



Responding to Extreme Weather and other Natural Disasters



How Canada's telecommunications service providers are working to keep you connected

Severe and destructive weather events and other natural disasters are becoming more frequent, with hurricanes and other high wind events, snow and ice storms, flooding, and wildfires being just some of the natural catastrophes that have struck communities across Canada in recent years.

Service providers are aware that Canadians depend on them to stay connected, especially during an emergency. That is why they have made it a priority to make their networks strong and resilient in the face of extreme weather and natural disasters.

Advanced Preparation



When a severe weather event or other disaster is forecast, our members monitor and make extensive preparations, such as:

- Setting up an emergency operations centre
- Inspecting fibre and cable routes and where possible removing trees/limbs that pose risks
- Halting any non-essential network changes to avoid unnecessary disruptions
- Reducing power consumption at cell sites so that batteries and generator fuel last longer
- Fueling and testing generators and vehicles and ensuring sufficient fuel reserves
- Adding personnel and equipment from other regions to support the affected area
- Positioning generators and repair teams based on expected path of storm at critical parts of the network
- Contacting and coordinating with:
 - provincial Emergency Management Office (EMO)
 - power utilities
 - Federal, provincial, and local government officials
 - other network providers and local partners
- Communicating with customers about the storm via social media, SMS, email, and websites.





During an Event

While a severe weather event is in progress, service providers monitor their networks, manage, and reroute traffic flows as needed and identify any parts of the network that require repair work once it is safe to do so.

Service providers use their social media accounts, websites, and other tools to inform customers of material service disruptions.

As needed, our industry works with governments and other partners to coordinate restoration work. For example, we may work with power companies to prioritize the areas that need power restored before they can begin any necessary repairs.

If it's safe to do so, crews are dispatched to assess damage, begin repairs, and if necessary, refuel generators and reposition back-up power generators to keep services running.



Restoration of Services

In many cases, internet and landline phone service outages are due to power outages in customers' homes or businesses and once power is restored, internet and home phone services are automatically restored.

Where services are impacted by damage to network infrastructure, such as downed poles, cut cables, or damaged equipment, repairs begin immediately depending on public safety priorities and the ability to safely access impacted locations. This can include the repair or replacement of cables and equipment, and the repositioning, replacement, or optimization of wireless antennas to ensure ideal wireless coverage.

Where restoration is dependant on work being performed by others, such as power restoration, it may not be possible to provide accurate estimates on service restoration until that work is completed.

Safely restoring services is our member's number one priority and restoration efforts continue until all customers have been reconnected.



How You Can Prepare for Extreme Weather and other Emergencies

Despite the extensive preparations made by our industry, power supply, poles and cables, and other equipment can still be impacted by extreme weather and other natural disasters, resulting in temporary service outages.

To prepare for such an event, there are steps you can take to protect you and your family.

To learn more please consult [Preparing for Severe Weather Events & Other Emergencies at canadatelecoms.ca](#).



ABOUT US:

The Canadian Telecommunications Association is dedicated to building a better future for Canadians through connectivity. Our members include service providers, equipment manufacturers, and other organizations in the telecommunications ecosystem, that invest in, build, maintain and operate Canada's world-class telecommunications networks.

Visit canadatelecoms.ca for more information.