

EMERGENCY RESOURCES

FOR BC'S TOURISM INDUSTRY

JULY 21, 2021



DESTINATION
BRITISH COLUMBIA

As you know, emergencies can impact travel, visitors, and businesses at any time, and potentially influence those who may be planning a trip to or within our province. Emergencies can trigger a crisis for tourism, but by sharing consistent and up-to-date information, managing visitor perceptions, and building trust and confidence with our stakeholders, we can work together to mitigate any unnecessary impacts while ensuring the safety of our communities.

During these emergencies, the tourism industry is an important conduit to official information sources for visitors. Our priority is ensuring that travelers have all the official resources they need to make informed decisions based on the latest, on-the-ground information, and to encourage them to continue to consult these resources for any updates before and during their trips.

Our [Know Before You Go](#) page on HelloBC.com is regularly updated and serves as a one-stop shop for visitors looking to access key information resources such as DriveBC, the BC Wildfire Service, Emergency Management BC, and more.

The following content outlines official emergency information resources for British Columbia, as well as suggested messaging and actions for BC's tourism industry during emergencies such as wildfires.

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STAY SAFE, STAY INFORMED

During times of stress and uncertainty, it is important to share information from official sources only. There are a variety of resources available to help you prepare for emergencies, gather up-to-date information and help visitors plan their travel.

- Step-by-step guides to prepare tourism businesses and their staff for emergencies, with templates and tools to help operators easily plan a fast and effective response.
- [Guide for Tourism Operators](#)

- Information about emergencies in BC, including evacuation orders and alerts.
- Twitter: [@EmergencyInfoBC](#)
[#BCFlood](#) [#BCWildFire](#)

- Information about road closures, major events, and transportation delays.
- Twitter: [@DriveBC](#)

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WILDFIRES

The BC Wildfire Service

- [Interactive map](#) of all active wildfires across the province.
- Twitter: [@BCGovFireInfo](#)
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BCForestFireInfo/>
- [Campfire bans, restrictions and forest use](#)
- Report wildfires to *5555 on a cell or 1 800 663-5555 toll-free.

FLOODS

River Forecast Centre

- Analyses snowpack, assesses seasonal water supply and flood risk, and predicts flows in BC's rivers and streams. The Centre produces a range of bulletins, maps, and warnings to inform emergency managers and the public about current and upcoming streamflow conditions.
- [Flood Warnings and Advisories](#)
- [Snow Conditions and Water Supply Bulletins](#)

Preparing Your Business for a Flood

- British Columbia is prone to flooding due to our mountainous terrain and the wet weather that comes in from the Pacific Ocean. This information kit provides businesses with an overview of key activities to help prepare for, and react to, a flood event proactively.

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PARKS AND RECREATION SITES WARNINGS AND CLOSURES

BC Parks

- Information regarding Provincial campgrounds and park closures or **#BCParks** on Twitter.

Recreation Sites and Trails

- Alerts, closures and warnings regarding BC's rustic campsites and recreational trails.

WEATHER ALERTS

Environment Canada

- Resource for the latest weather information, statements, and air quality advisories.
- Twitter: [@environmentca](https://twitter.com/environmentca)

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

Emergency Support Services

- Information regarding emergency reception centres and assistance.
- Support for the displaced, and group lodging

Red Cross

- Community news, training and certification, support resources
- Evacuees can register with the Red Cross by calling 1-800-863-6582
- [BC community support services](#)
- Twitter: [@RedCrossBCY](https://twitter.com/RedCrossBCY)

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WHAT INDUSTRY PARTNERS CAN DO

- Use the hashtag #RealTime_____ (name of city/community) on social media to ensure current and future visitors have an accurate 'real time' visual on current conditions (blue skies, business as usual etc.). Add the date and time the photo was taken. Tag key tourism partners in our post (@DestinationBC on Twitter, @HelloBC on Instagram) and your Regional/Community DMO partners to help us amplify your message.
- When appropriate—particularly for emergencies or issues that occur over a long period of time—consider adding boilerplate language that addresses the situation, to your captions.



- Destination BC has created safe travel infographics, including the one above, for you to share on your social channels, downloadable here: [Dropbox](#)

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WHAT INDUSTRY PARTNERS CAN DO (CON'TD...)

- Media are both an important stakeholder and a communications tool in a crisis. They represent the interests of the public and will be looking for specific details of the crisis, different perspectives, and human impact stories—including those about the tourism industry. The news cycle is real-time in a digital and social savvy world. Our response needs to be real-time as well.
 - Reach out to your local or provincial media contacts and let them know your community is open for business, while sharing the 'Know Before You Go' message and outlining resources for visitors.
 - If you see errors in reporting, work with the outlet/reporter to correct the misinformation in a timely but calm manner.
- If businesses are reporting cancellations, encourage them to be proactive with reservations. Businesses should call those who are booked to give them the latest on-the-ground information, and encourage them to continue to check the latest conditions before their trip, while connecting them with the resources to do so.

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WHAT TOURISM BUSINESS OWNERS CAN DO

- Share these resources with your staff and follow key social media accounts for the latest news.
- Help your guests:
 - If your business is in an impacted area, provide your current customers and future reservations with regular updates, by directing them to official information sources.
 - If your business is not impacted directly, help your current guests plan the rest of their trip to areas that are safe and open for business (your [local Visitor Centre](#) has a wealth of information on places to stay and things to do).
 - If your business is not impacted directly, be proactive with future reservations—let your customers know it's business as usual and you are looking forward to hosting them. British Columbia is a very large province and sometimes our guests can get confused by geographically misleading information.

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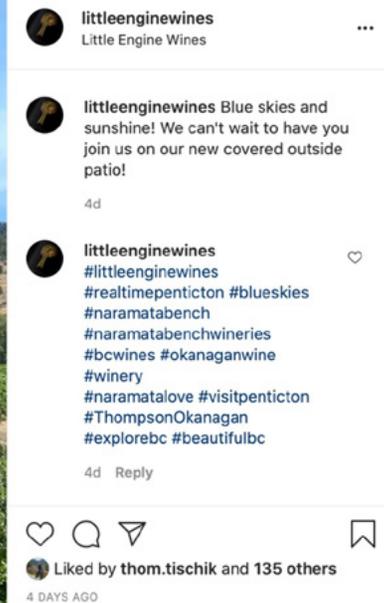
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- Have a plan—use the [BC Government's Resources](#) to prepare for emergencies and to identify potential hazards.

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WHAT DESTINATION BC WILL DO

- Destination BC's consumer marketing efforts will continue to promote the entire province, adapting to the needs of each region/community, by placing focus on areas that are not currently impacted by emergencies, and supporting impacted areas once the emergency is over.
- Destination BC will continue to leverage Know Before You Go as a central message in visitor-facing content, while ensuring visitors know where to find official information resources, and will amplify the real-time content and updates from our tourism partners around the province.
- Destination BC also works closely with the Provincial Government, including the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sports, and Emergency Management BC, to ensure tourism is part of response and recovery efforts. If you have concerns with media coverage or messaging, please contact Destination BC at media.relations@destinationbc.ca and we will work with you, our communications counterparts in the Provincial Emergency Coordination Centre and the media, to clarify, correct or update public information.