
INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate
Readiness

People encouraged to prepare for strong winds

VICTORIA – People living in the coastal regions of British Columbia, as well as in Metro Vancouver, the Fraser Valley and parts of the Interior, can expect stormy weather and strong winds starting Tuesday, Nov. 19 and extending through Wednesday, Nov. 20, 2024.

Environment and Climate Change Canada has issued wind warnings and special weather statements due to a significant fall storm that will bring southeasterly winds through the afternoon on Tuesday, with peak wind speeds expected that evening for most coastal regions.

The strong winds are likely to continue on Wednesday morning but are expected to ease later in the day.

Wind warnings and special weather statements are in effect for most coastal regions, in addition to the Fraser Valley, Metro Vancouver and other parts of B.C. For up-to-date weather forecasts and alerts, visit: <https://www.weather.gc.ca>

The Province continues to monitor conditions closely and work directly with communities to support preparedness and response actions.

The Province is taking a number of actions to keep people and communities safe in the event of flooding at all times of the year, including:

- The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness is working closely with communities on preparedness activities, including weekly Natural Hazard Information calls and event-specific co-ordination calls with First Nations, communities and partner agencies.
- The River Forecast Centre is monitoring weather patterns and river conditions and remains vigilant for any shifts toward extreme wet weather.
- The Ministry of Transportation and Transit will have maintenance contractors monitoring conditions, clearing culverts and pre-positioning crews and equipment to respond quickly to potential flooding or debris buildup during this weather event, to ensure safe and clear roadways.
- The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness is able to issue broadcast intrusive alerts as requested by First Nations and local governments to warn people in areas where there may be imminent threats due to flooding.

People are asked to take precautions, including developing a household plan, putting together emergency kits, connecting with neighbours and learning about the local government emergency response plan for their area.

Following any disaster event, property owners and residents are advised to contact their

insurance provider immediately to obtain advice about their next steps in cleanup and repairs resulting from the disaster.

Some areas can also expect heavy rain at times during this storm, but winds will remain the primary concern. People are encouraged to take the following steps:

Have a plan:

Prepare for a possible power outage or other disruption to infrastructure by creating a household emergency kit with enough non-perishable food, water and supplies to support your household for a week. Make sure it is stored in an accessible location that everyone knows about. If your lights go out, check to see whether BC Hydro is already aware of the outage by visiting: <https://www.bchydro.com/index.html>

Assemble an individual grab-and-go bag for each member of the household with the essentials they will need if asked to evacuate.

Protect your home:

People are advised to prepare for possible strong winds and flooding of low-lying areas by securing loose outdoor objects and moving equipment and other assets from low-lying areas to higher ground, where possible. Clear perimeter drains, eavestroughs and gutters. Sandbags also help and can be made available through your local government.

Recognize the danger signs:

If you live near a waterway, a change in water colour or rapid change in water level, especially a drop, could indicate a problem upstream. Call your local fire, police or public works department immediately if you suspect something is out of the ordinary.

If you face a threatening flood situation, park vehicles away from streams and waterways, move electrical appliances to upper floors and make sure to anchor fuel supplies. Listen to local officials if you are asked to evacuate.

In the event of flooding, some tips about what to avoid:

Steer clear of river and coastal shorelines:

Keep away from river edges and shorelines. During periods of high flow, river banks may be unstable and more prone to sudden collapse. Stay away and keep young children and pets away from the banks of fast-flowing streams and flooded areas or bridges.

During a storm surge or coastal flooding, people should:

- Move away from the shoreline if you see signs of coastal flooding.
- Do not drive through flood waters.
- Do not go out on the water, as storm surges can generate strong currents.
- Do not assume it's safe to go on the water or to the shoreline if the water recedes.
- Evacuate if instructed to do so by local authorities.

Do not drive through flood water:

Extensive water pooling on roads can be expected. Never attempt to drive or walk in flood water. Approximately 15 cm (six inches) of fast-moving water can knock over an adult, and 61 cm (two feet) of rushing water can carry away most vehicles, including SUVs and pickup trucks.

Landslide risk:

Heavy rain may contribute to landslides and dangerous debris in creeks and waterways. Be safe and do not go to watch the rushing water. If you notice trees beginning to lean or bend near your home, or cracks developing in the hillside, consult an engineer or contact local authorities.

There are more details in PreparedBC's Flood Preparedness Guide. The guide contains useful information to help British Columbians better protect themselves and their homes and understand what to do if their home or community is at risk of flooding.

Driving safety:

Crashes can be prevented when motorists are prepared. Some helpful tips for travelling in wet weather and winter driving conditions:

- Research the current road conditions before you leave at DriveBC's website. More than 1,000 highway webcam views are available at more than 450 locations throughout the province.
- Check the weather forecast and consider postponing travel. If travel is necessary, wait until conditions improve.
- Wear comfortable clothing that does not restrict movement while driving. Bring warm clothing, such as winter boots, coat, gloves and hat, in case you need to get out of the vehicle.
- Have an emergency plan. Ensure your vehicle is equipped with a full tank of fuel, a windshield scraper and snow brush, food and water, a first-aid kit and other emergency supplies.
- Do not panic if you get stuck or stranded. Stay with your vehicle for safety and warmth.
- If you have a cellphone, call for roadside assistance. For emergencies, call 911.

Learn More:

Flood-risk information and active evacuation alerts and orders can be found at @EmergencyInfoBC on X (formerly Twitter), or: <https://www.EmergencyInfoBC.ca>

River Forecast Centre: <https://bcrfc.env.gov.bc.ca/>

Environment and Climate Change Canada for up-to-date forecasts and alerts:

<http://www.weather.gc.ca>

PreparedBC Flood Preparedness Guide: <https://www.preparedbc.ca/floods>

For tips about how to create an evacuation plan and prepare grab-and-go bags, visit:

<https://preparedbc.ca/EmergencyReady>

To pre-register with Emergency Support Services, visit: <https://ess.gov.bc.ca/>

Windstorms can affect travel time and flood waters can quickly wash out roads and bridges. Be prepared and plan an alternative route. For the latest road conditions,

visit: <https://www.drivebc.ca>

Contact:

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