



# Emergency Preparedness & Planning

## Policy Position of Association of Yukon Communities (2025-26)

**Emergency Preparedness & Planning.** *Association of Yukon Communities – For  
Discussion, April 2025*

## 1. Background

Communities across Canada are facing more frequent and severe emergencies—from wildfires and floods to pandemics and infrastructure failures—driven in large part by climate change and aging systems. For local governments, especially in the Yukon, the ability to prepare for and respond to emergencies is a core component of community resilience and public safety.

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) has called for expanded investment in disaster mitigation, better coordination of emergency management systems, and increased local capacity to respond to climate-related hazards. In the Yukon, these challenges are acute: communities are remote, emergency response systems are limited, and climate risks are intensifying.

## 2. Yukon and Northern Context

Emergency preparedness in Yukon is shaped by:

- Increased frequency and intensity of wildfires, floods, and permafrost-related infrastructure damage;
- Limited access to emergency services, especially in remote or fly-in communities;
- Gaps in communication infrastructure and backup power systems;
- Limited municipal capacity for emergency planning, training, and coordination; and
- A need for culturally safe and community-informed emergency approaches, especially in Indigenous communities.

Many municipalities rely heavily on volunteers, and few have the full-time staff, funding, or technical tools needed for comprehensive emergency preparedness.

## 3. Policy Position

The Association of Yukon Communities supports a Resilient Communities Framework that emphasizes proactive planning, community-based risk reduction, intergovernmental coordination, and sustained investments in preparedness infrastructure. Yukon municipalities must be fully resourced and empowered to lead local emergency planning efforts in partnership with the Yukon and federal governments.

#### 4. Recommendations

AVC calls on the federal and territorial governments to:



1. Create a Northern Emergency Preparedness Fund to support local risk assessments, emergency planning, volunteer coordination, and equipment purchases.
2. Continue strengthening collaboration between the Yukon Emergency Measures Organization (EMO) and municipalities, including regional planning initiatives, joint training exercises, and shared response protocols.
3. Expand investments in wildfire mitigation, flood prevention, and climate adaptation infrastructure, with clear pathways for municipal access.
4. Develop mobile and community-based emergency response assets, including rapid-deployment communications, backup energy systems, and mobile shelters.
5. Provide technical assistance and training for municipal officials and staff on emergency planning, climate hazard assessment, and incident command systems.
6. Support culturally appropriate emergency education and engagement, particularly in Indigenous and multilingual communities.

#### 5. Strategic Considerations

- Escalating climate risks: Wildfires and floods are increasing in frequency and severity, requiring a shift from reactive to preventative approaches.
- Infrastructure interdependencies: Failures in energy, water, or communications systems can rapidly cascade into multi-system emergencies.
- Volunteer dependency: Many Yukon municipalities depend on volunteers for emergency response, yet lack the resources to recruit, train, and retain them effectively.
- Jurisdictional complexity: Clear roles and responsibilities between municipal, territorial, federal, and Indigenous partners are essential for effective response.

## 6. Implementation

To improve emergency preparedness in Yukon municipalities, AYC recommends:



- Establishing regional emergency planning collaboratives to pool expertise, resources, and coordination mechanisms.
- Piloting a Municipal Resilience Grant Program to support community-driven emergency initiatives tailored to local risks.
- Developing an Emergency Planning Toolkit with templates, guidelines, and best practices for small northern municipalities.
- Supporting an annual Yukon Emergency Preparedness Summit to share knowledge, strengthen partnerships, and enhance readiness across communities.

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