



Office of the Chief Administrative Officer

Memorandum

FOR INFORMATION

To: Committee of the Whole

Meeting Date: January 11, 2024

From: Erin Mahoney
Chief Administrative Officer

Re: **York Region's Emergency Management Program 2023 Compliance Update**

This memorandum provides an update to Council on activities undertaken by York Region to comply with annual requirements of the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* and Ontario Regulation 380/04 in 2023. This memorandum also provides an overview of other emergency preparedness and response activities undertaken by the Emergency Management Program to enhance York Region's resilience.

York Region has consistently met the annual regulatory compliance for its Emergency Management Program since legislation came into effect in 2004

Each year Council receives an update on York Region's Emergency Management program and any necessary updates to the bylaw and/or Emergency Plan. To fulfill the provincially legislated requirements, municipalities must verify they have completed all elements outlined in the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*, some of which include:

- Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment
- Identification of Critical Infrastructure
- An Emergency Plan
- Training and Education
- An Emergency Exercise
- Emergency Operations Centre
- Public Education

York Region partnered with local municipalities to assess and rank hazards and risks

Each municipality must conduct an annual Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment to ensure Emergency Management Programs are based on identifying and assessing local hazards. The provincial methodology calculates level of risk by assigning values to the likelihood and potential consequences of a hazard impacting a municipality. Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment is a core component of the Emergency Management program and is used to identify which hazards should be the focus of the emergency management program at a particular point in

time. Emergency exercises, training, and public education focus on the top threats identified through the process.

In the fall of 2023, York Region partnered with all nine local municipalities, York Regional Police and other stakeholders to conduct its annual Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment. Regional staff and subject matter experts determined risk by reviewing the likelihood and consequences of hazards most likely to affect York Region. Top hazards identified in 2023 through this exercise are noted in the table below, with a comparison to risks identified in 2022.

Table 1
York Region Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment
Top 10 Hazards of 2022 and 2023

Hazard 2023	Level of Risk 2023	Hazard 2022	Level of Risk 2022
Infectious Diseases	High	Infectious Diseases	High
Tornado	Moderate	Tornado	Moderate
Electrical Energy Outage	Moderate	Electrical Energy Outage	Moderate
Cyber Attack	Moderate	Cyber Attack	Moderate
Winter Weather/Ice Storm	Moderate	Winter Weather/Ice Storm	Moderate
Active Threat	Moderate	Active Threat	Moderate
High Wind	Moderate	High Wind	Moderate
Extreme Heat	Moderate	Extreme Heat	Moderate
Chemical Transport Incident	Moderate	Chemical Transport Incident	Moderate
Severe Flooding	Moderate	Water/ Wastewater Disruption	Moderate

In coordination with local municipalities, the critical infrastructure database has been reviewed and updated

The *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* requires each municipality to review and update a database of critical infrastructure within its jurisdiction annually. Critical infrastructure is defined as infrastructure that may be deemed to be critical if their failure or disruption significantly jeopardizes the health, safety and security of the Region. Examples of critical infrastructure include critical water/wastewater treatment facilities, data centres, and

paramedic stations. In 2023, York Region partnered with all nine local municipalities and York Regional Police to review the critical infrastructure database. The database has been updated, mapped and shared with local municipalities and province.

The Emergency Plan has been reviewed and updated

Each municipality must review and update its emergency plan annually. The Regional Municipality of York's Emergency Plan (the Plan) outlines how the Region will respond to emergencies. The Plan identifies members of the Regional Emergency Control Group and summarizes their roles and responsibilities. The Plan was reviewed and approved by Regional Council in March 2023.

2023 Public Education and Awareness Program reached over 75,000 individuals through various events

The Public Education and Awareness Program provides public education on local hazards and personal preparedness for emergencies. Elements of the 2023 program include:

- Emergency Preparedness Week activities focused on raising awareness about the risks and hazards York Region faces and included social media messaging for personal preparedness. Emergency Preparedness Week campaign reached over 57,000 individuals across York Region and generated over 219,000 impressions (views) of York Region's Emergency Preparedness Guide across all digital channels
- A continuation of the Resilient Region Lunch and Learn workshops for 115 staff focussing on specific hazards and the roles of regional and external responders
- Educating about 16 000 members of the public as part of municipal Fire Department Open Houses, Public Works Family Fun Day, Emergency Preparedness Week events and Halloween at the Community Safety Village event in partnership with York Regional Police and York Region Paramedic Services
- Providing Fire and Emergency Preparedness education to about 5000 children and youth through Summer Camp and regular class programming at the Community Safety Village

York Region Emergency Management Conference brought together partners to discuss 'What's New in Emergency Management?'

The York Region Emergency Management Conference took place on October 6th, 2023, at York Regional Police Association in Aurora, Ontario. The theme of this year's conference, the first in-person emergency management conference since COVID, was 'What's New in Emergency Management?'. The conference brought together 130 emergency management stakeholders from across the Region and included representatives from all nine local municipalities, first responders, Emergency Management Ontario, non-governmental organizations, academia, conservation authorities and local school boards. The conference included presentations on a range of emergency management topics and a panel discussion

on community resiliency. Emergency Management Ontario provided an overview of its new strategy for a 'Safe, Practiced and Prepared Ontario'. A presentation by Vancouver's Emergency Management Office on the 2021 Heat Wave highlighted the need to plan for increasing heat emergencies. The Northern Tornado Project presentation provided an overview of tornados and the probability of experiencing tornados in Canada and in York Region specifically. This hazard has been ranked as one of York Region's biggest threats.

York Region conducted Regional Emergency Control Group training and an emergency exercise in its Regional Emergency Operations Centre

Each municipality in Ontario must conduct an emergency exercise for Emergency Control Group members to satisfy the regulation. In 2023, York Region conducted an exercise over two days consisting of three shifts. 142 staff took part, filling roles as Regional Emergency Control Group members, primary and alternate Regional Emergency Operations Centre staff, exercise evaluators and facilitators. Each shift managed consequences to a progressive simulated emergency event in compliance with requirements of the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*. The Regional Emergency Operations Centre was tested during the exercise and met all its required capabilities. An after-action review focused on recommendations to improve future responses.

Emergency Management provided emergency management and business continuity training to 460 regional staff and key partners in 2023

As part of the annual training program, training was provided to 460 regional staff, key external partners and senior members of York Regional Police. The following courses were delivered:

- Emergency Management and Business Continuity Essentials (3 sessions)
- Introduction to Business Continuity (2 sessions)
- Introduction to the Incident Management System (Provincial IMS 100) (2 sessions)
- Basic Incident Management System (Provincial IMS 200) (3 sessions)
- Intermediate Incident Management System (IMS 300) (2 sessions)
- Additional Training (as requested) (10 sessions)

York Region continues to plan for and respond to business disruptions resulting from a loss of staff, loss of facility or loss of technology through its business continuity program. The business continuity program ensures the critical services York Region residents rely on can continue to be delivered during emergencies.

Business Continuity Program priorities include:

- Leveraging technology to make business continuity planning tools more accessible
- Integrating business continuity planning into day-to-day business operations
- Increasing training opportunities related to business continuity planning for all staff
- Enhancing the Business Continuity Program's standards/framework

- Clarifying corporate response structures to business disruptions

On a cost recovery basis, York Region provides emergency management support to the northern six municipalities

Since 2017, York Region Emergency Management has been supporting the emergency management programs of the northern six municipalities (Towns of Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, Newmarket and Stouffville and Township of King) on a cost recovery basis through a Memorandum of Understanding. The program continues with a new four-year term, January 1, 2023, through to December 31, 2026.

York Region provides business continuity support to York Regional Police

In early 2023, York Region began a project to support York Regional Police with development of a Business Continuity Program, and this project is being continued in 2024.

York Region has completed all legislative requirements for an emergency management program in 2023

In 2023, York Region Emergency Management continued to work with municipalities and key stakeholders to ensure a coordinated approach to Emergency Management preparedness and planning, while partnering in Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment, training, exercises, and public education activities for our residents. York Region has completed all required emergency management program elements outlined in the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act and Regulation 380/04*.

For more information on this memo, please contact Morris Faccin at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 71212. Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.



Erin Mahoney
Chief Administrative Officer

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