

MESSAGING GUIDANCE FOR BC'S TOURISM INDUSTRY

SPECIAL EDITION: EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO THE BC STORM

November 19, 2021



DESTINATION
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This document will be updated as information is made available by the Provincial Government. Please check back regularly.

THIS IS FOR:

Destination BC, Regional and Community/City Destination Marketing Organisations, Sector Associations, and Tourism Businesses.

BC Storm & Industry Response Efforts:

- On November 17, the **BC Government declared a provincial state of emergency** in response to the widespread damage caused by severe flooding and landslides in British Columbia.
- On November 19, the **BC Government issued an emergency order** to restrict non-essential travel along severely affected highways.

The following document outlines key messaging, information, and resources for BC's tourism industry as it relates to the above updates.

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SITUATION UPDATE: BC STORM RESPONSE

PROVINCIAL STATE OF EMERGENCY

On November 17, the [BC government declared a provincial state of emergency](#), to:

- Mitigate impacts on transportation networks and movement of essential goods and supplies, and
- Support the provincewide response and recovery from the widespread damage caused by severe flooding and landslides in British Columbia.

The state of emergency is initially in effect for 14 days and may be extended or rescinded as necessary.

EMERGENCY ORDER: NON-ESSENTIAL TRAVEL RESTRICTION ON IMPACTED ROUTES

Announced on November 19 and effective immediately, the Province has introduced a new order using the extraordinary powers of the Emergency Program Act to restrict non-essential travel to and from impacted areas.

The order prohibits non-essential travel along severely affected highways:

- **Highway 99:** from the junction of Highway 99 and Lillooet River Road to the BC Hydro Seton Lake Campsite access in Lillooet. Only passenger vehicles and commercial vehicles up to 14,500 kilograms will be permitted.
- **Highway 3:** from the junction of Highway 5 and Highway 3 in Hope to the west entrance to Princeton from Highway 3.
- **Highway 7:** from the junction of Highway 7 and Highway 9 in Agassiz to the junction of Highway 7 and Highway 1 in Hope.

As the backlog of essential traffic clears, restrictions on essential travel can be eased.

To help conserve fuel and prioritize it for essential services, people in the Lower Mainland-to-Hope region, the Sea-to-Sky region, Sunshine Coast, the Gulf Islands and Vancouver Island are also being asked to avoid all non-essential road travel until December 1. There is an additional order in those regions that limits non-essential vehicles, including the general public, to 30 litres per trip to the gas station.

[Read more](#) about the emergency orders and essential travel definitions.

VISITOR RESOURCES

During these emergencies, the tourism and hospitality 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. Also available on HelloBC's [Know Before You Go](#) page, here are the key resources to both reference for your own business planning, and to share with visitors:

[Drive BC](#)

Information about road closures, major events, and transportation delays.

Twitter: [@DriveBC](#)

[BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure](#)

Information about road safety and mobility, and the latest updates on transportation and infrastructure repairs. Follow their social media channels for regular updates.

Twitter: [@TranBC](#)

Instagram: [@ministryoftranbc](#)

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Emergency Info BC

Information about emergencies in BC, including a [regularly updated list of evacuation orders and alerts](#). Check this list at least daily for updates.

Twitter: [@EmergencyInfoBC](#) #BCFlood #BCWildFire

Canada Border Services Agency

- **NEW: EMERGENCY EXEMPTIONS.** The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) has confirmed that, given the current situation in BC, travellers who must transit through the United States to get to their residence in Canada are exempt from the COVID-19 pre-arrival test, the test in Canada, and quarantine requirements. Visit the [Emergency Preparedness page](#) for more information on pre-existing exemptions which can be applied to travellers in certain situations.

Emergency Support Service

- Emergency Support Services (ESS) provides short-term basic support to people impacted by disasters.
- The program is financed by Emergency Management BC (EMBC) and administered by Indigenous communities and local governments.

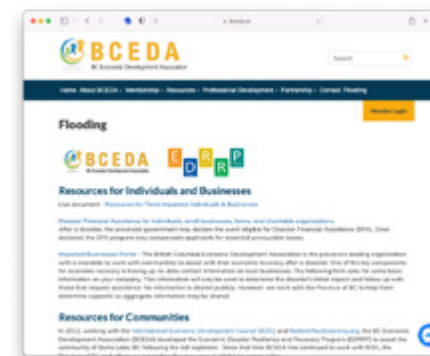
INDUSTRY RESOURCES

- The [Emergency Preparedness](#) page on Destination BC's corporate website is a repository of official, reputable sources of information that we use to prepare and respond to emergencies, including those from the Canada Border Services Agency, PreparedBC, the Insurance Bureau of Canada, and more.
- [Small Business BC](#) has compiled a number of resources available to business owners to help manage the day-to-day situation, as well as plan for the rebuild.

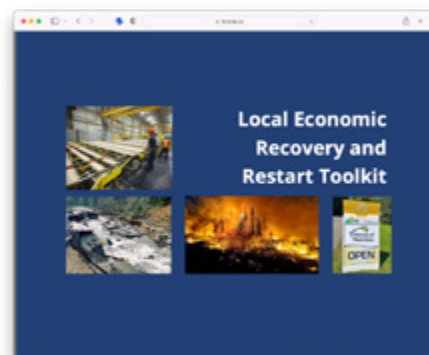
BUSINESS SUPPORTS



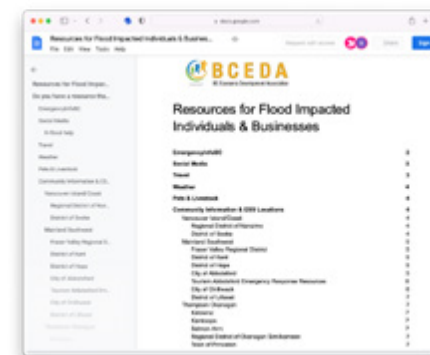
[Supports for businesses impacted by disasters](#) are available from the federal and provincial governments, community organizations and the private sector.



BC Economic Development Association (BCEDA) Resources for [Individuals, Businesses and Communities](#)



BCEDA [Local Economic Recovery and Restart Toolkit](#)



BCEDA [Resources for Flood Impacted Individuals & Businesses](#) (live document)

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INDUSTRY GUIDANCE

As a tourism partner and/or tourism business owner, here's what you can do:

- 1. Share these resources with your staff** and follow key social media accounts for the latest news. You can find them listed on [Destination BC's Emergency Preparedness](#) page.
- 2. Communicate with fellow businesses and neighbours in your community**, share official information with them too, and offer assistance if you can. Share examples of how partners and tourism businesses are supporting the community.
- 3. Help your guests:**
 - If your business is located in an impacted area, provide your current customers and future reservations with regular updates, by directing them to official information sources. Keep in mind that visitors are not often aware that conditions in BC can change rapidly, so we need to encourage them to check the latest, on-the-ground information before and during their trip so they can make informed travel decisions. Encourage them to check [Drive BC](#) for the latest.
 - 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). Also, be proactive with future reservations—let your customers know it's business as usual and you are looking forward to hosting them. BC is a very large province and sometimes our out-of-province guests (or even our own residents!) don't consider the vast geography of our province.
- 4. Have a plan**—use the [PreparedBC: Tourism Resources](#) to prepare for emergencies and to identify potential hazards.

SUGGESTED MESSAGING

- Non-essential travel is currently prohibited along severely affected highways: sections of Highway 99, Highway 3, and Highway 7. Check @DriveBC on Twitter for specifics #BCStorm #BCFlood
- For those in the Lower Mainland-to-Hope region, the Sea-to-Sky region, Sunshine Coast, the Gulf Islands and Vancouver Island, thank you for doing your part to conserve fuel for essential services and limiting all non-essential road travel until December 1.

NEW TRAVEL ORDER INFOGRAPHIC

Download the new "[Respect Travel Orders](#)" infographic to share through your channels.

