities.

Complying with the Government of Alberta's *Emergency Management Act* and Local Authority Emergency Management Regulation<sup>1</sup>, there are three City of Edmonton bodies that govern, lead and operationalize the City's Emergency Management Program:

- Emergency Advisory Committee - The Mayor is the Chair and all Councillors present at a meeting are members of the Emergency Advisory Committee. This committee was previously known as the Emergency Management Advisory Committee but was renamed by the Government of Alberta during its 2019 updates to the *Emergency Management Act*. In addition to regular meetings of the Emergency Advisory Committee, the Mayor and the City Manager have the option to call special meetings of the Committee as emergencies arise.
- Emergency Management Agency - The City Manager is the Director of the Agency, which consists of the Deputy Fire Chief of Emergency Management and Planning, the Office of Emergency Management, the Deputy City Managers, the Chief People Officer and City Solicitor, the Chief of Police and the Fire Chief. As set forward in Bylaw 19091 - Emergency Management Bylaw, the City Manager, as Director of the Agency, is required to review and update the City's

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<sup>1</sup> Government of Alberta. Emergency Management.  
<https://www.alberta.ca/emergency-management-legislation>

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Emergency Management Plan on an annual basis and present the document to the Emergency Advisory Committee for approval.

- Office of Emergency Management - The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) creates, implements and maintains an all hazards emergency management program that prepares the City to respond to and recover from major emergencies and disasters. During a major emergency or disaster, the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) operationalizes the Emergency Management Plan. The EOC brings together representatives from the City of Edmonton and the emergency response community to coordinate resources in support of response and recovery activities. There are more than 300 staff (from within Administration, partnering organizations and agencies) that are trained to staff the EOC during a major incident, disaster or emergency.

### 2023 Year in Review

#### Emergency Support Response Team

The Emergency Support Response Team (ESRT) is an OEM operational unit that provides support to people displaced from their homes during an emergency or disaster, addressing immediate needs such as shelter, food and clothing. Depending on the type and severity of the emergency, ESRT may activate reception centres for people displaced from their homes. In addition to provincial wildfire support provided in 2023, ESRT responded to 62 calls for service, supporting 1,603 displaced persons requiring temporary emergency accommodations and 316 people requiring emergency assistance and temporary shelter.

#### Wildfire response

The City of Edmonton received three provincial Requests for Assistance from the Alberta Emergency Management Agency as a result of large out-of-control wildfires as follows:

- Drayton Valley Wildfire - May 5-24, 2023
- Edson Wildfire - June 9-20, 2023
- Yellowknife, Northwest Territories Wildfire - August 18 - September 18, 2023

The following table illustrates the complexity of each activation and the staff redeployments required to support each effort:

Wildfire	Number of Days Activated	Registered Evacuees	Meals Served	Hotel Rooms Arranged	Pets registered	Unique City staff working on-site
Drayton Valley	20	3,100	10,000	500 households	336	293 staff working a total of 8,657 hours
Edson	12	1,780	4,090	79 households	146	236 staff working a total of 5,600 hours
Yellowknife/ NWT	32	7,540	4,100	1,760 households	1,238	366 staff working a total of 14,680 hours

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Each activation is unique. The individual needs of each activation are assessed and supports are provided as required. During these activations, additional supports were provided such as:

- wellness supports from Alberta Health Services including addictions and mental health supports and Indigenous wellness
- cultural and faith supports including specialized meals, hygiene and lodging, prayer spaces and smudging ceremonies
- access to recreation facilities, community attractions and events
- free regional transit
- temporary library cards
- access to additional community facilities such as YMCA and Garrison
- support for re-entry planning

Along with support for community evacuees, consistent, transparent and timely communications are provided to the media and Edmontonians. This ensures Edmonton's residents can provide support when needed and are informed of how the municipality is activating and supporting communities in need.

### Emergency Preparedness Week

Planning and preparations for 65 partner agencies were completed and in place to support the annual "Get Ready In The Park" event which aligns with the Federal Public Safety Canada Emergency Preparedness week each May. Due to operational demands to support wildfire evacuations, this event was cancelled for 2023. Although the event did not proceed, the planning is indicative of the strong and aligned partnerships that exist between agencies across Edmonton and the surrounding region.

### Emergency Operations Centre activation

In addition to the aforementioned provincially requested support, the EOC activated 11 times, all scheduled, to support five events, including:

- Edmonton Police Service Regimental Funeral (one activation)
- National Hockey League (NHL) playoffs (seven activations)
- NHL Heritage Classic (one activation)
- Canada Day celebration (one activation)
- New Years Eve festivities (one activation)

### Internal capacity and partner integration

The Incident Command System (ICS) is the basis for operational incident and event management at the City of Edmonton. OEM follows the training standards of ICS Canada and the Alberta Emergency Management Agency, which is the authority having jurisdiction in Alberta, to oversee ICS training and instructor standards. The OEM delivered five ICS courses in 2023 (three multi-day sessions of ICS200 and two multi-day sessions of ICS300). OEM's training philosophy is to provide interdisciplinary training to share how other agencies are involved in the management of emergency situations. ICS training provides an opportunity for these disciplines - Edmonton Police Service, Edmonton Fire Rescue Services, Alberta Health Services Emergency Medical

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Services, other members of Administration and external partners - to work together during the course exercises.

### Delivering the Emergency Management Program in 2024

The City of Edmonton's approach for emergency management is outlined in the Municipal Emergency Plan. The Plan, in conjunction with the Emergency Management Program, helps make Edmonton resilient by:

- Ensuring the protection and preservation of life, safety, health and property.
- Minimizing the effects of the incident on the city and its inhabitants.
- Minimizing loss or damage to property and the environment.
- Maintaining and restoring essential services.
- Facilitating the earliest possible coordinated response, mitigation and equitable recovery efforts.

Attachment 1 provides the 2024 version of this document for Emergency Advisory Committee approval. The City of Edmonton's Emergency Management Agency reviewed the updated plan. The changes for the 2024 plan are updating the titles of the Emergency Management Agency within the bulleted list under Section 1.4 on Page 3.

#### Risks determined at a corporate level

The City of Edmonton's 2024 emergency management approach considers the evolving risk landscape. The 2024 corporate strategic risk profile presented to the November 30, 2023 Audit Committee through Financial and Corporate Services report FCS01975 Annual Corporate Strategic Risk Profile informs the City's Emergency Management Program. To be prepared for strategic risks related to the Emergency Management Program, the City's Municipal Emergency Plan considers hazards that have the potential to pose major risks to Edmonton as a community or require the City of Edmonton's intervention.

As a particular area of focus, extreme weather risks, including cold weather risk to vulnerable populations and critical infrastructure and hot/dry weather risks which increase the potential for wildfires and heat-related impacts to infrastructure and health, are actively monitored and addressed. The City of Edmonton's monitoring efforts are aided by the ongoing briefings and guidance provided by the Alberta Emergency Management Agency through the Provincial Operations Centre.

### Community Insight

The City of Edmonton's approach recognizes that a successful emergency plan and response is informed by coordinated action between individuals, communities, industry, government and other mutual aid partners. Although there are general standards on how events are managed, stakeholders work together to ensure that the response is appropriate for the particular incident or emergency. Through many activations, the Emergency Management Program has adapted and expanded the approach based on guidance from user experience. Measures to respond to diverse needs have included halal meals, ensuring the safety and security of pets, partnering with

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different organizations to enhance stress management and supporting people with different faiths.

Administration is also mindful that a key stakeholder group is the City employees who operationalize the program. In times of stress and prolonged deployments (e.g., wildfires), Administration determines how psychological health and safety can best be supported through the City of Edmonton's robust health and safety program. As a best practice, the City follows the guidance of ICS whereby emergencies and incidents are managed through operational periods which delineate periods of work and rest/disconnection from the emergency. The City can also draw upon a significant sized and skilled workforce to offset the labour of the core service delivery team and is also mindful of the impacts for the staff that cover those who step away from their regular roles to support the emergency response.

### GBA+

Specifically considering the risk to Edmonton for climate change-related events, Administration understands that the impacts are magnified for specific populations including seniors, youth and children, Indigenous peoples, racialized populations, people with disabilities, people who are pregnant, frontline emergency responders, residents of northern and remote communities, individuals who are socially and economically disadvantaged and people who are immunocompromised and those living with pre-existing illness.<sup>2</sup> Understanding who is most at risk allows the City of Edmonton's approach to be planned appropriately to varying needs.

When displaced due to emergencies, people are also disproportionately impacted, with more significant impacts felt by those who have disabilities, speak primary languages other than English, have limited access to immediate emergency funds and those who have experienced previous trauma. The Emergency Management Program is adaptable and has responded to many different needs and works with partners to provide people with the most appropriate support given an individual or community's situation. The Emergency Management Program adheres and aligns with the Corporate Indigenous Framework and the Corporate Accessibility Guidelines and continues to look for ways to deliver an inclusive and compassionate response to Edmontonians and any other individuals requiring the City's assistance.

### Attachments

1. Municipal Emergency Plan 2024

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<sup>2</sup> Government of Canada. "Who is most impacted by climate change?"  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/climate-change-health/populations-risk.html>