

Appendix P—Recovery

Recovery is often overlooked yet it is perhaps as important as the disaster response. Recovery is about clean-up, rebuilding, healing, and recuperating. Recovery from major disasters can last for weeks, months, or more. Community needs will change over time.

In addition to supporting your neighbourhood immediately after a disaster, your meeting place can serve as an important platform for community-led recovery. Neighbourhoods recover stronger after a disaster when the whole community comes together to help one another.

Recovery needs may fall under some of the following themes:

- social or emotional
- physical or structural
- economic or financial
- environmental or ecological

The services your NEPP team provides may transition to support these needs. Some examples of how you might support recovery include:

- connecting with and checking in with community members, especially those who have been displaced or isolated by the event,
- working together to solve problems, big or small,
- collectively advocating for outside support or resources, finding volunteers to give community members bereavement support or grief counselling,
- supporting community art projects such as painting murals for healing and connecting,
- helping children and families with transitions back to daycare or schooling,
- finding volunteers to help community members navigate insurance claim applications,
- helping local businesses clean up and restore operations,
- connecting community members with skilled tradespeople to repair damaged homes and physical structures, or
- cleaning up garbage, waste, and contaminated natural spaces like parks, lakes, and the shoreline.

**Note: in the case of hazardous material spills, clean-up should only be done by people who are trained and who are using approved safety equipment.*

As the immediate response slows down, it is important to wind down and give people ample rest. Make sure team members are taking days off and getting time for their own personal recovery needs. If possible, find opportunities to socialize through shared meals or recreation.

Finally, debrief with your team and other volunteers on what worked and what did not—and incorporate these learnings into your future planning and preparedness.

Consider having a potluck or gathering before returning to the new normal and invite the whole community to foster connections between neighbours and to thank volunteers.

The Comox Valley Emergency Program can help with your debrief and offer professional counselling services as well if needed.