

Ministry of the Environment

Emergency Management Program

Introduction

In Ontario, municipalities and provincial ministries are required to have Emergency Management Programs as prescribed by the **Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act (EMCP Act)**, and Regulation 380/04.

An **Emergency** is defined as:

"A situation or an impending situation that could cause serious harm to persons or substantial damage to property and that is caused by the forces of nature, a disease or other health risk, an accident or an act whether intentional or otherwise".

An **Emergency Management Program** is based on a risk management approach and consists of a set of activities, measures and plans to manage emergencies and reduce risks through a proactive and coordinated approach.

Ministry Mandate

By *Order in Council* under the *EMPC Act*, the Minister of the Environment has been assigned responsibility for emergencies involving:

- Spills of pollutants to the natural environment including fixed site and transportation spills; and
- Drinking Water

MOE's **Emergency Management Program** includes the following key components:

- An **Emergency Management Program Committee** that steers the program,

- A **Ministry Action Group (MAG)** to direct the Ministry's response during emergencies,
- An **Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)** where the MAG coordinates operations and communications during emergency response. The Ministry's EOC has backup electrical power, heating and air.
- A **Continuity of Operations Plan** to ensure that time-critical ministry functions and services are continued in the event of an emergency, and to ensure the safety and protection of Ministry employees.
- An **Emergency Response Plan** to guide the Ministry's response to spill and drinking water emergencies as well as other emergencies that require MOE's support.

Emergency Management Pillars

A comprehensive emergency management program is one that incorporates a risk management approach supported by the five pillars of emergency management - **prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery**.

Prevention: Actions taken to prevent the chance of an emergency occurring (e.g. development of spill prevention plans).

Mitigation: Actions taken to reduce or eliminate the effects of an emergency (e.g. land-use restrictions, drinking water source protection, and spill diversion or containment structures).

Preparedness: Measures taken prior to an emergency to ensure an effective response. This includes the development of emergency response and continuity of operations plans and procedures, training and exercises.

Response: Actions taken to respond to an actual emergency. These actions are aimed at providing a controlled, effective and timely response. Ministry response is coordinated with local authorities as well as with other provincial and federal agencies when required.

Recovery: Actions taken to recover from an emergency. The aim is to assist individuals, businesses and communities to return to a state of normalcy. Recovery measures may include environmental cleanup and site restoration.

MOE Legal Authority

In addition to the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*, MOE's emergency management program is further supported by the following legislation, administered by the Ministry:

- *Environmental Protection Act*,
- *Ontario Water Resources Act*,
- *Safe Drinking Water Act*,
- *Nutrient Management Act*,
- *Environmental Assessment Act*, and
- *Pesticides Act*.

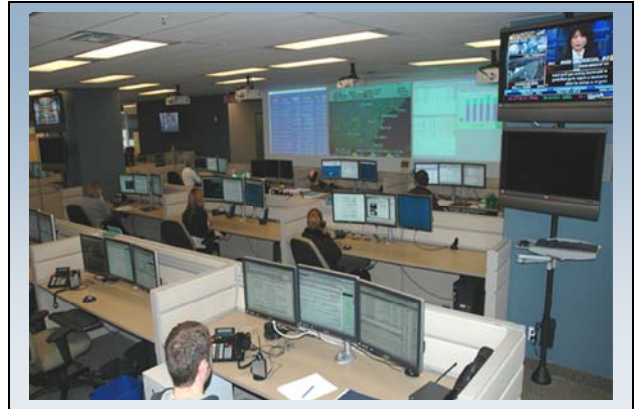
MOE relies heavily on this legislation to proactively prevent, mitigate and prepare for potential emergencies related to spills and drinking water hazards.

Spills Action Centre (1-800-268-6060)

In the event that a spill or drinking water event occurs, the Spills Action Centre provides a 24/7 reporting and response coordination service for the Ministry.

SAC receives a wide range of notifications including:

- Reports of spills and other environmental discharges
- Adverse drinking water results, and
- Disruptions to time-critical Ministry services.



SAC operates 24-hours a day and can be reached through a province-wide toll-free number (1-800-268-6060). Environmental officers who receive the calls at SAC can provide advice and information related to spills or drinking water events through a series of operating procedures. They can also activate a field response when needed or initiate service continuity arrangements.

Personal Preparedness

In Ontario, residents are expected to be prepared to take care of themselves and their families for up to three days during an emergency or a disaster. Information on personal preparedness and preparing an Emergency Survival Kit can be found through MOE's website:

<http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/en/emergency/personalplanning.php>

For More Information, Contact:

MOE Emergency Management Coordinator:
(416) 325-1995,

Public Information Centre:

135 St. Clair Ave. W.
Toronto ON, M4V 1P5
Tel: (416) 325-4000

Fax: (416) 325-3159

Toll free: 1-800-565-4923

or: <http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/en/emergency/index.php>