

COMMUNITY CONTACT

For and About
Local Government
Development

Manitoba
Aboriginal and
Northern Affairs



Welcome to Community Contact

Welcome to the June issue of *Community Contact*! In this issue, our focus is on *protective services*. Public safety is an issue of the highest priority, and there are numerous services and programs out there to help communities ensure safe environments for their residents.

Since fire season is once again upon us, much of the material in this issue is devoted to fire safety, fire prevention and related issues. Other protective and safety issues are also well represented with articles focusing on ambulance services, the role of the pro-

protective services consultant and emergency response plans.

Once again, we are extremely grateful to everyone who contributed to this issue, and we strongly encourage others to contribute, as well. Whether you're a resident of a northern community, an Aboriginal and Northern Affairs staff member or one of our departmental partners, your contributions and ideas are always welcome.

Ray Irvine and David Lavallee
Editors

Communities to Receive Smoke Alarms

Smoke alarms save lives. In a December 2001 news release, Manitoba's Chief Medical Examiner and the provincial Fire Commissioner reminded Manitobans to ensure their homes are equipped with a properly functioning smoke alarm.

Unfortunately, not all homes are outfitted with this important piece of equipment. Pursuing a more intense focus on fire prevention, Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs has purchased 525 smoke alarms for distribution to 19 communities in the Northern Region. The alarms will be made available to non-rental housing units that do not already have a smoke alarm. Rental units that are adminis-

tered by Community Housing Managers of Manitoba Inc. (CHMM), and do not have working alarms, will be serviced by CHMM.



Alarm units being provided are a well-known brand powered by a 10-year lithium battery that will eliminate the need for battery replacement. Sealed with tamper-resistant brackets, the smoke alarms are intended to be replaced after ten years.

Aboriginal and Northern Affairs will collaborate with the office of the Fire Commissioner on installation and maintenance instructions, and will seek assistance from community councils and fire departments to distribute and install the smoke alarms.

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Protective Services Consultants

Roles and Responsibilities

An office relatively new to Aboriginal and Northern Affairs, Protective Services fulfills an extremely important function. Protective Services consultants have a primary role of working with communities to help them improve their capacity to respond to public safety concerns such as fire, personal safety and community emergency situations.

Protective Services consultants are responsible for programs in the following areas:

Fires

Aboriginal and Northern Affairs is promoting a better balance between protection and prevention through education. Consultants support community-based training and proper maintenance of fire equipment/infrastructure.

Ambulance Program

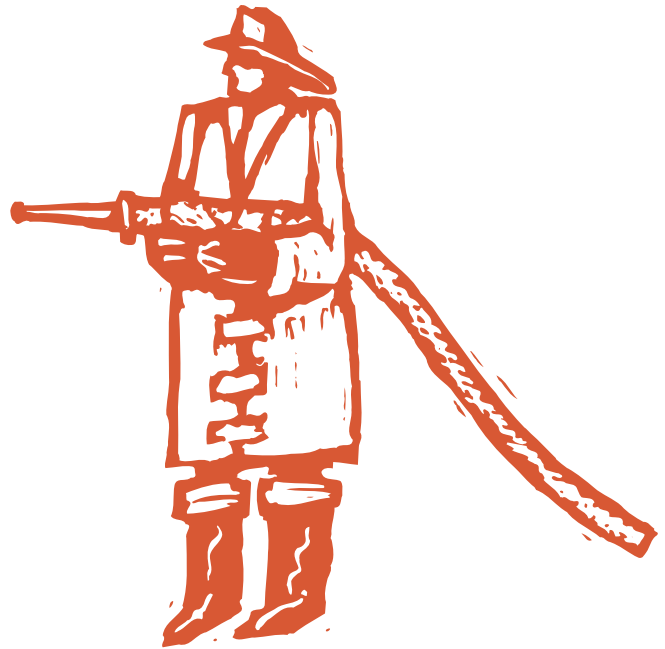
Communities invest a significant amount of resources in this important service, and the consultants are available to assist communities that request help.

Constable Program

Consultants work closely with communities to promote constable training. The constables work closely with RCMP detachments that police communities.

Emergency Planning

Community emergency plans are clear, thorough procedures put in place and updated regularly. Consultants help to ensure that communities update these extremely important procedures and can assist with community risk assessments.



Protective Services consultants also fulfill a number of other duties. These include providing municipal authorization for building permit applications in cottage areas under the jurisdiction of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs, and getting involved with initiatives like crime prevention committees.

Community safety is of the utmost importance, and Protective Services consultants are there to help communities stay safe. If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact an Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Protective Services consultant:

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New Regional Name

The East/West Region Local Government Development Division of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs has changed its name. It is now called *North Central Region*.

Boating and Water Safety: Hypothermia

Many people in Manitoba's North operate boats, and boating and water safety is an important issue. One of the most serious safety concerns is hypothermia. Direct immersion in northern Canada's typically cold lake waters and prolonged exposure to cool temperatures, particularly while in wet clothing, can kill. Boaters need to be able to recognize the symptoms and know what action to take.

Hypothermia occurs when a person's body temperature drops below normal. This affects the person's physical and mental functions. Here are some distinct signs to look for in determining if a person has hypothermia:

Early Stage

- Shivering
- Slurred speech
- Conscious, but withdrawn and slow to respond

Intermediate Stage

- Slow, weak pulse
- Slow respiration
- Accident prone or clumsy
- Confused and sleepy

Late Stage

- Weak, irregular or absent pulse
- Weak, irregular or absent breathing
- Loss of consciousness

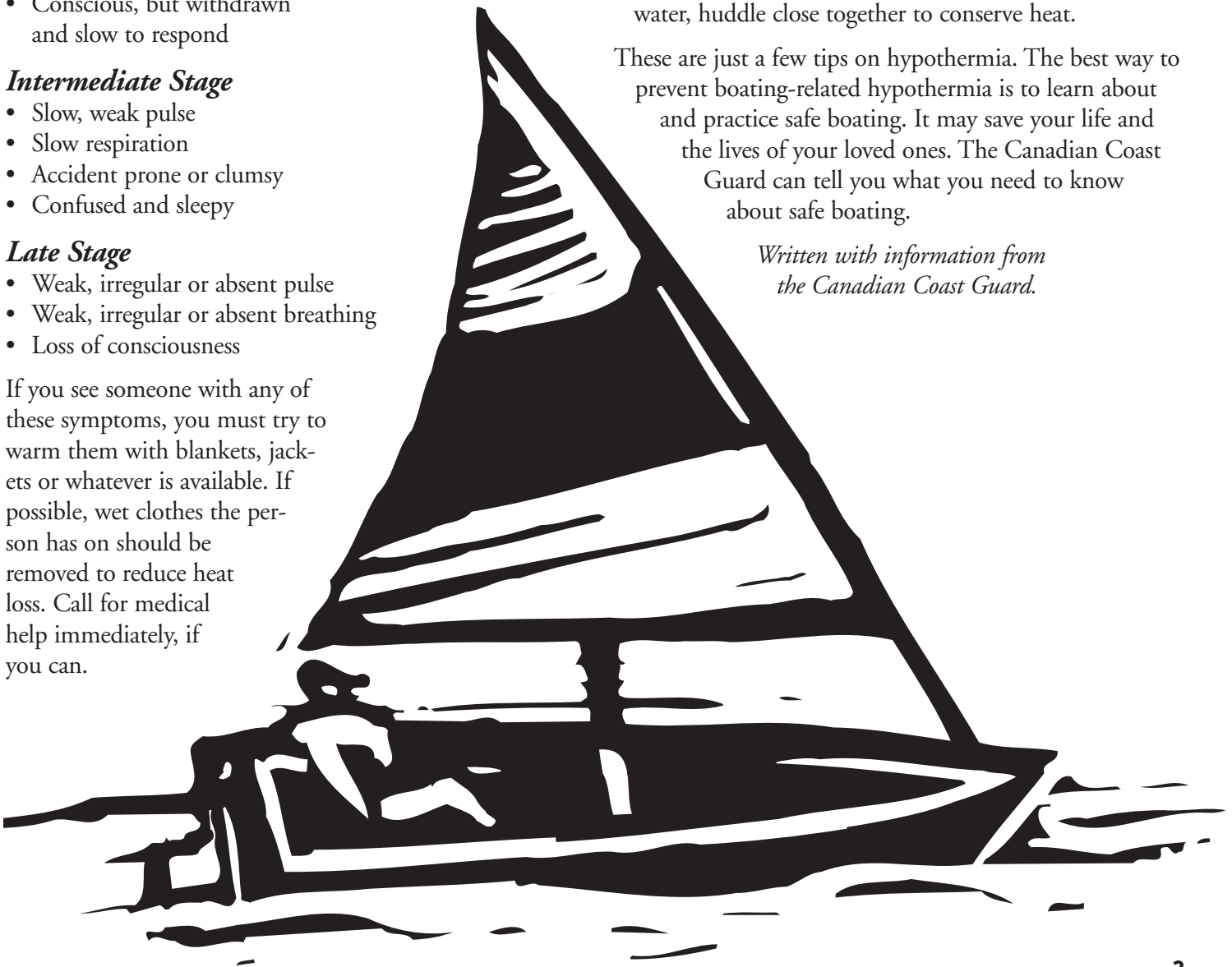
If you see someone with any of these symptoms, you must try to warm them with blankets, jackets or whatever is available. If possible, wet clothes the person has on should be removed to reduce heat loss. Call for medical help immediately, if you can.

If you are in a situation that puts you at risk of hypothermia, there are some things you can do to conserve your body heat and energy:

- If you are boating, you should already be wearing a personal flotation device (PFD) or lifejacket—it will keep you afloat without you having to use energy swimming or treading water. A well-designed PFD may also offer some wind protection or insulating value.
- If possible, climb onto a nearby floating object to get as much of your body as possible out of the water.
- Adopt the heat escape lessening position (HELP) by crossing your arms tightly across your chest and drawing your knees up close. Do this even if you cannot get out of the water.
- If there are other people with you, in or out of the water, huddle close together to conserve heat.

These are just a few tips on hypothermia. The best way to prevent boating-related hypothermia is to learn about and practice safe boating. It may save your life and the lives of your loved ones. The Canadian Coast Guard can tell you what you need to know about safe boating.

Written with information from the Canadian Coast Guard.



Community Emergency Response Plans

*Emergency response
plans prevent or limit
loss of life, injury,
threats to safety or
health, and property
or environmental
damage.*

Community emergency response plans are critical to providing a prompt, co-ordinated response by a community in an emergency or disaster.

Emergency response plans prevent or limit loss of life, injury, threats to safety or health, and property or environmental damage. The plans also aim to protect or restore essential services.

Community emergency response plans can be used without declaring a state of local emergency. An emergency response may be initiated by:

- minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs
- mayor and council
- contact person
- emergency co-ordinators
- emergency personnel
- authorized staff from Aboriginal and Northern Affairs

In a community emergency, the Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization should be immediately contacted at (204) 945-5555. They will notify other provincial departments and agencies. The Department of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs should also be immediately advised of emergencies that occur in Northern Affairs communities.

When required, a council may pass a resolution and forward the appropriate form asking the Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs to declare a state of local emergency.

Declaring a state of local emergency empowers the minister to take appropriate steps to prevent loss of life and damage to property or the environment. Evacuation can be enforced if necessary, and financial assistance is made available to affected residents, according to established guidelines.

Community emergency response plans establish tools and procedures for managing a possible crisis, such as:

- emergency warning procedures
- contact list (essential phone numbers, radio frequencies, etc.)
- evacuation/re-entry procedures
- reception procedures (if hosting evacuees from other communities)
- resource list (contractors, heavy equipment, fire-fighting equipment, etc.)
- transportation list (buses, aircraft, taxis, drivers, etc.)
- mutual aid arrangements with other communities
- accurate and authorized public information (initial warning, process for disseminating further information to residents, media, etc.)
- maps

Once a community emergency has been declared an established response is carried out to deal with the crisis.

First, an emergency operating centre and a management team are established. The team may include:

- Mayor/councillors (*operational control*)
- contact person (*advisor to the Minister and community/area residents*)
- community clerk/administrator (*maintain financial records*)
- emergency co-ordinator (*manages/co-ordinates emergency response*)
- telecommunications manager (*responsible for all necessary communication*)
- transportation manager (*develops/maintains a transportation resource list*)
- social services director (*evacuation/reception resource list*)
- supply/service manager (*maintains list of equipment/co-ordinates its usage*)
- public information manager (*timely information to media and area residents*)
- clerks/staff (*duties as assigned*)

An emergency site management team will also be established to manage activities at the crisis site. This team will generally include an emergency site manager (usually appointed by council after conferring with the emergency co-ordinator) and police, fire and ambulance services.

To ensure public safety in communities, community emergency response plans must be kept up to date. For more information on emergency response plans, please contact an Aboriginal and Northern Affairs protective services consultant:

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EMMO

The Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization

EMO strives to educate the public on emergency and disaster situations, through educational brochures and awareness materials relating to the four stages of emergency management.

Disaster can strike at any place or time, and the Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization (EMO) is there to help when emergencies occur. EMO is responsible for the overall provincial emergency program, and their mandate is to assist in ensuring the safety for citizens, their property and the environment through the four phases of emergency management—*prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.*

Prevention (Mitigation)
Mitigation describes the ongoing efforts to lessen the impacts of disasters on people and property. EMO promotes prevention by encouraging communities to assess risks and develop a plan for reducing the vulnerability of citizens and property. EMO also supports prevention by recommending that when rebuilding after a disaster, communities ensure they protect against future damages.

Preparedness
EMO assists with the preparation, review and enhancement of emergency preparedness programs/plans and provides a variety of emergency management training. EMO also maintains the Manitoba Emergency Plan, outlining the provincial emergency response concept and structure, and the roles and responsibilities of various departments and agencies responding to emergencies and disasters.

Response
During major emergencies and disasters, EMO co-ordinates the disaster response process to assist communities. Provincial, federal and non-government agency resources are co-ordinated using the incident command system, a standardized all-hazard, all-risk approach to managing crisis response operations and non-crisis events.

Recovery
Recovering from a disaster involves the restoration of property and the environment, as well as the psychosocial and economic recovery of the affected people, communities and government. EMO is responsible for the administration of the provincial Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA) program to assist victims, municipalities, government departments, and other agencies to recoup some of the costs of restoring property.

In addition to assisting in emergencies and disasters, EMO strives to educate the public on emergency and disaster situations, through educational brochures and awareness materials relating to the four stages of emergency management. For more information on the Emergency Measures Organization, please visit the EMO Web site at www.manitobaemo.ca, or call (204) 945-4772, or toll-free at 1-888-267-8298.



Travel Manitoba's Great Outdoor Adventure Guide

If you're looking for excitement and adventure in Manitoba's great outdoors, Travel Manitoba has the goods on where to go. The new, beautifully illustrated, *Great Outdoor Adventure Guide* highlights year-round outdoor hotspots in every region of the province, whether you're looking to paddle, hike, bike, ski, snowmobile, watch wildlife or ride a horse. With destination charts, activity

maps, adventure listings and much more, the *Great Outdoor Adventure Guide* is your ticket to maximizing your experience in Manitoba's great outdoors. The guide is free, and it's available by calling 1-866-MANITOBA (626-4862), or you can view the contents of the guide through the Travel Manitoba Web site at www.travelmanitoba.com.

Bissett Ambulance Service Transferred to NEHA

by Gail Wynne

Effective ambulance service is extremely important to communities located far from hospitals and other medical facilities. Over the years, the town of Bissett's ambulance service has developed into a reliable service with highly trained attendants.

This spring, the Bissett Community Council passed control of its ambulance service over to the North-Eastman Health Association (NEHA). The transfer, which came into effect on March 1, 2002,

was not an easy decision for Bissett. Council was reluctant to transfer control of the ambulance service to the NEHA. Concerns included the possibility of the service being removed from Bissett if numbers did not warrant it remaining there.

Thorough negotiations between council, the NEHA and ambulance service personnel resulted in an agreement beneficial to the people of Bissett and surrounding areas. NEHA improvements to the service

will replace the old ambulance with an upgraded unit. Plans for an improved communications system are also in the works.

Ambulance service will continue as a top priority for Bissett and council will continue to monitor the service through quarterly reports from the NEHA. Bissett will also be given first opportunity to resume control of their ambulance service should it be considered no longer viable by the NEHA.

Notice

Short Term Fund Terminated



The Board of Directors of the Manitoba Investment Pool Authority has decided to terminate the Short Term Fund effective as of April 30, 2002.

The decision was made at a meeting on April 26, that despite strong support from municipalities and other organizations, the fund would be cancelled due to the inability to reach the level of investment needed to sustain it. Economic trends over the past few years, such as declining interest rates, made it difficult for the fund to remain an attractive investment option. Also, changes to tax collection and grant/payment distribution have kept many municipalities from investing.

The Administrator, Great-West Life, oversaw the management of the fund up to April 30, when final statements were issued and balances were transferred to the various financial institutions of the investors.

The Manitoba Investment Pool Authority is a public corporate body created to provide investment opportunities for public bodies such as municipalities, schools, and health facilities by the establishment and operation of pooled investment funds under the *Manitoba Investment Pool Authority Act*. Board members are appointed by the Association of Manitoba Municipalities.

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