



TOWN OF
berwick

Kentville
A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

wolfville

Kings County, NS Winter Storm Preparedness & Response Plan

March 2025

Change 1



Table of Contents – Winter Storm Preparedness and Response Plan

FOREWORD	1
1.0 INTRODUCTION	2
1.1 Background.....	2
1.2 Authorities.....	3
1.3 References.....	4
1.4 Purpose.....	4
1.5 Aim and Scope.....	4
2.0 CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS (CONOPS)	5
2.1 Planning Assumptions	5
2.2 Plan Limitations	5
2.3 Incident Planning.....	5
2.3.1 Public Messaging	6
2.3.2 Vulnerable Populations	6
2.4 Winter Storm Hazards/Impacts.....	7
2.5 Characteristics of Risk.....	7
2.6 Planning for Winter Weather	8
2.7 Winter Storm Emergency Management Considerations	9
2.8 Winter Storm Emergency Management Priorities.....	9
2.9 Winter Storm Organizational Structure	10
2.10 Municipal Public Warning Strategy	10
2.11 Recovery.....	10
3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES	12
3.1 Federal.....	12
3.2 Provincial	12
3.2.1 Department of Municipal Affairs (DMA)	12
3.2.2 Nova Scotia Department of Emergency Management (NS DEM)	12
3.2.3 Nova Scotia Department of Public Works (NS DPW)	12
3.3 Regional – Kings REMO.....	13
3.3.1 Prevention and Mitigation.....	13
3.3.2 Response / Recovery Responsibilities	13

3.3.3	Regional Emergency Management Coordinator (REMC)	14
3.3.4	Site Operations (Incident Commander).....	14
3.3.5	Fire Services	15
3.3.6	Kings RCMP/Kentville Police.....	15
3.3.7	Infrastructure Services – Water / Wastewater	15
3.3.8	NS DPW & Engineering Departments.....	15
3.3.9	Infrastructure Services – Transit.....	15
3.3.10	Community Development – Social Services	15
3.3.11	Utilities (NS Power, Berwick Electric, Gas etc.)	16
4.0	PUBLIC EDUCATION & AWARENESS OF WINTER STORM PREPAREDNESS	17
4.1	Evacuation Warnings.....	17
5.0	PLAN TESTING, REVIEW & MAINTENANCE	19
5.1	Plan Testing Schedule & Responsibility.....	19
5.2	Plan Review & Maintenance	19
6.0	DISTRIBUTION LIST.....	20
Annexes.....		21
	Annex A – Declaring a State of Local Emergency (SOLE)	1
	Annex B – Kings County Comfort Centres/Emergency Shelters	1
	Annex C – Winter Storm Event – Kings REMO Actions	1
	Annex D – ECC Activation Key Triggers to consider in response to a Winter Storm.....	1
	Annex F – Winter Storm Event Checklist.....	1
	Annex G – Criteria for Public Weather Alerts	4
	Annex H – Lessons Learned – Winter Storm Disasters	1
	Annex I – Winter Storms – Public Service Announcements (PSAs).....	1
	Annex J – Winter Storms – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ).....	1
	Annex K – Winter Storms - References	2
	Federal.....	2
	Provincial	2
	Regional.....	2
	Annex L – Abbreviations & Acronyms	1
	Annex M – Glossary.....	1



FOREWORD

The development of a Kings County Regional Winter Storm Preparedness and Response Plan is paramount to public safety in the case of man-made disasters and natural disaster threats. The Kings County Regional Winter Storm Preparedness and Response Plan was prepared in consultation with County and Municipal stakeholders responsible for everyday management throughout Kings County. It serves as Kings County's Emergency Winter Storm Plan to coordinate an integrated approach to Winter Storm response.

As a Supporting Plan to the Kings REMO Regional Emergency Management Plan, the Kings County Regional Winter Storm Preparedness and Response Plan is augmented by the Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) Operational Guidelines and Evacuation Guidelines in order to provide the level of detail required for a comprehensive emergency response to a flood event.

Kings REMO strives for strong leadership within the emergency management community and is dedicated to continuous improvements and enhancements to this plan, training and exercising throughout the Kings County region. Therefore, this plan is a living document that will be amended as necessary through a planning process that is managed by the Regional Emergency Management Coordinator (REMC) in consultation with emergency management partners throughout the County.



Councillor Robbie Hiltz
Chair
Kings REMO
Regional Emergency Management Advisory
Committee (REMAC)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Extreme cold and heavy snowfall can immobilize the entire County causing road closures, power outages, disruption in communication services, and no heat for several days, under the most severe circumstances. Severe storms can require persons to abandon their homes and seek shelter.

Winter storms can range from a moderate snow over a few hours to a blizzard with blinding, wind-driven snow that lasts for several days. Many winter storms are accompanied by dangerously low temperatures and sometimes by strong winds, icing, sleet and freezing rain. One of the main concerns is that winter weather can knock out heat, power, and communication, sometimes for days at a time. Heavy snowfall and extreme cold can have serious effects on an entire region. Icy roadways can cause serious accidents.



Winter storms present a different set of challenges relative to other natural disaster types. Heavy snowfall, especially when accompanied by high winds, causes drifting snow and poor visibility. Sidewalks, streets, and highways can become hazardous to pedestrians and motorists. Extreme low temperatures can exacerbate these effects and make infrastructure and isolated populations more vulnerable. Winter storms generally do not cause the same degree of infrastructure damage as other natural disasters and rarely require population evacuations. However, they can be longer lasting and wider in geographic coverage than other types of natural disasters. The uniformity of the damage caused by severe winter storms also has a more disruptive effect on mobility than more localized disruptions from, for example, flooding. Damage to infrastructure can include power outages, while personal safety and mobility impacts include increased accident rates, increased travel times, cold-induced injuries and inability for relief services to respond to vulnerable populations.

This Regional Winter Storm Preparedness and Response Plan is only one part of preparedness efforts that include training, exercises and the debriefing of actual events. As Kings County evolves, so should the Winter Storm Plan, which will be regularly reviewed and adapted. Due to the nature of major emergencies, there may be a need to adapt the plan during a Winter Storm. Therefore, the following plan should not be seen as a final, rigid solution, but rather the foundation for continuous planning efforts

1.2 Authorities

The authority for an evacuation is afforded by the [Nova Scotia Municipal Government Act](#) and the [Emergency Management Act](#).

The legal authority for local authorities to order an evacuation rests within the Nova Scotia Emergency Management Act (1990) Section 14(f) – Protection of property and health or safety

Protection of property and health or safety – Section 14

Upon a state of local emergency being declared in respect to a municipality or an area thereof, the mayor may, during the state of local emergency, in respect of such municipality or an area thereof, do everything necessary for the protection of property and the health and safety of persons therein may:

- a. Cause an emergency management plan or any part thereof to be implemented;
- b. Acquire or utilize or cause the acquisition or utilization of personal property by confiscation or any means considered necessary;
- c. Authorize or require a qualified person to render aid of such type as that person may be qualified to provide;
- d. Control or prohibit travel to or from an area or on a road, street or highway;
- e. Provide for the maintenance and restoration of essential facilities, the distribution of essential supplies and the maintenance and coordination of emergency medical, social and other essential services;
- f. Cause or order the evacuation of persons and the removal of livestock and personal property threatened by an emergency and make arrangements for the adequate care and protection thereof;
- g. Authorize the entry by a person into any building or upon land without warrant;
- h. Cause or order the demolition or removal of any thing where the demolition or removal is necessary or advisable for the purpose of reaching the scene of an emergency, or attempting to forestall its occurrence or of combating its progress;
- i. Order the assistance of persons needed to carry out the provisions mentioned in this Section;
- j. regulate the distribution and availability of essential goods, services and resources;
- k. authorize and make emergency payments;
- l. assess damage to any works, property or undertaking and the costs to repair, replace or restore the same;
- m. assess damage to the environment and the costs and methods to eliminate or alleviate the damage

1.3 References

- [Public Health Agency of Canada – Emergency Lodging Service, 2007](#)
- [Nova Scotia Emergency Management Act](#)
- [Kings REMO Regional Emergency Management Plan, 2024-03](#)
- [Kings REMO Regional Emergency Evacuation Plan, 2022-09](#)
- Kings REMO Evacuation Operational Guidelines, 2018-05-01
- Kings REMO Emergency Coordination Centre Operational Guidelines, 2018-05-01
- [Kings County Policy – Comfort Centres/Emergency Shelters](#)

1.4 Purpose

Winter Storm preparedness and response planning is a strategy to minimize loss of life, injury and trauma and to reduce property damage as a result of a significant Winter Storm, as with ‘White Juan’ in 2003. No one can anticipate every contingency during a winter storm event, but a winter storm preparedness and response plan will help develop appropriate responses for a wide range of occurrences. This Emergency Management Support Plan will enable a quicker, more effective and more efficient response, and lead to a speedier recovery.

The Plan should be activated as soon as it becomes apparent that, due to an emergency of such magnitude as to warrant its implementation, evacuation and relocation of people is necessary.

1.5 Aim and Scope

The primary goal of this Plan is to provide an integrated planning framework that recognizes the role of individual residents, business owners, emergency responders and the Municipalities of Kings County. Together these individuals, groups and agencies represent the first line of defence in responding to a winter storm event within Kings County.

This goal is supported by overarching objective of enhancing public and emergency responder education, emergency preparedness and emergency response policies and procedures. Together these are intended to prevent or reduce loss of life or severe injury and/or damage to property and infrastructure during a major winter storm event within Kings County.



If the need to evacuate and relocate residents of the affected area(s) is apparent, the provisions of the Regional Emergency Evacuation Plan (REEP) shall be implemented. In such events, the Municipality shall discuss the need to declare a State of Local Emergency (SOLE), [Annex A](#), if a mandatory evacuation is needed. If there is a fire or the possibility of fire, the Fire Chief has the authority to declare the mandatory evacuation if the current time there is no advantage to declaring a SOLE.

2.0 CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS (CONOPS)

Emergency response efforts during a winter storm may require coordination of all Municipal Governments within Kings County as well as additional support agencies. The prime requirement for effective communication is the Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) where authorities can coordinate emergency operations, assistance and resources.



Most emergency incidents require the use of a graduated response based on the extent, size, duration and/or complexity of the event. Initially, at the onset of an emergency, a single or dual response from municipal departments (i.e., Police and Fire) may be sufficient to handle the incident. If the emergency escalates beyond the capability of a single or dual response, additional measures will be implemented as needed. The Kings County Emergency Coordination Centre provides resource-coordination across the County and maintains Situational Awareness through a Current Operating Picture (COP).

2.1 Planning Assumptions

The plan assumes the following:

- Kings REMO and the Emergency Coordination Centre Management Team (ECCMT) will have the primary responsibility for mitigation, prevention, preparedness, response and recovery in a winter storm emergency/disaster situation.
- It is highly probable that with events such as climate change and weather anomalies, Kings County will experience significant winter storm event to some degree in the future.
- Winter storm forecasts provide sufficient time to conduct planning and to prepare in general.
- Despite extensive public messaging, many residents of Kings County often fail to heed warnings to prepare for a storm.
- Residents of Kings County will take active measures to protect personal property.
- Because of the inherent uncertainties associated with any weather forecast, responders generally must assume the worst when it comes to preparing for a storm.
- Storm related traffic congestion, parked vehicles, and abandoned vehicles can impede efforts to clear roadways or restore power

2.2 Plan Limitations

The municipalities of Kings County will endeavor to make every reasonable effort to respond to a winter storm. However, regional resources and systems may become overwhelmed by the magnitude of a storm and its impacts. There is no guarantee implied by this document that a perfect response to a winter storm will be practical or possible.

2.3 Incident Planning

When there is sufficient notice of an incident with the potential to cause significant impacts, the Regional Emergency Management Coordinator (REMC), or designate, will review available information and recommend a course of action to the Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) Managers (CAOs).

- **Take no action:** Municipal Departments manage the incident without activation of the ECC.
- **Monitor the Incident:** The REMC, or designate, monitors the incident in coordination with affected municipalities. The REMC keeps the ECC Managers fully briefed on the situation. If needed, the REMC will share situation reports and forecasts with stakeholders using existing email distribution groups.
- **Conduct a Planning Meeting:** The REMC may recommend to the ECC Managers the convening of a planning meeting to review a Regional Action Plan and determine when the ECC will be activated and what Emergency Support Functions (ESF) will be involved.

The decision on what action to take is based on the totality of the circumstances, such as the forecast, anticipated impacts, past experience with similar weather events, scheduled events taking place during the storm, and recommendations from those Municipal departments likely to have a role in the response.

Triggers that could cause a planning meeting to be called, include but are not limited to the following:

- When requested by a Municipal department;
- “Weather Advisory” issued by Environment and Climate Change Canada;
- Freezing rain and/or snow anticipated;
- Freezing temps. sustained for 2-days straight (daytime temps. don’t rise above freezing).

2.3.1 Public Messaging

Public messaging is coordinated through the ECC Information Officer. Public messaging topics common to winter storms include:

- Check on your neighbour;
- Shelter and warming center locations and hours of service;
- Extent of damage;
- Safety information; hypothermia, driving, carbon monoxide poisoning, obey road closed and other warning signs;
- What the County is doing to respond to the incident;
- Status of County services, changes in hours of operation for County programs;
- Where to get information and assistance;
- Protect pipes and water services from freezing; and
- Clear storm drains in the event of snow melt or flooding.

2.3.2 Vulnerable Populations

Each storm and subsequent impacts may affect populations differently. For winter storms, populations that are potentially more vulnerable are people who are homeless; are elderly; are receiving medical treatments, such as dialysis; have a disability; rely on in-home case management services; need power for medical or assistive devices; become homebound and unable to go out during prolonged storm conditions; have limited English proficiency and others.

2.4 Winter Storm Hazards/Impacts

- Blizzards - combine strong winds with cold temperatures, and blowing or drifting snow, which reduces visibility to zero.
- Snow storms - a period of rapid accumulation of snow, often accompanied by high winds, cold temperatures, and low visibility.
- Ice Storms - an intense formation of ice on objects by the freezing, on impact, of rain or drizzle. Occurrences of freezing precipitation in Nova Scotia may vary.
- Extreme Cold – prolonged periods of very low temperatures, often combined with high winds

In addition to the direct impacts caused by extreme winter storms – notably the loss of mobility due to the accumulation of snow and ice on roads or from diminished visibility while driving – the operation of the transportation systems can be further compromised by other factors. These factors include failure to provide clear instructions to the public, failure of the public to comply with instructions, and failure to maintain access to transit and to fuel. The transportation system is critical to public safety, especially when the needs of those without basic mobility options are considered.

Cold weather brings with it the potential for freezing temperatures, heavy snowfall and ice incidents that can have multiple impacts on a community. Impacts to drinking water and wastewater utilities may include, but are not limited to:



- Pipe breaks throughout the distribution system, due to freeze/thaw cycles
- Loss of power and communication lines
- Limited access to facilities due to icy roads or debris such as downed tree limbs
- Reduced work force due to unsafe travel conditions throughout the service area
- Source water quality impacts due to increased amount of road salt in stormwater runoff
- Potential flooding risk due to snowpack melt and ice jams (accumulations of ice in rivers or streams)
- Potential surface water supply challenges as ice and frozen slush can block valves and restrict intakes

2.5 Characteristics of Risk

- Access to Food/Water
- Access to source of heat
- Continuity of Government Services, if prolonged
- Ice jams potentially leading to flooding
- Motorists trapped in their cars
- Collapsed buildings
- Major traffic accidents

- Interruption of critical infrastructure systems
- People isolated in their residences
- Fire during winter storms presents a great danger because water supplies may freeze and firefighters may not be able to access a scene
- Alternate heating sources may not be safe or may not be used properly leading to injury or death
- Death and heart attacks may increase due to physical overexertion and the exposure to cold weather

2.6 Planning for Winter Weather

Business owners and/or response teams should incorporate the following concepts into planning for winter weather:

- Monitor news and weather reports on television or the radio (with battery backup)
- Alert employees or others on-site that severe weather is approaching and communicate expectations
- Be aware of the dangers posed by ice and snow falling from equipment and buildings, mediate if possible
- Identify dangers posed by cold weather on exposed piping (hazardous releases, flooding, etc.)
- Prepare and insulate exposed piping
- Contract snow removal services or obtain the necessary equipment (snow shovels, ice scrapers, rock salt, tire chains, etc.)
- Ensure that company vehicles have a full tank of gas and are functioning properly (heater, de-icing fluid, antifreeze levels, windshield wipers)
- Ensure flashlights are in proper working order and have additional batteries on site.
- Monitor ice and snow accumulation on any onsite tanks, sheds, or buildings
- Obtain generators, if necessary, to re-power facilities or necessary equipment
- If appropriate, leave water taps slightly open so they drip continuously to prevent pipes from freezing.
- Understand and implement cold weather response techniques for product spills, as released product may flow under ice or snow.
- Establish and maintain communication with personnel
- Consider limiting vehicle traffic
- Maintain building temperature at acceptable levels and understand safety measures if using space heaters.
- Notify supervisors if facility(s) loose power or is otherwise unable to operate



2.7 Winter Storm Emergency Management Considerations

- Comfort centres/Emergency Shelters with cots and food supplies
- Need for generators and fuel for essential services
- Need for heating equipment
- Emergency shelter for stranded travellers
- Responding to building collapse emergencies
- Search and rescue
- Drop in/comfort centres (e.g. hot meals and update on emergency situation)



2.8 Winter Storm Emergency Management Priorities

In a winter storm situation, Kings REMO and its partner agencies will focus their efforts on achieving the following objectives:

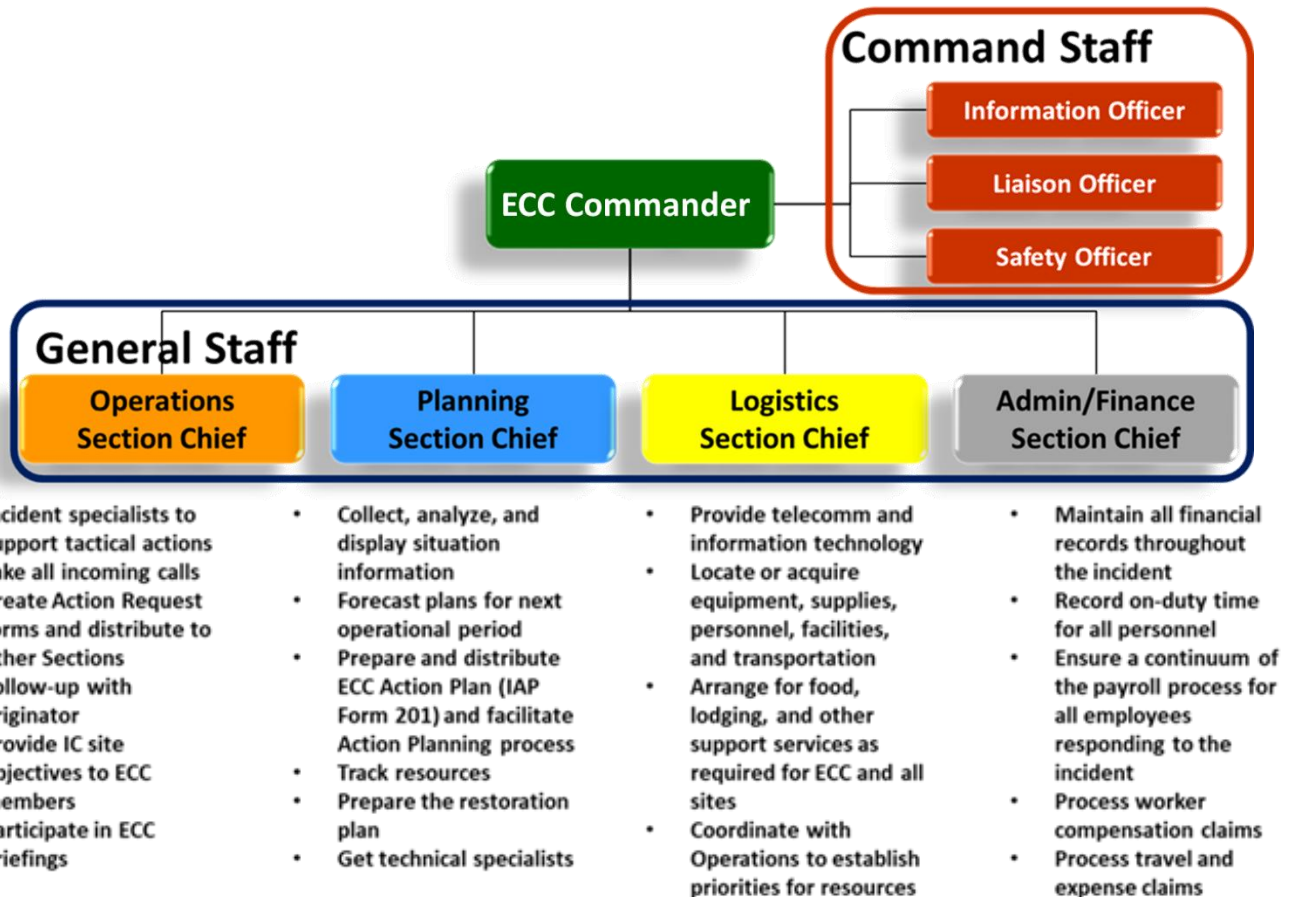
- Preservation of life and safety of emergency responders, residents and visitors.
- Support for stranded and evacuated persons.
- Protection of the water supply system, sewage treatment and other critical infrastructure of the Municipalities of Kings County.
- Protection of the environment, watercourses and potable water supplies.
- Reducing the economic and social suffering and losses to the residents of Kings County where possible.
- Returning communities to normal through a coordinated recovery process that includes re-entry of displaced persons.
- Reducing the impact to private property where possible and appropriate.



2.9 Winter Storm Organizational Structure

To support a regional winter storm incident within Kings County the Kings REMO Emergency Coordination Centre is structured under the Incident Command System:

- Key ECC Activation triggers outlined in Annex D



2.10 Municipal Public Warning Strategy

As there are limited audible warning systems within the Municipalities of Kings County, the public should be alerted to winter storm conditions through local media (radio, television, newspaper) and social media (Facebook, Twitter). Warnings should also be posted on all Municipal websites and distributed through the Kings REMO Emergency Email Notification System. In extreme circumstances, public warning may also be done through vehicle public address systems and/or door-to-door contact by municipal services and/or volunteers.

2.11 Recovery

The ability to recover from the physical damage, injury, economic impairment and human suffering resulting from a disaster is a critical element of any emergency program. It is essential to recognize that

successful recovery planning and activities depend on the rapid start-up of a recovery plan and must begin during the emergency response phase.

Through the implementation of a municipal disaster recovery strategy, Kings County Municipalities will work with their Departments, partner agencies, and volunteer resources to restore critical infrastructure (both public and private), systematically clean up affected areas, and return the community to a state of normalcy.

The prioritization of restoration and clean up efforts will be determined by the Kings REMO ECC Management Team based on a number of influencing factors, with the primary focus being on the protection of public safety.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Federal

The Government of Canada has disaster assistance programs available to respond to the financial needs of provinces and territories in the wake of major natural disasters including the [Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements](#)

Municipal staff across departments receive regular weather reports, advisories and warnings from Environment Canada weather services. These services are provided by weather meteorologists located in at Nova Scotia EMO Headquarters in Dartmouth, NS.

3.2 Provincial

A number of Nova Scotia government departments and agencies are engaged in winter storm related activities, including:

3.2.1 Department of Municipal Affairs (DMA)

- Provides programs, grants, and funding to municipalities and community groups
- Provides services and guidance to municipalities, towns, and villages in many areas including safety and security, budget planning and finance, and policy and program development
- Helps municipalities across the province govern and provide municipal services in times of emergency and are responsible for the Emergency Management Office and the Office of the Fire Marshal

3.2.2 Nova Scotia Department of Emergency Management (NS DEM)

- [NS DEM](#) takes an “all-hazards” approach to emergency management that recognizes that mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery can be used to address the impact of disasters.
- [NS DEM](#) regional staff (Emergency Management Planning Officers - EMPO's) work with municipal emergency management coordinators to ensure there are emergency management plans in place for each municipality in Nova Scotia.
- Municipal planning and local knowledge is represented in the development of emergency management plans.
- The [MCCAP](#) process requires municipal emergency management coordinators to work with EMPOs in the development of their respective climate change action plans.

3.2.3 Nova Scotia Department of Public Works (NS DPW)

- [NS DPW](#) is responsible for delivering quality public infrastructure for Nova Scotia and deal with approximately 23,000 km of roads, 4,100 bridges, 7 ferries, and 2,400 buildings.
- [NS DPW](#) designs, constructs and operates this infrastructure in accordance with nationally and internationally recognized standards.

- [NS DPW](#) consults with communities on infrastructure developments. Often this infrastructure is developed or renewed in partnership with the Federal or municipal governments.

3.3 Regional – Kings REMO

Kings REMO will work with partners to determine functional roles and responsibilities. Departments and agencies that may be involved in a response include (but is not limited to) fire, police, emergency medical services, public works, emergency social services, Amateur Radio Emergency Services, volunteer agencies (e.g. Canadian Red Cross, Salvation Army, etc.), provincial ministries (e.g. Lands and Forestry, and Environment), and utility companies. The table below provides a sample of responsibilities that may need to be assigned.

- Health Checks
- Provision and operation of snow removal equipment
- Alternate modes of transportation
- Search and Rescue
- Alternate heat sources
- Health care at comfort centres / emergency shelters
- Set up and operation of comfort centres / emergency shelters

3.3.1 Prevention and Mitigation

Kings REMO is responsible for developing and implementing mitigation strategies to prevent or lessen the severity of winter storms.

These strategies include:

- Coordinating the Kings REMO training program;
- Development and maintenance of the Kings REMO Regional Emergency Management Plan (REMP), and Emergency Management Support Plans
- Developing and circulating public education material concerning winter storm preparedness.

3.3.2 Response / Recovery Responsibilities

When winter storms will occur, the initial responsibility for the welfare of residents is at the Municipal level. As with any emergency, the first priority is responder and public safety. The second priority is the protection and maintenance of public critical infrastructure in order to maintain basic services (hydro, water / wastewater, gas, telecommunication systems, etc.).

When winter storm conditions are present within Kings County, Kings REMO should:

- Activate the Kings REMO Winter Storm Preparedness and Response Plan
- Activate the Kings REMO Regional Emergency Management Plan.
- Convene the Emergency Coordination Centre Management Team
- Appoint an Incident Commander (if not already appointed).
- If necessary, recommend the declaration of a Municipal emergency.
- Direct and control all winter storm response operations in Kings County.

- Coordinate the acquisition of emergency response equipment, personnel and other resources required at the incident site.
- Coordinate assistance to residents displaced by winter storm conditions.
- Disseminate vital emergency information to staff, the media and citizens using appropriate channels.
- Provide information to the public concerning water supply safety, alternative sources of water, and protective actions to be taken.
- Request assistance from agencies not under Municipal control, as required (i.e. Municipal Mutual Assistance Agreements, Red Cross, local industry, etc.).
- Request Provincial assistance to perform specific flood combat / control tasks as may be required.
- Coordinate community disaster financial assistance (Nova Scotia Disaster Relief Assistance Program) as deemed necessary.
- Facilitate arrangements for the inspection of evacuated premises and provide for their orderly re-occupation as appropriate.
- Assist the Provincial authorities with damage estimation and assessment after the winter storm.
- Provide residents and businesses with information on safe handling of items damaged by winter storm conditions.
- Explore mitigation and prevention strategies to reduce the impact of future winter storm events

3.3.3 Regional Emergency Management Coordinator (REMC)

Coordinate winter storm specific education materials for distribution to residents and business owners within identified winter storm damage areas to include:

- The Winter Storm Preparedness and Response Plan;
- Established evacuation routes (minimum of two) from each identified flood damage centre, including locations of a primary and secondary Evacuation Centre / Emergency Shelter;
- Emergency preparedness and response education information for residents and businesses including pre-event, during an event, and post event (including information related to sandbags and building a sandbag dike); and
- Contact information for the REMC.

3.3.4 Site Operations (Incident Commander)

The Incident Commander (IC) assumes responsibility for the overall coordination of all operations at the emergency site and is the point of contact between the ECC Management Team and site operations.

The Incident Commander is responsible for:

- Identifying the impacts from winter storms.
- Prioritizing response activities.
- Evaluating and identifying equipment and resources needed.

3.3.5 Fire Services

- Conduct rescues, as required.
- Rescue / evacuate any persons in danger with minimum delay and provide first aid as necessary.
- Assist Police Services with evacuations in the affected areas as required.
- Control Fires, released chemicals and other hazards.

3.3.6 Kings RCMP/Kentville Police

- Evacuate the affected areas as required.
- Perform traffic and crowd control operations.
- Disperse people not directly connected with the operations who, by their presence, are considered to be in danger, or whose presence hinders in any way the efficient functioning of the flood combat/control operation.
- Secure the affected areas (based on need and availability of staff).
- Provide community security to prevent against looting and other unruly activities.
- Identify and establish detour routes due to high water and maintain proper traffic flow patterns as deemed appropriate.

3.3.7 Infrastructure Services – Water / Wastewater

- Implement actions to protect water and sewer systems and identify threats to drinking water.
- Work with ECC Information Officer to advise the public of protective actions that may be required in the event of damage or concerns related to the sewer systems and/or drinking water sources.
- Request the disconnection or discontinuance of any service that may constitute a public hazard.
- In the event a flood emergency results in the release of untreated or partially treated sewage into lakes and rivers, implement internal procedures and notify the Ministry of the Environment, and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

3.3.8 NS DPW & Engineering Departments

- Clear snow-covered roads
- Free obstructions to storm and wastewater drainage
- Coordinate activities of utility companies

3.3.9 Infrastructure Services – Transit

- Provide transportation for residents and emergency responders as required.

3.3.10 Community Development – Social Services

- Provide assistance to residents displaced by flooding as required.
- Coordinate Emergency Shelter operations.

3.3.11 Utilities (NS Power, Berwick Electric, Gas etc.)

- Perform disconnect operations where this is considered necessary and in the interest of public safety.
- Secure services and equipment to ensure continuity of supply.
- Coordinate the priority restoration of affected services as dictated by emergency needs of municipal services and other essential users.
- Assist with clean up and restoration of services.
- Assess ability to resume normal operations.

4.0 PUBLIC EDUCATION & AWARENESS OF WINTER STORM PREPAREDNESS

Since public awareness of winter storm preparedness and response will contribute to an effective evacuation process, ongoing public awareness and education shall be an integral component of this plan. To this end, this Plan, as part of the Regional Emergency Management Plan, shall be posted on the [Municipality of the County of Kings](#), the Towns of [Berwick](#), [Kentville](#) & [Wolfville](#)'s websites in order that the public may have access to it and printed information shall be provided to residents in historically vulnerable areas. During an emergency evacuation, residents are to be able to access to the local media sources for information and instructions.

As part of Community Outreach, the Kings REMO Regional Emergency Management Coordinator should provide an overview of Emergency Evacuation procedures to members of the community on an ongoing basis.

4.1 Evacuation Warnings

To be effective, Evacuation Warnings/Announcements should have the following characteristics:

- Authority**—Warnings are more credible and more likely to stimulate appropriate public actions if they are issued by a recognised authority.
- Consistency**—To avoid confusion and uncertainty, it is important that consistency be maintained when multiple warnings are issued to the public.
- Accuracy**—Accuracy and currency of information contained in the warning also affect understanding and belief. Errors can cause people to doubt subsequent warnings.
- Clarity**—An unclear warning can cause people to misunderstand or ignore it. Warnings should be in simple language, without the use of jargon.
- Level of Certainty**—Certainty determines the level of belief in a warning and affects decision making by those to whom the warning is given.
- Level of Detail**—Insufficient information creates confusion, uncertainty and anxiety, and public imagination will tend to fill the information void. This can promote rumours, uninformed misconceptions or fears.
- Clear Guidance**— Messages containing clear guidance about protective actions people should take and the time available for doing so are more effective than those which provide no specific instructions.
- Repetition of Warnings**—Where time permits, warnings should be repeated preferably using more than one delivery method. This provides confirmation of the warning message, helps increase

persuasiveness and overcomes the problem of people not responding after hearing a warning only once.

- Impact Areas**—Warning information that clearly states the areas actually or likely to be affected by the event is most effective.
- Methods of Information Dissemination**—Warnings are more effective if a range of methods is used rather than a single method, thereby reaching as many people as possible in the shortest time. Methods need to be chosen to fit the time-frame available and should recognise that some modes are appropriate in reaching many people but with only relatively simple or generalised information (e.g. radio, television) whereas others can provide more specific information to targeted individuals (e.g. telephone, facsimile machine, computer, two-way radio, door-knocking or use of community leaders or wardens). Use of the Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS) “[Alert Ready](#)” can enhance the effectiveness of electronic media warnings by alerting listeners for an urgent safety message to follow.
- Information Dissemination for Special Needs Groups**—Consideration must be given to the specific problems of special needs groups. Dissemination to, and receipt of information by, many of these groups will pose different challenges, for example, language. Neighbours can also help by checking on special-needs people in close proximity.

5.0 PLAN TESTING, REVIEW & MAINTENANCE

5.1 Plan Testing Schedule & Responsibility

The Kings County Regional Emergency Management Coordinator (REMC) is responsible for coordinating the annual testing (in whole or in part) of the Regional Winter Storm Preparedness and Response Plan in order to verify its overall effectiveness and provide training to the emergency personnel. The exercise can take the form of a simple tabletop or a more elaborate functional exercise.

5.2 Plan Review & Maintenance

The Kings County Winter Storm Preparedness and Response Plan will be maintained by the Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee (REMPC) and the Regional Emergency Management Coordinator (REMC).

The WSPRP will be reviewed annually and, where necessary, revised by a meeting(s) of the [Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee](#) (REMPC) and the [Regional Emergency Management Advisory Committee](#) (REMAC). The REMP shall be revised subject to the approval of Municipal Councils.

REVIEWS

MONTH	DAY	YEAR	BY
January	31	2023	DS Stovel, Kings REMO REMC
January	31	2024	DS Stovel, Kings REMO REMC

PLAN REVISIONS

MONTH	DAY	YEAR	CHANGE	APPROVED
March	20	2025	1	2025-04-22

6.0 DISTRIBUTION LIST

Distributed electronically:

Municipal Units:

- [Municipality of the County of Kings](#)
- [Town of Berwick](#)
- [Town of Kentville](#)
- [Town of Wolfville](#)

- [Village of Aylesford](#)
- [Village of Canning](#)
- Village of Cornwallis Square
- [Village of Greenwood](#)
- [Village of Kingston](#)
- [Village of New Minas](#)
- [Village of Port Williams](#)

Fire Departments

- Kings County Fire Departments

Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee (REMPC)

- [NS Department of Emergency Management \(NS DEM\)](#)
- [Acadia University](#)
- [Annapolis Valley Amateur Radio Club](#) (AVARC)
- [Annapolis Valley First Nation](#)
- [Annapolis Valley Regional Centre for Education](#) (AVRCE)
- [Brigadoon Village](#)
- Community Services – Kings County
- [NS Department of Natural Resources](#) (NS DNR)
- [NS Department of Public Works](#) (NS DPW)
- [NS Emergency Health Services](#)
- Fire Services
- [Glooscap First Nations EMO](#)
- [Kentville Police](#) / [Kings County RCMP](#)
- [Kings Transit Authority](#) (KTA)
- [NS Department of Agriculture](#)
- [NS Health Authority](#)
- [Canadian Red Cross](#)
- [Valley Communications](#)
- [Valley Search and Rescue](#) (VSAR)

Annexes

- A [Declaring a State of Local Emergency \(SOLE\)](#)
 - [Form 4 \(Council\)](#)
 - [Form 5 \(Mayor\)](#)
- B [Kings County Comfort Centres/Emergency Shelters](#)
- C [Winter Storm Event – Kings REMO Actions](#)
- D [ECC Activation – Key Triggers to consider in response to a Winter Storm](#)
- E [Winter Storm Checklist](#)
- F [Criteria for Public Weather Alerts](#)
- G [Lessons Learned – Winter Storm Disasters](#)
- H [Winter Storms – Public Service Announcements \(PSAs\)](#)
- I [Winter Storms – Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#)
- J [Winter Storms – References \(Federal / Provincial / Regional\)](#)
- K [Abbreviations & Acronyms](#)
- L [Glossary](#)

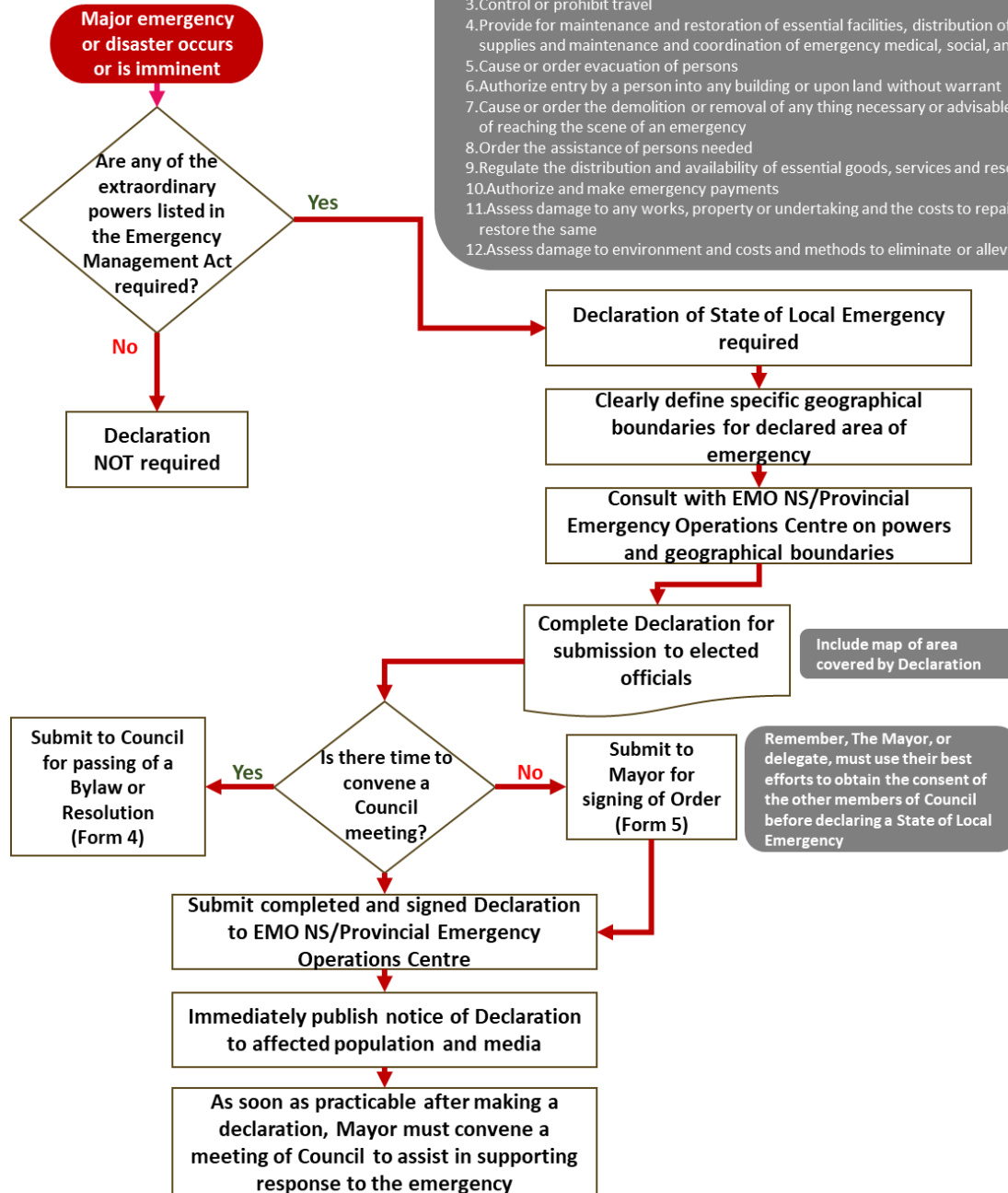
Annex A – Declaring a State of Local Emergency (SOLE)

Declaring a State of Local Emergency

Reference: [Nova Scotia Emergency Management Act](#)
(Section 12 / Section 14 / Section 18)

Emergency Powers in Brief:

1. Acquire or utilize personal property by confiscation or any means considered necessary
2. Authorize or require a qualified person to render aid
3. Control or prohibit travel
4. Provide for maintenance and restoration of essential facilities, distribution of essential supplies and maintenance and coordination of emergency medical, social, and other services
5. Cause or order evacuation of persons
6. Authorize entry by a person into any building or upon land without warrant
7. Cause or order the demolition or removal of any thing necessary or advisable for the purpose of reaching the scene of an emergency
8. Order the assistance of persons needed
9. Regulate the distribution and availability of essential goods, services and resources
10. Authorize and make emergency payments
11. Assess damage to any works, property or undertaking and the costs to repair, replace or restore the same
12. Assess damage to environment and costs and methods to eliminate or alleviate the damage



FORM 4

DECLARATION OF A STATE OF LOCAL EMERGENCY

MUNICIPALITY: _____

Section 12(2) of the *Emergency Management Act*, S.N.S. 1990, c.8

WHEREAS the area herein described is or may soon be encountering an emergency that requires prompt action to protect property or the health, safety or welfare of persons therein;

Emergency Area:

The area general described as:

[Empty rectangular box for describing the emergency area]

Province of Nova Scotia (hereafter

referred to as the "Designated Area(s)")

Yes

No

Nature of the Emergency:

[Empty rectangular box for describing the nature of the emergency]

AND WHEREAS the undersigned is satisfied that an emergency as defined in Section 2(b) of Chapter 8 of the Statutes of Nova Scotia, 1990, the *Emergency Management Act*, exists or may exist in the Designated Area(s) noted above;

THE UNDERSIGNED HEREBY DECLARES pursuant to Section 12(2) of the *Emergency Management Act*, a State of Local Emergency in the Municipality noted above as of and from ____ o'clock in the forenoon () or afternoon () of the _____ day of _____, 20____.

THIS DECLARATION OF STATE OF LOCAL EMERGENCY shall exist until _ o'clock in the forenoon () or afternoon () of the _____ day of _____, 20____, or for a maximum of 7 days from the date and time specified above unless the Declaration is renewed or terminated as provided in Section 20 of the *Emergency Management Act*.

DATED at _____, in the Municipality of _____, Province of Nova Scotia, this _____ day of _____, 20____.

Council, Municipality _____

Name _____

Positions _____

[Authorized by Resolution No. _____ dated the _____ Day of _____, 20____.

FORM 5

DECLARATION OF A STATE OF LOCAL EMERGENCY

MUNICIPALITY: _____

Section 12(2) of the *Emergency Management Act*, S.N.S. 1990, c.8

WHEREAS the area herein described is or may soon be encountering an emergency that requires prompt action to protect property or the health, safety or welfare of persons therein;

Emergency Area:

The area general described as:

[Empty rectangular box for describing the emergency area]

Province of Nova Scotia (hereafter

referred to as the "Designated Area(s)")

Yes

No

Nature of the Emergency:

[Empty rectangular box for describing the nature of the emergency]

AND WHEREAS the undersigned is satisfied that an emergency as defined in Section 2(b) of Chapter 8 of the Statutes of Nova Scotia, 1990, the *Emergency Management Act*, exists or may exist in the Designated Area(s) noted above;

AND WHEREAS the Council of the Municipality is unable to act;

AND WHEREAS the undersigned has (check appropriate box)

(a) Consulted with a majority of the members of the Municipal Emergency Management Committee

Yes

No

(b) Found it impractical to consult with the majority of the Municipal Emergency Management Committee

Yes

No

THE UNDERSIGNED HEREBY DECLARES pursuant to Section 12(3) of the *Emergency Management Act*, a State of Local Emergency in the Municipality noted above as of and from ____ o'clock in the forenoon () or afternoon () of the _____ day of _____, 20____.

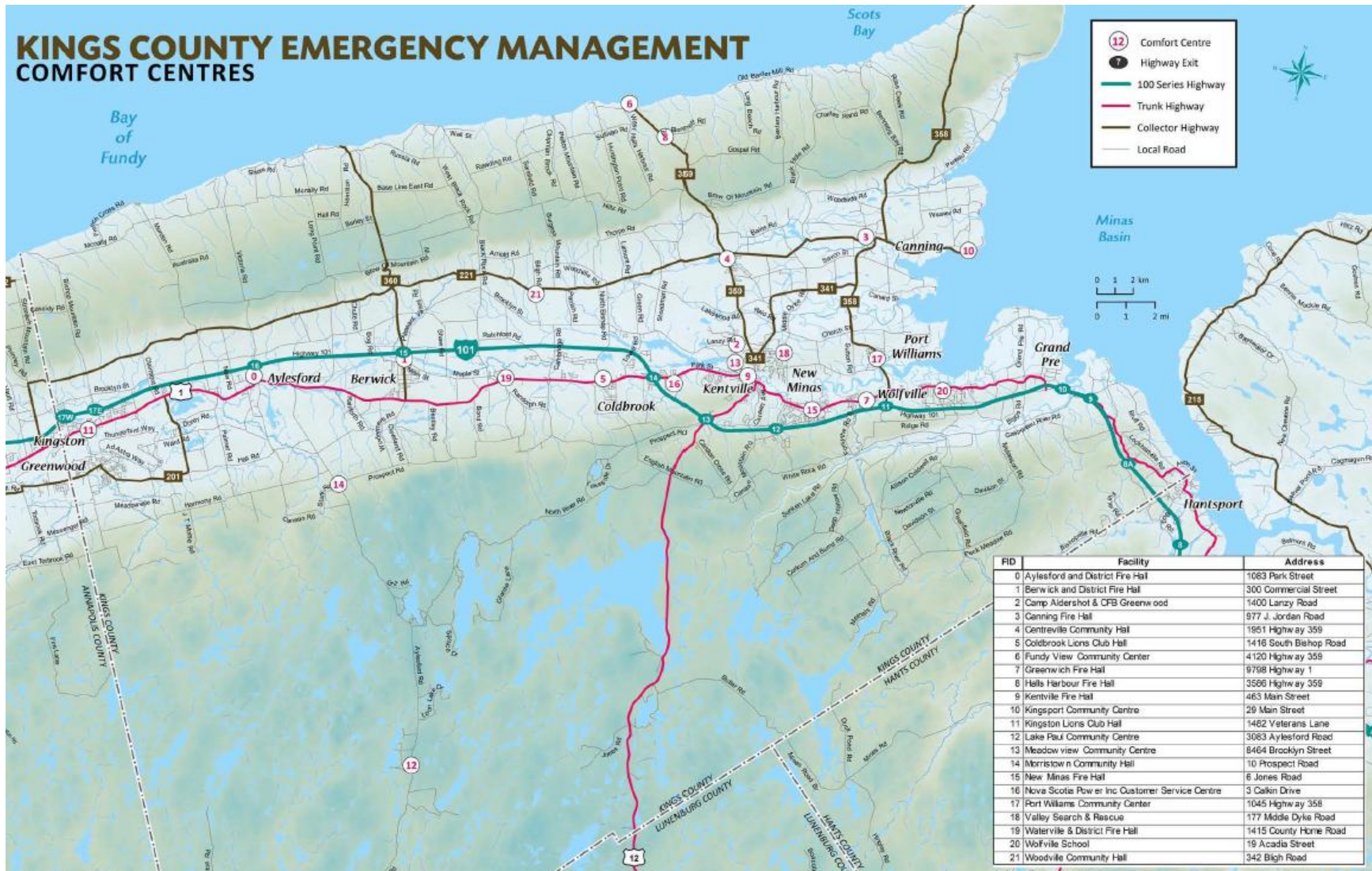
THIS DECLARATION OF STATE OF LOCAL EMERGENCY shall exist until _ o'clock in the forenoon () or afternoon () of the _____ day of _____, 20____, or for a maximum of 7 days from the date and time specified above unless the Declaration is renewed or terminated as provided in Section 20 of the *Emergency Management Act*.

DATED at _____, in the Municipality of _____, Province of Nova Scotia, this _____ day of _____, 20____.

Mayor's Signature

Municipality of

Annex B – Kings County Comfort Centres/Emergency Shelters



Annex C – Winter Storm Event – Kings REMO Actions

Reference: Kings REMO Regional Emergency Management Plan (REMP), 2025-03 (Change 4)

Snow Storm

A. Possible Major Effects	Probability
1. Casualties / Death	High
2. Disruption of community	High
3. Disruption of utilities	High
4. Damage to property	Light & isolated to extreme
5. Disruption of traffic	High
6. Disruption of communications	Moderate to High
7. Disruption to Hospitals & Social Services	Low to Moderate
8. Disruption to Emergency Providers	Moderate to High
9. Evacuation	Moderate to High

B. Potential Actions at the Scene	Agency Responsible
1. Warning of imminence	Meteorological service/CBC/Other news media
2. Establish an emergency headquarters	Town Council Chambers - ECC
3. Establish adequate communications	Communication Coordinator
4. Establish a control perimeter	Police
5. Establish routes for emergency vehicles	Police
6. Notify hospitals of casualties including number and type	Medical/Police
7. Rescue	Fire/Police/Rescue Services
8. Establish a temporary morgue	Medical Coordinator
9. Establish a news release system	Information Officer (Command Staff)
10. Establish emergency welfare services	Welfare/Social Services/Volunteer Agencies
11. Establish an inquiry service	Welfare/Social Services
12. Eliminate hazards from damaged utilities	Engineering/Utilities
13. Protection of property	Police
14. Provide auxiliary power	Engineering
15. Clear debris	Engineering

C. Equipment	Sources
1. Rescue equipment	Police/NS DEM
2. Fire equipment	Fire Department
3. Ambulances	Medical/Transportation
4. Road clearing equipment	Engineering
5. Barricades	Engineering
6. Auxiliary generators	Various sources
7. Mobile public-address equipment	Police/EMO/Radio stations/Fire Department
8. Food and lodging	Welfare/Social Services

Annex D – ECC Activation Key Triggers to consider in response to a Winter Storm

ECC Activation Level	Description	Key Winter Storm Impact Triggers
Level 1 Full Activation	All ECC functions activated; full staffing across operational periods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declared or imminent State of Local Emergency (SOLE) due to storm impacts. • Municipal emergency response capacity overwhelmed, requiring full coordination. • Widespread emergency messaging needed, including Alert Ready activation. • Widespread evacuations required due to prolonged cold, heating failures, or infrastructure damage. • Major power outages affecting a large portion of the population for extended periods (e.g., >24 to 36 hours). • Severe blizzard or major ice storm causing community-wide impacts • Severe road closures and dangerous travel conditions, stranding motorists and delaying emergency services • Multiple infrastructure failures, including water/wastewater systems, telecommunications, or fuel shortages. • Mass sheltering operations required for displaced or vulnerable populations. • Coordinated response across municipal services, utilities, and mutual aid partners
Level 2 Partial Activation	Selected ECC functions or roles activated based on response needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support required for multi-agency coordination • NS DEM Provincial Coordination Centre (PCC) activation with Kings County being in the affected area • Activation of Regional EM Mutual Aid Agreement(s) through submission of a Request for Assistance (RFA) • Environment Canada <u>Blizzard</u>, <u>Snowfall</u>, or ice storm warnings issued • Coordination of road clearing priorities and critical access routes.

ECC Activation Level	Description	Key Winter Storm Impact Triggers
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate infrastructure impacts, including partial utility disruptions or localized heating failures. • Requests for support from external agencies, including NS DEM. • Need for coordinated public communications (e.g., warming centres, road safety advisories).
Level 3 Monitoring	ECC not physically activated; key staff monitoring situation and maintaining readiness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter Storm Watch issued, potential for significant snowfall or freezing rain • Forecasted heavy snowfall, ice pellets, freezing rain, or blizzard conditions within 48–72 hours. • Increased risk of power outages or road closures due to ice/wind. • Monitoring of vulnerable populations and critical infrastructure risk. • Coordination of readiness activities initiated (e.g., situational briefings, internal preparedness checks). • Potential for escalation identified, ECC activation under consideration.

Annex F – Winter Storm Event Checklist

Pre-Incident Phase

- Arrange for personnel to participate in necessary training and develop exercises relevant to winter storm events in Kings County
- Coordinate the County's preparedness activities, seeking understanding of interactions with participating agencies in winter storm scenarios
- Ensure that emergency contact lists are updated
- Contact supporting emergency response agencies to review and determine whether major developments have arisen that could adversely affect response operations (e.g., personnel shortages, loss of equipment, etc.)
- Annually review and update the Kings REMO Regional Emergency Management Plan and Emergency Management Support Plans
- Familiarize staff with requirements for requesting a State of Local Emergency (SOLE)
- Ensure that supplies, such as communications devices and sandbags, are prepared and ready for use. This includes primary and alternate communications and warning systems
- Identify and review local contractor lists to see who may provide support specific to winter storm response
- Review, revise, and, where necessary, establish mutual aid agreements with local agencies and other County agencies and private contractors relevant to multiple agency response to winter storms

Response Phase

- The Kings REMO ECC Manager will provide overall guidance for the deployment of resources across Kings County

- Activate mutual aid agreements

- Activate the Kings REMO Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) and implement appropriate staffing plans. Contact appropriate supporting agencies to assign liaisons to the ECC for coordination of specific response activities

- Estimate emergency staffing levels and request personnel support, including specialized staff such as engineers, building inspectors, heavy equipment operators, and/or environmental remediation contractors

- Develop and initiate shift rotation plans, including briefing of replacements during shift changes (set the operational period briefing cycle)

- Submit request for State of Local Emergency (SOLE), as applicable

- Coordinate the evacuation of affected area, if necessary. Assign appropriate agency liaisons to the ECC, as the situation requires

- Support Search and Rescue operations by coordinating resource requests outside of the jurisdiction

- Request the Canadian Red Cross to activate Emergency Shelters and open shelters, if needed

- Formulate Emergency public information messages and media response using “one voice, one message” concept

- Record all ECC activities, completion of personnel tasks, incoming and outgoing messages, and the names of those sending and receiving them. These should be documented in ECC logbooks

- Begin damage assessments in coordination with Public Works Departments

- Assist with coordinating Public Works activities, such as debris removal from:
 - Storm drains
 - Main arterial routes
 - Public right-of-way
 - Dams
 - Other structures, as needed

- Contact local contractors for support, if necessary. Establish contact with private sector partners

- Coordinate with law enforcement agency (Kentville Police and/or Kings RCMP) to provide law enforcement to affected areas (road closures, security, etc.)

- Collect and chronologically file records and bills generated during the incident in order to ensure timely submittal of documents for reimbursement (Finance/Administration Section)

Recovery Phase

- Monitor secondary hazards associated with winter storms (power outages, damage to bridges/roads, impacts to utility lines/facilities) and maintain on-call personnel to support potential response to these types of hazards

- Deactivate/demobilize the ECC. Deactivate mutual aid resources as soon as possible

- Activate and implement applicable mitigation plans, community recovery procedures, and continuity of operations/governments plans until normal daily operations can be completely restored

- Implement revisions to the Kings REMO Regional Emergency Management Plan (REMP) and Supporting Plans based on lessons learned and best practices adopted during response

- Offer recommendations to Municipal Government and Public Works departments for changes in planning, zoning, and building code ordinances

- Participate in After Action Reports and critiques

- Submit valuable success stories and/or lessons learned to NS EMO and other County partners

Annex G – Criteria for Public Weather Alerts

Reference: [Environment and Climate Change Canada](#)

Alert Type	Threshold Criteria
Blowing Snow Advisory	When blowing snow, caused by winds of at least 30km/h, is expected to reduce visibility to 800 metres or less for at least 3 hours
Flash Freeze Warning	When significant ice is expected to form on roads, sidewalks or other surfaces over much of a region because of the freezing of residual water from either melted snow, or falling/fallen rain due to a rapid drop in temperatures.
Freezing Drizzle	When a period of freezing drizzle is expected for at least eight (8) hours.
Freezing Rain	When freezing rain is expected to pose a hazard to transportation or property; Or When freezing rain is expected for at least four (4) hours.
Frost Advisory	Issued during the growing season when widespread frost formation is expected over an extensive area. Surface temperatures are expected to fall near freezing in the overnight period.
Snowfall Warning	When 15cm or more of snow falls within 12 hours or less.
Winter Storm Watch	When conditions are favourable for the development of severe and potentially dangerous winter weather, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A blizzard;• A major snowfall (25cm or more within a 24 hour period); and• A significant snowfall (snowfall warning criteria amounts) combined with other winter weather hazard types such as: freezing rain, strong winds, blowing snow and/or extreme wind chill.
Winter Storm Warning	When severe and potentially dangerous winter weather conditions are expected, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A major snowfall (25cm or more within a 24 hour period); and• A significant snowfall (snowfall warning criteria amounts) combined with other cold weather precipitation types such as: freezing rain, strong winds, blowing snow and/or extreme cold. <p>Blizzard conditions may be part of an intense winter storm, in which case a Blizzard Warning is issued instead of a winter storm warning.</p>

Annex H – Lessons Learned – Winter Storm Disasters

Issue	Lesson Learned
Disaster Management Process	An effective disaster management process should also include a strong commitment to mitigation.
Public Awareness	
Hospital Staffing	Hospitals should look at making accommodations for clinicians and hospital staff to stay overnight at the facility to avoid poor road conditions. This also ensures there will be enough staff on hand in the event of weather-related emergencies.
Travel Bans	Travel Bans can effectively bar citizens from use of roads in ways that assist public works crews and first responders.
ECC Activation	Activate the Emergency Coordination Centre well in advance of any weather system that is forecast to deliver a significant winter storm.
Public Communications	<p>A variety of methods should be employed to communicate with the public about any impending winter storm, including paid ads across broadcast, online and print platforms, face-to-face events and using social media. Public information efforts should ramp up in November of each year.</p> <p>The public should be briefed by various media sources before the incident begins.</p>
Resident’s Safety	Prior to any storm event during which power outages are anticipated, efforts should be made for enhanced public information on generator safety.
Situational Awareness	<p>In many severe weather disruptions, decision-makers can be faced with the problem of obtaining reliable data about real-time conditions that could facilitate timely response and effective recovery actions.</p> <p>Stakeholders from the regional to the local level should make better use of traditional and non-traditional sources of information, including social media analysis to inform preparation, response and recovery strategies.</p>
Commerce Restoration	<p>The imperative to quickly restore commerce is particularly critical in the face of slow-moving long duration weather events. Small businesses are acutely vulnerable to extended disruptions of their businesses.</p> <p>Reenergizing municipal commercial activity is heavily reliant on the restoration of power and communications to the businesses themselves, and the restoration of the transportation system that provides mobility for their work force, supply chains and consumers.</p>

Issue	Lesson Learned
Municipal Services	Dependent on the weather system, municipal services may be limited because many employees may not get to work.

Annex I – Winter Storms – Public Service Announcements (PSAs)

Winter Preparedness & Safety

Preparedness for Winter

Before a winter storm arrives, plan ahead so you can comfortably and safely carry on during the winter season.

- Make arrangements with family members who may be elderly or have limited mobility issues and who do not live with you – help them prepare for winter.
- Get your home winter ready – have your furnace inspected, shut off outside water to protect plumbing and built-in sprinkler systems, and clean the catch basin grates before snow arrives.
- Assess the trees on your property and trim dead branches to reduce the danger of them falling onto power lines or your house during a storm.
- Winterize your vehicle and, when it snows, drive only with good winter tires.
- Make alternate plans for getting to work in the snow.
- Be sure to have warm clothing and solid shoes or boots with good traction.
- Assemble a [basic emergency supplies kit](#) to help your family be self-sufficient for 72 hours.

Planning Ahead

Home

- Have a flashlight, electric lantern, and extra batteries on hand.
- Consider an alternative safe heating system - choose approved heating units that do not depend on an electric motor, electric fan or other electrical device to function. Check with the dealer or manufacturer regarding power requirements and proper operating procedures.
- Use caution and follow directions when operating generators, insuring they are in a proper well-ventilated area.
- Furnace and fireplace maintenance considerations are very important in preparing for winter weather.
- Never use a camp stove, barbecue, or propane or kerosene heater indoors.

Vehicle Preparation

- Colder temperatures demand a lot of your vehicle so it's important to prepare for the winter season. Visit a qualified technician to ensure your vehicle is in good working condition. Prepare a small, portable [Emergency Car Kit](#) to keep in your vehicle to help you in the case of an emergency
- Slow down. Speed limits posted on the highways and on municipal roads are for ideal driving conditions, which are considered to be sunny summer days.
- Look ahead. Leave plenty of space between you and the vehicle ahead of you. Remember to look far ahead as you drive so you can recognize hazards and have plenty of time to respond.
- See and be seen. Turning your headlights on helps with visibility during the dark winter months and during inclement weather. It also helps other drivers see you.

- Get ready. Prepare your vehicle for the tough winter months. Check and make sure that your battery, ignition system, lights, brakes, heating and cooling system and windshield wipers are all in working order.
- Watch the weather. Check the weather before you leave your home. If conditions are bad the safest strategy is to avoid driving. If you must travel give yourself extra time and drive to the conditions.
- Prepare yourself and your vehicle. Always be prepared for winter driving. Wear warm clothes, have a fully charged cell phone with you and equip your vehicle with a winter survival kit.
- Maintain visibility. Clear snow and ice from all windows, lights, mirrors and the roof to help other drivers see you on the road and to assist with your own visibility while driving. After starting your vehicle, wait for the fog to clear from the interior windows before driving so you will have full visibility.

Preparedness Tips in the case of Power Outages

The most common occurrences during a winter storm is often extended periods of power outage mainly due to trees and other debris impacting power lines.

- Residents should have personal preparedness kits made up with up-to-date supplies and be prepared to stay on their own for a minimum of 72 hours. This is the minimum requirement and, more practically, residents should consider being prepared to be on their own for up to a week. Information on preparing a kit, contents etc., can be found [here](#).
- Residents should ensure their insurance coverage is up to date and keep copies of their coverage in their emergency kit.
- While a power outage is not a disaster and generally will not require residents to evacuate their home, residents can further prepare by having a portable generator to power items such as fridges and freezers. However, make sure if you are operating a generator it's placed outside your residence and the exhaust does not enter your home.
- Residents might want to consider maintaining a land line phone - these units do not require power and as long as your phone line is intact, access should be maintained. Cordless phone stop working when the power is out.
- Consider purchasing an external battery device that will charge a couple of smartphones and a tablet in just over an hour. These devices are readily available at most electronic stores for a reasonable cost (\$20-\$100) and are invaluable during power outages.

Personal Winter Safety

Winter storms can create personal safety issues if you are not prepared. Following weather forecasts and paying attention to personal emergency preparedness will reduce any possible impacts to your family and your property.

There are also a number of precautions you can take which will help to comfortably get through the winter season safely:

- Dress appropriately for the inclement weather. Protect exposed skin and help prevent heat loss by wearing a hat, scarf, mittens or gloves.
- Choose well insulated and waterproof footwear that has a thick, non-slip tread sole, a wide and low heel and is light in weight.
- Try not to drive unless you have to and only if you have good snow tires.
- Keep a medical emergency kit in your vehicle.
- Always, walk on the left side of the road facing traffic and pay close attention.
- When you see a snow plow approaching, please move to the inside of the sidewalk, and stay far away from the road when it is passing by.
- Allow extra time to get to your destination whether you are walking, taking transit or driving – slow down.
- Be aware of your surroundings. A covered patch of ice or a pothole filled with snow may cause an unexpected slip or fall.
- Stay at home, unless you absolutely need to travel when weather conditions are bad.
- Run errands during daylight hours whenever possible since it is easier to see slippery spots.
- Be careful when shoveling snow - although there is limited physical action, the strain of shoveling can put a strain on a person's heart. People with a heart condition should use caution. Use a smaller shovel, take your time and see a doctor if you experience discomfort.
- Stay off of the ice on lakes and ponds during the winter as the ice is too thin and poses a safety risk. Ice is not thick enough to support people or animals.
- Students should use caution walking to and from school when it has snowed, and when playing in the snow.

Annex J – Winter Storms – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Why is predicting the exact amount of snowfall so challenging

Snow forecasts continue to improve, but they remain a challenging task for meteorologists. Heavy snow often falls in small bands that are hard to discern on larger resolution computer models. In addition, extremely small temperature differences define the boundary line between rain and snow.

What should you do before a Winter Storm?

Protecting Your Home

Some major threats to your home are the loss of heat, power and phone service, as well as a shortage of supplies if the weather lasts longer than expected.

Facing the Cold

Those with prolonged exposure or those not dressed appropriately for extremely cold weather are in danger of frostbite and hypothermia.

How to keep your car safe

When the temperature dips, problems behind the wheel include dead car batteries, iced-over windshields, broken car locks and driving with no traction.

What are the Provincial Plowing Service Levels?

Levels of Service	
100-Series and trunk highways, and other high traffic roads	Cleared within 8 hours after snow stops
Secondary routes and other medium traffic roads	Cleared within 12 hours after snow stops
Local paved roads, most subdivision and residential streets	Cleared within 24 hours after snow stops
Gravel roads	Cleared within 24 hours after snow stops

Annex K – Winter Storms - References

Federal

- [Severe Storms – What to Do?](#)
- [Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements \(DFAA\)](#)

Provincial

- [Nova Scotia – Winter Time website](#)
- [Provincial Plowtracker](#)
- [NS Department of Public Works \(NS DPW\)](#)

Regional

- [Kings REMO Regional Emergency Management Plan \(REMP\)](#)
- [Kings REMO Policy – Comfort Centres/Emergency Shelters](#)



Annex L – Abbreviations & Acronyms

AREP	Agency Representative
DFAA	Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements
ECC	Emergency Coordination Centre
ECCC	Environment and Climate Change Canada
ECCMT	Emergency Coordination Centre Management Team
EMO	Emergency Management Office
FPRP	Flood Prevention and Response Plan
IAP	Incident Action Plan
IC	Incident Commander
ICP	Incident Command Post
ICS	Incident Command System
IMT	Incident Management Team
IO	Information Officer
LO	Liaison Officer
LSC	Logistics Section Chief
MAC	Multiagency Coordination (MAC) Group
NS DEM	Nova Scotia Department of Emergency Management
NS DNR	Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources
NS DPW	Nova Scotia Department of Public Works
OSC	Operations Section Chief
PSC	Planning Section Chief
REMAC	Regional Emergency Management Advisory Committee
REMC	Regional Emergency Management Coordinator
REMP	Regional Emergency Management Plan
REMPCC	Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee
SO	Safety Officer
UC	Unified Command

Annex M – Glossary

Reference: [Environment and Climate Change Canada – Weather and Meteorology Glossary](#)

Blizzard	A severe weather condition characterized by reduced visibility from falling and/or blowing snow and strong winds that may be accompanied by low temperatures.
Blowing Snow	Snow lifted from the earth's surface by the wind to a height of 2 metres or more.
Flurries	Precipitation in the form of snow from a convective cumulus-type cloud, are known as flurries. They are characterized by the suddenness with which they start and stop, by their rapid changes in intensity, and usually by rapid changes in the appearance of the sky.
Freezing Drizzle	Drizzle that freezes on impact to form a coating of clear ice (glaze) on the ground and on exposed objects..
Freezing Rain	Rain that freezes on impact to form a coating of clear ice (glaze) on the ground and on exposed objects.
Frost	A deposit of ice crystals that forms through a process called sublimation.
Snow	Precipitation of ice crystals, isolated or as part of a cluster, falling from a cloud.
Snow Grains	Minute, white and opaque grains of ice. When they hit hard ground, they do not bounce or shatter. They usually fall in very small quantities, and never in the form of a shower.
Snow Pellets	Snow pellets are brittle and easily crushed; when they fall on hard ground, they bounce and often break up. They always occur in showers. They are often accompanied by snow flakes or rain drops, when the surface temperature is around zero Celsius.
Snow Squall	A moderate to heavy snow flurry, which is driven by strong, gusty winds. Visibility during snow squalls is usually poor
Snowdrift	Sea-ice terminology. Describes an accumulation of wind-blown snow that is deposited in the lee of an obstacle. A crescent-shaped snowdrift, with ends pointing down-wind, is called a snow barchan.
Wind Chill	Chill that results from a specific combination of wind speed and air temperature, expressed by the loss of body heat in watts per square metre (of skin).
Wind Chill Index	Index used to determine the relative discomfort resulting from a specific combination of wind speed and air temperature, expressed by the loss of body heat in watts per square metre (of skin).

