

Better at Home Quesnel

Emergency Planning for Rural Seniors Who Cannot Self-Evacuate

A resource for families supporting seniors in the Quesnel & Cariboo region

Why this matters

Wildfires, floods, and road closures can happen quickly. In rural BC, emergency services **do not automatically evacuate individuals** who cannot drive or who have dementia. Families are encouraged to have a clear plan in place to keep their loved ones safe.

What emergency services *do*

- Issue alerts and evacuation orders
- Provide Emergency Social Services (ESS) **after** evacuation (food, lodging, registration, referrals)
- Open Reception Centres in Quesnel (Arts & Rec Centre or Correlieu)

What emergency services *do not do*

- Door-to-door evacuation of seniors
- Automatic transportation for people who cannot drive
- Pre-arranged pickup for individuals with dementia
- Wellness checks during wildfire alerts

What families should arrange ahead of time

1. Identify the evacuation helper Choose one person who will physically pick up your loved one during an alert or evacuation.

2. Create a simple evacuation plan Include:

- Who will pick them up
- Where they will go
- What route is safest
- What to bring
- Who will notify neighbours or caregivers

3. Prepare a grab-and-go kit See checklist below.

4. Register for transportation support (optional) The Cariboo Regional District (CRD) can pre-identify vulnerable residents for evacuation transportation **if arranged ahead of time**.

5. Keep communication simple Ensure your loved one knows:

- “If there is a fire or emergency, *[Name]* will come get you.”
- Where their grab-and-go bag is
- Who to call if they feel unsafe

How Better at Home can help

We can support families by:

- Helping create an evacuation plan
- Reviewing safety considerations
- Ensuring seniors have a grab-and-go kit
- Providing local emergency contacts
- Coordinating with CRD emergency programs when needed

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Rural Senior Evacuation Checklist

For seniors with dementia or who cannot drive

A. People & Contacts

- Primary evacuation helper: _____
- Backup helper: _____
- Neighbour who can check in: _____
- Family emergency contact: _____
- Doctor / pharmacy: _____
- Better at Home contact: _____

B. Grab-and-Go Bag (keep by the door)

- Copy of ID (BC Services Card, driver's licence, passport)
- Health card & medication list
- 7-day supply of medications
- Glasses, hearing aids, batteries
- Phone charger
- Water bottle & snacks
- Change of clothes
- Small blanket
- Written emergency plan
- Comfort items (photos, familiar objects)

C. Home Preparedness

- Key placed in predictable location
- Pets identified and carriers ready
- Mobility aids accessible
- House number visible from the road
- Path to driveway clear
- Emergency alerts enabled on phone or radio

D. Evacuation Plan

- Pickup location: _____
- Destination: _____
- Route options: _____
- Reception Centre if needed: Arts & Rec Centre or Correlieu
- Transportation support registered with CRD (yes/no)

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Emergency Planning Guide for Rural Seniors

For seniors living rurally who cannot self-evacuate

Understanding the local system

Emergency response in the Quesnel area is shared between:

- **City of Quesnel** – ESS, Reception Centres
- **Cariboo Regional District (CRD)** – rural emergency management, evacuation orders, transportation coordination

CRD is responsible for rural residents — including seniors living outside city limits.

What CRD recommends for vulnerable residents

CRD encourages:

- **Pre-identification of residents who may need evacuation transportation**
- **Family-led evacuation planning**
- **Neighbourhood support networks**
- **Preparedness for rapid wildfire movement**

This aligns with BC's provincial "Evacuation Transportation Support" program for people with disabilities, dementia, or no vehicle — but **only when arranged ahead of time**.

How to build a rural evacuation plan

1. Confirm who will evacuate the senior This is the most important step. Emergency services assume someone is responsible.

2. Map out the route Include:

- Primary route
- Secondary route
- Known wildfire choke points

- Areas with poor cell service

3. Identify the destination Options include:

- Family home
- Friend's home
- Hotel
- Quesnel Reception Centre (ESS support)

4. Prepare the senior's home

- Clear driveway access
- Ensure address is visible
- Keep grab-and-go bag ready
- Keep mobility aids accessible
- Keep pets ready for transport

5. Register with CRD if needed Families can request that a senior be added to a **vulnerability list** for transportation support. This does *not* guarantee pickup, but it increases coordination during large evacuations.

Local emergency contacts

- Cariboo Regional District Emergency Program
- City of Quesnel ESS
- BC Wildfire Service (alerts & maps)
- Emergency Info BC
- Better at Home Quesnel (planning support)

How Better at Home can support you

We can help families:

- Build a personalized evacuation plan
- Prepare grab-and-go kits
- Identify local supports
- Understand CRD processes
- Reduce confusion during emergencies
- Support seniors with dementia who may become distressed during alerts