



DID YOU KNOW?

AN INFORMATION SHEET FOR ST. JOHN AMBULANCE MEMBERS

DID YOU KNOW that when the power failure occurred in August affecting the Eastern region of Canada and United States; and during the raging fires in the West, a good percentage of the population was not prepared?

After any crisis, we seem to take stock of our own situation and ask ourselves how we would handle the situation if it were to happen to us. We immediately prepare ourselves physically and mentally and; after a while, we let our guard down and loose some of that preparedness. The recent power failure and the fires in the West only brought home the fact that regardless of where you live, an interruption of the essential services can greatly affect us.

Think about it – were you really prepared when a similar event occurred in your area? Did you go scrambling for flashlight batteries, once you located the flashlight? Did you discover that the portable radio didn't work because the batteries were either dead or had been removed? Was there any available cash put away because the ATM machine and banks were not open for business as usual? Did you have a sufficient supply of drinking water? Was there propane gas for cooking outdoors or fuel for your camp stove? When you looked around for something to eat, was there anything that did not need an appliance for preparation or did you have to go to the nearest corner store which happened to be open – thank goodness? These are just a few of the questions that we ask ourselves as we go through the process. It makes us think that we are not alone in this predicament and there were certainly many others going through similar situations.

Following is a list of basic items for consideration in preparing for any interruption of services, whether caused by fire, flood, earthquake, power failure, etc.:

- A well stocked first aid kit
- Emergency cash put in a safe place
- Fuel for a generator (if applicable)
- Fuel for BBQ's or camping stove
- Candles, matches, lamp fuel or solar lighting (solar lights can be useful inside when the power is out)
- Batteries for portable radios and flashlights
- Extra blankets for warmth, if required
- Clean dry clothes put aside for emergencies
- Non perishable food and drinking water (replenish every six months)
- Essential personal items such as medication, personal hygiene articles, etc.
- Contact information to keep in touch with St. John Ambulance offices to assist where needed.
- An emergency plan to keep in contact with your immediate family
- Awareness of emergency plans within your community

Certainly you can add to this basic list, but it's a start. Just remember, being prepared gives you peace of mind.

Further information is available on the internet under Office of Critical Infrastructure and Emergency Preparedness www.ocipep.gc.ca and Health Canada Emergency Preparedness www.hc-sc.gc