2023

Emergency Management Plan

Municipality of the District of

St. Mary's

Municipality of the District of St. Mary's
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FORWARD

This Municipal Emergency Plan is part of a series of documents that have been created by the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's to allow it to respond and recover effectively from potentially catastrophic events that may befall the municipality from time to time. This document, through its various chapters, appendices and annexes will allow operational personnel and strategic planners the opportunity to develop and implement a coordinated "best-practices" approach that can be utilized to mitigate any potential or actual event occurring within municipal borders.

The plan has been written to allow all municipal business units, agencies and partners to work together under one common goal and following one emergency management command system that will allow it to manage by objectives. The plan may be executed in whole or in part under the discretion of the Chief Administrative Officer with various parts of the plan only being utilized if and when needed. The plan details the overall management style of the municipality during a time of potential or actual crises.

1. INTRODUCTION

Any Municipality is vulnerable to numerous hazards and emergencies. These can be human caused such as transportation accidents, technological failure; infrastructure disruptions that could involve utility and power failures, and natural hazards such as severe weather.

This Municipality of the District of St. Mary's Plan establishes the framework that ensures the Municipality is prepared to deal with any of these emergencies and hazards. It is the way through which resources will be mobilized in the event of an emergency, thereby restoring the Municipality to a state of normalcy. It is designed to ensure that all agencies are fully aware of their respective roles and responsibilities during that emergency.

The Emergency Plan also makes the provisions for the earliest possible coordinated response to an emergency, an understanding of the personnel and resources available to the Municipality and recognition that additional expertise and resources can be called upon if required.

The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) (or designate) is responsible to ensure that all appropriate agencies and personnel are notified and engaged.

During normal operations, routine or minor emergencies are within the response capabilities of the Municipality first response agencies, with minimal need for EMO assistance. A major emergency is any emergency that will likely go beyond normal procedures and require the Emergency Command Center (ECC) to activate at the appropriate level. Due to this, the Emergency Management Plan (EMP) needs to be tested every two years and a full debrief be held within 15 days of an ECC activation.

An emergency may result from an existing danger, or it may be a threat of an impending situation affecting property or the health, safety and welfare of the Municipality. Its nature and magnitude require a controlled and coordinated response by a number of agencies, including governmental, non-profit and private, under the direction of the Municipal Emergency Management Organization.

The onsite response will be managed by the onsite incident commander. When the ECC is activated, its primary function is to coordinate and support operations while at the same time providing essential services to the unaffected areas of the municipality.

2. OBJECTIVES OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

An emergency is a perceived tragedy, being either natural, man-made or technological catastrophe. A comprehensive approach is adopted throughout emergency management planning to ensure that risk reduction and community resilience are developed in unison, while maintaining effective response and recovery capabilities. The comprehensive approach provides an overarching framework for disaster management and disaster response.

The ultimate purpose of emergency management is to:
- **Save Lives** – minimize the impact on people including first responders, as well as those affected by disaster.
- **Protect Property** – ensure that critical infrastructure as well as property of municipalities' residents is sustained.
- **Preserve the Environment** – as is an important priority today, water, air quality, and soil are critical to life.
- **Protect the Economy** – lessen community impact; ensuring that businesses are sustained is essential to the wellbeing of the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's.

For purposes of this plan, municipal emergencies are defined as situations or the threat of impending situations abnormally affecting property, health and or safety of citizens, the natural environment, local economy, and the general welfare of St. Mary's communities, which by their very nature or magnitude require a controlled and coordinated response by the public and/or private sectors, under the direction of the responsible elected and municipal officials.

These emergencies are distinct from routine operations carried out by municipal agencies (such as firefighting, public works services, policing, and medical emergencies). Emergency management consists of organized programs and activities to deal with actual or potential emergencies or disasters.

In establishing and maintaining an EMO Plan, the Emergency Management Planning Committee addresses the following six objectives based on a risk management approach:

Objective 1 – Assess Risks
The objective of assessing risks through the Hazard Identification and Risk Analysis (HIRA) process helps set priorities, suggests protective measures, and ensures the greatest effort is devoted to the greatest need. A central task is to carry-out a vulnerability analysis to identify the vulnerable population that may require priority actions.

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management, and ensures the greatest effort is devoted to the greatest need. A central task is to carry-out a vulnerability analysis to identify the vulnerable population that may require priority actions. The next step is to develop hazard-specific plans.

In order to determine what Municipal resources are critical to the provision of essential Municipal services, it is necessary to conduct a basic Business Impact Analysis (BIA) (See ***Appendix B- Business Impact Analysis***) In the event a piece of infrastructure required for delivery of critical Municipal services is lost due to an emergency the BIA will assist in determining Municipal response.

Objective 2 - Mitigate Risks

Mitigation measures are designed to prevent or reduce the impact of emergencies. Mitigation includes, but is not limited to, building codes, land use management, public education, and insurance incentives. These fall generally under responsibilities of various legislative bodies and public safety agencies. The Emergency Management Plan plays an important role in drawing attention to potential hazards and identifying needed change. Disastrous events like floods and weather extremes that cannot be prevented require effort at mitigation, response, and recovery phases.

Objective 3 - Plan for Response

Response includes those action taken immediately before, during and after an emergency event, the purpose of saving lives, preventing further impact to the affected area, and protecting property and the environment. In addition to developing the emergency plans there are several other planning tasks. These are: identification of vulnerable populations, identifying and designating emergency support facilities. Planning for response includes establishing emergency coordination centres, identifying resources, preparing to issue warnings, and planning for evacuation. Primary measures are the development of emergency plans and resource inventories.

Objective 4 - Plan for Recovery

Recovery plans are designed to help repair and restore communities and their environments to pre-emergency condition. Actions may include the re-introduction of displaced persons, economic impact estimates, counselling, financial assistance programs, temporary housing, and health and safety information. The goal of municipal service recovery phase is to reduce the direct impact to residents by restoring critical municipal services.

Objective 5 - Ensure Preparedness

Preparedness actions ensure that individuals and both public and private agencies will be ready to react effectively in an emergency. Primary measures include gathering equipment required to provide site

support, individual and collective training, and exercising members of the Emergency Management Committee, response agencies and stakeholders. Actions are wide-ranging with emphasis on coordination and training.

Objective 6 - Evaluate and Renew the Program

This calls for the Emergency Management Committee to periodically evaluate the entire Emergency Management Program, by measuring the performance of selected actions and the achievement of desired results. Emergency plans, revisions, additions, etc. must be approved by NS EMO and Municipal Council.

3. EMERGENCY PLAN FRAMEWORK

Scope

The aim of the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's Emergency Plan is to provide the framework within which extraordinary measures can be taken to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the residents, prevent or minimize property damage or loss and protect the environment and minimize economic disruption when faced with an emergency.

For this Plan to be effective, it is necessary for staff to take advantage of emergency management training courses to understand the Incident Command System (ICS) and the roles and responsibilities of staff working in the Emergency Coordination Center. ICS training throughout the Municipality will be coordinated by the Emergency Management Coordinator.

Purpose

The plan unifies the efforts of Municipal resources for a comprehensive approach in responding to and reducing the impacts of an emergency. It is intended to increase the emergency response capacity of the municipality by establishing a plan of action to efficiently and effectively deploy all required resources.

Authority

The Emergency Plan which contains the duties and responsibilities of the Municipality Emergency Management Organization is issued under the authority of the Council in accordance with the Nova Scotia *Emergency Management Act (**Appendix C- NS Emergency Management Act)* as well as the municipal *Emergency Management By-Law (**Appendix D- Emergency Management By-Law).**

In the event of an emergency, the Emergency Coordination Centre level of activation is determined and staffed as needed. This is determined by the nature of the emergency. Designated officials should identify alternate(s) to fill their role if they are unavailable during an emergency.

The authority for making policy decisions during an emergency situation rests with the Mayor/Council. Strategic and operational decisions are made by the CAO or designate.

Figure 1: *Emergency Plan Chain of Command*

ICS Organization of the Municipal ECC

4. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

The Municipality of the District of St. Mary's has adopted the Incident Command System (ICS) Canada model for managing and coordinating emergency response and recovery efforts. This is the recommended standard for emergency response and recovery for all levels of government in Canada.

The Incident Command System (ICS) is a flexible, standardized system, a common approach, and shared understanding of functions and procedures enable stakeholders to work together more effectively. In addition, the model is applicable to any incident, regardless of the scope, scale, or complexity.

As the complexity of an emergency increases, so will the need for multi-agency support from within the Municipality. The Municipality may call upon the Provincial Emergency Management Office (NS EMO) to provide or acquire additional resources necessary. Each agency is responsible for the overall operation of their emergency response.

Day-to-day functions that do not contribute directly to the operations may be suspended for the duration of the emergency. Efforts that would normally be required of those functions will be redirected to assist in accomplishing the objectives set in the incident action plan (IAP) at the site or the Action Plan at the ECC.

Onsite response will be managed by the onsite Incident Commander. When activated the IC will communicate with the ECC to provide Situation Reports, Resources needs, prognosis, etc.

The CAO or designate has the authority to activate the ECC and when the ECC is activated, its primary function is to coordinate and support operations while continuing essential services to unaffected areas of the municipality. Once immediate response missions and lifesaving activities conclude, emergency response teams are demobilized, and the emphasis shifts from response to recovery operations which is an ECC responsibility.

See **Appendix E- ICS Catalogue of Forms**.

5. MUNICIPAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The NS Emergency Management Act requires each municipality to appoint an Emergency Management Advisory Committee. This committee can either be a sub-committee of council or the municipality may choose to have a Committee of the Whole function as the Emergency Advisory Committee.

Emergency Management Advisory Committee/ Committee of the Whole

The following is a list actions that the elected officials are responsible for during the emergency:
• Assist with approved messaging to their constituents.
• Declare/cancel declarations of States of Local Emergency.
• Liaison with elected officials of other governments.
• Approve emergency policy changes.
• Approves Municipal Emergency Plans/Revisions
• Regularly meets to discuss Emergency Management issues.
• Approve extraordinary expenses.

As per the Nova Scotia Emergency Management Act and municipal Emergency Management Bylaw the Emergency Management Advisory Committee represents the local authority which is made up of elected members of Council.

Emergency Management Planning Committee (EMPC):

The Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee is comprised of municipal representation and representatives from various response agencies, assisting agencies and supporting agencies. The Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee may consist of:
- Municipal staff including the CAO, EMC, Director of PW, Director of Finance, Municipal Clerk
- Fire Services, EHS, RCMP
- EMONS
- Provincial agencies as required, (TIR, DCS, Red Cross, School Board etc.…)
- Hospital Administration
- Special Care Rep
- DNR
- Anybody else who might serve a useful purpose in the preparation or implementation of the plan.

Depending on the nature of the emergency, external agencies that are not normally a part of the EMPC, may be asked to send a representative to join the committee to assist in coordinating the response. Representatives from other organizations or agencies who may become committee members or attend specific meetings include:
- Provincial agencies
- Utilities
- Community Groups
- Volunteer Organizations
- Neighboring jurisdictions
- Business and Industry
- Mutual aid partners
- Home Care Representative
- Emergency Social Services

Duties performed by the Emergency Management Planning Committee include:
- Assist in Emergency Plan development and revisions based on their agency's role;
- Assisting with the Hazard Vulnerability Assessment;
- Provide information and expertise relating to the occurrence and mitigation of potential emergencies and the impact of emergencies in the Municipality;
- Identifying resources available for emergency response;
- Contribute to testing components of the EMO Plan through the development and participation in emergency exercises;
- Identifying resources available for emergency response;
- Communicating role in an emergency and identifying limitations;
- Provide contact information for personnel within their agency;

Note: Members of the Emergency Management Planning Committee may also be called to take a role in the ECC when activated to assist with the management of the incident/emergency.

6. HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND RISK ANALYSIS

Hazard analysis is used to identify situations that have potential for disrupting the Municipality, causing casualties or destroying public and private property. Once the impacts have been assessed, priorities for planning are identified. Effective emergency plans offer mitigation and response solutions to the impacts identified during hazard assessment. Hazard analysis determines what might occur, how often it is likely to occur and how vulnerable the Municipality is to the hazard. Conducting the HIRA process will identify those hazards that are Municipality specific and require a specific action plan.

Existing Hazards should be reviewed to identify any changes that may have occurred since last reviewed. Some possible changes within or near the Municipality that could cause hazard analysis information to change over time include:
• New mitigation measures (eg., stronger building codes, addition of roof or foundation braces);
• The opening or closing of facilities or structures that pose potential hazards (eg., hazardous materials facilities and transport routes).
• Local development activities or climate changes;
• Mass Gatherings or Civil threats.

There may be other long-term changes to investigate as well. These changes, such as climatic changes in average temperature or rainfall/snowfall amounts, are harder to track but could be very important to the hazard analysis. The hazards identified in the Hazard Risk Vulnerability Assessment as having the greatest potential for disrupting municipalities are *Severe Weather Events, Flooding, and Wildfires*.

7. DECLARATION OF STATE OF LOCAL EMERGENCY

The Warden and Council may declare a state of local emergency in the Municipality or in any part thereof and may take such action and make such orders that they consider necessary. The Mayor and Council may terminate a declaration of a State of Local Emergency. The Warden shall ensure that the Minister responsible for EMONS is notified of a declaration of a state of local emergency. In addition, the media and the public shall be notified of the declaration as soon as possible.

The declaration of a State of Local Emergency is at the discretion of Municipal Council. It is the responsibility of the Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) to maintain and update this Plan on an annual basis. The Emergency Management Advisory Committee (EMAC), comprised of the Warden/Mayors (or their designate) and one member of Council of each participating municipality are

responsible to review and approve this Plan upon any changes being made by the EMC and REMPC.

Attached is **Form 1- Declaration of a State of Local Emergency by Council** and **Form 2- Declaration of a State of Local Emergency by the Warden.** A copy of the declaration must immediately be sent to the Minister via the Emergency Management Office Fax # (902) 424-5376 or scanned and sent to the PCC@novascotia.ca

8. EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

Normal communications and reporting channels will be used to the maximum practical extent possible. Emergency communications systems should be obtained and kept fully operational and are to be used in the event that commercial communications systems are disrupted, saturated, or otherwise unavailable.

Upon implementation of the Emergency Management Plan, it will be important to ensure that communications are established between the emergency site and the Municipal EMO and Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC). At all times open lines of communication are to be established with internal and external agencies. The type and severity of the crisis will determine which stakeholder audiences are involved. When the ECC is activated Liaison Officer will operate the TMR2 and VHF radios. Their duties include:

- Establish communications with the site.
- Monitor all nets as required.
- Establish communications with neighboring Municipalities as necessary.
- Pass all messages to the appropriate ECC members.
- Log all messages to and from the ECC.

The Communications Coordinator or designate is responsible for all communications activities during operation of the ECC. (Refer to **Appendix F: Municipal Emergency Communications Plan**)

9. EMERGENCY COORDINATION CENTRES (ECC)

The response to a major emergency or disaster within the District of St. Mary's will be coordinated by the District of St. Mary's EMO Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC). The ECC coordinates the emergency response by bringing together representatives from the EMO municipal departments and other partner agencies to strategically coordinate resources in support of on-scene operations and activities. It manages and processes information about the emergency, identifies critical needs and establishes response priorities. In addition, the ECC provides information to the public concerning the emergency.

It is the responsibility of any agency providing support to the ECC to ensure that the individual representing that agency has the authority to make decisions for the agency.

The ECC is responsible for making operational decisions required to coordinate an efficient response. The ECC is activated and staffed to a level that matches the needs of the incident – the size and composition of the ECC may vary according to the circumstances.

Should the requirement arise to activate the District of St. Mary's EMO Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC), see **Schedule B- ECC Locations**.

The purpose of the ECC is to provide support for the Incident Commander by obtaining resources, maintaining up-to date information, coordinating activities and providing the public with information. The ECC also coordinates related activities that are beyond the scope of the Incident Commander, such as media relations and large-scale evacuations.

The ECC is considered to be activated when:
- The ECC manager has assumed leadership of the ECC and declares the ECC is activated/open
- ECC roles are being performed, and/or
- ECC activation is communicated to the Incident Commander.

Incident Command System (ICS) Structure & Staff in the ECC

The Incident Command System (ICS) assists the ECC Manager (CAO or designate) in determining the best staffing levels for the incident. Every incident has certain major management activities or actions that must be performed. Even if the incident is very small, and only one or two people are involved, these activities will still always apply to some degree. The following five primary management functions are the foundation upon which the ECC's organizational structure is based:

Command Staff:

Responsible for overall emergency policy and coordination through the joint effort of government agencies and private organizations. Sets objectives and priorities.

- **Information Officer:** Serves as the point of contact for the media or other organizations seeking information directly from the incident or event. There should only be one information officer. Others will serve as assistants.
- **Liaison Officer:** On larger incidents or events representatives from co-operating or assisting agencies may be assigned to the incident to coordinate their agency's involvement. The liaison officer serves as their primary contact. This position is usually the role of the EMC or alternate.
- **Safety/Risk Officer:** Monitors safety conditions and develops measures for ensuring safety of all assigned personnel. Will correct unsafe situations via chain of command. May also stop activity if personnel are in imminent danger.

General Staff:

- **Operations:** Coordinate the tactical response to carry out the tactical objectives, organization, and directs all resources of all field operations in accordance with the Incident Action Plan.

- **Planning:** Collect, evaluate, document, and use information about the incident and the status of resources. Provide status information to the Command, Operations and Logistics and forecast resource needs during the emergency.
- **Logistics:** Responsible for all the services and support needs of an incident, including obtaining and maintaining essential personnel, facilities, equipment, and supplies.
- **Finance/Admin:** Monitors all financial and cost analysis aspects of the emergency. Document costs, procurement, time recording and assist in the management of cost reimbursement.

ECC Principal Tasks

The ECC is designated for the gathering and dissemination of information plus emergency/disaster analysis. The ECC will continue to collect, evaluate and have information on display about the incident, to help better understand the current situation to build situation awareness that will help to manage the local emergency.

It is important for all information to be to be shared immediately as it is received. This will include clear, concise and frequent communication. To achieve this, it requires the priority of the maximum use of available technology and human resources. The ECC manager, EMC and section chiefs will identify the current objectives/priorities required to assist in the development of the action plans. As members of the ECC staff assemble in the Emergency Coordination Centre they will receive a situational briefing and be given their tasks to help achieve the objectives/priorities for the current plan.

The ECC must identify and use available resources, especially human and financial resources. This is why it is necessary to designate essential personnel, equipment, materials and supplies in advance.

The ECC has several principal tasks to perform, including (but not limited to):

a) Provide support to the Incident Command Post(s). The ECC receives instructions from the Incident Command Post (ICP) concerning what support is required (such as equipment, information, media relations, coordination with external agencies) and how to provide it (such as access/exit routes, schedules, etc.) The ECC obtains the necessary support and coordinates its provision to the ICP's staging area. These resources may originate from:
   - municipal resources;
   - the community level;
   - mutual aid sources; or
   - provincial or federal resources.

b) Manage the emergency response for the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's. Some emergency response operations may be required across the entire municipality to mitigate threats from an emergency.

c) Provide information to the public on the emergency and the Municipalities response. The public needs timely information so it can protect itself, and in some cases, play a part in emergency operations, and in order to minimize fear and anxiety. For these reasons, the emergency

operations centre prepares and disseminates information.

d) Coordinate with municipal services. In general, the Emergency Coordination Centre needs to coordinate its activities with municipal services and other organizations affected by the emergency. It does so by establishing links to the following locations:

- municipal office;
- service dispatch centres (police, fire, public works, etc.)
- emergency operations centres (those at hospitals, school boards, universities/colleges, provincial establishments; and
- emergency operating locations (comfort, reception centres)

e) Ensure continued operations in unaffected areas of the Municipality. The ECC must ensure that there is no interruption in the provision of emergency services (such as fire protection) and essential services (i.e., hospital, water, sewer, electricity, waste management, telephone, etc.) in unaffected areas outside the incident site. In cases where the municipality is not responsible for these services, the ECC works with the appropriate alternative organization(s).

10. ECC ACTIVATION AND NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

When First Response Agencies are faced with an incident or emergency that requires support from the municipality, other levels of government, or require resources outside of their ability, they shall contact the EMC. Upon notification of an imminent or actual emergency, the EMC will initiate the notification of the CAO. A discussion with the CAO will determine if the ECC will activate and to which level.

The CAO or designate, has the authority to activate the ECC and when the ECC is activated, its primary function is to coordinate and support operations while continuing essential services to unaffected areas of the municipality. If activation is required, the EMC will notify the personnel by using the list found in *Schedule C- ECC Contact List* and advise them of the incident and their requirement to convene at the ECC.

Once immediate response missions and lifesaving activities conclude, emergency response teams are demobilized, and the emphasis shifts from response to recovery operations which is an ECC responsibility.

The Public in the Municipality may be notified and given direction by, but not limited, to the following means as additionally laid out in *Appendix F- Municipal Emergency Communications Plan*:
- First responders advising those at risk in the immediate proximity of the emergency
- Public Information Officer
- Local radio station or Social Media
- Municipal Voyent Alert System or provincial Alert Ready (Criteria must be met)

Activation Levels

The level of ECC activation is determined by the magnitude and scope of the event. The size and composition of the ECC may vary according to the requirements of the particular circumstances. It is the responsibility of the ECC Manager to determine the level of activation that is required.

The ECC will be activated at one of three emergency activation levels (Monitoring, Partial or Full). On all levels of activation, the ECC is staffed by ECC manager (CAO or designate), EMC and Information Officer. Once the level of activation required has been determined, only those ECC functions and positions required to meet current response objectives are brought in. If unsure of which level to activate, the ECC is activated to the higher level since it is easier to scale back staffing than it is to ramp up.

Level 1 – Monitoring (Key Personnel only)	
o Small incident, One site o Several agencies involved o Potential threat (e.g., flood or severe storm impending) o Some agency or coordination and/or support required o ECC set-up optional o NS EMO notified by EMC	o ECC Manager o Emergency Management Coordinator o Information Officer o Liaison Officer o Operations Section Chief

Level 2- Partial Activation (Key Personnel and Personnel from Responding Agencies)	
o Moderate incident, Two or more sites o Several agencies involved o Major scheduled event(s) (e.g., conference or sporting events) o Limited evacuations o Some Resources/support required o ECC set-up o NS EMO notified by EMC	o ECC Manager o Emergency Management Coordinator o Information Officer o Liaison Officer o Section Chiefs (as required) o Limited activation of other ECC staff (as required) o NS EMO Provincial Coordination Centre partially activated

Level 3- Full Activation (All Personnel)	
o Major incident, Multiple sites o Regional disaster o Multiple agencies involved o Extensive evacuations o Resources/support required o ECC set-up o Emergency Management Advisory Committee notified o NS EMO notified by EMC	o ECC Manager o Emergency Management Coordinator o NS EMO Provincial Coordination Centre activated.

11. EMERGENCY SITE(S)

The CAO may appoint an Incident Commander (IC) if one is not in place. The IC may be from the first response agency having the predominant role or may be an individual particularly suited to coordinate the diverse activities being undertaken. The role of the IC is to:

- Establish a site command post.
- Establish overall priorities for the on-site response.
- Establish the site perimeter and arrange for security.
- Establish objectives and Manage Strategies and Tactics through assigned staff.
- Manage resources.
- Determine Evacuation needs.
- Provide situational updates to the ECC.
- Set and approve the overall objectives at the emergency site.
- Provide media information.
- Ensure responder safety.

Onsite response will be managed by the onsite Incident Commander. The Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) will collect information from Incident Commanders and responding agencies, analyze and disseminate it to all members of the Emergency Management Planning Committee (EMPC) after consultation with the ECC Manager (ECCM) - (Municipal CAO or designate). Responding agencies on-site will:

- Cooperate with the IC.
- Provide information on response activities, damage and casualties, and resource needs to the IC.
- Continue to receive functional direction from their parent organization.
- Provide a tactical response in support of the operation objectives.

12. EVACUATION

The evacuation function describes how the public would be evacuated out of areas affected by an emergency that are deemed to be too hazardous for people to stay in place. Evacuation methods will be dependent on the incident and is the responsibility of the Incident Commander Onsite.

A key component of the evacuation process is to look after the evacuees once they are evacuated and this is the responsibility of the municipality. This function shall be performed by the EMC unless the ECC is activated, at which time it will be organized and managed by the ECC.

There are two types of evacuations, Volunteer and Mandatory Evacuation.

- <u>Volunteer Evacuation</u> occurs when it is recommended to evacuate within a certain perimeter usually a building or block until the initial situation is contained.

- <u>Mandatory Evacuation</u> takes place when it is determined by the Site Incident Command Team that there is an absolute need to evacuate an area, usually on a large scale, possibly for a long period of time (i.e., for more than 24 hours).

Evacuation may result in a tremendous psychological effect on those persons directly affected. Adequate communication with people involved is essential and shall include; explaining that an evacuation is pending, what they shall be required to do and when they should be required to react if an evacuation is issued. A decision to evacuate should only be made when absolutely necessary.

First response agencies alone cannot be expected to deal with a large-scale evacuation and relocation of residents. An effective response will require participation and cooperation between municipal/Town services, provincial resources and volunteer services such as ground search and rescue and humanitarian organizations. See **Appendix G - Municipal Evacuation Plan.**

Figure 3- *Evacuation Consideration Chart*
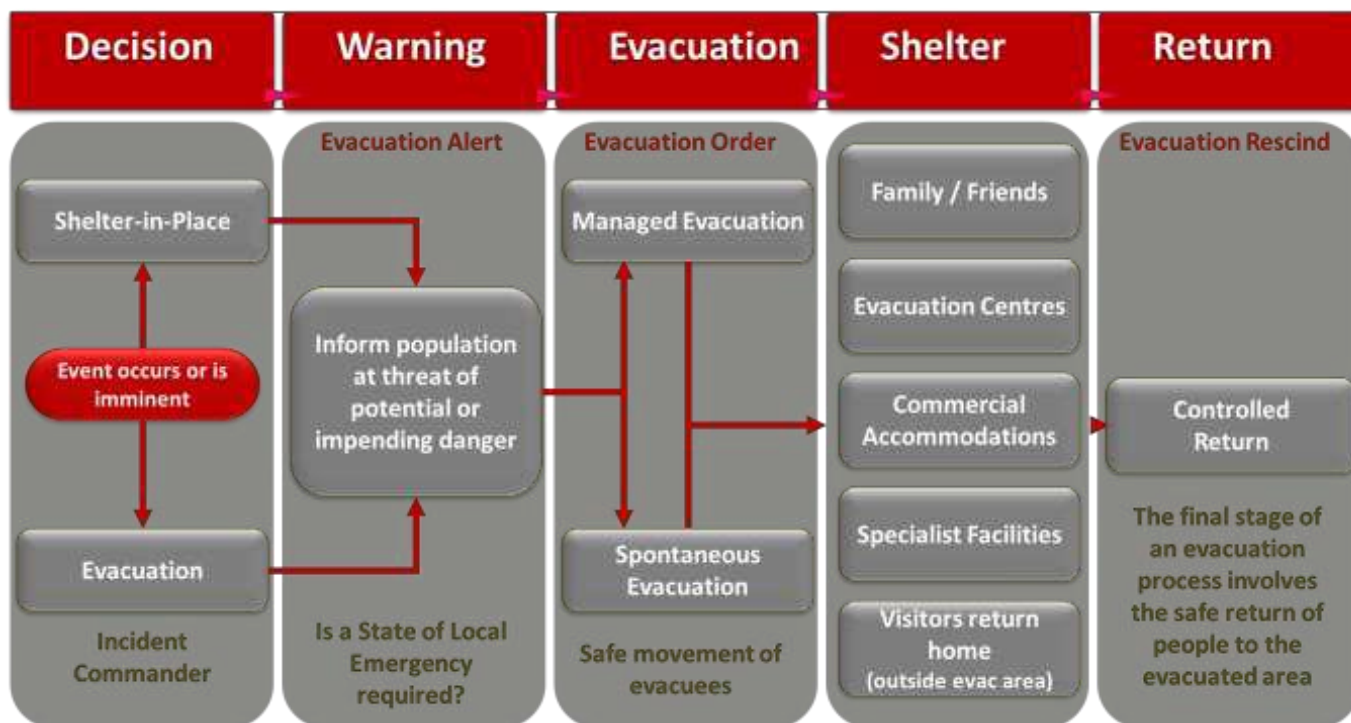
13. VOLUNTEERS

A municipal staff person should be appointed as a Volunteer Coordinator by the CAO. This operational support function provides guidance on the Municipality's role in the management of volunteers. Emergency Management Officials are aware of the benefits and have adopted the concept that the Municipality should be prepared to accept assistance by the public as a matter of formal agreement, making volunteers an important part of the Emergency Plan. See *Form 5- Volunteer Registration Form*. It is important that this form is used whenever there are volunteers during emergency situations as it aids in keeping track of where volunteers are needed and for liability purposes.

Emergency Shelter/Reception Centre

A temporary location where people effected by an emergency can be temporarily located to keep them safe until a more suitable location can be arranged or until they can return to their residence if safe to do so. They are usually a safe location close to the incident which can be accessed in the event of a more formal evacuation.

See *Schedule D-Approved Facilities for Emergency Shelters/Reception Centres* for a list of approved facilities that can be used for Emergency Shelters / Reception Centres.

Comfort Centre

A location in which people affected by an emergency can be located to when overnight accommodations are **not** required. The site would be suitable to stay warm or cool, provide light meals, charging stations, washrooms, etc. This is also a suitable location to communicate information to residents. A Comfort Centre is usually managed by community groups or the municipality.

A list of approved facilities that can be used for Comfort Centres and Shelters can be found in *Schedule E- Approved Facilities for Comfort Centres under the Appendix H-Comfort Center Policy.*

Shelter

A location when overnight accommodations are required as people affected by an emergency are unable to return home for a significant amount of time. Shelters are in place until a more permanent location can be found. Shelters are usually managed by the NS Dept. of Communities in conjunction with the Red Cross.

A list of approved facilities that can be used for Comfort Centres and Shelters can be found in *Schedule F- Approved Facilities for Shelters.*

14. ECC RESPONSE AND RECOVERY OPERATIONS

The District of St. Mary's EMO will be the local government program that takes actions to repair or restore conditions to an acceptable level after a disaster impacts an area or region. This includes short-term and long-term measures to coordinate all activities, such as the return of evacuees, trauma counselling, clean-up, reconstruction, economic impact studies and emergency financial assistance. Recovery efforts will be conducted with a view towards disaster risk reduction and forward-looking recovery measures, to the Municipality not only to recover from recent disaster events, but also to rebuild better conditions than in the past, in order to overcome past vulnerabilities.

Psychosocial Response and Recovery

This function outlines the process specifically designed to prevent or mitigate the development of post-traumatic stress among emergency services professionals. Most first response agencies will have a program in place for their responders. It is Important that the ECC recognize this reality and ensure staff and volunteers can take advantage of similar programs.

Psychosocial response and recovery represent and integrated "system" of interventions which is designed to prevent and/or mitigate the adverse psychological reactions that so often accompany emergency services, public safety, and disaster response functions. These interventions are especially directed towards the mitigation of post-traumatic stress reactions.

Recovery

Disaster recovery refers to actions taken to repair or restore conditions to an acceptable level through measures taken after a disaster impacts a Municipality. This includes short term and long-term measures such as the return of evacuees, trauma counselling, clean-up, reconstruction, economic impact studies and emergency financial assistance. Recovery efforts should be conducted with a view towards disaster risk reduction and forward-looking recovery measures allow communities not only to recover from recent disaster events, but also to build back better in order to help overcome past vulnerabilities.

Demobilizing

When the emergency has ended the centralized coordination may no longer be required. At this time, responsibilities are transferred back to the individual agencies. A period of recovery begins and is a process that draws upon existing resources.

An after-action review process is a critical part of the iterative cycle of emergency management and

serves to provide a quality improvement process relating to emergency management activities. Debriefings will be conducted after each emergency (Level 1, 2, or 3) or exercise to determine the effectiveness of the St. Mary's Emergency Management Plan. Debriefings are to be conducted as per ***Appendix I- Incident Debriefing Plan*** in a constructive, open-minded, and confidential manner in which blame is not affixed to any individuals or organizations.

Costs Reimbursement

Extraordinary costs incurred in responding to and recovering from a natural disaster of civil emergency may be reimbursed through the Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangement (DFAA). Special tracking of activities, personnel and expenses, and their associated limits, must be done in order to ensure all eligible expenses are captured and documented in order to maximize the reimbursement of local government expenses.

It is essential that coordination with DFAA be initiated from the onset of the emergency. DFAA can provide the forms and procedures necessary to capture and report all required information and substantiating documentation. (Eligible expenses. See DFAA for info)

15. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TRAINING & EXERCISES

To support the staff roles during an emergency as identified in this plan, the EMC or Alternate EMC will coordinate a training and exercise schedule. Training and Exercises are coordinated with NS EMO as they provide trainers and assist in coordinating the training and exercises.

Training and Cross Training

Training is a continual process that is required to be delivered in a manner that introduces and familiarizes personnel with their roles in the event of an emergency or disaster. All employees of the Municipality who may work in the ECC should be trained in the principles and use of the Incident Command System (ICS) Canada standards.

There are many reasons why training and cross-training are required, including:
- Some primary staff may be injured or may not be available.
- Routes to the ECC may be disrupted, prohibiting primary staff from reaching the facility.

Essential functions are essential and must continue, even with reduced staffing. All personnel must be trained for their jobs in the ECC. As a contingency, specific staff should be cross-trained to ensure that ECC operations can continue with a smaller number of staff than originally planned. It is the responsibility of the EMC or Alternate EMC to ensure all staff involved with emergency management

maintain established training standards. Internal records should be maintained for all staff to benchmark each requirement being met including the date, location, and proof of completion.

For required training for EMO personnel see **Schedule G- Required Training for Emergency Management Personnel**.

Exercises

Exercises are controlled, objective-based activities used to practice, evaluate or test plans, procedures or resources. During exercises it is a time that team building can occur and staff learn and become more comfortable in their roles in the ECC. The results and information from the exercise will let the organization know if additional training and supports are needed. Exercises provide opportunity to assess the operational readiness of the organization and the effectiveness of the plan.

Exercises are an important part of the planning and response process as they are useful to:
• Evaluate plans;
• Identify issues;
• Promote and maintain awareness of EM Plan;
• Increase familiarity with the EM plan;
• Demonstration capability;
• Validate training;
• Identify gaps; and
• Evaluate equipment, resources, techniques, and processes.

Exercise Types

Exercises will range from small scale 1-2 hour activities to large all day events. There are two type of exercises, *Discussion-Based and Operational-Based.*

Discussion-Based exercises are those that familiarize participants with current plans, policies, agreements and procedures. This many also be a time to develop new plans, policies, agreements and procedures. Discussion based exercises will include:

• Seminar – A seminar is an informal discussion, designed to orient participants to new or updated plans, policies, or procedures (ex. A seminar to review a new Evacuation Standard Operating Procedure).

• Workshops – A workshop is similar to a seminar, but the goal of a workshop is to build specific components, such as a draft plans or policy (ex. Training and Exercise Plan workshop is used to develop a Multi-year Training and Exercise Plan).

- Table Top Exercise (TTX) – A Table top exercise is where participants will be presented with a scenario in an informal setting. Participants will be asked to use their training and knowledge of their roles and the plan to describe how they would respond to the scenario. Table tops can be used to assess plans, policies and procedures. (ex., A Table Top Exercise may be used to prepared for a Hurricane or Wildfire)

Operational-Based exercises validate plans, policies, agreements and procedures, clarify roles and responsibilities, and identify resource gaps in an operational environment. Operational based exercises will include:

- Functional Exercise – A functional exercise is where an actual incident is staged and simulation is used to generate insert from the outside world. This type of exercise is similar to a full-scale exercise except it involves only one site and is less complex. A functional exercise does not involve any: boots on the ground" (i.e., first responders or emergency officials responding to an incident in real time)

- Full-Scale Exercise – This type of exercise would include the complete emergency management organization. An actual incident is staged and the complete organization is mobilized to manage it. A simulation centre is used to generate injects from the outside world involving multiple sites. Community resources are typically invited to participate in the exercise simulation. A full-scale exercise does involve multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional, multi-discipline exercise involving functional (ex. Emergency Coordination Centre, etc.) and "boots on the ground" (i.e., first responders or emergency officials responding to an incident in real time)

16. PLAN ADMINISTRATION & REVIEW

The Municipality of the District of St. Mary's Emergency Management Organization Plan will be maintained by the Emergency Management Planning Committee (EMPC) and the Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC). Development of contingency plans and procedures, training opportunities, and exercises are important to achieve and maintain a high state of readiness.

The District of St. Mary's EMO Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) is responsible for coordinating all reviews of the Emergency Management Organization Plan. After any emergency in which the ECC is activated, an operational debrief will occur within 15 days of the event and plan re-assessment conducted shortly thereafter. The plan is to be reviewed bi-annually or when exercises or emergencies identify gaps or improvements or at the discretion of Council.

Revisions

Minor revisions that are considered minor in nature such as spelling, grammar, resource contact information, formatting and typos will be made as required by the EMC and presented to the CAO for approval.

Major revisions that are considered major in nature such as a section or a large portion of the plan is updated and/or revised, re-organization of information within the document, the addition of sections, the elimination of content, or changes in terminology will be presented to Emergency Management Planning Committee for review and recommendation to Municipal Council for approval.

Plan Distribution

Copies of the Municipality Emergency Plan will be available:

- At the St. Mary's Municipal Office, 8296 Highway 7, Sherbrooke
- On the municipal website
- To all active Volunteer Fire Departments that service the Municipality
- All members of the Emergency Management Planning Committee

Date of Council Meeting of Plan Approval   February 16, 2023

Schedule A
"Plan Amendments"

Date of Review	Section(s) Updated	Council Approval Date
	Adoption of Plan	February 16, 2023

Schedule B
"ECC Locations"

Schedule C
"ECC Contact List"

Schedule D
"Approved Facilities for Emergency Shelters / Reception Centres"

Schedule E
"Approved Facilities for Comfort Centres"

Schedule F
"Approved Facilities for Shelters"

Schedule G
"Required Training for Emergency Management Personnel"

Schedule H
"Contact List"

Appendix A
"Hazard Identification & Risk Analysis"

Appendix B
"Business Impact Analysis"

Appendix C
"Emergency Management Act"

Nova Scotia Emergency Management Act

Appendix D
"Municipal Emergency Measures By-Law"

Municipal Emergency Measures By-Law

Appendix E
"ICS Catalogue of Forms"

Incident Command System ICS Forms Catalogue

Appendix F
"Municipal Emergency Communications Plan"

Appendix G
"Incident Debriefing Plan"

Appendix H
"Evacuation Plan"

Appendix I
"Comfort Center Policy"

Appendix J
"Incident Debriefing Plan"

Form 1
"Declaration of State of Local Emergency by Council"

Declaration of State of Local Emergency by Council

Form 2
"Declaration of Local State of Emergency by the Warden"

Declaration of Local State of Emergency by the Warden

Form 3
"Renewal of State of Local Emergency"

Renewal of State of Local Emergency

Form 4
"Termination of State of Local Emergency"

Termination of State of Local Emergency

Form 5
"Volunteer Registration"