EMO △ EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION

Local Authority Re-entry Toolkit

Supporting Community Recovery After Evacuation

Manitoba 🦬

Introduction

Purpose

This toolkit is designed to support local authorities in planning and implementing the safe and coordinated re-entry of residents following an evacuation due to a disaster.

Re-entry is a complex process that requires the local authority to work closely with partners to ensure that safety remains the top priority. Decisions must be based on a thorough assessment of multiple factors, including environmental hazards, structural integrity, availability of critical services, and public health conditions.

The guide does not replace a community specific re-entry plan. Rather, it provides a framework to assist local authorities in developing, refining, or validating their own re-entry procedures. Ideally, re-entry planning should occur prior to an evacuation, with stakeholder roles clearly defined and confirmed. Local authorities are encouraged to engage with both local and provincial partners in advance to ensure effective coordination when a disaster occurs.

Definitions

- **Stakeholders** – relevant groups that are impacted by the disaster
- **Non-Government Organizations** – organizations that support during the disaster but are not part of government.
- **Partners** – those engaged with emergency management activities
- **Critical Service Providers** – personnel and organizations that provide essential services and supports (i.e. utilities, water treatment plant, critical retail providers, fuel, etc.)
- **Subject Matter Experts** – technical experts within their field

Legislation and Regulations

The responsibilities, and authorities of local and provincial governments in managing emergencies are outlined in the Emergency Measures Act. This legislation provides the legal foundation for emergency preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation in coordination between different levels of government.

Access the Emergency Measures Act:

- https://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/_pdf.php?cap=e80

The Regulations governing Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA) programs outline how financial aid may be provided to eligible claimants. These regulations define eligible

losses and expenses, and set the terms under which residents, businesses, and local authorities may receive compensation following a disaster.

Local authorities should be familiar with this legislation and ensure that relevant stakeholders understand their legal responsibilities and opportunities for support during and after a disaster.

Re-entry Indicators

Re-entry should only occur when it has been determined that conditions are safe for residents to return.

The specific indicators and thresholds for re-entry will vary depending on the type of disaster, as well as the unique characteristics of each community. Local authorities must proactively develop re-entry plans in advance of an evacuation, ensuring these plans are regularly reviewed and exercised with relevant stakeholders.

The decision to authorize re-entry should be based on a collaborative assessment of risks, readiness, and recovery programs, and must be guided by verified information. This process should involve consultation with a broad network of partners and subject matter experts, including but not limited to:

- Elected Officials
- Chief Administrative Officer
- Provincial and Federal Partners
- Industry
- School Board(s)
- Childcare Facilities
- Subject Matter Experts
- Office of the Fire Commissioner

- Regional Health Authority
- Utilities/Critical Service Providers
- Traffic Authority
- Public Works
- Environmental Authorities
- Emergency Services (Fire, Police, Ambulance, 911)
- Manitoba Emergency Management Organization
- Neighbouring jurisdictions/First Nations/Northern Affairs Communities

Re-entry Communications

Clear, timely, and coordinated communication is critical throughout the re-entry process. Effective information sharing helps manage expectations, dispel misinformation and rumours, and support a smooth and safe return for residents and businesses.

Local authorities must ensure that all messaging is accurate, consistent, and accessible. Updates should be delivered through multiple platforms to maximize reach and engagement, including:

- Television and Radio Broadcasts.
- Social Media Channels.
- Municipal and Partner Websites.
- Message Boards at Evacuation and Reception Centres.
- Public Briefings or News Conferences.
- Welcome Centres and Community Hubs.

In addition, local authorities should prepare printed materials such as brochures, handouts, and door-to-door bulletins to support in-person communication and reinforce key safety messaging. All information should be provided in plain language, and alternative formats should be made available to accommodate the diverse needs of the community, including:

- French and Indigenous languages.
- Large print and easy-to-read formats.
- Audio and visual formats (e.g., recorded messages or videos with captions).

Appointing a dedicated Information Officer or Public Information Officer to manage and coordinate messaging is strongly recommended. This role ensures that all public communications are streamlined, credible, and consistent across all channels and partner organizations.

Key information to communicate should include:

- The start date and time of re-entry.
- Whether re-entry will be phased or staged, including which zones, groups, or priority populations are authorized to return and when.
- Rationale for phased return or restrictions.
- Transportation limitations and road closures.
- Designated re-entry routes and whether they are monitored or controlled.
- Location and services available at any Welcome Centres.
- Health and safety guidance, including whether Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is required or recommended upon re-entry.

- Availability or disruption of critical services (e.g., water, electricity, healthcare, education).
- Notification for residents whose homes have been destroyed or rendered uninhabitable, ensuring they are informed **prior** to general public announcements.
- Re-entry safety guidance, including:
  - Procedures for restoring utilities.
  - Proper disposal of spoiled food or hazardous materials.
  - Signs of structural damage or environmental hazards.

Transparent and proactive communication will support community confidence, reduce confusion, and allow residents to return with the information they need to stay safe and begin recovery.

Re-entry Planning

Re-entry into a disaster-affected area is a complex process that must be planned in advance and guided by safety, situational awareness, and interagency coordination. A structured, phased approach helps local authorities manage the return of residents and restoration of community functions in a safe and orderly manner.

Re-entry is typically organized into three progressive stages:

Stage 1 – Damage Assessment and Site Scan

This stage focuses on conducting a coordinated, structured evaluation of the affected area to determine safety conditions and assess damage to infrastructure, utilities, buildings, and natural systems.

Access is strictly limited to authorized personnel such as emergency responders, engineers, and environmental health professionals. Their responsibilities include identifying hazards, assessing structural integrity, and determining the safety of water and wastewater, air, utilities, and transportation routes.

This stage is essential for informing decisions about when and how critical services can be restored. Accurate documentation during this phase will support short-term and long-term recovery efforts.

Stage 2 – Restoration of Critical Services

Once immediate risks are addressed, priority shifts to restoring the core systems needed to support community re-entry. This includes water and wastewater treatment,

electricity and gas services, emergency healthcare, emergency communications, transportation networks, and waste management.

The goal is to establish a baseline level of safety and livability for returning residents—even if full service levels cannot yet be restored.

This phase requires active coordination between local authorities, provincial and federal partners, utility providers, healthcare systems, school boards, and other essential community stakeholders.

Stage 3 – Community Re-entry

With critical infrastructure stabilized and hazards addressed, the community can begin to return in a controlled, phased, or full-scale manner.

Re-entry should follow a structured plan that reflects the size and needs of the population, the status of services, and safety considerations.

Welcome Centres may be established to serve as centralized hubs for information, supplies, and psychosocial support. Ongoing, transparent communication across multiple platforms is essential to guide residents through the re-entry process, address questions, and provide updates on available supports, hazards, and recovery services.

Timing Considerations

The timeline between these stages will vary depending on several key factors, including:

- Community size and population distribution.
- Extent of impact on privately owned properties.
- Geographic location and accessibility of the community.
- Level of damage to public infrastructure and critical services.
- Nature, scale, and complexity of the emergency event.

Each community will face unique challenges during the re-entry process. Local re-entry plans should be developed prior to an emergency, with clearly defined roles, stakeholder engagement, and flexibility to adapt based on the scope and severity of the event.

Stage 1: Scan of Damages

Find a contact list template for stage 1, see Appendix A.

The first stage of re-entry planning involves a detailed and coordinated assessment of the impacted area to identify hazards, determine structural and environmental safety, and document the extent of damage to public and private infrastructure.

Access to the affected area during this phase must be limited to authorized personnel, including emergency responders, utility specialists, engineers, and private service providers with roles in recovery operations.

Local authorities are responsible for working in coordination with provincial and federal partners to evaluate the feasibility of re-entry and identify services that must be restored prior to allowing residents to return.

Accurate documentation of damage throughout this process is essential to support both immediate safety decisions and long-term recovery planning.

Key areas for assessment include:

Structures

- All structures must be assessed for stability, particularly those partially burned or exposed to hazardous conditions, as they may pose a risk of collapse.
- A tagging or color-coded identification system (e.g., red for uninhabitable, green for habitable) should be used for clarity.
- Structural assessments should be conducted by the Office of the Fire Commissioner, local fire departments, or certified building inspectors.

Water and Wastewater Services

- Complete inspection of all related infrastructure is required, including source water intakes, treatment plants, reservoirs, distribution and collection systems, and stormwater infrastructure.
- Repairs and safety certifications must be completed prior to re-entry.
- The status of potable water availability must be clearly communicated to service providers and response personnel.

Air Quality Conditions

- Outdoor air quality data should be obtained from Environment and Climate Change Canada, particularly if an active fire is nearby.
- Contaminants such as smoke, chemical vapors, or fuel releases may also affect indoor environments.

- Facilities should be assessed prior to re-entry, and buildings exposed to poor air quality may require professional evaluation before being deemed safe.

For air quality advisories:

https://weather.gc.ca/airquality/pages/provincial_summary/mb_e.html

Gas, Heating Fuels and Electric

- All utility systems—including natural gas, propane, heating oil, and electricity—must be inspected and certified as safe by the appropriate utility providers before service is restored or entry is permitted.

Access Routes

- Transportation infrastructure (roads, bridges, culverts) must be assessed for damage and safety.
- Local and provincial traffic authorities should complete hazard assessments and confirm access routes before allowing movement of personnel and equipment.

Telecommunications

- Telecommunications infrastructure, including towers, fiber lines, and mobile/data services, should be assessed and restored with priority given to emergency communications.

Accommodation/Food

- Temporary accommodations and food access should be arranged for contractors, inspectors, and other personnel engaged in recovery operations, particularly in remote or heavily damaged areas

Solid Waste

- Planning for storage, transport, and disposal of solid and liquid waste must begin immediately.
- Debris may include household waste, construction materials, hazardous substances, and spoiled food.
- Early intervention will prevent secondary hazards such as pest infestations, disease vectors, or wildlife intrusion.

Health Care Facilities

- All health facilities, including hospitals, personal care homes, quick-care clinics, and specialty centres, must be assessed and restored in a phased, system-wide approach before services resume.

- The following systems must be evaluated and certified as safe:
  - Infection prevention and control.
  - HVAC and air filtration.
  - Laundry and dietary services.
  - Natural gas and electrical systems.
  - Medical gases and refrigeration.
  - Water and steam supply.
  - Building envelope integrity.
  - Biomedical equipment and elevators.
  - Clinical services (emergency, inpatient, outpatient, diagnostics, dialysis, CancerCare).

Stage 2: Restoration of Services

Find a contact list template for stage 2, see Appendix B.

Following hazard assessment and initial safety scans, the focus shifts to restoring essential services to support safe and sustainable re-entry. The goal during this stage is to re-establish a minimum level of functionality across key infrastructure and community services. It is important to recognize that this baseline may differ from pre-evacuation conditions.

This phase requires coordination between local authorities, provincial partners, utility providers, health authorities, and private sector partners. The following service areas must be addressed prior to or in parallel with phased community re-entry:

Health Care Facilities

- Hospitals, personal care homes, quick care clinics, and other healthcare infrastructure must be operational before resident's return.
- A minimum standard of health services must be established in consultation with the regional health authority and confirmed through appropriate inspections and certifications.
- Ensuring continuity of care is essential to public safety and community stability during re-entry.

Emergency Services (Fire, Police, Ambulance, 911)

- Emergency response services must be staffed, functional, and supported by operational communications systems.
- Road access must be available to facilitate rapid deployment and ensure the safety of residents and responders.

Water and Wastewater Systems

- Water systems must be operational and capable of delivering water, even under a boil water advisory if necessary.
- Wastewater collection and treatment systems must also be restored and verified for safe use.

Waste Management and Garbage Disposal

- Systems for waste collection and disposal must be in place, including handling of decaying organic waste, electronics, construction debris, and hazardous materials.
- Public works must ensure landfills and collection programs are restored.

- Professional remediation services should be engaged to manage biological hazards such as rotting food or mold, preventing health risks and environmental contamination.

Gas and Electrical Services

- Restoration of gas, propane, heating oil, and electricity services must be completed and certified by utility providers.
- Critical infrastructure and essential buildings should be prioritized for reconnection.

Telecommunications

- Restoration of both voice and data communication systems must occur to support emergency operations and public access to information.

Educational Institutions and Daycares

- Schools and childcare facilities should be assessed for safety and functionality.
- Minimum service levels should be established in consultation with school superintendents, principals, and childcare directors.
- These facilities must meet safety and operational standards before children and youth return to the community.

Public Works Operations

- Operational capacity for local public works must be restored, including infrastructure support, debris clearance, and landfill access.
- The waste collection strategy must include:
    - Household garbage
    - E-waste and electronics
    - Construction/vegetation debris
    - Household hazardous waste

Critical Retail Services

- Basic retail services—such as grocery stores, pharmacies, and fuel stations—must be re-established to support returning residents.
- Business owners are responsible for ensuring cleanup, waste disposal (e.g., spoiled goods), and facility safety prior to reopening.

Stormwater Systems

- Drainage and stormwater collection infrastructure must be cleared and functioning to prevent localized flooding or runoff contamination during recovery.

Lighting and Traffic Control

- Street lighting and traffic signals should be restored.
- Where not functional, traffic management alternatives must be in place to support safety during increased vehicle movement.

Banking Services

- Access to financial institutions or cash services must be available to support residents' basic transactional needs.

Donation Management

- Systems should be established to receive, sort, and distribute donated goods effectively.
- Consider partnering with NGOs or community organizations to manage inflows and avoid duplication or storage issues.

Volunteer Management

- Volunteer contributions can significantly support restoration and re-entry efforts.
- A coordinated volunteer management strategy should be established, including:
  - Designated volunteer coordinators
  - A registration and credentialing process
  - Clear role definitions and safety training
  - Integration into recovery planning and task assignments
- Volunteers should not be used to replace specialized roles (e.g., electricians, inspectors) but can provide valuable support in areas such as logistics, community outreach, debris management, and distribution of supplies.

Stage 3: Community Re-entry

The third stage of re-entry involves the organized return of residents, businesses, and service providers to the affected community. This phase requires thoughtful coordination to ensure safety, accessibility, and support for a diverse population.

Community re-entry should be conducted in a phased or structured manner and guided by previously developed re-entry plans. The scope, speed, and method of return should consider factors such as the scale of evacuation, local infrastructure capacity, and community demographics—including vulnerable populations, Indigenous communities, and those requiring additional support.

Welcome Centres: Centralized Hubs for Support and Information

For large-scale re-entries, Welcome Centres serve as critical anchor points for reuniting residents with essential information, resources, and psychosocial support. These centres should be safe, inclusive spaces designed to meet diverse community needs and facilitate coordinated service delivery. Welcome Centres should be equipped to offer:

- Culturally appropriate supports, including access to Elders, spiritual leaders, and mental health professionals to support emotional recovery.
- On-site representatives from government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), public health, and other key service providers.
- Logistical and communications support, especially for residents facing language, digital, or mobility barriers.

Information and Resources Available

Whether in-person at Welcome Centres or through other accessible platforms, the following information and supports should be provided:

Re-entry Instructions

- Re-entry for business (Appendix D)
- Re-entry for food facilities (Appendix E)
- Re-entry for educational institutions and daycares (appendix F)
- Re-entry for homeowners (Appendix G)

Public Health and Infrastructure Updates

- Status of water systems, including availability and potability
- Functionality of wastewater and stormwater systems

- Availability and location of waste disposal services

Recovery and Safety Resources

- Instructions for property clean-up and debris removal
- Distribution of clean-up kits (gloves, masks, cleaning agents, etc.)
- Guidance on air quality conditions and PPE use
- Health and safety advice from public health authorities

Emotional and Practical Support

- Access to psychosocial services (e.g., crisis counselling, mental health support)
- Insurance and claims guidance
- Access to communications services (e.g., internet, mobile, landline)
- Where to find weather alerts, air quality data, and other environmental updates

Volunteer Management and Coordination

Volunteers play a vital role in supporting re-entry activities—from logistical assistance to emotional support. To maximize their impact, a dedicated volunteer coordinator should be appointed to:

- Oversee volunteer registration and screening
- Assign roles and responsibilities aligned with skill sets and community needs
- Provide orientation and safety briefings
- Facilitate coordination between local authorities, NGOs, and volunteer organizations
- Ensure volunteers have access to support services, including mental health check-ins

Volunteers may support:

- Welcome Centre operations
- Distribution of supplies and kits
- Wayfinding and translation services
- Community outreach and wellness checks
- Transportation assistance for vulnerable populations

Multi-Channel Communication Strategy

While Welcome Centres serve as vital touchpoints, not all residents will access them. A comprehensive, multilingual communication strategy is essential to ensure equal access to information. Recommended channels include:

- Municipal websites and emergency alerts

- Local radio and television
- Social media platforms
- Printed materials delivered door-to-door
- Community information boards or kiosks in high-traffic areas

Appendix A: Stage 1 – Scan of Damages Contact List Template

Service	Point of Contact (Telephone or email)	Additional Information
Assessment of Accommodations/Food		
Assessment of Access Routes		
Assessment of Air Quality Conditions		
Assessment of Gas, Heating Fuels and Electric		
Assessment of Health Care Facilities		
Assessment of Solid Waste		
Assessment of Structures		
Assessment of Telecommunications		
Assessment of Water and Wastewater Services		

Appendix B: Stage 2 – Restoration of Services Contact List Template

Service	Point of Contact (Telephone or email)	Additional Information
Banking Services		
Critical Retail Services		
Donation Management		
Emergency Services (Fire, Police, Ambulance, 911)		
Educational Institutions and Day Cares		
Gas and Electrical Services		
Health Care Facilities		
Lighting and Traffic Control		
Public Works Operations		
Stormwater Systems		
Telecommunications		
Volunteer Management		
Waste Management and Garbage Disposal		
Water and Wastewater Systems		

Appendix C: Stage 3 – Community Re-Entry Contact List Template

Service	Point of Contact (Telephone or email)	Additional Information
Available communications (internet access, cell phone service, landlines, radio stations)		
Faith based communities available		
Information on condition of Business available		
Information on Health Care facility available		
Information of property clean-up		
Insurance Information/personnel available		
Information on weather, air, or water conditions as applicable		
Key Non-Government Organizations available		
Mental Health Services available		
Welcome Centre or muster point established		
Other		

Appendix D: Re-entry for Businesses

Protect Yourself

When assessing and cleaning your establishment, wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for the hazard. This could include a respirator, gloves, and/or other protective clothing. Individuals with asthma or respiratory conditions should only spend short periods in areas contaminated after a disaster and wear respiratory protection.

Initial Considerations

- Try to create an inventory of items inside and outside the buildings damaged by the disaster. Do not throw away damaged goods until your insurance company's representative advises, if applicable.
- Take plenty of pictures of your establishment and all damaged areas and goods.
- Contact your insurance company for information about restoring/replacing items such as electronic devices, etc.
- Consider unplugging, rolling out, and rinsing the coils and compressors on refrigerators and/or freezers (they must be entirely dry before repowering).

Check Your Utilities

- Check that electricity, hot and cold running water, sewage systems, heating fuels, and gas utilities to ensure they are working correctly. Contact your utility provider if you are unsure if the utilities are safe to use.
- Do not try to use any electrical appliances or power outlets that may have come in contact with fire, water, or other chemicals until they have been checked and cleared for use by a qualified electrician.

Air Circulation

- Consult a professional to clean, restore, and restart any building heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems.
- Get the air moving inside the building by using a fan and open windows, providing there is no air quality advisories for the area or safety concerns.
- Be mindful with open doors and windows during windy conditions to prevent any debris from entering the building.

Water Drainage

- If the building was damaged by water, you will need to get rid of all excess water to prevent the potential for mould growth.

- Check any water-damaged or water-strained surfaces and appliances for damage. Clean and disinfect indoor surfaces and appliances for damage. Clean and disinfect indoor surfaces with a 1:10 parts household bleach to water solution (6 tsp bleach in 1 cup water or 5ml bleach in 45 mL water).
- Outdoor surfaces should be cleaned with soap and water only.
- Dry all wet items as soon as possible.
- Dry of remove wet or waterlogged carpeting as quickly as possible, including the underlayment.
- You may need to consider brining in a dehumidifier to help remove excess moisture from the air inside the building.
- Let your insurance company and restoration contractor(s) know as soon as possible if you find any visible mould growth or smell mould inside the building.

Discard Items impacted by a Disaster

- Take stock of any food in your facility that you can see.
- For insurance purposes, take plenty of photos and write down an inventory of the contents of any fridges and/or freezers.
- Discard:
  - Food stored in refrigerators and freezers **IF** the temperature was warmer than 4°C at any given time.
  - Please note that the temperature may have exceeded 4°C when the power was disrupted and then returned to 4°C. if unsure, discard the food items.

Cleaning Up

- Structures after a disaster may be unsafe and have the potential to collapse or pose other serious safety risks.
- As a business and an employer, you may wish to consult with a professional engineer for guidance on how to safely proceed with work.
- Situations can range from simple to complex: always make sure you have appropriate controls in place to protect your workers.
- A number of health risks may be associated with cleaning up or demolishing structures after a disaster. Ensure you develop safe work procedures and follow all applicable requirements from your local or provincial occupational health and safety laws (for example: first aid or working safely with powered mobile equipment).
- Prior to site cleaning, ensure your site is safe for your employees. Provide workers with site-specific safety training and relevant decontamination training prior to site clean-up.

- Provide an area just outside the work perimeters where workers can wash their face and hands and take off PPE.
- Your area should include disposal bins for used coveralls, gloves, and respirator cartridges (if applicable), as well as an area to clean boots and respirators. Supply the area with clean water and water/mild detergent solution.
- Clean equipment and tires of vehicles transporting waste out of area before moving them to a new area.
- Workers should not bring any equipment or PPE home or to their housing accommodations unless the equipment has been cleaned first.
- Heat stress may become a hazard, ensure workers are trained to recognize the signs of heat stress, ensure they have plenty of drinking water available, and implement a work/test schedule.
- Consider having a Safety Officer on-site to ensure employee safety is prioritized.
- Wash all interior surfaces with mild detergent or appropriate cleaning solutions and rinse thoroughly.

Appendix E: Re-entry for Food Facilities

Food

- Take stock of any food in your facility or home that you can see.
- For insurance purposes, take plenty of photos and write down an inventory of the contents of any fridges and freezers.
- Discard:
  - Food stored in refrigerators and freezers **IF** the temperature was warmer than 4ºC at any time.
  - Please note that the temperature may have exceeded 4ºC when the power was disrupted and then returned to 4ºC.
  - Any spoiled food, even if the fridge always remained at 4ºC.
  - Open foods.
  - Fire or water-damaged foods like dry goods (i.e., flour, sugar, spices, etc.) even if the package isn't open.
  - Fire or water-damaged food products in plastic or paper-based packaging as the material is porous.
  - Fire or water-damaged food products with caps and lids as they may not stay airtight.
  - Unrefrigerated raw vegetables or fruits.
  - Canned food where the can is bulging, rusted or dented.
  - If in doubt, throw it out.
- Clean and sanitize the exterior of all canned foods before opening to ensure the contents are not contaminated when opened.

Water

- Food facilities on cisterns and wells should submit bacteriological samples for analysis and receive acceptable results before reopening.

Assess, Clean and Sanitize Equipment

- Thoroughly clean and sanitize all sinks before using them.
- Assess all equipment, including refrigerators, coolers, freezers, ice machines and meat slicers. Equipment must be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized (see directions under sanitizing solutions) before being used.
- Ensure all refrigerators and coolers can maintain temperatures of 4ºC or less.
- Use a commercial dishwasher or three-compartment sink to wash, rinse, and sanitize equipment, dishes and utensils using potable water. Ensure dishwashers are achieving the required temperatures and sanitizer concentrations.

- Clean and sanitize all food surfaces, including food preparation counters, seating tables and chairs, shelving, and other food-related storage areas with potable water.
- Ensure equipment is in good working order, as per manufacturer's specifications.
- Repair or replace damaged equipment.

Sanitizing Solutions

- Cleaning and sanitizing will remove debris, soot, harmful microorganisms, and chemical residues that could pose a food safety risk.
- The first step is to remove dirt, dust, and residues physically.
- Cleaning equipment and surfaces with a solution of non-reactive cleaners (e.g., dish soap) and potable water will allow sanitizers to effectively remove harmful bacteria.
- Chemical sanitizers include:
  - Chlorine bleach at a concentration of 100–200 ppm (approximately one tablespoon of bleach in one gallon of potable water), or
  - Quaternary ammonium at a concentration of 200 ppm, or
  - Other approved sanitizers.

Before Opening to the Public

- Verify all refrigerated and freezer display cases, walk-in refrigerators, and walk-in freezers can consistently maintain proper temperatures.
  - Refrigeration units must keep foods less than 4°C, and freezers must keep foods frozen.
  - Ensure all refrigeration or freezing equipment maintain adequate temperatures before putting food into the units.
- Verify that all equipment used for food preparation (e.g., cooking, cooling, and reheating) can operate according to the manufacturer's specifications/instructions.
- Ensure handwashing basins, including in washrooms, are operational, stocked with hand soap and paper towels, and are accessible.

Appendix F: Re-entry for Educational Institutions and Daycares

Food

- Discard:
    - Food stored in refrigerators and freezers **IF** the temperate was warmer than 4ºC at any time (temperatures may fluctuate during power disruptions).
    - Spoiled food, opened foods, or fire or water-damaged foods like dry good (i.e., flour, sugar, spices, etc.) even if the package is not open.
    - Unrefrigerated raw vegetables or fruit.
    - Canned food that is bulging, rusted, or dented.
    - If in doubt, throw it out.
- Clean and sanitize the exterior of all canned goods before opening.

Water

- After any disaster, you may want to check with a qualified electrician before using your washer and dryer.
- Consider scraping all heavy dirt from clothes, rinse and wash several times with detergent and dry immediately to prevent mould from forming.
- Never use water you think may be contaminated to wash dishes, prepare food, wash hands, make ice, etc.

Clothing, Bedding, Plush Toys, etc.

- Launder all affected clothing, plush toys, bedding, and costumes. You may require numerous rinse cycles to extract any contaminants. Consider laundering offsite using a machine tagged for heavy contaminants at a laundromat.
- Professional assistance is recommended to remove any related odour or dirt from mattresses.
- **Do not save** books, paper materials, plush toys, or mattresses if they become wet.
- Vacuum or damp-wipe books, cardboard, and other paper materials. If heavily damaged, they may need to be discarded.
- Furniture may be difficult or impossible to clean if upholstered, especially if there is odour that has permeated into these furnishings. Upholstered furniture may be steam cleaned or may need replacement.

- Absorbent materials such as disposable diapers should be considered unusable if open to contamination. If the materials are contaminated, discard the item as it cannot be cleaned.

Clean and Sanitize Toys and Equipment

- Clean and sanitize all toys and equipment. Refer to the directions on making sanitizing solutions below.
- Use a commercial dishwasher or three-compartment sink to wash, rinse, and sanitize non-plush toys or toys without electronic components using potable water. Ensure dishwashers are achieving the necessary temperatures and sanitizer concentrations.
- Before washing toys and equipment, run the dishwasher empty through the wash- rinse-sanitize cycle three times. This practice will flush the water lines and clean and sanitize the dishwasher's interior.
- For equipment such as sleeping mats and cots, where the material is impervious to moisture, these materials must be clean and sanitized prior to use.
- Sanitizing Solutions include:
    - chlorine bleach at a concentration of 100–200 ppm (approximately one tablespoon of bleach in one gallon of potable water), or
    - quaternary ammonium at a concentration of 200 ppm, or
    - other approved sanitizers.

Outdoor Play Equipment and Surfacing

- For equipment such as sleeping mats and cots, where the material is impervious to moisture, these materials must be clean and sanitized prior to use.
- Inspect all surfacing for contaminants. Spray down and remove visibly contaminated loose material. (e.g., sand, mud).
- Inspect the playground before allowing play. Do not allow children outside for outdoor play/recess until the play area and equipment have been assessed for contaminants and safety.
- Monitor the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) to determine whether it is safe for children to play outdoors.

Appendix G: Re-entry for Homeowners

Preparing to Return Home

If you cannot live in your home:

- Do not enter the area where your home is located unless officials say it is safe to do so.
- Use caution when entering an area after a disaster, as hazards may still exist.
- Recognize that there may be many tasks associated with relocating and resettling your family. Take small steps.
- Get your family settled – if your home is unlivable, you may want to arrange temporary housing. For further information reference the Manitoba Emergency Management Organization's website on emergency go kits: Emergency Management Organization - Be Prepared Factsheets
- Take care of your pets – if possible, take your pets with you and ensure they have plenty of food and water. Ask your vet for some options to board your animals if you cannot take them with you. For further information reference the Manitoba Emergency Management Organization's website on pet emergency go kits: Emergency Management Organization - Be Prepared Factsheets
- Notify people of your temporary address. Give your new address to your employer, family/friends, post office, bank, school, credit cards, utility companies, and insurance companies.

If there is no apparent damage to your home:

- Do not enter your home until officials say it is safe to do so.
- If you are unsure if it is safe, ASK! Reach out to your local authority as they are there to help you.
- Use caution when entering areas after a disaster as hazards may still exist.
- Establish what you need to do FIRST. Take small steps at a time: check the status of your power, water, gas, phone, and sewer. You may need to call utility services for assistance.
- Once you are feeling settled, consider reaching out to your neighbours. It is important to re-establish relationships and lend a helping hand to one another.

Inspecting your Home and Starting to Clean Up

If you are insured, contact your insurance company. Your policy may cover house cleaning by a restoration specialist. As you go through your possessions, keep ruined furniture, appliances, books, etc. for insurance purposes. You can put them outside or in a shed temporarily.

Household items often take several cleanings to rid them of odours, contaminants or stains. In some cases, they will never come clean or lose their smell. You may want to consult a restoration specialist to help you determine what is worth saving and what isn't.

Suggested Content for Clean up Kits

- 5 Litre Bucket
- Mop
- Long handled broom/Hand brush and dustpan
- Cleaning fluid/detergent
- Sponges
- Heavy duty garbage bags
- Disposable Gloves
- Work gloves
- Dust particulate masks
- Safety Glasses
- Any other equipment deemed necessary or useful to the specific incident

Hazardous Materials

- Contact your local authority to find out how to dispose of hazardous materials such as solvents, garden chemicals, and home cleaning products that have been soaked or that show signs of water damage.
- Perishable foods, foods packaged in cardboard or plastic, or any foods or medicines directly exposed to heat, smoke, fumes, or water may not be suitable for consumption.

Removal of Odours

- You may want to try placing small saucers of vinegar or vanilla around the house to absorb odours.

Heating, Appliances, and Utilities

- Consider contacting a professional prior to using appliances, electrical outlets, switch boxes, or fuse breaker panels.
- Consider having your central heating system checked by a qualified technician before use.
- Contact the appropriate utility or service company to have your service restored (i.e., electricity, gas, cable, phone, etc.) when you are ready to return home, if needed.

Floors and Walls

- You may want to vacuum all surfaces, including carpets and rugs. Consider sealing off the room you are working in with plastic sheeting to keep dirt from travelling throughout the home.
- Consider consulting a professional painter for advice on how to clean your walls. You may need to re-paint with a specially formulated paint.

Furniture

- Remove residual mud and soil from furniture and dry it off.
- If you suspect any mould on any furniture that has been wet, you may want to contact a professional for advice.
- You may want to consider cleaning surfaces (furniture, kitchen cabinets, railings, etc.) with a cleaning solution.
- You may want to get professional advice for cleaning antiques and fine reproductions.
- You may need to provide a list of lost or damaged items as part of your insurance claim. Review your insurance policy so you understand what items to list.
- If you had a household inventory before the disaster, retrieve it for the insurance adjuster. If you didn't, or if it was destroyed, ask your insurance agent for a blank inventory form; it may help to jog your memory.
- Record serial numbers of appliances and household equipment, if possible and note the approximate cost or value of each item.
- If possible, take close-up photos or video footage of damaged rooms, furnishings, and property.

Take an Inventory

Once the inventory is complete, contact your insurance company for details on how to submit the information. Keep all receipts related to living expenses and repairs, permits, inspection forms and any other papers in one place. Your insurance company may request them.

Notify your bank or mortgage company

- You should notify your mortgage company about the disaster and to keep them informed about what is being done to restore the property. They may have forms for you to fill out, and they may want to inspect the property.

Basic Needs: Food, Water and Medicine

Food

- Discard:
    - Food stored in refrigerators and freezers IF the temperate was warmer than 4⁰C at any time (temperatures may fluctuate during power disruptions).
    - Spoiled food, opened foods, or fire or water-damaged foods like dry good (i.e., flour, sugar, spices, etc.) even if the package is not open.
    - Unrefrigerated raw vegetables or fruit.
    - Canned food that is bulging, rusted, or dented.
    - If in doubt, throw it out.
- Clean and sanitize the exterior of all canned goods before opening.

Water

- If affected by a disaster, you may want to check with a qualified electrician before using your washer and dryer.
- Consider scraping all heavy dirt from clothes, rinse and wash several times with detergent and dry immediately to prevent mould from forming.
- Never use water you think may be contaminated to wash dishes, brush teeth, prepare food, wash hands, make ice, or prepare baby formula.

Medications

- You may want to dispose of all medicines, cosmetics, and toiletries that have been contaminated.
- Medications that are required to be refrigerated should be safely disposed of and replaced to ensure they are still effective.
- Ensure you have enough medication (prescription and over the counter) to sustain you for two weeks.
- If you have concerns about accessing your medications, you may want to consult with a pharmacist or a doctor.

Special Considerations

Taking care of yourself and others

- It is normal to experience conflicting emotions when returning home. Allowing yourself to admit your feelings and expressing them to someone you trust will help you to cope. Try to anticipate what conditions you may be confronted with and how you may react. Thinking through this may help you feel more in control of the situation and less distressed.

- Children have many different types of reactions to an evacuation. They may be coping well. They may become clingy or fearful, have aches and pains or nightmares. All of these responses are expected. Try to encourage your children to express their feelings and fears and continue to provide them with support as you move through this experience.

Special considerations for caregivers

- For people who depend on caregivers, there may be debris on the streets that could prevent caregivers from being able to reach you. This could leave you isolated.
- If you have a service animal, the animal also needs time and care to recover. They may be hurt or too frightened to work after an evacuation.

Other considerations

- Your usual access to health services, such as your family doctor, physiotherapist, home care, and other health supports may be limited.
- If you have a condition that requires a reliable electrical supply i.e., home dialysis, home oxygen, CPAP, or other assistive devices such as an electric bed or lift, or motorized wheelchair, please check to ensure that your devices can operate consistently.
- Your usual ways of getting groceries, medications, and supplies may be disrupted. It may take several days before stores reopen. You may not be able to readily replace even basic items related to your health, including hearing aid batteries and prescription medications.
- Ensure you have an adequate supply (minimum two weeks) of any other health supplies you may need. Access to these products may be limited or unavailable.
- Public transportation may not be working and routes and schedules may be changed. Public and private wheelchair transport services may not be operating.
- Roads may be damaged or blocked. Road signs may be down. Traffic lights and walking signals used to cross the street may not be working properly. This can disrupt cues used to cross the street. Travel time may be longer because of detours and added traffic.
- Landmarks may be changed or gone entirely; home may look, feel, and smell different.