

Emergency Event Guidelines – Kootenay Mountaineering Club

. When travelling to remote back country, consideration should be given to bringing satellite communication devices, and sufficient provisions and gear for staying overnight and for enduring inclement weather. Basic personal first aid kits should be on hand. Trip plans should be left with a family member or friend in advance of departure. Trip leaders should be familiar with the route. If it is an ‘exploratory’ trip, the trip leader should be able to navigate with a map and compass.

In the event of an emergency, someone needs to take charge, either selected by group or most capable surviving individual. **Evaluation - after an emergency event, assess if the members of group can safely maintain their present location?**

- **If NO and Danger cannot be mitigated** - Those members able to do so should move to a safe location, develop a rescue plan, call/send for help and set up shelter for the group – **Do not re-enter incident site.**
 - **If NO, but the Danger can be mitigated** – Move group to a safe location until danger is mitigated (e.g. thunderstorm passes, rockfall stops, animal moves away), and then develop and implement a Rescue Plan.
- If YES** – Group can safely maintain its present location. Develop and implement a Rescue Plan.

Rescue Plan – once in a safe location

- a) Re-evaluate situation – Check your group. Confirm how many are missing or injured. Provide first aid to the evacuated members. Look for fall back positions in case of further events. (Rockfall, avalanche, lightning, forest fire, animal attack). Post a spotter, if required.
- b) Develop and communicate the rescue plan (search and/or rescue strategies, fall back locations, danger areas) and assign duties (First Aiders, Searchers, Spotters, Shovelers, Rope handlers, Contact people for communications).
- c) **Contact help** (see backside of sheet) – If available, use an electronic communications device to call the police or if it is safe to do so and there are people unneeded for the rescue, they should travel on foot to obtain help.
- d) Implement Rescue Plan and administer First Aid as required.
- e) Evacuate injured;
 - ❖ Self-rescue. If group can move victims safely to a medical centre, proceed to do so. Monitor for shock and, if shock symptoms are noticed, stop and treat immediately.
 - ❖ Group cannot self-rescue - Move injured to a sheltered location accessible to helicopter. Administer first aid, warm and shelter victims
 - ❖ Group cannot self rescue and stays in place - Administer first aid, warm and shelter victims who cannot be moved.
- f) Group members who are not required to maintain the victims should return to their vehicles, if safe to do so and if not already done, contact emergency help. They should leave behind supplies to support rescuers who may have to stay overnight (extra clothing, fuel, food, water, matches, tarps, space blankets, etc). Make sure that group members leaving to contact help have an exact location on a map (include latitude and longitude, if possible, as this is the system used by the helicopter’s GPS)
- g) Group members remaining onsite should prepare shelter, fire (if safe to do so) and supplies for themselves for an overnight stay and consider constructing or finding a heli-landing site nearby.

Lost Individuals

- a) If one or more individuals have separated from the group and not returned to the vehicle by a pre-agreed time, organization of a search party should be considered. If the general vicinity of the missing party is known, send a group(s) out in the direction that the party might be expected to return. The search party should return to the vehicle at a predetermined time. The search party should not stay out after dark; nor should they expose themselves to harm. If party is found injured, refer to Emergency Event guidelines.
- b) If the search is unsuccessful, then a member shall remain with a vehicle at the trailhead overnight. Other members shall proceed to the nearest telephone and notify the RCMP, lost or missing persons must be reported to the local police. The RCMP is the Incident Site Commander and the agency that activates the local Search and Rescue. Do not call Search and Rescue directly. A call should also be made to the missing hiker's next of kin to notify them of the situation. A search may not be started until first light the following morning.
- c) RCMP assumes the Incident Command and, with Search and Rescue personnel, will take control of the situation.

Emergency Phone Numbers

Calling 9-1-1 is the recommended way to call for help. It is important to tell the dispatcher whether you have a front-country or back-country Emergency. The caller should be prepared to tell the dispatcher their location, location of incident, what services are required (i.e. lost hiker, rescue from crevasse, require Search and Rescue...).

Satellite phones generally require the use of an area code, and therefore cannot access 9-1-1 services. It is a good idea to have phone number for someone that you can call and ask them to call 911 for you. As a last resort the following numbers may be utilized if you are unable to contact Emergency services utilizing 9-1-1. RCMP – for satellite phones only – 1-250-491-4303 and Emergency Management BC (PEP) -1-800-663-3456.

Emergency Information (what you have to tell the authorities)

- a) The nature of the emergency including:
 - ❖ The number, sex and age of the people injured or at risk (i.e. 2 males in their mid 50's)
 - ❖ The extent and cause of injuries, (i.e. broken legs from an avalanche burial)
 - ❖ The level of consciousness
 - ❖ How well they are breathing
 - ❖ Amount of blood loss, if any.
 - b) Your name and how many are in your group,
 - c) The location of the injured persons
 - ❖ The general location, (nearest community, river/mountain range, road or ski area)
 - ❖ Map coordinates (latitude and longitude)
 - ❖ Landmarks in the vicinity (e.g. lakes, mountains, etc.)
 - d) The call back number of the phone (this will be on the phone).
 - e) Level of preparedness (do you have medical supplies, are you equipped to stay overnight)
 - f) Describe any specialized equipment rescuers may need (ropes, crampons, snowshoes etc)
- How is the site accessible for rescue personnel- helicopter, road, snowmobile or on foot