

2024 Wildfire Season Checklists:

FAMILIES



The safety of our students, staff, schools, and the greater community is always our top priority of Grande Yellowhead Public School Division. Our schools practice safety procedures multiple times per year as part of our emergency planning/ preparedness cycle. Staff and students are to be familiar with School Medical Emergency, Shelter in Place, Hold & Secure, and Lockdown protocols. In the event of an incident in, or in the vicinity of a school, we wish to remind our families it may not always be possible to send out information until after the incident has ended. Once it is safe to do so, a message will be sent via **School Messenger** to all parents/ guardians and social media, including the Division's Facebook page. This is the same for all updates as well.

As we enter a new wildfire season, we hope the following information is helpful in preparing your family in the event of an emergency. We also encourage you to discuss school safety with your child and any concerns they may have. Please also contact your school for additional information.

1 Families should:

- Be aware that the Province of Alberta declared an early start to wildfire season on February 20, 2024 as "Alberta is experiencing warmer than normal temperatures and below average precipitation in many areas of the province, leading to heightened wildfire risk."
- Download the Alberta Emergency Alert APP and other local emergency APPs used by your town/ local emergency first responders.
- Check out the Division's website on [Wildfire and Air Quality Information](#) for more useful and trusted sources of information.
- Ensure that your school has the most current emergency contact information for your child(ren) including any consent forms for older siblings to pick up younger ones in case of emergencies.
- Note that all emergency information from schools will come from **School Messenger** and the Division's Facebook page.
- Learn more about preparing for a wildfire by visiting Alberta's website [Wildfire Preparedness](#) at alberta.ca/wildfire-preparedness



2 When an Emergency ALERT is Activated

- The Division's Incident Command Team will have members on any local Emergency Command Centers that have been activated in your community. This greatly assists that we will have the most current information during the time of a crisis situation.
- During an emergency, all direction will be relayed by the Incident Command Team to the schools under the direction of the Superintendent of Schools, as well as local and provincial emergency personnel.
- Authorities issue evacuation ALERTS to warn the public of a potential of current threat. An evacuation ALERT can lead to an evacuation order. If an ALERT is activated, you should prepare to evacuate.
- When an ALERT is activated, schools remain open and will continue with normal operations including transportation.
- Families or emergency contacts on file with the school can choose to pick up their children from school at any time when an evacuation ALERT is activated.
- If there is a threat of fire in your area:**
 - listen for updates from authorities
 - be prepared to evacuate at a moment's notice
 - have your vehicle stocked with supplies and ready to go

Please note that conditions can change rapidly.

3 When an Evacuation Order is Issued

- Evacuation ORDERS are issued when the public must leave the area for their own safety.
- During school hours:**
 - Families will be notified immediately through **School Messenger** to pick up their child(ren) within a 30 minute timeframe at their school. A notice will also go out on social media including the Division's Facebook page.
 - Only those emergency contacts on file with the school will be given release of the student with proper photo identification.
 - After the 30 minute window, all students will be transported to a reunification centre outside of the evacuation zone for pick-up. Families will be notified of the centre's location via **School Messenger** and the Division's Facebook page.

4 Re-Entry

- Once authorities have lifted the evacuation order and allowed residents to return, schools will resume normal operations once it is safe to do so.
- Families will be notified by School Messenger and on social media.



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

