



More than half of Alberta's non-profit organizations do not have emergency plans.

When it comes to business continuity planning, non-profit organizations face unique challenges. Consider the following when planning for emergencies or disasters:

1 An emergency or disaster can mean an increased demand for service and can result in significant operations pressures on your organization. During the 2013 floods, 30 per cent of affected non-profit organizations in Calgary experienced an increased demand for their services. This increase most often occurs in the social services sector. To cope with an increased demand for service during an emergency:

- Ensure that your own clients' needs are being met before responding to new clients.
- Keep in mind that revenue sources may be affected during and after a disaster due to the cancellation of fundraising events, reduced donor capacity and diversion of charitable donations to disaster recovery. Consider maintaining an appropriate operating reserve to help cover the cost of an increased demand for service or limited revenue.
- As part of your business continuity plan, develop staffing and volunteer plans that allow your organization to meet the increased demand for services.
- Develop a communications plan to inform the public of your service capacity and whether you are accepting new clients during an emergency.

2 **During and after a disaster, staff and volunteers may face fatigue, burnout or personal stress as they are pressured to maintain service delivery under difficult conditions.** More than 40 per cent of non-profit organizations reported increased staff and volunteer stress during the 2013 floods.

- Inform all staff and volunteers about your emergency plans and their roles during an emergency. Maintain up-to-date contact lists of who should report to work or serve as backup in the event of a disaster.
- Consider recruiting volunteers based on disaster response needs. Know your organization's volunteer insurance policies, including third party liability and personal injury. Plan for spontaneous volunteers who may arrive to help out.

3 The Government of Alberta's **Disaster Recovery Program (DRP)** provides financial assistance to non-profit organizations for uninsurable property damage, loss and other expenses to cover the costs of returning essential property to functional condition.

To be eligible for DRP, a non-profit organization must:

- **Be registered as a non-profit organization;**
- **Contribute significantly to the fabric and sustainability of the community;**
- **Provide basic or essential service in the interest of the community as a whole;**
- **Allow members of the local community reasonable access to the facility.**

In your business continuity plan, outline how your organization will meet DRP requirements. Store any documentation of your legal status as a non-profit organization and information on your involvement in the community in a safe location, and have back-up copies at a secondary site.

It may take several months or longer to receive DRP funding. Consider how potential delays could affect your recovery plans. If possible, diversify funding to ensure support throughout an emergency. Calgary's nonprofits have covered expenses incurred in past disasters through:

- Insurance (property and business interruption);
- Individual, private and corporate donations;
- Operational reserves;
- Other funding organizations (such as the Canadian Red Cross and the Calgary Foundation).

4 **Plan for an increase in donations (including donation of goods) in a disaster and develop a donation management strategy prior to an emergency or disaster.** Prepare materials in advance to let the public know about the services you might offer during a disaster, the costs of those services and how you might use donations in provision of these services. Notify donors if the volume of donations is overwhelming your organization's capacities.

5 **Two-thirds of Calgary's non-profit organizations do not have plans to operate out of another facility if forced to evacuate.** It is difficult to develop partnerships in the chaos of a disaster. Consider creating mutual aid agreements—partners may be willing to provide you with resources, volunteers, staff, office space, or service coverage during an emergency. Endeavour to partner with agencies that are not likely to be affected by the same disaster. During the 2013 floods, several organizations discovered they could not use their designated backup facilities because they were also affected by flooding.

6 **Stay informed.** Get information that could affect your operations by signing up for the Calgary Chamber's Emergency Business Contact database. You will receive email notification about events or incidents that could affect your operations.

Sign up at calgarychamber.com/EBCD.



Additional Resources

Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations (CCVO)

www.calgarycvo.org

Disaster Recovery Program Handbook Not-for-Profit Organizations, Institutions and Condo Associations

<http://www.alberta.ca/albertacode/images/DRP-manual-nonprofit.pdf>

Emergency Preparedness Initiative Calgary

<http://getpreparednonprofit.com>

Nonprofit Financial Risks and Vulnerabilities

(Strengthening Nonprofits: A Capacity Builder's Resource Library)

http://strengtheningnonprofits.org/resources/guidebooks/Managing_Crisis.pdf

Volunteer Alberta

Volunteers and the Law in Alberta

<http://volunteeralberta.ab.ca/vollaw>

Insurance Toolkit for the Voluntary Sector

<http://volunteeralberta.ab.ca/insurance/general-information/types-insurance>