

Emergency Management Update – June 2024

Presented To: Community and
Emergency Services
Committee

Meeting Date: July 8, 2024

Type: Correspondence for
Information Only

Prepared by: Shannon Dowling
Community Safety

Recommended by: General Manager of
Community Safety

Report Summary

This report provides an update regarding the recent business activities within the Emergency Management Section of the Community Safety Department.

Relationship to the Strategic Plan, Health Impact Assessment and Community Energy & Emissions Plan (CEEP)

This report refers to operational matters and has no direct connection to the Community Energy and Emissions Plan.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Background

The Emergency Management Section provides leadership, guidance, and public education to ensure the safety of residents during emergencies. This Section is governed by the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act (EMCPA). Emergency Management Ontario (EMO) and the Greater Sudbury Emergency Management Advisory Panel (GSEMAP) provide further direction and advice to the Emergency Management Section. This section offers 24/7 support with a primary focus on the safety of our citizens through the effective management of community risks and emergencies.

Supporting Emergency Preparedness in Greater Sudbury, Compliance Results for 2023

Each year, municipalities are required to submit a compliance package to Emergency Management Ontario to ensure municipalities are meeting the requirements of their emergency management program, in accordance with the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act (EMCPA).

On April 15, 2024, Mayor Paul Lefebvre and the Emergency Management Section received notification that documentation submitted by the Community Emergency Management Coordinator has achieved compliance for the 2023 reporting year. Annual compliance is reached when a municipality satisfies 13 program elements required under the EMCPA including:

- Complete a municipal Hazard and Identification Risk Assessment (HIRA)
- Municipal critical infrastructure list;
- Municipal emergency plan;
- Program By-law;
- Annual Review;
- Annual training;
- Annual exercise;
- Public education program;
- An Emergency Operations Center;
- A Community Emergency Management Coordinator;
- An Emergency Management Program Committee;
- A Municipal Emergency Control Group (MECG) and;
- An Emergency Information Officer.

The City continues to incorporate best practices into all aspects of our Emergency Management program with the overall goal of building a disaster-resilient community.

Stronger Together Host Community Plan

In advance of the annual flood and wildland fire seasons, Emergency Management Ontario aims to secure the necessary spaces for evacuations of First Nations communities across the province, displaced due to the threat of wildland fires.

The Sudbury Stronger Together Host Community Plan is supported by 40 local community partners including 16 local Indigenous service agencies and aims to enhance host teams, resources, and operational plans. Should a First Nations community request Greater Sudbury act as a host community through the Provincial Emergency Operations Centre (PEOC), the Stronger Together Host Community Plan would be activated, and partners would be engaged. Costs for hosting operations is funded through an agreement between the City and Indigenous Services Canada.

Hosting evacuations is a complex endeavor that further challenges our community's emergency, health, and social resources. The decision to act as a host community will always consider the current conditions, availability of resources and circumstances that exist at the time to best inform the decision.

Alternatively, the province may also choose to host a First Nations community in a municipality with a contracted third-party operator. With the province and third-party operator overseeing daily operations, the municipality would remain in a support role providing emergency and healthcare services.

Community Evacuation Plan Review

In 2023, more than 15 million hectares burned from wildland fires across Canada between April and October resulting in more than 235,000 people in 200 communities being evacuated. The record-breaking year prompted many municipalities across the country to revisit and update local evacuation plans.

The Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, RSO, 1990 requires every municipality to have an emergency plan that includes procedures related to evacuations.

Most evacuations are routine operations overseen by first responders with a limited number of those displaced for a limited time frame. The Emergency Management Section administers the City's Personal Disaster Assistance fund and coordinates these types of evacuations, in collaboration with the Canadian Red Cross.

Larger scale evacuations require a more coordinated approach, often with several City Departments, community agencies, and may involve other levels of government for support. Larger evacuations require a partial or full activation of the Community Control Group.

The Community Evacuation Plan review includes:

- A review of the criteria of each evacuation level.
- Facility reviews of the six existing Evacuation Centres used for group lodging, last reviewed between 2017 and 2019.
- Identification of Reception Centres used to support evacuation efforts and information sharing.
- The development of an Emergency Social Services Plan to support standard and specialized services for those displaced as a result of a community emergency.
- The development of a public framework supported by the Emergency Public Information Plan.

The Evacuation Plan review is a collaboration between several City Departments and various community partners. It is being developed using best practices and learning from the recent lived experiences of other municipalities and provinces.

Emergency Preparedness Week Supports Public Education

From May 5 to 11 Emergency Preparedness (EP) Week was celebrated in Greater Sudbury and across Canada. This year's theme was 'Plan for every season' and reflects the unique challenges residents in Ontario face on a seasonal basis and supports the importance of being prepared for an emergency year-round.

Several initiatives took place to mark the week, complementing year-round public education goals that included:

- Inspiring residents to engage in overall emergency preparedness with their family, friends, co-workers.
- Informing residents on the essential components of a 72-hour emergency kit.
- Increasing signups of the Sudbury Alerts system, encourage updating profiles/information, and educate residents on the importance and efficiency of the system.

The annual Sudbury Alerts community-wide test exercise is conducted during EP Week to support community emergency preparedness and encourage subscriptions. Notification was sent to 79,500 individual contacts in the system. There were 150 new subscribers during the campaign for a total of 11,650 subscribed to date. These subscriptions combined with the 69,000 publicly listed contacts from existing white and yellow pages, bringing the total number of contacts to over 81,000.

Community Emergency Exercises

Q1 Hazardous Materials Notification Test – May 7 (rescheduled from March 26 due to resource availability)
Hazardous materials notification protocols were tested among internal partners.

Exercise Heatwave – May 7, 8, 9

Emergency Management Ontario conducted an emergency exercise simulating a province-wide heat emergency. The Community Emergency Management Coordinator (CEMC) participated in the exercise observer program.

Sudbury Alerts Community Test - May 10

The annual community wide test of the Sudbury Alerts notification system was conducted.

Pioneer Manor Emergency Exercise – May 22

Annual tabletop exercise testing standard operating procedures related to pandemic planning and preparedness.

Resources Cited

Emergency Management Update - June 2022 – Host Community and Stronger Together Host Community Planning and Framework

<https://pub-greatersudbury.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=46675>

Emergency Management Update – August 2022 – Stronger Together Host Community Planning and Framework Update

<https://pub-greatersudbury.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=47824>

Canada's top 10 weather stories of 2023 – Government of Canada

<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/top-ten-weather-stories/2023.html#toc2>