

Climate Event and Emergency Preparedness and Response:
A Community Conversation With Equity-Deserving Groups.

Engagement Summary Report

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Executive Summary

Understanding Emergency Preparedness and Climate Event Response: Community Share-Back Report

People in Motion (PIM) with support from the Healthy Community Development Team at Interior Health, and funding from **SPARC BC**, undertook a community-based engagement initiative to better understand how people with low incomes, people with disabilities, and seniors experience climate-related emergencies and prepare for extreme weather events. The project focused on centering lived experience, recognizing that climate hazards such as wildfire, extreme heat, smoke, flooding, snowstorms, and power outages disproportionately impact equity-deserving populations.

Using an **intersectional lens**, the engagement explored how overlapping identities—such as disability, age, income level, housing stability, newcomer status, and Indigenous identity—shape people’s experiences before, during, and after climate emergencies. Particular attention was paid to preparedness, access to information, barriers to safety, and existing community strengths.

Methodology

The engagement took place from mid-February to mid-March and included approximately **eight (8) facilitated engagement groups**, with **an estimated six to ten (6–10) participants per group**. Engagement formats were intentionally flexible and accessible, with honoraria, transportation supports, and facilitation assistance provided.

Participant anonymity was maintained throughout the process. No identifying information was collected. Notes were taken during engagements, digitized, and organized thematically. While the data was shared with SPARC BC to inform provincial research, it has also been compiled into this local share-back report to support local learning, planning, and collaboration.

Participants and Community Partners

Engagements were hosted in collaboration with community organizations serving specific populations in Kamloops. Participant demographics are described at a high level to preserve anonymity and reflect the populations reached through host agencies rather than individual identifiers.

Host agencies and the populations they serve included:

Agency	Primary demographic served
YMCA – BC Aging Mindfully	Seniors (co-ed)
Centre for Seniors Information	Seniors (co-ed)
Kamloops District Men’s Shed	Mostly senior aged men
Kamloops Immigrant Services	Newcomers to Canada
Thompson Rivers University Students’ Union (TRUSU)	Newcomer and Indigenous post-secondary students, and those living with low-income levels
Kamloops Society for Community Inclusion (KSCI) & Speak Up Self-Advocacy Group	Adults with developmental disabilities
City of Kamloops – Accessibility Engagement Group	People with physical disabilities
Same Sky & ASK Wellness	Individuals experiencing homelessness and/or with substance use disorders

Purpose of this Report

This report presents the **voices and contributions shared by participants**, organized by themes for clarity. Themes are provided to show patterns and trends in the data and support readability and shared understanding.

The report is intended to:

- Inform inclusive emergency preparedness and climate resilience planning
- Highlight barriers experienced by equity-deserving populations
- Identify what is working well at community and system levels
- Support collaboration among service providers, emergency managers, and decision-makers
- Ensure community voices meaningfully shape future policy and planning efforts

Findings

Overall, the engagement revealed that community members from equity-deserving groups are actively navigating climate-related emergencies using a combination of personal strategies, informal supports, and available services. At the same time, findings show that experiences of preparedness, safety, and recovery vary significantly, shaped by broader social, economic, and structural conditions. Participants consistently described challenges related to access, clarity, coordination, and suitability of systems intended to support them during emergencies.

Recommendations

- ✓ Strengthen pre-season preparedness through coordinated, community-based education and planning
- ✓ Improve clarity, accessibility, and coordination of emergency information
- ✓ Expand neighbourhood-level and place-based supports during emergencies
- ✓ Address housing-related vulnerability as a core emergency preparedness issue
- ✓ Ensure evacuation planning is inclusive and realistic for people with diverse needs
- ✓ Recognize and integrate lived experience and Indigenous knowledge into emergency planning

Community Experiences of Climate Event Preparedness, Safety, and Emergency Response

What We Heard

Across all engagement topics — pre-season preparedness, staying safe at home, staying safe in the community, accessing information, and evacuations — participants consistently described actively preparing for and responding to climate-related emergencies. Many people reported taking proactive steps such as modifying their homes, stocking emergency supplies, closely monitoring environmental conditions, planning evacuation routes, and checking in on neighbours.

These actions reflect strong individual initiative and community care. However, participants were also clear that individual preparedness has limits. A person's ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies is strongly shaped by income, housing stability, health, mobility, language, access to technology, and familiarity with local emergency systems. Climate-related events often amplify existing inequities, resulting in uneven impacts across the community.

Information, Communication, and Coordination

Access to clear, consistent, and actionable information emerged as a central theme across all engagement areas. Participants described actively seeking information through emergency alerts, apps, news media, social networks, and word of mouth. Despite this, many reported confusion about what to do next, where to go, or which sources to trust — particularly during evacuations or rapidly changing situations.

Information was often described as available but not always coordinated, accessible, or delivered in plain language, including for newcomers, non-English speakers, seniors, people with disabilities, and those without smartphones. Participants emphasized that uncertainty and conflicting messaging increase stress and risk, even when people are motivated and paying close attention.

Housing, Health, and Physical Safety

Housing conditions strongly influence safety during climate events. Participants noted that homes with adequate cooling, heating, air filtration, and reliable utilities offer significantly greater protection during smoke, heat, and power disruptions. Renters, people with low incomes, and those without stable housing described having fewer options to prepare or shelter safely.

During evacuations, participants identified ongoing challenges related to transportation access, medical and mobility needs, and accommodating pets and service animals. These barriers can delay evacuation or increase harm, particularly for people already facing multiple challenges.

Community Capacity and System Gaps

Participants highlighted the important role of non-profits, public facilities, neighbours, and first responders in helping people stay safe during climate emergencies. Cooling centres, indoor public

spaces, informal neighbour check-ins, and community organizations often provide critical support when emergencies are prolonged or formal systems are under strain.

Participants also identified gaps in system coordination, including centralized services that are difficult to access at the neighbourhood level and inconsistent communication between agencies and levels of government, contributing to confusion during emergencies.

Overall Pattern

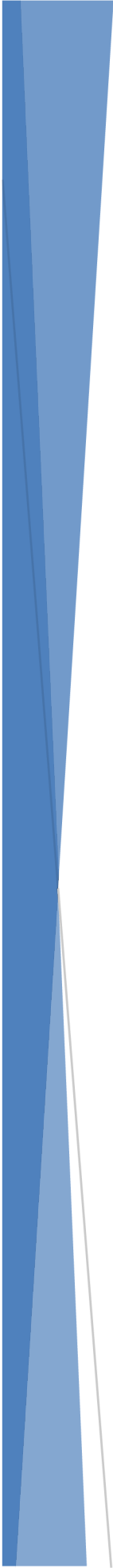
Across all themes, participants emphasized the value of early, pre-season planning; neighbourhood-level supports; stronger coordination; and planning that reflects lived experience. Indigenous knowledge and leadership were identified as essential to effective preparedness and response.

Overall, while community resilience is strong, participants consistently identified the need for systems that better support residents through clear communication, inclusive design, coordinated response, and proactive planning.



Key Cross-Cutting Takeaways

- People are preparing — but support matters: Individual preparedness is widespread, yet constrained by income, housing, health, and access to resources.
- Clear information reduces risk and stress: Confusion often results from unclear, inconsistent, or inaccessible communication.
- Housing conditions shape safety outcomes: Cooling, filtration, power reliability, and housing stability directly affect safety.
- Access determines who can respond: Transportation, mobility, language, and technology influence evacuation and support access.
- Coordination strengthens community resilience: Clear leadership and coordination across agencies improve outcomes



Appendices

Appendix A:

Engagement questions resulted in conversations focused on 5 key areas: **Accessing Information, Pre-Season Preparedness, Staying Safe at Home, Staying Safe in the Community**, and **Evacuations**. This section summarizes the thematic results of those topic-focused discussions highlighting what was heard and working well currently, barriers/challenges and opportunities for improvement.

1. Accessing Information for Preparedness and Response: Theme Summary

What We Heard Is Happening and Working Well

Seeking information to inform decision making

- Participants actively seeking information to guide decisions during emergencies.
 - Participant perspective: *Before making any decisions, I tried to gather as much information as possible so I wouldn't make the wrong call.*

Monitoring environmental conditions

- People regularly monitored air quality, smoke maps, weather alerts, and fire proximity.
 - Participant perspective: *I was constantly checking smoke maps and air quality to figure out if it was safe to be outside.*

Use of apps, alerts, and notifications

- Smartphone apps and emergency alerts were widely used to receive updates.
 - Participant perspective: *Phone alerts were often the first way I found out that conditions had changed.*

Following news and official updates

- Participants relied on local, provincial, and national news sources for information.
 - Participant perspective: *I kept the news on all the time because that's where I felt I could get regular updates.*

Word of mouth and community sharing

- Information was shared through friends, family, neighbours, and community networks.
 - Participant perspective: *When official information wasn't clear, people started calling and checking on each other instead.*

Barriers/Challenges

Misinformation and information overload

- Conflicting or excessive information created confusion and stress.
 - Participant perspective: *There was so much information coming from different places that it was hard to know what to trust.*

Difficulty knowing who to contact

- Participants experienced uncertainty about where to get reliable information.
 - Participant perspective: *The hardest part wasn't seeing the fire, it was not knowing who I was supposed to contact for answers.*

Communication barriers for newcomers and non-English speakers

- Language and familiarity with systems limited access to information.
 - Participant perspective: *If English isn't your first language, it's really hard to understand instructions quickly during an emergency.*

Digital and technological barriers

- Not having a phone, apps, or sufficient digital skills limited access to alerts.
 - Participant perspective: *Most alerts assume everyone has a smartphone, and that's just not the case.*

Accessibility barriers

- Some communication formats were not accessible for people with disabilities.
 - Participant perspective: *Radio doesn't work for everyone, especially if you have hearing impairments.*

Lack of clear direction and coordination

- Information was sometimes unclear, scattered, or inconsistent.
 - Participant perspective: *There was lots of information, but nothing clearly told you what you were supposed to do next.*

Ideas for Improvements

Centralized and trusted information source

- Participants suggested a single, reliable place to find emergency information.
 - Participant perspective: *It would be much easier if there was one place everyone knew to go for accurate information.*

Clear, plain-language instructions in multiple languages

- Information needs to be easy to understand and available in multiple languages.

→ Participant perspective: *Plain language and translations would make a huge difference, especially in stressful situations.*

Information shared across multiple platforms

- Messages should be delivered through apps, TV, radio, email, and print.
→ Participant perspective: *Not everyone uses the same platform, so information needs to be shared everywhere.*

Inclusive communication systems

- Communication methods should consider seniors, people with disabilities, and those without phones.
→ Participant perspective: *Emergency communication needs to work for people who don't or can't use phones.*

Clear evacuation information and direction

- Direct guidance about where to go and what to do is needed during evacuations.
→ Participant perspective: *People don't panic because of the emergency itself, they panic because they don't know what to do.*

Step-by-step guidance for newcomers and international students

- Tailored guidance is needed for people unfamiliar with local emergency systems.
→ Participant perspective: *If you're new here, you don't automatically know how emergencies work or where to look for information.*

2. Pre-Season Preparedness: Theme Summary

What We Heard Is Happening and Working Well

Home resilience improvements

Participants described making changes to homes before emergency seasons to reduce impacts from smoke, heat, and fire.

→ Participant perspective: *Making upgrades ahead of time, like air purifiers and small home improvements, helped reduce stress once smoky conditions arrived.*

Staying informed / seeking information

People described seeking information, participating in discussions, and sharing knowledge about preparedness.

→ Participant perspective: *Talking with others and staying informed helped me feel more prepared instead of caught off guard.*

Loss prevention and recovery efforts

Participants reported preventive actions such as maintaining insurance and reducing risks around the home.

→ Participant perspective: *Keeping insurance up to date and dealing with risks early felt like one of the few things I could control.*

Barriers / Challenges

Lack of knowledge or familiarity with preparedness

Participants described uncertainty about what actions to take and where to go during emergencies.

→ Participant perspective: *I didn't really know where to start or what I was supposed to do to prepare.*

Limited income

Financial barriers were reported as limiting the ability to prepare or respond to emergencies.

→ Participant perspective: *Even knowing what would help, the cost made it hard to actually prepare.*

Access to resources and services

Some participants experienced limited access to preparedness resources and supports.

→ Participant perspective: *It felt like some communities had access to support and resources, while others were left out.*

Navigating local preparedness systems

Newcomers and international students described difficulty understanding local emergency systems and expectations.

→ Participant perspective: *If you're new here, it's not obvious how emergency systems work or where to look for help.*

Ideas for Improvement

Pre-season readiness and training

Participants emphasized the need for training, education, and information sharing before emergencies occur.

→ Participant perspective: *Basic training ahead of time would make emergencies feel less overwhelming.*

Centralized preparedness information

A single, easy-to-find location for preparedness information was recommended.

→ Participant perspective: *Having one place to find reliable preparedness information would make planning much easier.*

Community engagement and knowledge sharing

Suggestions focused on strengthening community connections and sharing place-based knowledge.
→ Participant perspective: *Connecting with people who understand local risks makes preparedness feel more realistic.*

Centering Indigenous knowledge and leadership

Participants highlighted the importance of Indigenous leadership and knowledge in preparedness planning.
→ Participant perspective: *Indigenous knowledge of the land brings insight that should guide how communities prepare.*

3. Staying Safe at Home: Theme Summary

What We Heard Is Happening and Working Well

Staying indoors during smoke and heat events

- People described staying indoors, limiting outside activities, and using air conditioning or fans during smoke and heat events.
→ Participant perspective: *We spent most of the time inside and avoided going out because the smoke and heat made it hard to breathe and move around safely.*

Emergency supplies at home

- Many participants reported having food, water, and emergency supplies stocked at home before events.
→ Participant perspective: *Having water, canned food, and basic supplies already at home made it easier to get through disruptions.*

Home heating, cooling, and filtration infrastructure

- Homes with air conditioning, heating systems, and air filtration were described as more resilient.
→ Participant perspective: *Good heating, air conditioning, and filters made a big difference in keeping the house livable during extreme conditions.*

Home resiliency improvements

- Participants described making physical changes to their homes to improve resilience to smoke, heat, and fire.
→ Participant perspective: *Installing air purifiers and making small upgrades helped keep smoke and heat out of our home.*

Barriers / Challenges

Feeling trapped indoors

- Being confined indoors during prolonged smoke events caused stress and discomfort.
→ Participant perspective: *After days of smoke, staying inside started to feel suffocating and isolating.*

Power outages and essential service disruptions

- Long power outages, boil water advisories, and disrupted services created major challenges.
→ Participant perspective: *When the power was out for days, it affected everything from food to being able to get supplies.*

Lack of cooling and air quality protection

- Homes without air conditioning or filtration were described as difficult or unsafe during extreme heat or smoke.
→ Participant perspective: *Without air conditioning or proper filtration, the house became unbearable during the heat dome.*

Limited income and housing constraints

- Limited income and lack of control over housing limited the ability to make improvements.
→ Participant perspective: *Not having the money or permission to make changes made it hard to prepare the home properly.*

Lack of safe housing options

- People without stable housing described heightened risk and lack of safety during climate events.
→ Participant perspective: *When you don't have a stable place to stay, every weather emergency becomes more dangerous.*

Ideas for Improvement

Access to free or low-cost emergency supplies

- Participants identified the need for low-cost or free emergency preparedness supplies.
→ Participant perspective: *Free or affordable emergency supplies would help people who can't stock up on their own.*

Improved home cooling and filtration

- Suggestions included better air purifiers, cooling systems, and filtration for smoke events.
→ Participant perspective: *Better access to cooling and air filtration would make staying at home safer during extreme heat and smoke.*

Pre-season home preparedness

- Improving home readiness before fire and heat seasons was identified as helpful.

→ Participant perspective: *Getting homes ready before the season starts would reduce stress when emergencies happen suddenly.*

Financial preparedness

- Being financially prepared was identified as important for emergency readiness.
→ Participant perspective: *Having some financial cushion makes it easier to respond quickly during emergencies.*

4. Staying Safe in the Community: Theme Summary

What We Heard Is Happening and Working Well

Monitoring environmental conditions

- People actively monitored air quality and environmental conditions to guide daily decisions about safety and activity in the community.
→ Participant perspective: *I was checking the air quality constantly to decide if I could even leave the house that day.*

Adjusted daily behaviours to conditions

- Participants described changing daily routines, including hydration, activity timing, and movement through the community, in response to heat and smoke.
→ Participant perspective: *I shifted everything earlier or later in the day because being out at the wrong time just wasn't safe.*

Use of public and community spaces

- Air-conditioned and indoor public spaces played an important role in helping people stay safe during extreme heat and smoke events.
→ Participant perspective: *The YMCA became the place people went just to cool down, shower, and feel safe during the heat.*

Community members supporting each other

- Informal peer support, neighbour check-ins, and community care helped people stay safe, particularly when formal systems were strained.
→ Participant perspective: *People were knocking on doors and checking on each other because not everyone was getting alerts.*

Agency and first-responder support

- Emergency services, non-profits, and community organizations provided critical assistance during climate emergencies.

→ Participant perspective: *When we finally reached them, the fire department was phenomenal and made a huge difference.*

[Barriers/Challenges](#)

Weather-related accessibility issues

- Environmental conditions such as deep snow, extreme heat, and smoke created mobility and access challenges for some community members.

→ Participant perspective: *When the snow is really deep, even getting around with a guide dog becomes incredibly hard.*

Transportation gap

- Limited access to transportation prevented some people from reaching cooling centres, shelters, or other supports during climate emergencies.

→ Participant perspective: *Even knowing where to go didn't help if there was no way to actually get there.*

Compounding hardships

- Climate emergencies intensified existing inequities and made everyday survival more difficult for people already facing barriers.

→ Participant perspective: *Every day is already hard, and when emergencies hit it just stacks more problems on top.*

Lack of emergency infrastructure close by

- Centralized services were not accessible to all neighbourhoods or populations.

→ Participant perspective: *Centralized shelters sound good, but they're not useful if you can't physically reach them.*

Lack of coordinated response

- Participants observed confusion and perceived disorganization across agencies during emergency situations.

→ Participant perspective: *It felt like everyone was doing their own thing, and no one was clearly in charge.*

[Ideas for Improvements](#)

Clear and convenient information and direction during emergencies

- Participants emphasized the need for clear, straightforward guidance about where to go and what to do during emergencies.

→ Participant perspective: *There was information everywhere, but nothing that clearly told you what your next step was.*

Neighbourhood-level emergency gathering locations

- Local, walkable muster points were identified as a way to improve safety and access during emergencies.

→ Participant perspective: *If there had been somewhere close by to gather, more people would have actually used it.*

Inclusive and welcoming cool and safe spaces

- Public emergency spaces need to be accessible and non-stigmatizing for all community members.

→ Participant perspective: *Not everyone feels safe going into public spaces without being questioned or judged.*

Multi-governmental and agency coordination

- Stronger coordination between municipal, provincial, and federal bodies was identified as an area for improvement.

→ Participant perspective: *Agencies need to communicate better so people aren't getting mixed messages.*

Recognizing lived experience

- Participants stressed that emergency responses should reflect the knowledge and realities of people with lived experience of instability or multiple barriers.

→ Participant perspective: *Plans work better when they're shaped by people who actually live through this kind of crisis.*

5. Evacuations: Theme Summary

What We Heard Is Happening and Working Well

Alternate accommodation planning

- Some participants had plans to stay with friends, family, hotels, vehicles, or RVs if evacuation was required.

→ Participant perspective: *I already knew where I would go if we had to leave, whether that was a motel or staying with someone outside of town.*

Evacuation and emergency supplies at the ready

- Many people described keeping go bags, documents, food, water, fuel, and cash accessible so they could leave quickly.

→ Participant perspective: *Having a go bag with documents and essentials meant we could grab what we needed and leave without thinking too much.*

Preparing for a prolonged evacuation

- Participants described planning in advance for evacuations that might last several days or longer.
→ Participant perspective: *I tried to think ahead and pack enough medications and supplies in case we couldn't come back quickly.*

Including animals in evacuation plans

- Pets and service animals were considered essential parts of evacuation planning.
→ Participant perspective: *Leaving wasn't an option unless I knew my dog could come with me.*

Location and safety check-in

- People described notifying family, friends, or contacts about where they were and that they were safe.
→ Participant perspective: *Once we got out, letting people know where we were was one of the first things we did.*

Barriers / Challenges

Lack of transportation or unclear transportation options

- Non-drivers, seniors, and people with disabilities expressed uncertainty about how they would evacuate.
→ Participant perspective: *Not driving made me wonder how I would actually get out if an evacuation was called.*

Evacuation logistics challenges

- Congestion, road closures, and unclear evacuation routes created delays and confusion.
→ Participant perspective: *Traffic and road closures made it stressful trying to figure out which way was actually safe to go.*

Short notice or slow response

- Limited warning time made it difficult to prepare or gather essential belongings.
→ Participant perspective: *By the time we realized how serious it was, there wasn't much time to prepare.*

Not having essential or medical supplies during evacuations

- Participants described losing access to medications, mobility aids, or medical equipment during evacuations.

→ Participant perspective: *Trying to choose which medical equipment to bring was incredibly difficult when time and space were limited.*

Mental distress

- Fear, stress, and uncertainty were common during evacuation experiences.
→ Participant perspective: *The hardest part was the constant worry about whether we were going to lose our home.*

Communication and coordination challenges

- Lack of clear, coordinated communication across agencies caused confusion during evacuations.
→ Participant perspective: *Information felt scattered, and it wasn't always clear which updates we were supposed to follow.*

Ideas for Improvement

Clear and convenient evacuation information and direction

- Participants emphasized the need for simple, direct guidance about where to go and what to do during evacuations.
→ Participant perspective: *Clear directions would have reduced a lot of the panic and second-guessing during evacuation.*

Transportation options for non-drivers

- Accessible transportation options were identified as critical for people who cannot drive.
→ Participant perspective: *Knowing there was a reliable way out for non-drivers would make evacuations less frightening.*

Neighbourhood-level muster points

- Community-level gathering locations were identified as helpful during evacuation situations.
→ Participant perspective: *Having a nearby muster point would make it clearer where to go instead of everyone guessing.*

Inclusive planning for disabilities and medical needs

- Evacuation planning should account for mobility devices, medical equipment, and additional support needs.
→ Participant perspective: *Planning that considers medical and mobility needs would help people evacuate without leaving essentials behind.*

Multi-governmental and agency coordination

- Stronger coordination across municipal, provincial, and federal levels was recommended.

→ Participant perspective: *Better coordination between agencies would make evacuation messaging less confusing.*

Supporting mental wellbeing during evacuation

- Recognizing stress and emotional strain can improve evacuation outcomes.

→ Participant perspective: *Staying calmer during evacuations makes a real difference, but support is needed to help people manage the stress.*

Appendix B:

All response data (digitized and thematized) by engagement question.

What big climate events have you recently experienced?

Theme	What you said
Wildfire and evacuation events	Juniper Ridge fire – confusion and anxiety
	wild fires close to Kamloops and Monte Lake
	Lytton fire – had to evacuate in the middle of the night. Lost all belongings and ended up homeless. Lost all work tools and supplies and insurance coverage was not sufficient
	Evacuated and had to live at a RV park
	Evacuated from home
	Wildfire evacuation
	feeling deeply shocked by the loss of others and amplification of their own fears of losing their home
Smoke and air quality events	Smoky air for a couple weeks straight – having kids who are asthmatic and not knowing what to do
	Wildfire smoke related health concerns (worsening asthma)
	worry about lung damage from smoke and pollutants
	Concern about health effects of poor air quality
	Nosebleeds and skin and lips cracking
	feeling trapped indoors during smoke events
Extreme heat events	High stress and uncertainty about how to stay safe in 2021 heat dome
	Extreme heat causes higher risk of overdosing
	Fear, stress, anxiety
Flooding events	Flooding
Snowstorms and cold events	Big snow storms
	Blizzard resulted in power outages and couldn't go to the store
	cold
Power outages and service disruptions	long power outages
	worry about power failure
	worry about inability to charge cell phones
	worry about loss of internet and cell service
Water system disruptions	Boil water advisory
Cultural and land-based impacts	Harder for Indigenous Peoples to maintain their homes on their lands after a climate emergency
	Changes in animals on the land – no longer able to engage in traditional hunting in the same way

Perceived or real impacts of climate events and/or emergencies

Theme	What you said
Mental health impacts	Anxiety about future emergencies and what to do
	Increased anxiety and climate emergencies exacerbate the threat and urgency in daily survival
	Fear, stress, anxiety
	media language causes unease when there is extreme weather
	emotional and mental strain during smoke events
Physical health impacts	Wildfire smoke related health concerns (worsening asthma)
	Nosebleeds and skin and lips cracking
	Extreme heat causes higher risk of overdosing
Economic impacts	Lost all belongings and ended up homeless. Lost all work tools and supplies and insurance coverage was not sufficient
	threats of job loss due to photographing fires on private property
Access to essentials disrupted	access to essential goods disrupted (food, water, power, housing)

How has a big climate emergency affected your normal routines?

Theme	What you said
Disruption to daily routines and plans	Go into response mode
	regular routines disrupted
	Restricted plans/activities
	wedding moved to a different location due to extreme summer conditions
	No camping
	Could not visit family
Reduced outdoor activity and staying indoors	More time spent indoors
	when there's smoke outside, it limits the outdoor activities significantly
	Smoke changed typical day, spent less time outdoors and wore masks
	feeling trapped indoors
Transportation and mobility barriers	Difficulties travelling
	Flying instead of driving for medical appointments during floods
	I couldn't get groceries on my own. I still go out, I put boots on the dog and I travel as best as I can, but it often means I seek transit alternatives such as Handydart, Taxi, or a ride with my wife
Impacts on animal care	More difficult to get food for animals, who are always with you when sleeping on the streets

Individuals' Response in Climate Events/Emergencies & Preparation for future events?

What did you do to stay safe?

Theme	What you said
adjust travel plans	adjust travel plans
adjusted daily behaviours to conditions	Drank more water
	Exercised when it was cooler
	closing curtains during heat events
	Limited how long lights were on in house
	Walk with umbrella in heat
	Wore a mask
	wear a mask during smoky conditions if outside
	stay indoors and use air conditioner during heat events
	spend more time indoors
	Stayed inside
	Limiting time outside
	less outside activities when it's smoky
go to cooling place	Go to cooling centres
	Go to the rec center or mall to stay cool and get out of the smoke
	Utilized cooling centers
	Went to air-conditioned public spaces
community members	Alerted a woman to get out of her house when her husband was trapped in a fire
	Knocking on people's doors to alert them
	Served community as a first responder
	Helped with community services (providing clothing, water, food)
	Donated essential items
evacuation & emergency supplies at the ready	Now in each of my vehicles I keep an emergency kit with non-perishable food items, clothing, etc. Prep bags are now just a normal thing for me.
	"Go bags" with passports and important documents
	We always keep an emergency bag ready with important documents and essentials
	keep the gas tank half or full
	keep the car full of gas in case we need to leave.
	store non-perishable food
	keep bottled water on hand
	keep blankets, water and food in my car
	Have a go bag and a go bin

	keep duct tape in the car
	keep cord and garbage bags in the car
	has a plan for hot conditions
	Yes-modified home to limit heat or cool transfers via windows and doors

Who have you helped?

Theme	What you said
community members	Alerted a woman to get out of her house when her husband was trapped in a fire
	Knocking on people's doors to alert them
	residents open up their property to put up out of towners
	evacuated the community
family & friends	Helped family pack to leave during a fire evacuation
	friend stayed with me
	Friends and family- opened up house and provided yard parking
	helped evacuees (stayed with me, fed them, gave them rides)
evacuees from out of town	evacuees from out of town
sought help	Asked for support

How are you preparing for the future?

Theme	What you said
evacuation & emergency supplies at the ready	Now in each of my vehicles I keep an emergency kit with non-perishable food items, clothing, etc.
	We always keep an emergency bag ready with important documents and essentials
	Having stocked pantry / supply excess
	Having dry goods on hand
	Packed a go bag
	Pre-packing bins when fires are near
	keeping phones charged and spare external battery
having a plan for emergencies	Having a plan for emergencies
	having a plan and a back up plan
	have some form of evacuation plan
	evacuation plan for all members of family and pets / service animals
	setting family meeting points
preparedness to leave	Picking out which getaway vehicle to take; motor homes, outlander vehicles
	Packed light, essentials only
	grab phone, water, bag and wallet
	You take your vehicle, your dog, and what you can

	Get passport and sentimental items
financial preparedness	having emergency savings ready
experiential and daily preparedness	They would know how to survive – people experiencing homelessness are well prepared as they are constantly in response mode
home resiliency improvements	considering air purification systems for smoky conditions
	home resiliency improvements

Is your home ready for future Climate Events?

Theme	What you said
home has cooling infrastructure	10/11 have air conditioning
	have good AC
home has heating infrastructure	All report having good heating
	Fire place for additional heating
	Proper insulation for heating and cooling
home has filtration infrastructure	Air purifiers / filters in home
	I change the furnace filter every three months

Preparedness to leave home?

Theme	What you said
prepared to leave home	prepared to leave home
	leave town
	leave home
	Leaving on foot
alternate accommodation	having an alternate plan for accommodation at a different part of the province.
pets	keep the cat carrier by the door
	take pets
	Grab specialized food and meds
	support animals are able to go anywhere their person needs to go for support
	Send pets to live with someone else

How did you get information during events?

Theme	What you said
government updates	official updates
	government updates
	TNRD website
environmental monitoring	used NASA / Space Centre heat maps
	Checked internet for air quality

	monitor environmental conditions
	will be monitoring smoke maps
emergency alerts	Emergency alert on cell phone
	Voyant Alert
	Text emergency
	Cellphone text alert
news media	Radio
	TV news
	CFJC News
	global news
	BC news channels
	News
social media	Social Media
	facebook misinformation
word of mouth	Friends / family
	Someone knocking on your door (Lytton fire)
	word of mouth
	Overhearing conversations while in stores
	Hearing on the block (Northshore) for participant who doesn't have a phone
	Had to resort to word of mouth
education & planning	Engaging in firesmart education
	Discussing fire dangers
	Learning from elders

What is working well to support people to stay well during Climate Events/Emergencies?

Who can help?

Theme	What you said
Volunteers	Volunteers
Community members	Community members – People who are unhoused look out for each other and care for each other
	In smaller communities the town will help each other
Neighbours	Neighbours
Family	daughter
	family
	Family and friends outside of the province
	Family or friends in another community
Indigenous support	Indigenous Elder
	Indigenous communities – knowledge of the land and how to prepare for extreme weather emergencies / natural disasters
Emergency services	reach out to your local fire hall and let them know

	what your specific needs are.
	fire department / emergency services
	fire department was phenomenal
Emergency management	call ambulance for medical emergency
	emergency management
Non-profit / service agencies	RedCross
	non-profit / service agencies
	Agency support
	Same Sky and ASK Wellness
YMCA	the YMCA lowered the temperatures in the pools and offered free swims open to non-members also
	the YMCA stocked up on water bottles and made sure we had food and water available for folks
	YMCA made our showers available too
	During a heat dome the YMCA kept the AC going and kept fans going so the buildings stayed cool for people to access
Outreach & support staff	At CMHA we have a team of outreach staff that goes out to folks on the streets
	Turned CMHA clubhouse into a bit of a cooling station when needed
Paid support	Home share providers / support staff
	paid support staff
Self-reliance	Relying on ourselves
	yourself

What makes preparation easier?

Theme	What you said
Awareness of gathering points	designated muster points
Clear communication	clear instructions in multiple languages
	centralized and trustworthy information
	credible and consistent information from one group
Collective support	Sharing plans with a group of people – pooling resources
	Collective capacity / resource sharing
Community connection	Integrating more into community – making friends and learning from locals
	community connections
	community-relevant knowledge
Family support	family
	relatives out of town
Planning & readiness	having a ready to go list
	having a list
	knowing now what to do in preparation for an emergency
Education & awareness	Education

	Awareness
Inclusive spaces	Noted privilege to go to an air-conditioned space and not get profiled or accused of loitering inclusive and welcoming cool spaces
Mental wellbeing	it works well if the evacuees are in a stable mindset mental wellbeing / calm
Medication preparedness	taking a week's supply of prescriptions
Emergency readiness	preparing to be evacuated for a prolonged period

Barriers & Challenges

What was harder than expected?

Theme	What you said
Agency cooling supports insufficient	Kamloops pop up cooling centre did not meet the needs of people
Medical access	Getting medication from a different pharmacy Doctors who will not give extra medication for a go bag in case of emergency
Communication barriers	difficulty contacting organizations Lack of communication to Newcomers Govt websites are difficult to navigate for information
Home cooling	no air conditioning
Infrastructure	Older agency buildings make it harder to turn into cool space
Smoke & air quality	concerns about in-home air filtration
Compounding hardship	Every day is hard for the unhoused, emergencies just made it even more difficult
Distrust	Mistrust in police and City officials
Information gaps	Most concerning thing was not necessarily seeing the fire, but not knowing who to contact for information
Accessibility	radio isn't good for people with hearing impairments
Mental health	The constant news feeds make it scary
Routine disruption	Missing routine during evacuations
Transportation	many seniors don't drive, so didn't know how to evacuate

What makes preparation harder?

Theme	What you said
Financial barriers	The less money you have, the more problems you encounter

	Not having enough finances could be challenging during a climate emergency
Information overload	Information overload
Lack of clarity	Not knowing what to do or where to go no clear evacuation plan
Accessibility barriers	apps like Voyent Alert only work for people who can use smart phones Emergency alert accessibility barrier
Transportation gaps	Lack of transportation – how will they relocate in the case of an emergency
Predictability	Not knowing what the actual emergency will be – different emergencies require different responses
Housing insecurity	Mother nature changes so quickly, really puts the pressure on when you have no place to stay
Resource limitations	Not enough resources for Indigenous groups locally

Is your home ready? (barriers)

Theme	What you said
Lack of cooling	no air conditioning
Smoke protection	lack of air filtration
Power dependency	dependence on electronic medical devices if power goes out
Structural limits	unable to be proactive about infrastructure changes
Aging	in my age, just about anything would give me heart failure
Utility disruption	power outage prevented gas stations from operating

Opportunities for Improvement

What would make you feel safer and more confident in preparation for future emergencies?

Theme	What you said
clear evacuation information	clear evacuation instructions clear routes out of the city
credible and up to date information about emergencies	ongoing updates about fire proximity Less media hysteria as it causes unnecessary panic. news alerts would be helpful. Being well-informed by following the news and other media
digital literacy	Having more technical literacy
having a lead agency	Clearer leadership during emergencies
having a platform to be able to ask	How to communicate with the people you are

questions	with- knowing what questions to ask so you know what to do and what the plan is
having an income that can support preparedness	Being more prepared financially would help in any emergency.
having emergency and evacuation supplies on hand	Having a stock of food for emergencies
	Gathering extra things like first aid kits
having multiple plans in place	Having a plan and a back up plan
information about muster points	Public identification of neighbourhood "muster points"
	Greater visibility of emergency response locations across Kamloops
information on multiple platforms/mediums	Clear and coordinated messaging through TV and radio
	Backup communication systems such as battery-operated radios
	Emergency management alert system
knowing about transportation options	One participant suggested exploring alternative emergency transportation options, including the idea of motorcycles being used to transport individuals if highways become inaccessible.
	Easy access to transit or help with transportation
pre-season readiness/training/information sharing	better understanding of how evacuations would unfold in practice
	Basic evacuation training for seniors
	Getting more access to information, downloading alert apps
	Having conversations like this
support to create or distribute a pre-populated contact list/preparedness list	Help to create a contact list
	a pamphlet listing important items to take in the event of evacuation.
	Cards available for the 211 calling to connect to emergency services
	have a check sheet for home absence monitoring
	Awareness of resources
	Unsure what to do to prepare for future emergencies

What is most needed?

Theme	What you said
support to create or distribute a pre-populated contact list/preparedness list	Not just papers with 'how to's', but in-person sessions to help people create the list and put together a bag
access to free or low-cost emergency supplies	Access to low cost or free emergency supplies
clear and convenient information and direction during emergencies	Clear signage and communication about where to go
	The city can be more direct with directions as it

	can be confusing to know where to go during emergencies
	brochure listing all things to do in an emergency or evacuation
community commitments to climate initiatives	Frustration about inability to commit to climate initiatives
community connection eases mental strain during and after climate events	community connection helped reduce tension after a big event
	Reconnecting with others in smaller communities during weather events was a positive side.
digital literacy training	Computer training for seniors
Early and sustained engagement with Indigenous People	Enhanced/improved communication and continuity with Indigenous populations (deep knowledge of the land)
	Center Indigenous knowledge and leadership in planning
	Stronger partnerships between local First Nations, municipalities and institutions like TRU
gathering spaces	Designated emergency centre
	Day spaces
information is produced in plain language and for non-English Speakers	Step-by-step guides for international students
information on multiple platforms/mediums	Idea of an information sharing channel on cable television, to support those who don't have phones or apps.
	Communication systems inclusive of seniors
local resources	Region specific resources
making multiple forms of transportation available	transportation for non-drivers in evacuation circumstances
multi-governmental and agency coordination and collaboration during emergencies	Better coordination between municipal, provincial, and federal governments.
	Reduced political conflict during crisis situations
	agencies need to communicate to each other more effectively for evacuations. Gets info consolidated for less confusion
	There are many local community leaders who should be included in discussions about climate emergencies
muster points nearby	Neighbourhood-level emergency gathering locations
one location to find information/resources	Central location for all information about a community and emergency preparedness
pre-season engagement with youth	Community consultation- engage post-secondary students
pre-season infrastructure improvements	Removal of cedar trees
pre-season readiness/training/information sharing	Stronger community engagement before emergencies occur
	ESS is trying to encourage the City to have on their website all aspects of preparedness in the

	event of emergency
	Equal access to support (ex- international students can't access the food bank)
	Create a space where locals can connect with people who are new to Kamloops or BC to discuss safety
	Free or low barrier training courses
	Workshops explaining local risks
response should meet the needs of those populations with multiple barriers to support and lived experience of survival	Recognize the unique lived-experience and knowledge of those experiencing chronic unstable/unsafe housing
	Avoid in-depth training- rather, recognize that folks are experts and hold expertise for navigating emergencies
streamlining emergency services	Streamlined services during emergencies
pre-season readiness/training/information sharing	Free or low barrier training courses
pre-season engagement with youth	Community consultation- engage post-secondary students
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