

## *Supporting Local Business*

### **2023 WILDFIRE INFORMATION FOR BC COMMUNITIES**

BCEDA strongly urges all local and Indigenous governments not to underestimate the significance of economic disruptions on their local businesses, regardless of their size. These businesses may be HBB, self-employed individuals who also employ local residents or a larger corporation - either way - all businesses are important for a community. Even if no structures are lost, the evacuation and isolation of a community has ramifications.

Based on our extensive global experience, we have prepared the following recommendations for communities to prepare for an approaching or existing disaster:

- Create an information page on your website exclusively dedicated to the disaster, including links to the BCEDA wildfire page: <https://www.bceda.ca/wildfires.php>
- Familiarize yourself with BCEDA's Live [Resources for Wildfire Impacted Individuals and Businesses](#) document, which includes information from Service Canada, Province of BC, sector resources, contact links and more.
- Develop a comprehensive communication plan that addresses the needs of both residents and businesses. Templates are available in the [Local Economic Recovery & Restart Toolkit](#).
- Ensure your business database is up to date, encompassing detailed contact information, including email addresses of primary individuals. Store this database in the cloud to access the information in case of an evacuation. BCEDA offers complimentary use of BC BusinessCounts during disasters. Please inform us if you require access (note that your businesses' data will not be pre-loaded; it will only include information provided in the past).
- Distribute the [Top 10 Steps to Prepare Your Business for Evacuation](#) document to businesses.
- Inform businesses about how to contact the EOC (Emergency Operations Center) or other vital contacts for assistance with securing their premises, activating generators, and other related needs.
- Develop a re-entry plan for businesses, allowing them to enter before the general public. This will enable them to prepare their operations and contribute to restoring normalcy in the community. More information is available in the [BCEDA Economic Recovery and Resiliency Manual](#).
- Prepare an intake form to assess the impact of the disaster, evacuation, or any other event that hampers a business's ability to function. See the [Local Economic Recovery & Restart Toolkit](#) for a sample.
- Compile a comprehensive list of partners involved in supporting economic recovery, including BCEDA, Community Futures, Chambers of Commerce, Regional Trusts, Destination BC, Province of BC, Red Cross, Insurance Bureau of Canada, and other relevant entities.
- If your community is directly affected by the disaster (evacuations, structural losses, etc.), be prepared to seek assistance from BCEDA in engaging with businesses and developing an economic recovery plan.
- Share Destination BC's [Emergency Resources for BC's Tourism Industry](#).