

## 2021 Wildfire Season

### **What is an Evacuation Alert?**

An Evacuation Alert means you should be ready to leave your residence on short notice.

### **What is an Evacuation Order?**

An Evacuation Order means you should leave your residence immediately.

### **What is a Tactical Evacuation?**

A Tactical Evacuation requires immediate evacuation and action with no warning or preparation.

### **What is a State of Local Emergency (SOLE)?**

Declaring a State of Local Emergency enables local authorities to exercise emergency powers as listed in the [Emergency Program Act](#). The emergency powers can, but are not limited to, order of evacuation of residents from their homes, prohibition of travel, and the acquirement or use any land or personal property considered necessary to prevent, respond to or alleviate the effects of an emergency or disaster within that local authority's jurisdiction.

### **I've been placed on an Evacuation Alert. What do I do?**

- Locate all family members and designate a meeting area outside the evacuation area, should an Evacuation Order be called while separated.
- Pack essential items such as government issued ID, medications, eyeglasses, valuable papers (e.g. insurance, credit, and mortgage information), immediate care needs for dependents and, if time and space permits, keepsakes for quick departure.
- Ensure you have a means of communication and important phone numbers.
- Prepare to move persons with disabilities, children and/or neighbours, if assistance is needed.
- Prepare to take pets and their food with you and move livestock to a safe area (if possible).
- Arrange transportation for all your household members. Fill the gas tanks of personal vehicles.
- Arrange accommodation for all members of the residence, if possible. If you have an RV – we consider utilizing it.
- You do not need to evacuate unless an Evacuation Order is issued. Early Evacuation prior to an Order being placed will not be eligible for Emergency Support Services. Persons with disabilities can receive assistance for early evacuation if required. Contact your local jurisdiction for details.
- Monitor the news, radio and online sources for information on evacuation orders and location of Reception Centres.

## **I've been placed on an Evacuation Order. What do I do?**

You must leave **IMMEDIATELY**.

- Shut off all propane, gas and electric appliances (other than refrigerators and freezers). Your natural gas and electricity will be shut off by your service provider if required.
- Close all windows and doors. Pull back curtains.
- Close gates (latch) - but do not lock.
- Take critical items (medicine, purse, wallet, and keys) only if they are immediately available. Take pets in pet kennels or on leash.
- Gather your family and, if you have room, take a neighbour or someone needing transportation. Do not use more vehicles than you have to.
- Do not use the telephone unless you need emergency services.
- Follow the evacuation route provided with the order
- Once you are evacuated, register as an evacuee online at <https://ess.gov.bc.ca> or at the designated Reception Centre indicated with the order.

## **Should I turn off the utilities to my house? (like gas and water)**

Natural gas and electricity will be turned off by your service provider, but appliances using propane should be shut off by the owner.

## **What route should I take to evacuate the area?**

The decision of evacuation route to leave the affected area will be made by BC Wildfire Service, the Ministry of Transportation or the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resources based on current fire activity, location and proximity to roadways. This information will be communicated to residents at the time of the evacuation order.

## **Where will I evacuate to?**

The decision on where to go will be made by your local jurisdiction based on current fire activity, location and proximity to roadways. This information will be communicated to residents at the time of the evacuation order through media, Facebook, and email notifications.

## **I have been evacuated and require services like food and shelter. Who do I talk to?**

Once your residence has been evacuated, please register as evacuee online at <https://ess.gov.bc.ca> for further direction, or go to the dedicated Reception Centre for your area as described in the Order when it is issued. Residents can also contact their insurance company for assistance in covering extra costs.

## **My property is under an Evacuation Alert/Order and my pets/animals are there – how do I get them out?**

Register with the Emergency Support Services centre (ESS), who will work with the local Animal Lifeline Emergency Response Team to create a plan to get your animals and pets out safely. You can also call 1-855-622-7722 to speak to someone at the SPCA Call Centre. Support services may not be extended to accommodate pets and small animals. This is the owners responsibility.

## **I have been evacuated but need to go back to my property to get something. Can I get through?**

No, you cannot return to your home until the evacuation order has been rescinded. You can register with Emergency Support Services and may be able to assist you. Entering a closure area creates a safety hazard to yourself and the crews working hard to control the fire.

### **I have not been evacuated but need to travel through the Evacuation Order area to get to my recreational property. Can I get through?**

No. Entering a closure area creates a safety hazard to yourself and the crews working hard to control the fire. We do not authorize residents to re-enter the closure area once evacuated. Is there another way you could get to your property that does not require entering the closure area?

### **Can I evacuate before I am ordered to?**

If you feel like you are in danger, you may move out before an Evacuation Order is put in place. If you evacuate voluntarily, Emergency Support Services would not be available. Special authorized “early evacuation for persons-in-need” could be arranged, and ESS can be provided early in this case.

### **How can I stay up to date on the current wildfire situation?**

Information will be issued as updates are received from the BC Wildfire Service. Residents are encouraged to or visit [www.rdno.ca](http://www.rdno.ca), the RDNO Facebook page, and listen to local radio for more information. Residents of other jurisdictions are encouraged to visit corresponding websites for more information.

### **I don't know what Regional District I live in. How can I find out?**

If you are unsure what Regional District your property falls under, you can search for your address in this [interactive map provided by the Province of British Columbia](#). Once you have found your address, zoom out to see what area you are located in.

### **What if a fire moves quickly?**

You may be subject to a tactical evacuation and be required to leave your residence immediately with no warning or preparation. Grab your bag and go. You will not have time to prepare boats and trailers if they are not already ready.

### **Do you monitor the weather?**

Residents are encouraged to prepare themselves by monitoring the weather and forecasted weather conditions which could strongly influence the progression of wildfires in the area.

### **I am planning a vacation to the North Okanagan. Can I still travel to the area?**

You are still able to travel to the area, but you are responsible to monitor the situation and keep yourself informed of the progression of the wildfires. There may be reduced air quality conditions, but unless an Evacuation Order is issued for the area you are visiting, you are free to travel. Visitors should note that firefighting efforts including aircraft suppression support could limit public access to lakes for recreational activities.

### **Are the RDNO Parks & Trails Closed?**

Not at this time. The RDNO will consult with the province if it is ever determined as a requirement, but right now it is business as usual.

### **Is the RDNO responsible for closing boat launches and access point to property from the water?**

The closure of Provincial boat launches would be determined and communicated by the Province of British Columbia. If there is an Evacuation Order in place, it is expected the public would not be using these access points and are required to stay out of the area.

## Resources from External Agencies

### **Flood & Wildfire**

- BC Wildfire Service (active fire information and fire bans) - [BC Wildfire map](#)
  - The new BC Wildfire Service mobile app is available for Apple (iOS) and Android devices and is free to download in the [App Store](#) and [Google Play](#)
- [FireSmartBC](#) & [FireSmart Canada](#) – General information

### **Emergency Services & Health Services**

- [Air Quality Health Index](#)
- [Animal Lifeline Emergency Response Team ALERT](#) (animal support in an emergency, 250-809-7152)
- [DriveBC](#) (road conditions and closures)
- [Emergency preparedness for farm animals](#)
- Emergency Support Services [Evacuee Registration & Assistance platform](#)
- [Interior Health](#) (Health/Drinking Water Advisories)

### **Power Outages**

- [FortisBC](#) (power outages, gas emergencies)
- [BC Hydro](#) (power outages)

**Have a question that is not listed above?** Call us at 250-550-3700 or email [info@rdno.ca](mailto:info@rdno.ca).