

Frequently asked questions: Emergency Management Legislative Review

The Government of Alberta is updating Alberta's Emergency Management Legislative Framework to reflect emergency management best practices and help communities be better prepared to respond to disasters.

Why are changes being made?

Post-incident assessments following recent major catastrophic events in Alberta recommended reviewing our emergency management legislative framework.

Updating the framework helps Alberta adapt to the reality of more frequent disaster events. Better prepared communities will help to ensure the safety of all Albertans.

What changes have been made to the *Emergency Management Act*?

Authority to create a regulation to provide additional emergency management guidance to local authorities has been added.

Evacuation order provisions have been clarified and the *Emergency Management Act* clearly sets out that local authorities, and those acting under their direction (including first responders), are not liable for actions taken, or not taken, in good faith while enforcing evacuation orders.

A number of technical amendments have been made for clarity.

What is in the Local Authority Emergency Management Regulation?

The regulation includes additional clarification and direction around emergency advisory committees and emergency management agencies, mechanisms to support regional collaboration, training, and maintaining, exercising, and updating municipal emergency management plans.

More information is available in the attachment titled Local Authority Emergency Management Regulation Content Summary.

What types of communities will the regulation apply to?

The regulation applies to cities, towns, counties, villages, summer villages, municipal districts, specialized municipalities, improvement districts, special areas, and Métis Settlements.

What is the timeline for changes?

The amendments to the *Emergency Management Act* are now in force. The Local Authority Emergency Management Regulation will come into force on January 1, 2020.

How were stakeholders consulted?

Municipal elected officials and administration, Métis Settlements and First Nations, first responders, fire chiefs and law enforcement were engaged on content and implementation of the proposed changes through numerous in-person sessions and an online discussion guide.

What supports are available to municipalities?

The Alberta Emergency Management Agency (AEMA) offers a number of programs and tools to help municipalities, at no cost to the community. These include:

- The AEMA field officer program,
- Online and in-class training, and
- The Community Emergency Management Program – an online application that provides templates and guidance to develop local emergency management plans and programs.
- Emergency Management Preparedness Program grants

Is there additional funding available?

No additional funding has been committed to municipalities. Communities are encouraged to use existing support tools to help them meet the requirements, as well as existing funding opportunities provided by AEMA, Municipal Affairs, and the Government of Alberta.

What if communities have difficulties meeting requirements?

Communities identified as having issues meeting their goals can be assisted by AEMA to help them meet these requirements. Focus will be on a collaborative approach to bring communities into full compliance.

Do these changes affect First Nations?

The regulation will not apply to First Nations. First Nations have access to provincial emergency management supports through the AEMA First Nations Field Officer program, as well as through funding from indigenous Services Canada.

Who can be contacted for more information?

For more information, local authorities can contact their AEMA Field Officer or ma.aema-policy@gov.ab.ca.