

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q: Where can I find up-to-date information about local wildfires and other emergencies, including current Evacuation Alerts and Orders?

A: You can stay informed through:

- [RDOS website](#)
- [Voyent Alert!](#) notifications (registration required)
- RDOS [Facebook](#) and [X \(Twitter\)](#)
- [EmergencyInfoBC](#)
- [BC Wildfire Service](#)

Q: What is the difference between a “tactical” evacuation, an Evacuation Alert and an Evacuation Order?

A: Tactical Evacuation

A tactical evacuation happens when there is an immediate danger to your safety, such as a fast-moving wildfire or other life-threatening situation, and you need to leave right away.

Evacuation Alert

This is a precautionary step when there is a possible risk nearby, such as wildfire, flood, or landslide, which could become dangerous. It’s about being prepared to leave at a moment’s notice should conditions get worse.

Evacuation Order

An Evacuation Order is issued when there is an immediate or very serious threat to public safety. People are strongly urged to follow the order and leave the affected area right away to protect themselves from harm.

Q: I am currently under an Evacuation Alert, what should I do to prepare?

A: Keep an [emergency kit](#) and [grab-and-go bag](#) near your door:

- Clothing and personal essentials
- Important documents (such as insurance and banking information)
- Medications
- Government ID
- Items for elders, children, or anyone with mobility challenges
- Supplies for pets

Q: Why should I leave the area during an Evacuation Order?

A: Staying in an area under an Evacuation Order puts you, your family, and emergency responders at serious risk of injury or death. Evacuation Orders are issued only when there is an immediate threat to life safety. Leaving the area allows emergency responders to carry out their work safely and focus on protecting the community, rather than diverting resources to assist individuals who remain behind.

During an Evacuation Order

- Power and water services may be shut off without notice
- Emergency services, including BC Ambulance, may not be available
- Access to the area may be restricted for safety and security reasons

Q: I have pets and/or hobby farm animals that require assistance, who do I contact?

A: For pets or hobby farm animals, call **ALERT** (Animal Lifeline Emergency Response Team) at 250-490-6531. For commercial livestock or ranch operations, contact the Ministry of Agriculture for assistance.

Q: Who will make sure my home and property are secure during an evacuation?

A: It's your responsibility as a homeowner or property owner to secure your home and belongings before an Evacuation Order is issued. Once an area is evacuated, RCMP, and security personnel will secure the evacuated zone. They will set up checkpoints, patrol evacuated areas and restrict access to authorized personnel only.

Q: I am currently under an Evacuation Order, where do we go?

A: Your Evacuation Order notice will tell you where the nearest Emergency Support Services (ESS) Reception Centre is located. You may also get updates through:

- Voyent Alert! (via email, text, or phone)
- The RDOS website (rdos.bc.ca) and social media channels

If you need help or transportation, call the RDOS Emergency Operations Centre (EOC): **250-490-4225**

You should also:

- Stay with family or friends outside the evacuation area
- If you're not a permanent resident, return to your home community

Q: I have home insurance. Do they provide more support than ESS?

A: Often, home or tenant insurance offers more comprehensive assistance than ESS. Contact your insurance provider directly or call the Insurance Bureau of Canada at **1-844-227-5422** for details.

Q: How long is the Evacuation Order in place? Why am I not allowed to return home yet?

A: It will remain in place as long as the threat to public safety exists. In many cases, even after the fire, flood, or other emergency has passed, other dangers may linger, and essential services such as water, power, and sewer may need to be restored.

Q: Can I travel on a certain road, is the highway still open?

A: Please check DriveBC.ca for the latest highway information.

Q. How can I help?

A: While the RDOS appreciates offers of help, individuals and groups are encouraged to connect with local non-profit organizations, such as the United Way, Salvation Army, Red Cross, and faith-based groups for support or volunteer opportunities.

You can also support or donate to the following organizations:

ALERT – www.alertcanada.org

United Way BC – www.uwbc.ca

Salvation Army Penticton – www.pentictionsa.com

Canadian Red Cross – www.redcross.ca