

Emergency Response Roles & Responsibilities

Health Emergency Management BC, North (HEMBC)

HEMBC is a program under the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA). HEMBC provides the expertise, education, tools, and support specifically for the BC Health Sector to effectively mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from the impacts of emergency events; ensuring the continuity of health services. There is a HEMBC team in each BC health authority. HEMBC-North deals specifically with Northern Health.

Roles and responsibilities:

- Maintain a 24-hour emergency/on call contact number for notification and activation of the health system in Northern BC (appendix I)
- Notify/activate the appropriate Northern Health programs (i.e. Public Health, Acute Care, etc.) based on the nature of the incident/emergency event.

Northern Health (NH)

Northern Health is the regional health authority responsible for providing health services to 300,000 people over an area of 600,000 square kilometers in the province of British Columbia. Services include:

- Acute (hospital) Care
- Public Health (Protection, Preventive and Population Health services)
- Mental Health and Addictions
- Home and Community Care

In the event of a major emergency/disaster, Northern Health will provide health care services within its capacity, and will activate its emergency response management plan(s).

NH Roles & responsibilities - PREPAREDNESS (PRE-EVENT):

- Participate with industry, local authority and other partners in the development of their Emergency Response Plans as it relates to health authority roles and responsibilities:
- Participate in stakeholder training and exercises associated with activation of an Emergency Response Plan, in which Northern Health or HEMBC have a role and responsibility (as resources allow);

NH Roles & responsibilities - RESPONSE:

- Activate internal health emergency management plans related to ongoing provision of services (listed above);
- Provide acute care and emergency services at existing Northern Health hospitals/health centres;
- Work with BC Emergency Health Services (Ambulance) and the BC Patient Transfer Network to transport patients to the appropriate levels of care;
- Apply and enforce the Public Health Act, and associated regulations;
- Provide advice/information to the stakeholders on the existing or potential public health effects of an incident (including drinking water safety, air quality, environmental contaminants, communicable disease prevention, re-occupancy of evacuated areas, etc.);
- Provide advice/information on the best methods for monitoring health effects from an incident.
- Assist in development of (joint) messaging for public information on emergency incidents;
- Provide guidance to stakeholders and local authorities on public health considerations in operating reception and evacuation centres, and group lodging facilities

NOTE: British Columbia Emergency Health Services (BCEHS - Ambulance) remains independent of Northern Health. If an ambulance is required please contact BCEHS via 911 (or the local contact number, if 911 is not available in your area).

Appendix I

NH/HEMBC- Contact information

1. **For Emergency events that require immediate connection with Northern Health, please call :**
 - HEMBC on call number (24/7) **855-554-3622** (or 855-55-HEMBC)
 - HEMBC will notify/activate the appropriate Northern Health programs (i.e. Public Health, Acute Care, etc.) based on the nature of the event/emergency. Please include this number in industry ERPS, for the use of permit holders in contacting Northern Health on an emergency basis.
 - **Please do NOT** include this number on Public Awareness Pamphlets for individual projects; the EMBC/Oil and Gas Commission's emergency number(s) is more appropriate, and the HEMBC 24/7 number is on record with those agencies.

2. **For non-urgent requests related to Emergency Response Plans, or emergency exercise planning/information, contact HEMBC North Director Mary Charters, at:**
 - 250-617-5288
 - HEMBC@northernhealth.ca

3. **For Environmental assessment inquires and general government consultation questions pertaining to health please email the NH Office of Health and Resource Development at:**
 - resource.development@northernhealth.ca