

Message from the Desk of Your Emergency Manager:

The Town council members and Town employees have been busy these past few weeks planning and educating themselves on how to effectively respond to a potential flood this spring. Many of you have probably read the articles in the newspaper giving coverage of the disaster exercise held recently.

This exercise was meant to raise awareness of the community's capacity to respond in case of a disaster, such as the potential flood from spring runoff. We practice these types of scenarios from time to time in order to maintain our own awareness and provide an opportunity for those who may be involved in the emergency response to practice ahead of time. Learning about our capacity to respond beforehand makes for a much more effective response when challenging events occur.

It is our hope that all community members, all businesses and certainly all organizations within Lumsden are able to understand what their responsibilities are in the event of a flood this spring.

- 1) Certainly all individuals are responsible for the safety of each other and their families and personal property first. It is important that everyone has an evacuation plan and a way to inform others of your whereabouts in the event of separation during a rapid evacuation.
- 2) The community as a whole is responsible for its own safety and security in as much as they are capable of managing without outside support and response. That means that we are preparing by stockpiling sand bags for protecting our perimeters from the infiltration of water; having all of the utility companies involved in our plan and response so that we are better able to provide a safe environment for community members in the event of flooding; and looking at evacuation routes and plans to assure the safe relocation of community members if need be.
- 3) In the event that the community is overwhelmed by the incident, we have the capacity to declare an emergency which will then give us extra support and powers from the provincial and federal levels as well as the capacity to make decisions for the safety of the people living within vulnerable areas.

The most important consideration right now is that we are going to work together no matter what sort of difficulties we face this spring. This is not the first time there has been a natural disaster in our community, and we know that neighbours help neighbours all of the time. That sort of trust and reliance will bring us together for whatever comes our way this spring. Emergency Preparedness Guides have been dispersed through the mail. We hope every household takes the opportunity to review the material in the coming weeks in order to assure their own preparedness in the event of spring flooding.

We will provide updates as situations warrant, on our website at www.lumsden.ca. Questions can be directed to your town office and information will be available through the municipal office and also through the media and website.

Thomas McCord & Patty Stewart McCord
Emergency Measures Organization Coordinators