



**Prepared:
A Guide to Help
Families Plan
for Extreme
Weather Events**



Abbotsford's Fishtrap Creek Park
November 2021
Image Courtesy of Cindy Rintoul

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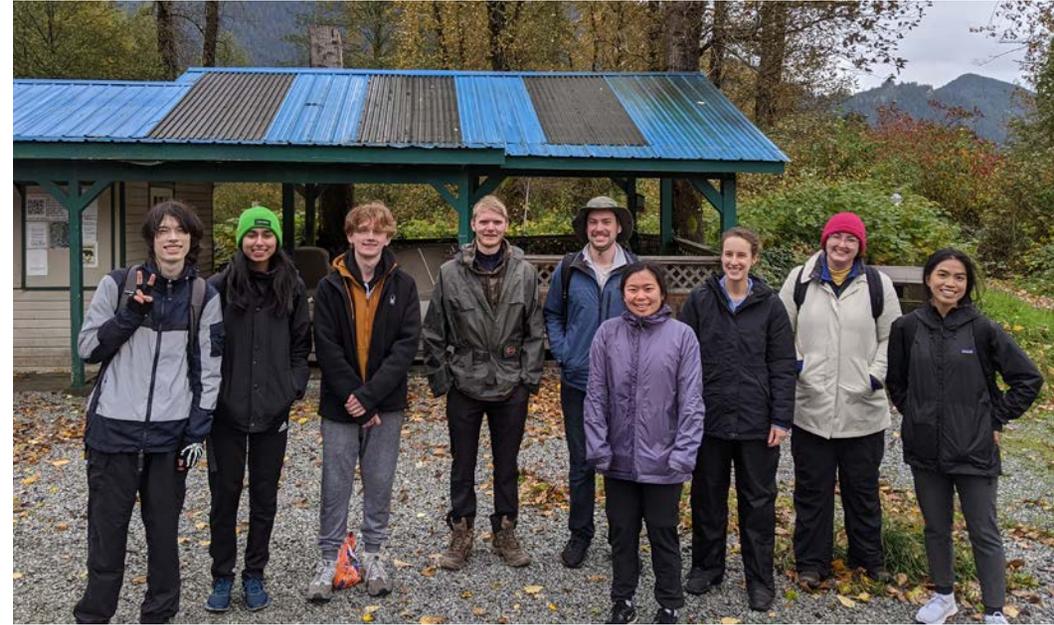
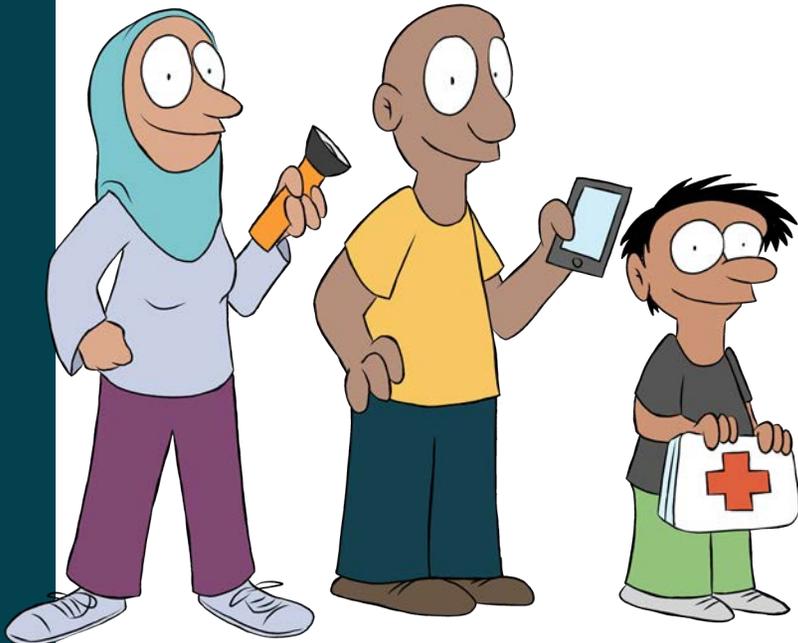
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Is Your Family Prepared?

Families in the Fraser Valley are navigating increasingly intense climate events, such as heat waves, wildfires, and flooding. Furthermore, these events are expected to increase in intensity and frequency.

This booklet contains tips and resources you can use to prepare for and manage climate emergencies. These tips are a starting place to keep you and your family safe when disaster strikes.

This resource guide is brought to you by youth volunteers from the Fraser Valley cohort of Co-Creating a Sustainable BC (CCSBC). CCSBC is a program run by the Fraser Basin Council, a non-profit organization that encourages youth to take a hands-on approach to advancing sustainability in their local communities. This guide is the result of months of gathering information and we hope it inspires you into action to keep you and your loved ones safe.



The question is not *if* our rivers will overflow again or *if* temperatures will rise, but only *when* and *how many lives will be lost*.

Heat Pumps

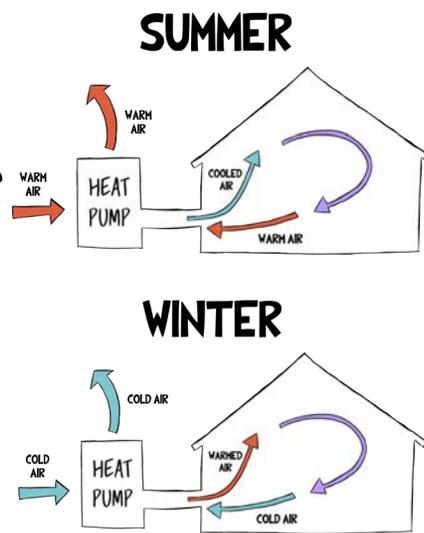
One innovative method recommended by a member of our community is to purchase a heat pump for your home. Like air conditioning, heat pumps can keep your home cool in the summer, but unlike AC, they also keep your home warm in the winter!

“Use a heat pump!”

-Abbotsford Resident

The key benefits of heat pumps:

- Energy efficient
- Cost cutting
- Rebates offered in BC for switching (ranging from \$2,000 to \$11,000)
- Utilizes lower-emission energy source (hydroelectricity in BC)



Thermal Curtains

Thermal curtains also help keep your home at a comfortable temperature. These curtains, also known as R-rated curtains, keep the cold air out in the winter and keep the hot air out in the summer.

Keep in mind that there is a difference between thermal curtains and blackout curtains. While both will help keep your home more comfortable, thermal curtains are the more effective solution.

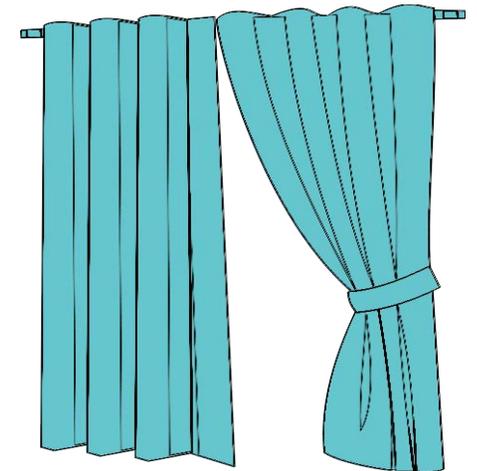
For a more affordable option, create your own DIY thermal curtains!

“[Use] R-rated curtains for heat control. Check that all home insulation and weather stripping is in good condition.”

-Abbotsford Resident

The key benefits of thermal curtains:

- Save money on heat and cooling
- Improved energy efficiency
- Blocks out sunlight and noise!



Protecting Your Home From Wildfires

Every year in British Columbia, people lose their homes and even their lives when wildfires spiral out of control. And since sparks from a wildfire can travel up to 2 km ahead of the blaze, it is crucial that you prepare your home ahead of time.

The key idea here is to create a buffer around your home that makes it harder for fire to get close. Some suggestions are as follows:

- Keep your gutters free of dry leaves and twigs that could act as kindle in a fire
- Regularly remove debris from under your deck
- Maintain a lawn shorter than 10 cm to reduce the intensity of a burn
- Keep firewood piles and other highly flammable materials away from the immediate vicinity of your home
- Within 10m of your home, plant only low-density, fire-resistant plants

For more details, visit <https://firesmartbc.ca/>

Keeping Your Children Safe in the Heat

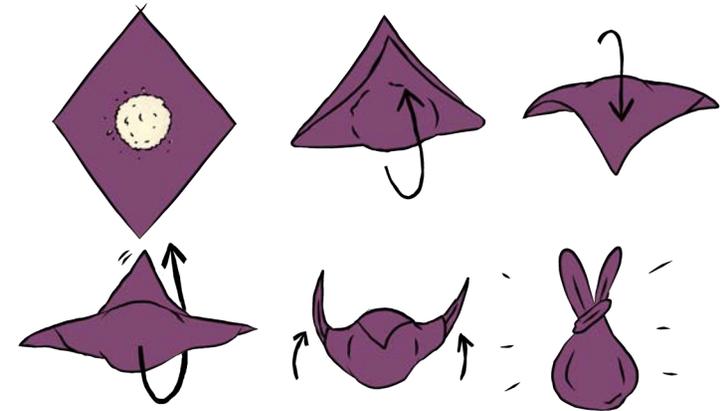
- Dress your children in light-colored clothing made of breathable fabric (such as cotton!)
- Make hydration fun by using silly straws or making your own popsicles!
- Eat more fruits and vegetables because these tend to have high water content
- Placing bedsheets and/or pillowcases in the fridge or freezer before bedtime can greatly aid in falling asleep on hot nights



Image courtesy of Cor Dulce via Unsplash

Fun and Functional DIY to Keep Comfortable!

Whether you're too hot or too cold, you can use this easy trick to keep yourself comfortable. No skills required!



- Grab a square cotton cloth (recommended 20" x 20") or any other microwave safe fabric (use 100% natural material such as cotton or wool)
- Place the fabric piece on a flat surface
- Fill with about 2 cups of rice in the center and secure with a tight knot (Furoshiki method)
- Toss your rice pack into the microwave for a minute with a glass of water to get a nice hand warmer!
- Alternatively place the rice pack in the freezer for an hour for some cold relief in the summer

***Can substitute rice with beans or lentils!**

How to Create Emergency Kits

In the event of major flooding, wildfires, earthquakes or other climate disasters, crucial infrastructure such as roads, stores, and gas stations may be out of service. You might even have to flee your home or live for a time without running water, electricity, or gas.

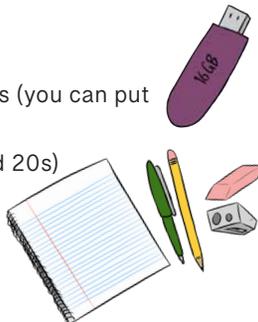
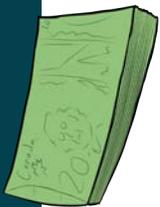
Emergency kits prepare you for circumstances where there is limited or no access to services in your region by allowing you and your family to live self-sufficiently for a couple days or weeks.

“Be prepared to live (for a short time) being isolated, with no electricity, roads, etc.”

-Abbotsford Resident

Your emergency kit for your car and your home should include:

- Water for at least 3 to 7 days. Store 4 litres per person (and consider your pets too!)
- First aid kit that also includes extras of your prescription medications or other health aids.
- Flashlight (battery-powered or hand-cranked)
- Radio (battery-powered or hand-cranked)
- Seasonal clothing; footwear; blankets
- Phone charger, power bank, and extra batteries
- Non-perishable food supplies for at least 3 to 7 days.
- Garbage bags
- Wet wipes and hand sanitizer
- Copies of important documents (you can put this on a USB)
- Cash (in small bills 5s, 10s, and 20s)
- Pen and notepad
- Mask



Create a support network. Include multiple methods to contact people in your support network.

- Include phone numbers, addresses and emails of people who live near you. Consider who in your network is vulnerable and should be checked on.
- Include phone numbers and emails of people who live outside of your region. Call these people to provide an update on your health and safety in the event of an emergency.

Everyone in your household should have a physical copy of this list. Keep it in your wallet!

“During an emergency, contact your local contacts and decide on a place to gather and support each other.”

-Langley Resident

To create your emergency plan, consider completing this document: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/embc/preparedbc/preparedbc-guides/preparedbc_household_plan.pdf

How to Find Community Resources/Organizations That Offer Support During Extreme Climate Events

It's important to maintain a basic awareness of what's happening in your community so that you have time to prepare in a crisis. We highly recommend you familiarize yourself with the following resources:



Local Government

City of Abbotsford (<https://www.abbotsford.ca/>, 604-853-2281)

City of Langley (<https://city.langley.bc.ca/> , 604-514-2800)

Township of Langley, (<https://www.tol.ca/>, 604-534-3211)

Police Department

Abbotsford (<https://www.abbypd.ca/>, 604-859-5225)

Langley (<https://city.langley.bc.ca/city-services/public-safety/langley-rmp,604-532-3200>)

Environment Canada Website

(<https://weather.gc.ca/>, 1-833-794-3556)

Visit the local library

Contact local community support organizations

Red Cross (<https://www.redcross.ca/>)

Archway Community Services (<https://archway.ca/>, (604) 859-7681)

Langley Community Services (<https://www.lcss.ca/>, 604 534 7921)

Scan me for
quick access
to various
resources!



Stories of climate from FV cohort members

Many of us were also directly impacted by these climate events. The following describes some of the experiences that two of our own members endured.

“I couldn’t live in my house during the heat waves.

We kept our windows and blinds closed but the heat was unbearable. We went to stay with friends in a basement suite. We brought our cats with us which likely saved their lives. Looking back, I wish we’d had thermal curtains or a heat pump to keep us safe. Then we could have stayed at home.”

Lauren’s Story, Langley



“During the floods, streets were inaccessible—

my in-laws’ residential neighbourhood was totally washed out and their neighbours’ homes flooded. We were able to help out a neighbour who needed wet carpet ripped out of their flooded basement. It felt good that we were able to be part of a support network and I would encourage others to think about who they would call if something like that happened to them.”

MP’s Story, Abbotsford



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The logo for the Youth Program features the word "YOUTH" in large, bold, multi-colored capital letters. Each letter is a different color: 'Y' is orange, 'O' is grey, 'U' is green, 'T' is blue, and 'H' is yellow. To the right of "YOUTH" is the word "PROGRAM" in smaller, white, bold, capital letters.

**YOUTH
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www.fbcyouthprogram.ca