

Flood Facts

Floods are the most frequent natural hazard in Canada. They can occur at any time of the year and are most often caused by heavy rainfall, rapid melting of a thick snow pack, ice jams, or more rarely, the failure of a natural or man-made dam.

- A heavy rainfall can result in flooding, particularly when the ground is still frozen or already saturated from previous storms.
- Flash flooding – in which warning time is extremely limited – can be caused by hurricanes, violent storms or dams breaking.
- Many Canadian rivers experience flooding at one time or another. The potential for flood damage is high where there is development on low-lying, flood-prone lands.

Provincial and territorial information

Each province and territory responds to floods in cooperation with local authorities. In some cases, the federal government may be asked to assist. The majority of provinces and territories have information online on the flood situation in their area, as well as practical information for dealing with floods. See <http://www.aema.alberta.ca> for further information about the Alberta Emergency Management Agency.

Alberta Disaster Recovery Programs (DRPs)

Recovering from a disaster is difficult. The Government of Alberta makes it easier by providing disaster recovery funding for eligible residents, small businesses, agricultural producers and municipalities after events like overland flooding that cause uninsurable damage and loss. Municipalities apply for disaster recovery programs (DRPs) on behalf of their residents.

Disaster recovery programs provide financial assistance for municipalities and their citizens who incur uninsurable loss and damage as a result of a disastrous event. These programs are an effective way of assisting municipalities by ensuring that the costs of disasters are shared by all Albertans, and whenever possible, by all Canadians through cost sharing arrangements with the federal government.

A state of local emergency does not have to be declared in order to receive financial assistance under a disaster recovery program.

The Disaster Recovery Program (DRP) is administered by the Alberta Emergency Management Agency (AEMA). AEMA is part of Alberta Municipal Affairs. Alberta Regulation 51/94 of the Alberta Emergency Management Act allows the province to provide disaster recovery assistance to residents, small business, agriculture operations, and provincial and municipal governments if the event meets the criteria as outlined in the regulation.

- The event is considered extraordinary.
- Insurance is not reasonably or readily available.
- There is evidence that the event is wide spread.

Rainfall

If the rainfall has been at least at a one in 25 year level in urban areas or a one in 50 year level in rural areas, it is considered extraordinary.

Streamflow

If the flooding is caused by a waterway, and the stream flow exceeds a one in 100 year level, it is considered extraordinary.

Ice Jams

Each ice jam is reviewed on an individual basis. Data, collected by Alberta Environment on general winter and ice conditions and extraordinary conditions (colder winter, rapid melt, thick and strong ice) that prevailed at the breakup in the vicinity of the site will be reviewed.

For More Information on Disaster Recovery Programs, please call toll free 1-888-671-1111.

Federal Role

The Government of Canada's Government Operations Centre (GOC) monitors the flood situation across the country. The GOC coordinates the federal government's response to events of national interest, such as floods, that may affect the safety and security of Canadians or critical infrastructure. Should a provincial or territorial government request assistance to deal with a flood, then the GOC would coordinate the Government of Canada response.

The Government of Canada has disaster assistance programs available to respond to the financial needs of provinces and territories in the wake of major natural disasters including the [Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements](#).

Several other forms of assistance may be available, from both the federal and provincial/territorial governments to address certain needs or to assist specific economic and social sectors affected by a disaster. A list of these programs is available from the Public Safety Canada [website](#).