

Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Program (NEPP)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What is NEPP?

The Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Program (NEPP) helps neighbours work together to prepare for emergencies and disasters. The goal is to ensure communities can support one another during the two weeks after a major emergency. Neighbourhoods that are prepared can be self-sufficient, allowing emergency responders to focus on those who most need emergency assistance.

NEPP focuses on preparedness, communication, and community resilience.

Why do I need NEPP if we already have first responders?

During a large-scale emergency such as a wildfire, earthquake, severe storm, or flooding event, emergency services including fire, police, ambulance, and public works may be overwhelmed.

Neighbours may need to rely on each other until professional responders can reach everyone. NEPP helps communities prepare for this possibility safely and effectively.

What does a NEPP group do?

A NEPP group typically includes 20–40 homes in a neighbourhood and works together to:

- Build neighbourhood connections
- Create emergency communication plans
- Identify local skills and resources
- Support vulnerable residents who may need extra assistance
- Learn basic emergency preparedness and response concepts
- Develop evacuation and meeting plans
- Increase overall neighbourhood resilience

What does Emergency Management Cowichan (EMC) do?

[Emergency Management Cowichan \(EMC\)](#) supports neighbourhoods by providing:

- Emergency preparedness presentations
- Educational materials and handouts
- Guidance on organizing a NEPP group
- Facilitation support for neighbourhood meetings
- Workshops related to emergency preparedness
- Information on local hazards and evacuation preparedness
- Ongoing support by phone or email

EMC's role is to educate, guide, and support communities in becoming better prepared.

What training does EMC provide to NEPP groups?

EMC may provide or coordinate:

- Household emergency preparedness workshops
- NEPP orientation sessions
- Evacuation preparedness information
- Basic emergency planning guidance
- Community resilience education
- Role-specific workshops for neighbourhood teams
- Hazard awareness information for the Cowichan region

Training opportunities may vary depending on community needs and staff availability.

What does EMC NOT provide to NEPP groups?

EMC does **not** provide:

- Incident Command System (ICS) certification or formal ICS training

- Damage assessment certification or formal damage assessment training
- Professional emergency responder certification
- Firefighter, police, or paramedic training
- Advanced medical training or first aid certification
- Search and rescue certification
- Disaster response deployment team training
- Emergency response insurance or liability coverage
- Prioritized emergency response during disasters

NEPP volunteers are neighbours helping neighbours — not emergency responders.

Is there any funding available to NEPP groups?

Although there is no specific funding available to NEPP groups, many of the educational materials are free and EMC will provide free workshops and guidance to help neighbours find cost effective ways to build their resilience.

How do I get started?

Before organizing a neighbourhood group, make sure your own household is prepared.

First steps include:

1. Get to know your neighbours
2. Organize a small neighbourhood meeting
3. Discuss local risks and emergency plans
4. Contact EMC for support and resources

EMC can help provide educational materials and guidance as your neighbourhood begins building its preparedness team.