

# Be “Emergency Ready”

By *Melanie Hutton*, Senior Advisor Resilience,  
*Civil Defence and Emergency Management*

The deadly *Grenfell Tower* fire in west London in June this year resulted in 80 people dead and many displaced, and left many of us deeply affected and worried.

## How safe are our Auckland apartments?

The *Auckland Council* immediately worked to identify buildings around the region that use aluminium composite panels in their construction. “To date we have found no evidence of inappropriate use of these products. The events in London will continue to inform our work,” said *Ian McCormick*, General Manager Building Control.

## How “emergency ready” are Auckland’s apartment dwellers?

The most important lesson from London is for all apartment dwellers to plan where you would go to stay if you have to evacuate your apartment. Consider how you would get there if your car is trapped in the basement.

*Auckland Emergency Management’s Resilience Team* were delighted to start an emergency preparedness conversation with *ADCOSS InnerCity Network* members in July. A number of key messages came out of the workshop including strong and safe communities are achieved through being connected! There was strong enthusiasm to hold a community-wide *Get Connected & Ready* workshop later in the year.



Getting to know your neighbours and discussing what you might need to share and help each other are at the heart of being able to care for yourself

and those around you during and after an emergency – be it a big disaster or small.

## What can you do now?

1. Make a commitment to get to know your neighbours because this is easy. It could be over a dinner, or shared interests like your children, pets, or everyday things like community gardening that connect us and make it feel great to be part of our community. Visit [aucklandcivildefence.org](http://aucklandcivildefence.org) for conversation starter ideas.



Friends, whanau, neighbours, and your community will provide critical support for you in the event of an emergency and most often will be the first to come to your aid. Caring for each other until emergency service agencies are able to respond gives you greater safety and will help you recover more quickly. Remember, their priority is saving lives.

2. Talk together about what resources you could share, like food, radio, car, or water. In an emergency, check on your neighbour, especially those who might need extra support, or let others know if you need help.

Make a start and share what you have done with your friends and those closest to you.

- △ This weekend subscribe to emergency warning emails and text messages at [www.aucklandcivildefence.org](http://www.aucklandcivildefence.org)
- △ Pick up your smartphone today and download the *Red Cross Hazard* app so you get emergency messages and do their hazard knowledge quiz.
- △ When you get home tonight note who your power company is and their phone number so you can contact them if the power goes off.

- △ Share your contact details with your neighbours.
- △ Get familiar with emergency procedures in your apartment so you know what to do and where to assemble if you evacuate.
- △ If your inner city apartment has a smart screen display, look at it when you get home from work for helpful preparedness tips that will be on it this year.

## Do you run a business in the city?

Disruption and adversity are hard facts of life for small businesses. Build resilience and plan to get through by doing easy actions from the [resilientbusiness.co.nz](http://resilientbusiness.co.nz) website.

## Have you got a plan for these emergencies?

Sometimes the unexpected event happens when we least expect it. What would you do to be safe if an emergency happened in the middle of the night or if it was during the day and you are at work and the children are at school? Do you have a plan if you couldn't make it home?

What would you do if you suddenly had no internet or phone, or no water at home?

Take the time to visit [happens.nz](http://happens.nz) website to find out helpful and practical ways to get ready for an emergency. **Finally, don't forget ...**

if someone's life is at risk,  
dial 111

