



# CITY OF SAULT STE. MARIE EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

6/26/2023

Fire Service, Emergency Management Division



Schedule "A" to By-law 2023-114

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

Emergencies threaten public safety, public health, the environment, property, continuity of government operations, critical infrastructure, and economic stability. Emergencies vary in intensity and complexity depending on factors such as time of occurrence, weather conditions, severity of impact, type and construction of the affected infrastructure and buildings, type of hazard, and demographics.

In most instances, for emergencies that exceed the capacity of the individual, families or businesses, the municipality manages the emergency response and recovery as a matter of routine by emergency services (including police, fire, and paramedic services) and in more serious cases by implementing the Emergency Response Plan.

## 1.1 Authority

The *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*, is the legal authority for all municipal emergency response plans in Ontario. The *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* states:

Every municipality shall formulate an emergency response plan governing the provision of necessary service during an emergency and the procedure under the manner in which employees of the municipality and other persons will respond to the emergency and the council of the municipality shall by by-law adopt the emergency plan. Section 3 (1)

*Ontario Regulation 380/04* sets in place the standards for municipal emergency management programs. These standards describe minimum provisions that must be met to constitute an essential level program.

In accordance with Section 3(1) of the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* the City of Sault Ste. Marie has enacted *By-law 2023-114: A by-law to adopt the Emergency Response Plan for the protection of public safety, health, the environment, critical infrastructure and property within the municipality.*

## 1.2 Purpose

The Emergency Response Plan provides the framework to guide responders in planning for, responding to, and recovering from a potential or actual emergency. The goal of the Emergency Response Plan is to limit the impact on people, property and the environment, and allows for the continuation of local government.

The broad scope of the document allows a flexible response to any emergency situation, while at the same time provides some specific information on collective and individual roles. The plan will be provided to other organizations that are required to understand the City's role during these events. As recovery activities usually overlap with response, the framework presented can also be used to coordinate recovery activities that happen during the response phase.

Several procedures and guidelines exist as supporting documents and emergency response plans for the Emergency Response Plan. These documents outline an integrated response for responding to and recovering from emergencies. They can be stand-alone documents or grouped depending on the nature of the emergency and response required.

## 1.3 Municipal Emergency Control Group

The Municipal Emergency Control Group provides for the overall management and coordination of site support activities and consequence management with a focus on:

- Establishing a common understanding of roles and responsibilities as they relate to a particular response.
- Facilitating the activities of all relevant stakeholders to work towards common or complementary objectives.
- Sharing information in a timely and structured manner.

The Municipal Emergency Control Group is comprised of the following members and/or their designate and may be invited to meetings to review emergency planning matters as required:

- Chief Administrative Officer
- Deputy CAO - Clerk Corporate Services
- Deputy CAO - Community Development & Enterprise Services
- Deputy CAO – Public Works & Engineering Services
- Community Emergency Management Coordinator
- Corporate Communications Officer

Additional municipal staff and/or organizations may be requested to join the Municipal Emergency Control Group to provide expertise and advice as necessary.

## 2 CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

The City's emergency services and other departments, agencies and corporations manage incidents that occur on a day-to-day basis. In extraordinary circumstances, emergencies can occur where wide areas, large numbers of people, or significant critical infrastructure systems are affected.

The impacts of large and widespread emergencies can vary significantly, depending on the resilience of the affected organizations and communities. In cases where these impacts are significant, normal service and resource arrangements may not be sufficient to meet the needs for response and recovery and coordination will be required to prioritize the use of limited resources.

It is possible that the needs of the municipality will exceed their capacity to effectively respond to some or all impacts of an emergency. This does not necessarily mean that these organizations have become overwhelmed, but that coordination efforts and resources must grow to appropriately respond to or recover from an emergency.

Existing additional arrangements can enhance response efforts, including but not limited to contractual agreements for specific services, bi-lateral agreements, and mutual assistance agreements, if applicable.

### 2.1 Activation of the Plan

The Emergency Response Plan may be activated in whole or in part by any member of the Municipal Emergency Control Group. The Municipal Emergency Control Group may take action under the Emergency Response Plan where an emergency exists, but has not yet been declared to exist.

The following may be event triggers which drive the activation of the Plan:

- The event requires the coordination of multiple agencies
- The event requires centralized decision-making to mitigate impact
- The event requires coordinated communication and messaging
- The event requires a coordinated approach with other levels of government
- The event is outside the scope of normal operations
- The event requires information gathering and analysis from multiple sources
- The event is pre-planned and requires active management to ensure public safety

## 2.2 Emergency Notifications

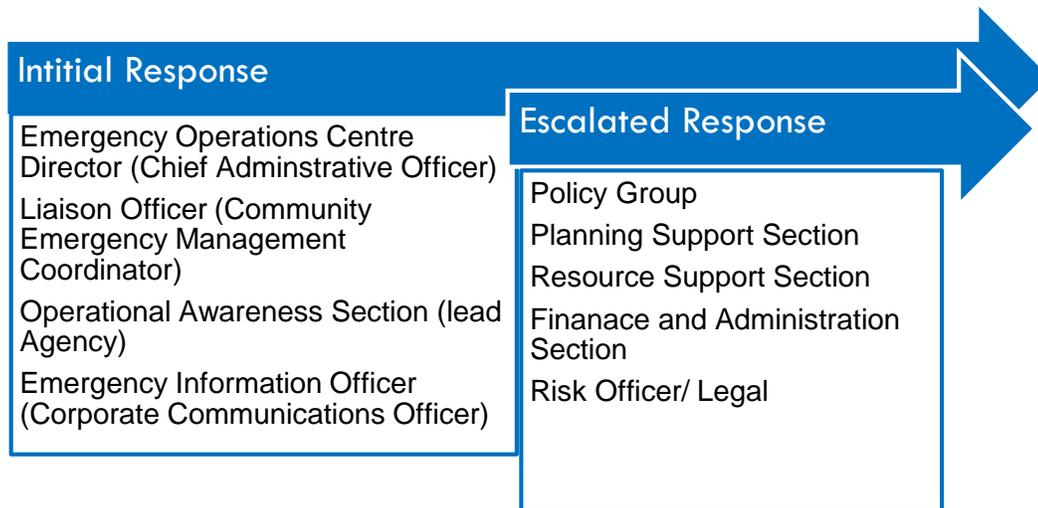
A request to activate the Municipal Emergency Control Group may be made by:

- Any member of the Municipal Emergency Control Group
- An Incident Commander at the site of an emergency within the City of Sault Ste. Marie

If they believe the situation is beyond the capacity to manage or support without additional assistance they will contact the Community Emergency Management Coordinator: In consultation with the Chief Administrative Officer and Lead Agency, the decision will be made to activate the Emergency Operations Centre.

The response may not require the presence of all the people listed as members of the Municipal Emergency Control Group, regardless all members of the Municipal Emergency Control Group will be notified when activation occurs. Depending on the

circumstances of the response the Municipal Emergency Control Group may be phased, as follows:



## 2.3 Declarations of Emergency

The Mayor of Sault Ste. Marie, as Head of Council, is responsible for declaring an emergency. This decision is made in consultation with other members of the Municipal Emergency Control Group. Upon declaring an emergency, a formal written Declaration of Emergency must be submitted to Emergency Management Ontario by the Community Emergency Management Coordinator.

## 2.4 Termination of an Emergency

A declared municipal emergency may be terminated at any time by

- Head of Council,
- Council of the municipality
- Premier of Ontario.

A formal written Termination of a Declared Emergency must be submitted to Emergency Management Ontario by the Community Emergency Management Coordinator.

## 2.5 Requests for Assistance

It is possible that assistance from other levels of government, or external partner agencies with specialized knowledge or expertise, may be required to successfully respond to an emergency. Depending on the nature of the emergency and the assistance required, these agencies may be requested to attend the emergency site(s) and/or the Emergency Operations Centre to provide assistance or provide information and advice to the Municipal Emergency Control Group.

### 2.5.1 Provincial and Federal Assistance

Assistance may be requested from the Province of Ontario at any time without any loss of control or authority. A request for assistance will be made by contacting the Provincial Emergency Operations Centre Duty Officer. This contact is the responsibility of the Community Emergency Management Coordinator. The Provincial Emergency Operations Centre will evaluate the municipality's request and determine the availability of requested resources.

Any request for federal resources must be made to the Provincial Emergency Operations Centre through the same channels as described above.

## 3 INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Incident Management System gives communities and organizations a common framework to communicate, coordinate and collaborate during a response. Whether at the site, in an Emergency Operations Centre, or for multi-organization coordination, a clear coordination and command structure is a key element in effective and efficient incident management.

### 3.1 Response Goals

The following response goals are applied to all emergency situations; response objectives will be prioritized based on these goals. In order of priority:

1. Provide for the health and safety of all responders
2. Save lives
3. Reduce suffering

4. Protect public health
5. Protect critical infrastructure
6. Protect property
7. Protect the environment
8. Reduce economic and social losses

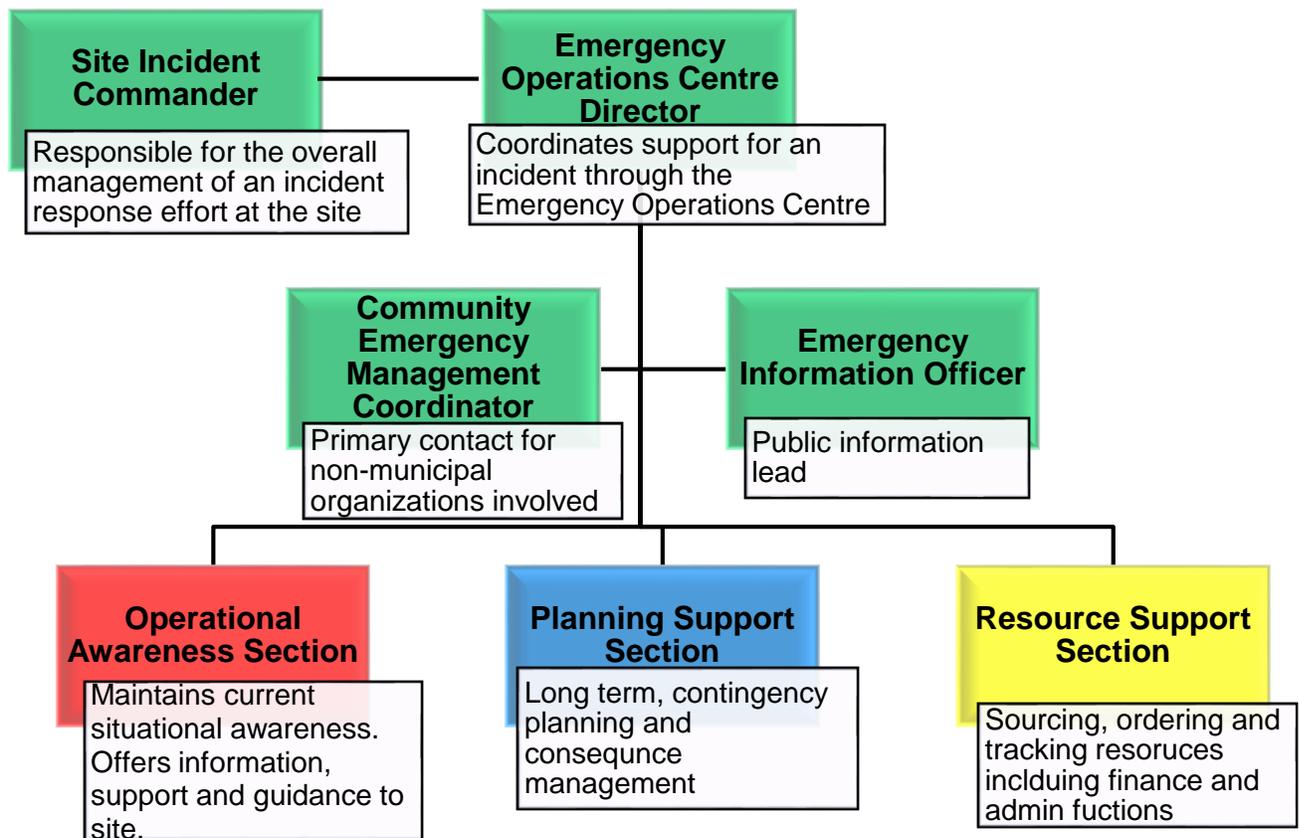
### 3.2 Emergency Operations Centre

The Emergency Operations Centre is the physical location or virtual space in which the Municipal Emergency Control Group reports to and provides overall direction and support for the response. The Emergency Operations Centre could also be activated to monitor situations that may escalate or for coordination of planned events.

The Emergency Operations Centre does not replace the need for a sound command structure at the site; instead, it complements the site with further coordination, resource management, information management and overall support.

### 3.3 Organizational Structure

The Emergency Operations Centre is organized in a manner to support the implementation of the Incident Management System response model. A basic Incident Management organizational structure used in the Emergency Operations Centre is outlined below:



## 4 RESPONSIBILITIES

The general responsibilities of the Municipal Emergency Control Group during an emergency are:

- i. Providing support to the incident site(s) including:
  - Notifying response agencies and coordinating the activities of the various departments and organizations which are needed to effectively respond to and recover from the emergency;
  - Providing strategic direction and support to the response including the Incident Commander, site personnel and response agencies;
  - Collecting, collating, evaluating and disseminating information and acting upon required needs;

- Establishing priorities based on all the information gathered and developing EOC Action Plans that complement and enhance the response;
  - Obtaining, coordinating and managing payment of any additional resources (both personnel and equipment) needed to support the response;
  - Coordinating all internal and external information and communicating advisories, warnings, and emergency information to staff and the general public.
- ii. Providing for the continuity of essential services
- Ensuring that business continuity and essential services are maintained and/or restored, including where possible, the areas impacted by the emergency
- iii. Under specific circumstances the Municipal Emergency Control Group may also exercise the following functions:
- Performing an Area Command role for multiple incident sites;
  - Performing an Incident Command role.

## 4.1 Emergency Information and Notification

The Municipal Emergency Control Group will inform the public, as soon as possible, of the emergency that is occurring or imminent and advise the public of appropriate self-help actions and/or issue public warning messages.

The *Sault Ste. Marie Emergency Information Plan* addresses the flow of emergency communications externally to allow for a coordinated communications strategy among all involved organizations in an emergency.

### 4.1.1 Alert Ready

Alert Ready is designed to deliver critical geographically specific alerts through television and radio. The Alert Ready system is developed in partnership with federal, provincial and territorial emergency management officials, Environment and Climate

Change Canada, The Weather Network and the broadcast industry. For additional information on visit [www.alertready.ca](http://www.alertready.ca)

## 5 PLAN ADMINISTRATION AND MAINTENANCE

The plan is reviewed annually by the Division of Emergency Management, and where necessary, updated with input from the Emergency Management Planning Committee and other partner agencies. Each time the plan is substantially amended, it will be brought forward to City Council for approval. Minor revisions and updates to maintain the currency of the plan may be approved by the Emergency Management Planning Committee Chair.

### 5.1 Plan Training

The Emergency Management Division will provide annual training on the implementation of the Emergency Response Plan.

### 5.2 Plan Testing

The Emergency Response Plan will be tested at minimum annually through an exercise coordinated by the Emergency Management Division.

### 5.3 Supporting Documents

Required supporting documents relative to this plan will be maintained and validated through the Emergency Management Division. The Emergency Management Division will ensure that the required hazard specific plans and supporting policies and procedures are in place to comply with and maintain all response objectives outlined within the Emergency Response Plan.

### 5.4 Plan Distribution

Copies of the Emergency Response Plan will be provided electronically to the Emergency Management Planning Committee, Municipal Emergency Control Group,

partner organizations, and the Province. The Emergency Response Plan is also available on the City of Sault Ste. Marie website.