

BC Is Flooding Again. This Is No Longer “Once in a Lifetime”.



Across British Columbia, communities are underwater again.

An intense atmospheric river has triggered widespread flooding, highway closures, rail disruptions, and evacuation orders. Major logistics corridors have been shut down. Farms have been submerged. Small businesses have been forced to close with little notice. Families are watching floodwaters reach places that were considered “safe” just a few years ago.

This is not new.

In 2021, flooding in British Columbia caused an estimated \$9 billion in economic damage, wiped out critical highway infrastructure, and took nearly a year to fully restore key transportation routes. Supply chains across Canada and into the United States were disrupted almost overnight. Food prices rose. Construction stalled. Entire regions were cut off.

What was once described as a “once in a lifetime” disaster is now happening every two to three years.

The human cost matters most. People are being displaced. Livelihoods are being lost. Emergency responders are stretched thin. If you are able to help, the Canadian Red Cross is actively supporting evacuation, shelter, and recovery efforts in affected communities.

Donate or learn how to help: <https://www.redcross.ca>

As Canadians, we tend to respond generously when disaster strikes. But these events also force a harder conversation, especially for employers.

Flooding is no longer hypothetical risk.

Many organizations still treat flooding as an insurance issue rather than an operational one. The reality is that floods shut down worksites, strand employees, damage equipment, interrupt payroll, and expose serious gaps in emergency preparedness. When roads are closed, borders are impacted, or utilities fail, the consequences ripple far beyond the flood zone.

This is a moment for employers to pause and ask a few uncomfortable but necessary

questions.

If your primary location were inaccessible tomorrow, what would happen?
If employees could not safely commute, what guidance would they receive?
If floodwaters damaged your site, who is responsible for shutdown decisions, communication, and recovery?
If regulators reviewed your emergency planning after an incident, would it hold up?

These are not theoretical questions. After major flooding events, investigators and insurers routinely review emergency plans, training records, and hazard assessments. Gaps discovered after the fact are far more expensive than gaps addressed in advance.

For OHS and HR leaders, this is an opportunity to [strengthen readiness](#) before the next event arrives.

OHS Insider and HR Insider members have access to practical tools that help employers assess and improve flood and extreme weather preparedness, including emergency response planning guidance, hazard assessment checklists, and audit tools designed to identify gaps before they become failures.

Review flood and emergency preparedness resources (free to all in this time of need): <https://ohsinsider.com/>

1. [Managing Climate Risks](#)
2. [Adverse Weather Policy](#)
3. [Emergency Preparedness & Response Policy](#)
4. [Safety Management Checklist](#)
5. [Dealing with the Aftermath of a Flood](#)

Preparedness does not prevent storms. It does reduce harm.

Our thoughts are with everyone affected in British Columbia and across the region. If you can help, please consider supporting relief efforts. And if you are responsible for keeping people safe at work, use this moment to prepare while there is still time to act.

The water will recede. The question is whether we learn before it returns again.