

## News Release

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Preparing Your Family for an Emergency: New Program from the City of Edmonton and ATCO Gas Aims to Help**

**Edmonton, May 11, 2006** – Helping Edmontonians better prepare for major emergencies is the focus of a new education program from two key emergency response agencies, the City of Edmonton and ATCO Gas.

If residents are prepared to take care of their families, emergency responders can focus on the crisis site. The Community Emergency Preparedness program will see City officials working with community groups to help them help their members prepare for the unexpected.

“I encourage all Edmontonians to spend some time on simple preparations now, says Mayor Stephen Mandel. “These kinds of events really can happen. We came very close to evacuating Rosssdale last summer. Those residents will tell you that a little emergency planning pays off.”

For the first phase of this Community Emergency Preparedness program, the partners have produced a simple information guide to help Edmontonians prepare. “We want to make it easy for people to have information in their home,” explains Bob Black, the City’s Director of Emergency Preparedness. “Stick this guide on your fridge or near your phone, and keep it handy.”

ATCO Gas responds to Carbon Monoxide and other emergency calls along with City firefighters. Company representatives also work in the City’s emergency operations centre when major incidents occur.

“As a company with a strong commitment to public safety, ongoing partnership with fire and emergency services personnel and as a member of the City’s disaster response team, this project is a good fit with ATCO Gas,” said John Carroll, Vice-President, Edmonton Operations, ATCO Gas. “As well as supporting the project financially, we’re pleased to provide expertise in natural gas and utility emergencies, as well as safety and disaster preparedness to support the training and education objectives of the Community Emergency Preparedness program.”

The new emergency guide has point-form advice on preparing for and coping with severe weather, floods, chemical releases and influenza. It will be available at a public information display at West Edmonton Mall this Friday and Saturday. Responders from more than a dozen disaster service agencies will answer questions and provide information to the public from their location on the ground level near the Bay.

The guide will also be available at fire stations and the Citizen Action Centre in City Hall.

The City's Office of Emergency Preparedness will now begin working with community groups to help spread this planning information. Staff will also work with cultural groups to translate the information package, beginning with groups that generally have less familiarity with the English language.

May 7 to 13 is Emergency Preparedness Week in Canada.

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### **About Edmonton:**

Edmonton, Alberta's capital city, serves north-western Canada and is the heart of a region of more than one million people. Edmonton is Canada's health care hub and an international pacesetter in health innovation, discovery and education; a global leader in environmental stewardship; and a culturally diverse centre with a passion for the arts and sports. Well-positioned to support northern resource development, Edmonton enjoys one of the world's most cost-competitive business environments, and was rated by the Conference Board of Canada as the top city for economic growth in the country in 2005. Edmonton is unrivalled in its combination of affordability, prosperity and opportunity, making it an ideal place to live, work, invest and visit.

For more information on Edmonton, please visit our website at: [www.edmonton.ca](http://www.edmonton.ca).

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