



What is the history of this issue and how does it impact First Nations?

First Nations that are at risk of flooding, forest fires, or other natural disasters rely on federal and provincial/territorial governments to provide relief when an emergency is declared. This is problematic on many fronts as the unilateral approach taken by governments has left First Nations powerless to respond and protect their citizens from pending emergencies. Without their own regime or funding First Nations are at a severe disadvantage and face additional risks as they lack equipment and the personnel to develop plans that will incorporate prevention/mitigation strategies, training, and evacuation procedures in the event of an emergency and/or natural disaster.

How has the AFN's recent advocacy affected this area?

The AFN Emergency Services Unit (ES) has been advocating for First Nations to assume control of their own emergency management regimes and gain access to funding that is comparable to municipal services. Recent advocacy efforts in this area include the promotion of the development of First Nations-led emergency management regimes and ensuring all Indigenous Services Canada emergency management policies, processes, and procedures are inclusive of regional First Nations representation and contribution.

The ES Unit is mandated by the Chiefs-in-Assembly and includes Resolutions 03/2015, *First Nation Involvement in Emergency Preparedness*; 83/2019, *First Nations Control of Emergency Management*; 84/2019, *Call for Emergency Operations Management Planning in First Nations*; 85/2019, *Support for A Proposed First Nations Training Institute on Emergency Management*; and 94/2017, *Support for the Immediate Inclusion of First Nations in the Development of Emergency Management Agreements*.

In March of 2021, Emergency Services held the initial strategic planning session to develop a strategic plan for First Nations care and control of emergency management. The full development of the strategic plan will transpire over a projected five (5) year period and will seek to ensure First Nations eligibility to assume the role and responsibility of the administration of culturally appropriate emergency management regimes.

As of September 2021, the ES Unit co-developed the Steering Committee on First Nations Home Flood Insurance Needs project with the Emergency Management Directorate in Indigenous Services Canada. The focus of this project is to examine the issues and challenges surrounding on-reserve First Nations access to flood insurance products.

*The AFN is the national organization representing First Nations citizens in Canada.
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Where do we hope to go in the future?

The ES Unit will continue to develop and maintain respectful working relationships between First Nations and federal, provincial, and territorial governments in an effort to increase cooperative and beneficial emergency management processes, and for the eventual transfer of responsibility and direct funding to First Nations.

The future goal for First Nations emergency management is for First Nations to become fully autonomous in controlling and developing their own emergency management programs in full partnership with the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, and regional emergency management organizations.