

# Special Event Emergency Planning Guidelines

March 2024



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## 1.0 Introduction

This guide is designed to share best practices and resources, as well as to highlight regulations that pertain to Special Events. The resources within this manual are divided into seven operational planning sections and will support us in working together to present special events that will be exciting and positive additions to our community's quality of life.

This manual specifically applies to events that are open to the public with an estimated attendance of 500 or more. However, this manual provides useful guidance for the organizations of any size of special event.

As the event organizer, it is your responsibility to ensure that you are familiar (and compliant) with relevant regulations, municipal by-laws and/or processes pertaining to special events. In cases where events are being organized by a third party (event organizer) on private lands, it is the responsibility of the host venue/property owner as well as the event organizer to ensure that the third party has complied with these regulations and processes. It is important to consider if your event is:

1. permitted in the Township's zoning by-laws or has otherwise been authorized by the Township, and,
2. part of the normal operations of a business or institution, and specifically will not reasonably:
  - have the potential to strain the community's emergency services response;
  - have a foreseeable impact on the regular flow of traffic;
  - adversely affect the Township of Muskoka Lakes Community; and/or
  - present an elevated risk to the health and safety of participants or public.

This Event planning manual is not intended to burden host venues or event organizers with additional processes for activities that are part of normal business operations. This manual is designed to:

- Increase communication and coordination amongst key stakeholders;
- Minimize potential conflict between events/venues;
- Assist in marketing and promotion;
- Optimize planning; and
- Minimize negative community impact.

## 2.0 Operations Plan

The planning process is one of the most important aspects of Special Event management. The more robust the operations plan, the smoother the journey to success. Good planning is a continuous process, and good plans should be adaptable and flexible. The operation plan is a key document that will assist you in communicating with community stakeholders about the various aspects of your Special Event. The operations plan should include all key functional areas that are relevant to your specific event.

Planning for special events should start as far in advance as possible. It is recommended that planning start no less than 180 days in advance for mid-sized events (expected attendance of 500-5000) and 365 days in advance for large events (expected attendance of 5000+). Events requiring a special event permit are required to apply to the Township no less than sixty days in advance.

The operations plan should include the following:

1. Physical Plan
  - a) Site Plan
  - b) Site Works
  - c) Permanent & Temporary Structures
  - d) Barriers & Fencing
2. Traffic Management (Onsite and Offsite)
  - a) Traffic Considerations/Requirements
  - b) Parking
  - c) Vehicle-Based Incidents
  - d) Use of Drones
3. Onsite Services
  - a) Food Services
  - b) Water Services
  - c) Alcohol Services
  - d) Sanitation Management
  - e) Waste Management
4. Emergency Management & Planning
  - a) Access & Egress
  - b) Safety Services
  - c) First Aid and Medical Services
  - d) Standby Ambulances
  - e) Planning Evacuation of Site
  - f) Social Media and Crisis Communications
5. Risk Management
  - a) What is risk vis a vis Special Events

- b) Incident Management
  - c) Event/Venue Specific Safety Issues
  - d) Weather Monitoring & Extreme Weather
  - e) Insurance
  - f) Emergency Management Plan
  - g) Evacuation of Site
  - h) Social Media and Crisis Communication
6. Prevention
- a) Public Health Messaging
  - b) Overdose Prevention
  - c) Tobacco, Cannabis & Vaping Management Plan
  - d) Safeguarding Young People
  - e) Sexual Violence Prevention
7. Event Resilience & Stewardship
- a) Pre-event Communications
  - b) Community Impact
  - c) Noise Reduction
  - d) Post-event Reporting
  - e) Environmental Footprint

## 2.1 Site Plan

The Site Plan should be included within the operations plan and provide information about all the points below. Keep in mind that depending on your event category and footprint, not all will apply.

### Permanent Site Details

- the north direction
- contours and grading
- permanent structures
- permanent geographical features (ditches, tree lines)
- utilities information – water, hydro, gas, septic and main shutoffs.

### Temporary Site Details

- temporary structures, objects, obstacles used in the event (arches)
- gates, fencing and security controls
- licensed areas
- temporary servicing – power etc.

### Traffic Management Details

- traffic flows
- public parking
- back of house/equipment parking
- signage
- length and width of streets, paths
- potential obstructions to flow of vehicles including off-road carts
- traffic calming devices
- access and egress points (pedestrian, vehicular, emergency access, operational – waste collection, deliveries etc.)

### Safety & Security

- evacuation routes
- information/assistance kiosks
- unobstructed fire/emergency response lane(s)
- location(s) of fire extinguisher(s);
- fire hydrant locations (Note: clearance from fire hydrants must be a minimum of 2 metres; if hydrant is at the curb, clearances must be 3 metres)
- location of medical services
- identification of any hazardous/combustible materials (e.g., fuel storage, propane, etc.)

### Public Health

- location of water stations
- location of temporary and permanent washroom and handwashing facilities
- location(s) of any vendor(s) – food and beverage and other
- location of waste diversion sites





Figure 1 – Example of Site Map (Source: [Penang Marathon](#))

## 2.2 Site Works

There are several considerations and regulations pertaining to site works. This may include the placement of fill, movement of soil, changing grades, removal of trees etc. If site works are required for your event, it is advisable that the host venue consult with the Township of Muskoka Lakes Development Service Department to review applicable legislation and associated requirements. Ontario Environment and Energy recently amended its regulations on excess soil and the management of it, which can be reviewed in their [Handling Excess Soil](#) page that outlines the changes in 2021, 2023, and 2025.

## 2.3 Permanent and Temporary Structures

The following is provided for your convenience in making a building permit application. The information below will also assist you in providing details for the Building Inspector and the Fire Prevention Officer, which will be required prior to approval for the use of any temporary structures. The Ontario Building Code provides minimum fire safety requirements specific to assembly occupancies and tents for special events.

## 2.3.1 Tents

Please review the following information carefully. The average special event pop up tent (10 feet x 10 feet = 100 square feet) does not require a building permit. However, limits do apply and all structures must meet zoning requirements, regardless of whether or not a building permit is required.

Per the Special Event Tent Building Permit, a tent or group of tents is exempt from the requirements to obtain a permit provided they are:

- (a) not more than 60m<sup>2</sup> (645 sq. ft.) in aggregate ground area,
- (b) not attached to a building, and
- (c) Constructed more than 3m (9'-10") from other structures.

Example: 3 event tents (10 x 10) together do not require a permit; 7 event tents (10 x10) together would require a permit

### **Less than 645 sq ft (60 m<sup>2</sup>)**

Tents or a group of tents spaced at less than 3m apart that are less than 645sqft (60m<sup>2</sup>) in aggregate area, do not require a building permit.

### **More than 645 sq ft – 2420 sq ft (225 m<sup>2</sup>)**

Tents or a group of tents that are less than 3m apart, do not contain bleachers and are unenclosed (no sidewalls) require a building permit and the following is applicable:

#### Clearance to Other structures:

- 3m from property lines
- 3m from all structures and other tents

Exceptions are made for tents not occupied by the public and do not need to be separated, as long as no hazard to the public exists. Tents on fairground or similar open spaces need not be separated, as long as no hazard to the public exists. Considerations:

- Clearance to Flammable material
  - A 3m perimeter around the tent shall be kept free of flammable material or vegetation that will carry fire
- Flame Resistance
- Every tent, and tarpaulin, decorative material, fabric and film used in conjunction with tents, shall be certified to CAN/ULC-S109 or NFPA 701
- Provisions for firefighting
  - Access shall be provided for the purpose of firefighting

**More than 2420 sq ft (225 m<sup>2</sup>)**

Tents that exceed 225 m<sup>2</sup>, tents that contain bleachers or have sidewalls enclosed, require a building permit and the following is applicable:

- All provisions in #2 above
- Means of egress
  - Travel distance
  - Clear aisles
  - 3m width between stake line and the property line
  - Swing doors if applicable
- Bleachers shall meet the OBC and shall be engineered
- Sanitary facilities
  - Required number of water closets shall be determined in accordance with the OBC
- The tent shall be designed and reviewed by a professional engineer. This process is normally covered through the manufacture or contracted installer.

You will be asked to indicate all structures, temporary and permanent, on the site plan. Please include the type and size of structures and clearances from the tent(s) to existing structures as part of your Event Operations Plans.

Where tents are erected on site and require the issuance of a building permit, an inspection is to be scheduled after any required engineer review, and in advance of the event itself. The inspector will review the approved permit package on site, the location, erection, and engineer's report to ensure compliance with permit issued and building code requirements.

For more information on building permits please visit the [Building Department](#) web page.

The Ontario Fire Code (as amended) contains minimum fire and life safety requirements specific to assembly occupancies and tents for special events.

1. Portable fire extinguishers with a minimum 2A rating are required to be placed at or near each exit.
2. Exit signs may be required if the tent is enclosed.
3. No Smoking signs shall be posted and adhered inside all structures on the commercial property.
4. All exits and means of egress in an open side and an enclosed tent are required to remain clear of any obstructions on both the interior and the exterior at all times.
5. Aisle widths are required to be minimum 1100mm, where applicable.
6. Open flames of any kind are not permitted in the tent.
7. Fire access routes are required to be maintained and kept clear.
8. The travel distance to an exit from any point must not exceed 30 m.
9. The property owner/event organizer is required to know the emergency procedures and their individual responsibilities as it relates to fire and life safety.

Events are required to have an event specific fire suppression plan. This plan must outline the steps taken to respond to an active fire in addition to calling 911 (e.g., describe onsite fire suppression

resources, fire emergency action plan, etc.). Events that have embedded fire suppression in their indoor/outdoor space can share details of the current fire suppression systems, event spaces that do not have embedded fire suppression (e.g., canopy tents) would need to explain what fire suppression measures they will take.

Prior to use of any temporary structure an inspection is required. You will need to book the inspection by contacting 705 765 3165 and asking for the Fire Prevention Officer. The Fire Prevention Officer will attend the site and verify the size, location, and anchorage of the tent plus the 9 items shown above. Upon completion of your event, the tent is to be removed and confirmed by the fire and/or building department.

**TIP:** If you are an event organizer who is not familiar with local regulations, consider contracting a local tent company to supply and assemble your tent(s). Please make sure that your tent contractor is aware of the above requirements and complies with the requirements of the Ontario Building and Fire Codes. Failure to comply may result in orders and fines to the organizer and venue.

### 2.3.2 Stages

The Township of Muskoka Lakes does not currently inspect or certify stages that are considered vehicles, where these vehicles have propane energy systems the Fire Department would perform inspections related to the TSSA certification.

Demountable stages and Demountable Support Structures as defined in the Ontario Building Code (OBC) require a building permit. Your application for a building permit will require the following:

- Site plan
- Engineer sealed plans for stage, frame work, legs and anchorage/ballasts
- Geotechnical report for soils the stage will rest on
- General review commitment from a Professional Engineer

The Ontario Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development has provided guidelines for temporary structures and has asked municipalities to share this information with event organizers and special event venues.

The [Temporary Performance/Event Structures Safety Guideline](#) for the Live Performance Industry brings together Ministry regulations and sets out industry best practices in regard to the design, planning, erection/construction, maintenance and disassembly of temporary structures. This guideline provides reasonable precautions that the constructor/employer may use as guidance and will also help workplace parties understand their obligations under the Occupational Health and Safety Act and its regulations as they relate to temporary structures.

### 2.3.3 Other Temporary Structures

There are several temporary structures such as security gates, lighting/camera scaffolding, screens and AV equipment that may be used for Special Events. In cases where the Ontario Building Code applies, the Code must be followed. However, in many cases temporary structures fall outside of the Ontario Building Code and so due diligence and risk management must be exercised. For events taking place on private property, it is strongly recommended that all temporary structures are pre-engineered and have a general review completed post installation by a certified structural engineer. For events taking place on public property pre-engineering and general review may be required depending on the nature of the temporary structure and event.

### 2.4 Amusement Rides

The organizer of the event will be responsible for ensuring the Amusement Ride Operator complies with all governing regulations regarding the amusement ride. If inflatables will be part of your Special Event, please ensure adult supervision is provided. You must have a documented safety and supervision plan. Inflatables and amusements are regulated through the [Technical Standards and Safety Authority](#).

### 2.5 Electrical Systems

Consideration should be given to electrical system capacity and equipment used. In many cases there will be a need for electrical system upgrades, auxiliary power (generators) and or work to existing systems. Any electrical work is regulated and governed by the [Electrical Safety Authority](#) and generally is required to be completed by a licensed contractor and permit through the Electrical Safety Authority (ESA). For large events with amplified sound, it may be prudent to engage a sound and electrical engineer to review electrical system requirements.

NOTE: The [Ontario Building Code](#) requires any electrical system, including cables on the ground in areas used by the by public shall be inaccessible to the public. In tents/around structures etc. electrical cables should be placed in trenches or protected by covers to prevent damage from traffic and trip hazards.

### 2.6 Barriers & Fencing

In many cases, your event will incorporate the use of barricades and/or fencing. When you are planning for barriers and fencing, consider several “hot spots” on event:

1. Perimeter. Depending on the type of event you are hosting, there may be people who wish to attend but did not purchase a ticket. Consider placing a “double-line” of fencing (i.e., two sets of fencing placed 10-12 feet apart to permit retrieval of any persons trying to jump the fence).
2. Front Gate. If your event is going to attract tens of thousands of attendees, consider how you will manage the crowd to prevent barriers being pushed over or collapsing. Consider how the event will communicate with in-line attendees (e.g., microphone, speakers). Consider placing

personnel outside of the main gate to provide information to the crowd (and to keep the crowd moving in the right direction). Consider providing shade and water if entering the event is going to involve a long wait. Consider using fencing to create multiple lanes for admission rather than a single entry.

3. **Main Stage.** If your event includes a main stage (or any area where thousands of people will gather), as you place the barriers and fencing for the main stage, consider the issue of emergency access in case there is a medical emergency during your event.
4. **Clearly Marked Exits.** Ensure that all exits are clearly marked for easy and rapid egress of attendees.
5. **Access for Incoming Emergency Service Vehicles.** It's imperative that emergency service vehicles can access the event grounds. Latched fencing, removable blockade access, or clearly posted explicit emergency vehicle access instruction may be helpful.
6. **Fencing and Weather.** If fencing is put up with visual blockades (e.g., black privacy screens), please consider adding wind slits to avoid the entire fence strip being blown over.

## 3.0 Traffic Management

If your event is anticipating attendance of at least 500 people you will need to consider the impact on Township, District, and Provincial roadways. Your traffic management plan should be developed by a traffic engineer and identify how you will mitigate impact to traffic flow and access/egress from parking sites. The OPP have responsibility for traffic and road safety at the local (Township of Muskoka Lakes), District (District of Muskoka), and provincial (Ministry of Transportation) levels and should be consulted in the plan development. The traffic management and signage plan will need to meet the requirements of OPP, and be approved by the relevant road authorities and the OPP. In cases where traffic control is required event organizers may be required to hire paid duty police officers to manage vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

The Ontario Highway Traffic Act prohibits anyone but police, fire, and trained workers for road construction or maintenance to direct or control traffic. It is imperative to provide early notification of events so that Police Officers can be secured for your event and manage traffic.

### 3.1 Vehicle and Cycling Traffic

Event organizers must plan for access and egress to and from the site. As well, you are responsible for mitigating the impact of your event on local traffic. Traffic Plans should account for the flow of traffic associated with the event, as well as local traffic, and contingencies in the event of temporary road closures related to the event. Traffic Plans should be developed in consultation with road authorities and the OPP for larger scale events. For major planned events organizers should seek the assistance of transportation planners to complete a traffic impact study to assist with the development of traffic management plan if one is not developed for the host venue. Traffic plans should also be linked to parking plans as processing times will impact traffic flow and encroachment onto local roadways. Further logistical consideration such as staggering start times or providing shuttles will minimize impacts on traffic and parking operations.

### 3.2 Pedestrian Traffic

Event organizers have a specific responsibility for providing and protecting pedestrian travel routes. If attendees and participants will be crossing roads you must identify, designate and manage safe travel routes as part of traffic plans.

### 3.3 Ride Share Programs

When practical, consider supporting a Ride Share Program for your event. This may help to reduce the number of vehicles that need parking onsite or nearby. Keep in mind that your attendees may use a Ride Share program (e.g., Uber, Lyft, and Taxi programs), so ensure that your access and egress plan incorporates a designated drop off/pick up point. Consider and identify a marked staging area for ride

share pick ups, with signage for both riders and providers. Marking specific locations (e.g., spot 1, spot 2, etc.) within the designated areas.

### 3.4 Roadways or Road Allowances

Placement of barricades, traffic controls, public notification, public signage, traffic management and so on, may be required by the Township of Muskoka Lakes, the District of Muskoka road authorities, MTO and/or the OPP. Collaborating with the Operations Department will be the responsibility of the event organizer. Guidelines set out in [Ontario Traffic Resource Book 7](#), Temporary Conditions, will be used in determining an appropriate traffic control plan in consultation with the Operations Department, other road authorities having jurisdiction and the OPP.

### 3.5 Parking

#### 3.5.1 Onsite Parking

Event organizers are responsible for ensuring adequate provision for the anticipated number of attendees (i.e., participants, spectators, vendors, employees). Event parking should be arranged to ensure the safe flow of traffic before, during, and after the event. It is recommended that parking be designed based on an assumption of a 2.5-person occupancy per vehicle, with a standard stall of 3 m x 6 m plus the applicable portion of the access lane. If parking is offsite, consideration may be required on how traffic will be managed. The event organizer must be aware of 16 local parking regulations (i.e. Parking By-law, which will be enforced). Any deviation from the Parking By-law must be approved before the event and public notice provided (as required). Consideration must be given to parking for back of house equipment, vendors, and any other event operators.

A Parking Plan should be included as part of the operations plan. The Parking Plan should include:

1. Consideration should be given to hiring [paid duty Police Officer\(s\)](#) for traffic and parking control
2. Informed assumptions of number and types of vehicles and anticipated modal share (i.e. Bus, taxi etc.) As well as times of arrival and departure. Ex. An event with timed start/finishes or heats will have different requirements than an event where all participant will arrive and depart at the same time.
3. A review/identification of the applicable Fire Access Routes and Designated Disabled Parking spaces for anticipated vehicles/transportation modes
4. Outline where emergency vehicle access routes are
5. Documentation of the availability of surrounding streets and lots where parking may be allowed
6. Strategies for providing event attendees and participants with appropriate parking information/direction related to the event
7. The location of "Parking" signs on the date(s) of the event to alert drivers to the location of event parking
8. Staging areas for busses, taxis, shuttles, ride share programs, etc.
9. Consider where the point of transaction (i.e., attendees providing payment/ticket verification) is, ideally on the event space, so that traffic lines do not interrupt local traffic
10. Providing onsite shuttle transportation from parking areas outside to your Special Event



### 3.5.2 Offsite Parking

Any deviation from the Township or District Parking By-law must be approved by the appropriate agency before the event and public notice provided (as required). In many cases parking may be arranged off site on lands which are appropriately zoned for such use and supported by an accompanying shuttle service. It is recommended that parking be designed based on an assumption of a 2.5-person occupancy per vehicle, with a standard stall of 3 m x 6 m plus the applicable portion of the access lane. If shuttles are to be used separate loading and offloading zones are required. In these circumstances, communication with event participants is of paramount importance to avoid impact on traffic and a negative participant experience. Event organizers must ensure that parking arrangements are clearly communicated to participants in advance of the event through website, email etc. and that appropriate signage is in place to direct motorists. Lack of signage or communication may encourage participants to travel to the event by an unsafe route or park in an unsafe manner. If off-site parking and shuttles are being considered, please discuss your preliminary plans with the Township of Muskoka Lakes Operations Department prior to executing any contract or lease of land for ancillary parking.

### 3.6 Vehicle Based Incidents

There may be a great deal of vehicular activity on the site before, during and after the event. The types of vehicles onsite (e.g., heavy machinery, UTVs, golf carts, etc.) may present a risk both to those working on the site such as vendors and security services, as well as event attendees. The following principles should be observed:

1. Ensure that all event personnel are qualified to operate the vehicles for which they are responsible.
2. Provide “just in time training” for those individuals who will be operating a vehicle in a mobile crowd.
3. Enact a zero-tolerance policy for driving any motorized vehicle under the influence of alcohol or substances.
4. Enact a clear policy that keys are not to be left in unattended vehicles AT ANY TIME.
5. Be aware of the orientation of portable toilets (i.e., don’t have the doors opening onto a road travelled by motorized vehicles.
6. Eliminate, where possible, any mixing of vehicles and pedestrians.
7. If your event includes camping, separate vehicle parking from camping facilities.
8. Arrange for streamlined re-fueling for event vehicles.

Finally, be aware that there have been multiple fatalities at special events related to attendees leaving the event to travel home and being hit by vehicles leaving the event. We recommend that you create a robust plan for egress from your event. Ideally your traffic management plan will prevent or minimize the mixing of pedestrians and motorized vehicles during egress.

## 3.7 Drones

The use of drones for photography or other purposes will be subject to federal aviation laws. If you are planning to use drones for photography or other purposes, please make note of this in the operations plan. Please visit the Canada Government's page on [Flying your Drone Safely and Legally](#) for more information.

**Drones may be excluded from General Liability Insurance Policies and require a specific aircraft rider. Please review your risks and insurance and ensure you are adequately protected.**

### 3.7.1 Unauthorized Use of Drones

The unauthorized use of drones can pose a significant safety risk to individuals and property. As such, it is important to have a clear policy regarding the use of drones during special events. Drones are strictly prohibited from being flown during the special event unless prior approval has been obtained from the event organizers. All drone operators must adhere to federal and local guidelines for the operation of drones. These guidelines include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Drones must be flown below 400 feet.
- Drones must remain within the operator's line of sight.
- Drones must not be flown near airports or other restricted airspace.
- Any drones found to be operating in violation of this policy will be immediately grounded, and the operator will be required to leave the event premises.

Event organizers reserve the right to take legal action against any individuals who operate drones in violation of this policy and cause damage or harm to individuals or property. Any individual or company that wishes to operate drones during the special event must obtain written permission from event organizers prior to the event. Permission will only be granted if the operator can demonstrate compliance with TC guidelines and provides proof of insurance. Event organizers will work with local law enforcement and Transport Canada to ensure that any drones operating during the event are doing so in a safe and responsible manner.

By implementing a policy such as the one above, event organizers can help to ensure the safety and well-being of all individuals attending the event.

## 4.0 Onsite Services

### 4.1 Food Services

Food service for events can be offered in several ways:

- 1) Venue supported food services
- 2) Catered food services
- 3) Vendor food services

Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) regulates and approves applications for food service. The event organizer shall notify SMDHU 60 days prior to the event through submission of the Event organizer Application. Information can be found via the [SMDHU application](#).

Ensuring that all vendors are SMDHU approved mitigates or lowers the risk of potential foodborne illnesses or outbreaks.

In the event of a suspect foodborne illness, please contact the SMDHU for follow up and response guidance as found on the [SMDHU Mass Gathering plan](#).

The SMDHU website contains resources for event organizers via the [SMDHU Mass Gathering plan](#). In addition, the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit offers a provincially recognized Food Handler Certification Course that is required for food handlers. Information surrounding this program can be found via the [Food Service Operators page](#).

Please also note that the Township of Muskoka Lakes requires licensing of all [food and refreshment stands](#). The event organizer shall ensure all licenses are obtained prior to the event.

### 4.2 Water Services

#### 4.2.1 Onsite Water Services

It is essential that the attendees and participants for your event have easy access to an adequate supply of potable water, meeting the requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act, to prevent dehydration and the associated health risks. Please refer to the [SMDHU Mass Gathering](#) guidance document. Event operators should also consider sustainability and aim to reduce use of single use plastics including single use water bottles.

#### 4.2.2 Offsite Water Services

Safe water is a key deliverable for the safety of all. In the case of temporary water systems, organizers must ensure that water is delivered in a safe manner by approved water haulers. Water should be readily

available to all attendees through multiple delivery points. Many options are available to distribute water, in that we support the environment, reducing waste should be considered.

## 4.3 Alcohol Service

The Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO), Regulatory Compliance Branch holds jurisdictional responsibility for the sale and service of alcohol in Ontario. Provincial liquor laws are enforced by AGCO and OPP. In Ontario, alcohol may only be sold and/or served under legal authority. The authority comes from a Sale License (Licensed Establishment or Catering Company) or a Special Occasion Permit (SOP). For related information access AGCO:

- 1) [www.agco.on.ca](http://www.agco.on.ca)
- 2) AGCO Customer Service at 1-800-522-2876
- 3) AGCO Regulatory Compliance Branch – Orillia at 705-329-5045

To obtain a permit for Small Special Events with less than 5,000 people in attendance can purchase a license to serve liquor via the AGCO.

For large Special Events with more than 5,000 people in attendance, a permit is required.

To assist with your event planning the AGCO has developed a number of resources to help you obtain a permit for large special event via the AGCO Special Alcohol Permit. If you are planning a large event and alcohol will be served onsite, please ensure that the AGCO requirements are included in your operations plan.

[Smart Serve](#) Ontario is a non-profit organization dedicated to developing and delivering a responsible service training program to all individuals who serve alcoholic beverages or work where alcoholic beverages are served in the Province of Ontario. Having Smart Serve trained staff helps to ensure the responsible service of alcohol, minimizing the potential risk exposure to event hosts/organizers. For more information, please visit [Smartservice](#).

## 4.4 Sanitation

If the location for your Special Event does not have sufficient facilities to accommodate the anticipated crowds, you will be responsible for providing a sufficient number of portable washrooms, wheelchair accessible portable washrooms and hand sinks. Complete a thorough assessment of how many washroom facilities (i.e. portlets) and showering stations (if applicable) are required to safely handle the volume of wastewater produced by large crowds. Higher numbers may be required if alcohol is served or if regular servicing of the sanitary facilities is not possible.

Provide the following details around the use of portlets: contact details for provider, number of portlets to be provided on site, and cleaning schedule. It is recommended that the sanitary facilities be cleaned, stocked and serviced at least twice daily or more often as necessary. With respect to hand wash stations

must be placed in accessible areas for patrons to adequately wash their hands, including but not limited to areas near washroom facilities and camping areas. Grey water removal should also be scheduled on a regular basis. Effective communication methods between the food vendors, organizers and servicing company must be implemented to ensure timely removal of liquid waste. Consideration must also be given to provide for barrier free access as required by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

Locations of portlets should be:

- Well-marked
- Well Lit
- Serviced
- Located away from food storage and food service areas

Numbers of toilets required is suggested in the [Emergency Preparedness Guidelines for Mass, Crowd-Intensive Events](#) on page 34 suggests: per 1,200 persons, three toilets and three urinals for males and nine toilets for females. A 1987 Cornell University study of highway rest stop washroom usage for the Washington State Department of Transportation suggested a 60-40 ratio of female-to-male fixtures would be appropriate.

In an outdoor setting, it becomes a relatively simple matter to provide additional portable toilets. As a hedge against long line-ups, particularly at female toilets, some organizers have provided additional, non-designated toilets to be used by either sex. Those with sensitivities can continue to use the designated toilets, those without such concerns can use either. The effect is to reduce lines at both male and female toilets.

Where outside authority does not govern required washroom facilities, and/or building permits are required for proposed development, provisions of the Ontario Building Code will be applied.

## 4.5 Waste Management

As the event organizer, you will be expected to arrange for waste management including kitchen waste such as grease and organic materials, litter generated by event attendees and participants, and recycling. Regular pickup of waste containers is expected.

In order to ensure a sanitary environment, biohazard waste that is separate from human waste, such as sharps or medication, should be disposed of properly. Sharps can be disposed with the use of Sharps Containers and disposed through pre-communication with a local pharmacy. Event promoters are encouraged to pursue zero waste events. A number of resources are available to support zero waste events, such as [Zero Waste Events](#) and [Let's Talk Trash](#).

## 5.0 Emergency Management & Planning

Every event of a significant size requires planning to ensure that each person involved in organizing the event knows their role if a natural disaster or an emergency situation occurs. If organizing a large scale planned special event, you are expected to provide a detailed Emergency Plan. Samples can be found at the following sites:

- FEMA Developing and Maintaining Emergency Operations Plan
- City of Peterborough Special Events Planning Guide
- SMDHU Mass Gathering Plan

The first step is embedding baseline services for your event. Embedding baseline services will help you enact event policies that are aligned with current by-laws, making your event as safe as possible under normal operating conditions. Frequent meetings prior to the event, involving each team (e.g., police, security, paramedicine, onsite medical services, etc.) will help you create an action plan for rare, critical events. Of note, event promoters and vendors are responsible for providing an immediate response to an emergency, until local community services arrive, at which point police/fire/ambulances services will assume control of the situation.

**ALL PLANS FOR LARGE SCALE EVENTS SHOULD INCLUDE PROVISIONS FOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND EVACUATION. THESE PLANS WILL BE DEVELOPED IN CONSULTATION WITH EMERGENCY SERVICES.**

### 5.1 Access/Egress

It is imperative that designated emergency access/egress be maintained throughout the event. The traffic management plan and event site plan should designate these areas and controls to be put in place to maintain emergency access/egress. Event organizers must coordinate and consider how attendees will access and egress the site with the following concepts:

- Maintaining proper traffic flow on municipal roadways
- Impact of mass planned exit
- Maintaining proper access and egress for Emergency Services
- Impact of road traffic accident on access and egress
- Directional signage that communicates intended access and egress roads
- Clear emergency vehicle signage for both access/egress and parking

### 5.2 Public Health Guidance

Event organizers are encouraged to review regional public health topics from Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU). SMDHU regularly updates their website on topics such as the management and state of diseases of public health significance, [drug use](#), [food safety](#), and [safe water](#). SMDHU updates their [COVID-19 community risk level](#) regularly which can be a useful resource. If there are any important emerging topics or general public health updates, the SMDHU will update their [SMDHU News page](#).

## 5.3 Safety Services

### 5.3.1 Security & Policing

An integral component of the risk management program is a comprehensive security plan. The operations plan should include the number and schedule of all event staff, including private security and paid duty police. In addition, the operations plan should outline how communication will take place between event staff, agencies, and the venue during the event.

If private security is contracted, it is recommended that these expectations become part of the service agreement with the security firm. It is also recommended that the proficiency in speaking and understanding the English language is a requirement to ensure effective communication throughout the event. The security plan should also describe what other controls will be implemented to mitigate any risks to the public. Examples include perimeter fencing, bag checks, amnesty bins, etc. Security firms can assist with many security functions including perimeter and bag checks, entry and exit head counts.

Paid Duty Police officers are often required by liquor permit or as determined through the hazard identification and risk assessment process. A Paid Duty Officer is a work assignment arranged through the OPP, where an off-duty officer performs policing duties for an individual or organization other than the Municipality and is paid by the third party (e.g., traffic, security, special events). Policing Services for the Township of Muskoka Lakes are provided by the OPP. Requests for Paid Duty officers must be received in writing by contacting the local OPP detachment stating the nature of the duties to be performed, the number of hours involved, the specific hours for which the service is requested and the reasons why it is considered necessary to engage officers for such duties. Vehicles may be required depending on the nature of the Paid Duty.

### 5.3.2 Fire and Life Safety

Similar to a security plan, event organizers must consider the risks associated with fire and life safety and ensure controls are implemented to mitigate these risks.

Open air burning in the Township of Muskoka Lakes is regulated by [By-Law 2018-16](#). Whether you are having a small backyard fire or clearing your property of brush, it is your responsibility to burn in

accordance with the Township's regulations for outdoor fires. To obtain a Burn Permit, go to <https://tml.burnpermits.com/> and fill out the application.

The Township of Muskoka Lakes is located in the Ontario Fire Zone 27 (District of Muskoka). The Muskoka Fire Season runs April 1st to October 31st each year. The rating is verified daily and updated whenever the rating changes.

The Muskoka Fire Danger Rating is determined using the Fire Weather Index (FWI), an internationally used method for determining the risk of fires in open air. It uses factors such as the relative humidity, temperature, previous 24-hour rain amount, wind directions and wind speed in combination with the forest fuel type and loads to determine the risk of the forest to certain fire types. From this calculation the Forest Fire Danger Rating is made in consultation with the Fire Chiefs of the six area municipalities and the Ministry of Natural Resources.

If there are special circumstances required that will affect the fire safety of any onsite services, such as delays due to crowds. There may be a need to have fully staffed fire trucks at the event location to expedite any fire/rescue response.

### 5.3.3 First Aid and Medical Services

Special Events can draw large numbers of people together to participate and enjoy unique experiences. One of the responsibilities of event organizers is to ensure a timely and effective response to medical emergencies at your event.

The objectives of medical emergency planning are to:

- Take a risk-based management approach.
- Ensure the success of the event and ensure that participants are protected through the provision of medical services that meet the demand created by the event.
- Provide rapid first aid intervention for any life-threatening emergency.
- Ensure the delivery of emergency medical care in the community and surrounding communities in which the event is taking place is not adversely affected or overburdened by the consumption of paramedic and hospital resources by the event participants.
- Mitigate risk to participants, event organizers, event venues and public service agencies.

Event organizers and venue operators have many options on how to provide reasonable and professional medical care for the any injured event attendee. You may choose to contract anything from a "first aid" team, all the way to a pre-hospital level medical response for a high-risk event such as a large music festival.

Note that although a given venue might have an embedded first aid team, the event organizer needs to contract medical providers that are free of venue responsibilities and so able to respond to emergencies without impacting the venue team's workload.



There are several options available such as St. John Ambulance, Canadian Ski Patrol, and the Red Cross. These volunteer-based organizations can provide onsite first aid and basic life support. If an event organizer wishes to provide additional support such as advanced medical and rescue teams or health professionals (e.g., physicians, athletic trainers, nurses, physiotherapists), there are organizations that can provide these services via an event medical services company.

Consider reviewing the [Event Safety Alliance Medical Preparedness Standards \(2022\)](#) for best practices for event medical service planning.

#### Questions to Ask Your Contracted Medical Services Provider

- 1) Who is your named Medical Director?
- 2) Do you carry Errors & Omissions insurance?
- 3) How do you screen your medical team members?
- 4) How long do you retain patient records?
- 5) What is the highest level of care provider who will be onsite during the event?
- 6) How will you provide a post-event report on medical services?

### 5.3.4 Standby Ambulances (Paid Duty)

Land ambulance services within the Township of Muskoka Lakes are provided by the [District of Muskoka Paramedic Services](#). The District of Muskoka Paramedic Services can provide dedicated Primary and/or Advanced Care Paramedics for special events on a cost recovery fee for service contractual basis.

When determining the need for Paramedic Services it is important to understand the following:

- The District of Muskoka Paramedic Service is the only land ambulance provider certified under the Ontario Ambulance Act.
- They provide land ambulance services in the District of Muskoka
- Event medical companies cannot transport patients to the hospital, only District of Muskoka Paramedics can transport patients to the hospital.
- The District of Muskoka Paramedic Service is the only certified agency under the Ontario Ambulance Act that can operate and provide an ambulance for your event and transport injured or ill patients to a health care facility within the District of Muskoka. No private medical or first aid provider is authorized to provide this service.
- The District of Muskoka Paramedic Service does not automatically increase resources and staffing during an event unless contracted by the event organizer. If your event generates numerous requests for ambulance services through 911, this may create undue pressure on the system which may be reported to the District of Muskoka and to the Township of Muskoka Lakes.

The coordinator of medical services should contact the District of Muskoka Paramedic Service to identify their scope and level of care as well as transfer of care protocols. Event organizers are encouraged to

contact the District of Muskoka Paramedic Service for assistance in event medical and first-aid planning, support, and contracting dedicated paid-duty support. The District of Muskoka Paramedic Service will assist the event organizer with:

- Conducting a comprehensive risk and medical needs assessment of the event.
- Assisting in the determining the level of care required (e.g., first aid only, paramedic support, or advanced medical support) and provide costing as needed for dedicated paid-duty resources.
- Providing emergency medical planning expertise and support to event organizers in order to develop an emergency medical operational plan.
- Assisting with medical emergency communication planning.
- Assist with access/egress and navigation planning.
- Provide supervision and medical surveillance during the event to ensure the objectives of the emergency medical operational plan are being met.

In determining medical service needs, the following types of issues will be considered:

<p><b>Event Demographics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Night versus daytime event</li> <li>• Number of active participants</li> <li>• Demographics of crowd</li> <li>• Number of attendees</li> <li>• Length of event</li> <li>• Location of event/multiple locations</li> </ul>	<p><b>Hazard &amp; Risk Profile</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• History of the event</li> <li>• Weather/time of year</li> <li>• Geographical hazards</li> <li>• Type of activity involved (e.g., swimming)</li> <li>• Anticipated crowd mood/motivations</li> <li>• Potential risk behaviors</li> <li>• Alcohol availability and anticipated use</li> <li>• Distance of event from hospital-level care</li> </ul>
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## 5.4 Fireworks

For questions about the use of fireworks and pyrotechnics, please refer to the [Township of Muskoka Lakes Fireworks By-Law](#).

## 5.5 Combustibles/Hazardous Materials

The operations plans must include details on hazardous materials and combustibles. These materials should be listed along with precautions which will be taken. Combustible/hazardous material storage locations are to be shown on the event site plan along with information on gas locations and shutoffs and other venue utility information.

## 5.6 Fire Safety Plan

Most event venues will have a Fire Safety Plan. As an event organizer you will want to ensure you have read and understand the plan and that your event plan follows the requirements of the plan including compliance with occupancies if applicable.

## 5.7 Ontario Fire Code

The Ontario Fire Code also contains several regulations and requirements in addition to local requirements. It is your responsibility to be aware of and in compliance with regulations. If you are unsure of requirements, please consult with the Township of Muskoka Lakes Fire Department.

## 5.8 Planning Evacuation of Site

In the exceedingly rare situation that an emergency occurs during your event, you need to have a plan in place for evacuating the event site quickly. At minimum, please specify:

1. Which individual or individuals will have the authority to call for a site evacuation;
2. Your plan for contacting every team lead that needs to be notified;
3. How you will notify the attendees/participants about the emergency situation;
4. How you will mark the exits clearly to permit quick, seamless egress; and,
5. Which groups, individuals will be responsible for supporting the site evacuation?

Resource – See: Health and Safety Executive – [Managing Crowds Safely](#)

## 5.9 Social Media and Crisis Communication

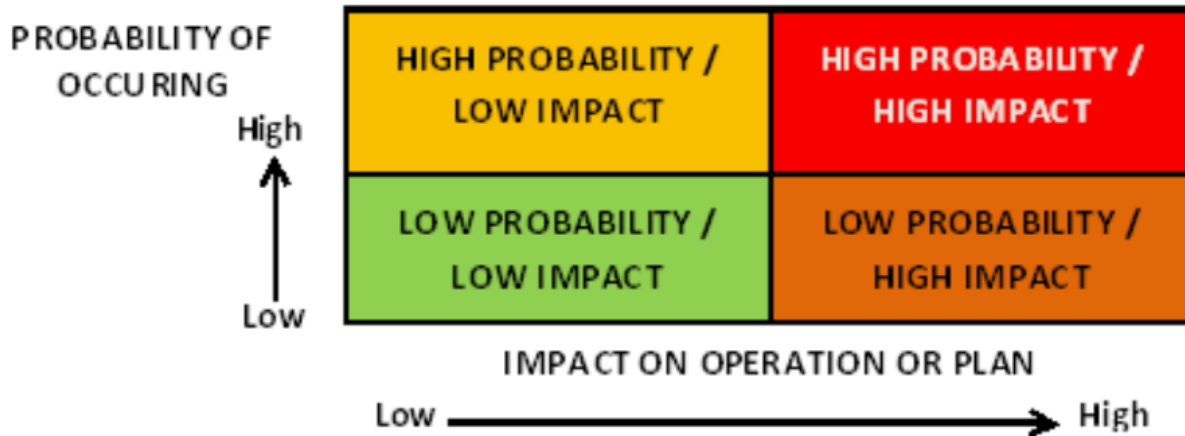
Depending on the nature of your event, you would be well advised to monitor social media channels throughout your event. In some cases, social media will alert the event management team to incidents in advance of channels of communication such as 911. Social media may also provide a clear path for communication with event attendees in the event of an emergency.

When planning for social media and crisis communication, consider whether you have appointed a media spokesperson and/or representative for your event.

## 6.0 Risk Management

All stakeholders involved in Special Events are committed to event safety. Our commitment to our local community and event attendees is to produce the safest possible events. Part of that process is to carry out a thoughtful, comprehensive risk assessment. Risk assessment informs strategies to mitigate risk.

Risk management is a key responsibility of all event organizers, venues and associated contractors. Event organizers should undertake a Hazard Analysis and Risk Assessment as the foundation of the risk management process. This process will assist the organizer in identifying key risk areas and provide directions on areas that require a mitigation plan or strategy. A Hazard Analysis and Risk Assessment should consider both the severity/implications of the risk and the probability of occurrence; the greater the severity or probability, the greater the risk.



Risk Classification	Action
Low probability, low impact Not a significant risk	Probably no action required.
High probability, low impact Probably not threatening	Probably no action required, but should be monitored in case circumstances change.
Low probability, high impact A potential danger	Develop contingency plan, with special attention to triggering events. Insurance should be considered.
High probability, high risk A real danger	Develop preventative plan and contingency plan. Event plan may need to adapt to avoid this condition.

The following list is meant to provide some examples of hazards and risks present at events and is not an exhaustive list. Event organizers must look at the details of the event they are offering and identify hazards that apply to their specific situation.

## 6.1 Types of Risks

### 6.1.1 Environmental Risks

Hazard / Risk	Potential Harm or Loss
Heavy rainfall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Damage to structures or equipment.</li> <li>• Localized flooding.</li> <li>• Show/event delay or cancellation.</li> </ul>
Flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Damage to structures, equipment, infrastructure.</li> <li>• Physical harm to participants, staff, vendors.</li> <li>• Show/event delay or cancellation.</li> </ul>
Lightning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Damage to structures, equipment, infrastructure.</li> <li>• Physical harm to participants, staff, vendors.</li> <li>• Show/event delay or cancellation.</li> </ul>
High Winds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Damage to structures, equipment, infrastructure.</li> <li>• Physical harm to participants, staff, vendors.</li> <li>• Show/event delay or cancellation.</li> </ul>
Tornado	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Damage to structures, equipment, infrastructure.</li> <li>• Power outages.</li> <li>• Impact to communications.</li> <li>• Physical harm to participants, staff, vendors.</li> <li>• Potential loss of life.</li> <li>• First responder difficulty reaching and treating patients.</li> <li>• Event cancellation.</li> </ul>
Extreme Heat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical harm to participants, staff, vendors – heat exhaustion, heat stroke, etc.</li> <li>• Cancellation of elements of event.</li> </ul>
Earthquake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Damage to structures, equipment, infrastructure.</li> <li>• Physical harm to participants, staff, vendors.</li> <li>• Show/event cancellation.</li> </ul>

### 6.1.2 Health Risks

Hazard / Risk	Potential Harm or Loss
Water Contamination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Illness among participants, staff, vendors.</li> <li>• Loss of water refill station – possible dehydration.</li> <li>• Loss of food service.</li> <li>• Cancellation of event.</li> </ul>
Food-borne Illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Illness among participants, staff, vendors.</li> <li>• Removal of vendor or loss of food service.</li> </ul>

Virus Transmission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential source of outbreak.</li> <li>• Harm to event reputation – fear among attendees.</li> <li>• Changes to Provincial requirements alter event elements or permissibility.</li> </ul>
Animal Related Injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical harm to participants, staff, vendors, potential loss of life.</li> <li>• Halt to related event activity.</li> </ul>
Medical Emergency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical harm to participants, staff, vendors.</li> <li>• Potential loss of life.</li> <li>• Delay or cancellation of event.</li> </ul>

### 6.1.3 Infrastructure Risks

Hazard / Risk	Potential Harm or Loss
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant, staff, vendor safety jeopardized.</li> <li>• Human rights complaint.</li> </ul>
Fire – Structure / Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evacuation required, attendee panic, surging.</li> <li>• Physical harm to participants, staff, vendors.</li> <li>• Damage to structures, equipment, property.</li> <li>• Delay or cancellation of event.</li> </ul>
Fireworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire.</li> <li>• Physical harm to spectators, technician harm.</li> <li>• Delay or cancellation of show.</li> </ul>
Stunt / Amusement Rides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Injury to participants, possible loss of life.</li> <li>• Could result in stunt person entrapment requiring rescue.</li> <li>• Delay or cancellation of show/event.</li> </ul>
Structure Collapse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stage, tents, fencing collapse or malfunction.</li> <li>• Physical harm to participants, staff, vendors – possible loss of life.</li> <li>• First responder safety jeopardized, responder difficulty reaching and treating patients.</li> <li>• Delay or cancellation of event.</li> </ul>
Gas Leak - Propane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inhaling or ingesting fumes.</li> <li>• Explosion.</li> <li>• Physical harm to participants, staff, vendors.</li> </ul>
Hazardous Material or Spill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inhaling or ingesting fumes.</li> <li>• Fire, explosion, environmental contamination.</li> </ul>
Power – Communication Failure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short circuits/power surge – damage to equipment / data loss.</li> <li>• Loss of power to ATMs.</li> <li>• Delay or cancellation of entertainment.</li> <li>• Interruption of communication capabilities with attendees.</li> </ul>

### 6.1.4 Traffic Risks

Hazard / Risk	Potential Harm or Loss
Vehicular Accident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical harm to staff, vendors, public sharing use of the site.</li> <li>• Damage to site – ruts in park space, loss of damage deposit, environmental contamination.</li> </ul>
Water supply - sewer return disruption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Damage to equipment.</li> <li>• Loss of area of event space.</li> <li>• Water contamination.</li> <li>• Delay of event.</li> </ul>
Shuttle transportation – over demand, disruption, breakdown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harm to event reputation.</li> <li>• Danger of physical harm – crowding on roadway / pedestrian-vehicle conflicts.</li> <li>• Public disorder / aggressive behaviour.</li> <li>• Attendees driving under the influence of substances.</li> </ul>
Proximity to hazards – water, electrical, roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vehicle intentionally or unintentionally accesses closure / event site.</li> <li>• Power surges.</li> <li>• Localized flooding.</li> <li>• Physical harm to participants, staff, vendors, potential loss of life.</li> </ul>
Traffic Congestion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints from the public - harm to event reputation.</li> <li>• Impeded access for emergency services in the area.</li> <li>• Potential for pedestrian-vehicle conflicts.</li> </ul>

### 6.1.5 Social Disorder

Hazard / Risk	Potential Harm or Loss
Alcohol consumption - over service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intoxicated event attendees – possible injury / need for medical attention.</li> <li>• Disorderly / aggressive behaviour.</li> <li>• Loss of alcohol license.</li> </ul>
Underage drinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Injury to minor – possible need for medical attention.</li> <li>• Disorderly / aggressive behavior.</li> <li>• Loss of alcohol license.</li> </ul>
Drug use - overdose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Injury to attendee – potential harm to multiple attendees if drugs being sold on site.</li> <li>• Potential loss of life.</li> </ul>
Lost person – vulnerable person or child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical / mental harm to person(s).</li> </ul>

Overcrowding / Crowd surge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of open space and visibility.</li> <li>• Visitor anxiety and stress – harm to event reputation.</li> <li>• Physical harm to participants, staff, vendors – lost persons, surging, sexual harassment, assault, etc.</li> <li>• Public and first responder safety jeopardized, responder difficulty reaching and treating patients.</li> <li>• Possible loss of life.</li> <li>• Delay or cancellation of show / event.</li> </ul>
Criminal - aggressive behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Altercations between attendees or staff.</li> <li>• Physical harm to participants, staff, vendors.</li> <li>• Damage to property.</li> </ul>
Sexual harassment / assault	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical / mental harm to person(s).</li> </ul>
Civil disobedience – protestors, gangs, extremists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk of altercations.</li> <li>• Physical harm to participants, staff, vendors.</li> <li>• Damage to property.</li> <li>• Delay or cancellation of event.</li> </ul>
Active threat - killer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mass panic / crowd surges.</li> <li>• Physical harm to participants, staff, vendors – loss of life.</li> <li>• Vehicle borne attack – potential mass casualties.</li> <li>• Responder difficulty reaching and treating patients.</li> <li>• Cancellation of event.</li> </ul>
Bomb / Chemical threat / Suspicious package	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evacuation required. Attendee panic / crowd surges. Physical harm to participants, staff, vendors.</li> </ul>

It is suggested that you build a contingency plan that addresses the Hazards that are outlined above and their relevance to your event. The plan can be as simple as Actions or Responses if the hazard or risk develops. For ideas on this approach see [The Emergency Planning Guide](#) from City of Ottawa, see pages 11-37.

### 6.1.6 Additional Considerations

Recent world events (including in Canada) have demonstrated the devastating consequences of vehicular accidents or hostile vehicle attacks on crowded places, including parades, festivals, and sporting events. The following have been identified as risk factors for when perimeter hardening / enhanced barricading should be considered for at a special event:

- Vehicular access: event is on a public roadway or has vehicle access to site due to proximity to roadway
- Capacity: crowd density is high and there may or may not be escape routes



- There is a straight approach to a crowd
- There is international/significant media attention on the event itself
- Attendees have reduced sensory awareness (e.g., alcohol consumption, drug consumption, audio/visual impairment, etc.)

For those events deploying site hardening measures, the OPP will be able to provide some direction on mitigation device placement, however, the functionality or effectiveness of the product used may require the organizer to get a professional engineering opinion.

## 6.2 Incident Management

The identified hazard situations should form part of the risk assessment with appropriate responses considered in the operational plan. Depending on the risk profile of your event, you may be required to provide a detailed plan for hazard and risk mitigation that will include:

- Fire
- Medical Emergency
- Acts of Violence / Theft
- Lost or Missing Persons
- Weather related emergency

In order to be prepared for any emergency situation or disaster, events with an elevated risk must submit an Emergency Plan that includes:

- 1) Communication (Internal & External)
  - a. A robust internal communication system to activate onsite emergency resources
  - b. A description of how you will communicate with the public in the event that an evacuation is necessary
  - c. Contact information for event organizers including their cell phone numbers and how they will be contacted in case of emergency
  - d. A communication plan to activate External Resources (Police, Fire, Ambulance) if not already on-site
- 2) Emergency Evacuation
  - a. The procedures to be followed in the case of an emergency or disaster
  - b. Dedicated and mapped emergency access points
  - c. An evacuation area with an evacuation route
  - d. Identification of support services for routing the responding resources within your event site as indicated,
  - e. The emergency services that are required in case of an emergency or disaster
  - f. Details of how you have prepared your volunteers and organizational staff to handle a disaster or emergency situation

- g. Details of how your security be contacted and respond to an emergency or disaster during your Event.

## 6.3 Deliberate Acts

Special events can create conditions attractive to those who wish to cause harm in order to create conditions of chaos and loss of life. When you are planning for your event, consider the degree to which your event could be targeted in a deliberate act of sabotage or violence. Depending on the assessed level of risk, consider embedding information about emergency planning around deliberate events, within your emergency action plan. This would, ideally, include a preliminary plan for the following types of incidents:

- 1) Sabotage
- 2) Bomb threat
- 3) Active shooter
- 4) Fire
- 5) Protest
- 6) Chemical weapon

In terms of preparation, your team members should be provided with information about muster stations (primary and secondary) and any venue-specific emergency procedures.

## 6.4 Public Accessibility & Comfort

Be sure to plan for physical accessibility for all patrons. Consider providing:

- 1) Appoint an accessibility officer who will act as a subject matter expert for your event.
- 2) Easily accessible, dedicated areas for those with physical challenges.
- 3) Create some areas with surfaces appropriate for wheelchairs.
- 4) Provide disabled access toilets.
- 5) Provide water bowls for assistance animals.

In addition, consider the following for the comfort of your attendees/participants:

- 1) Make your event scent-free.
- 2) Create neutral labelling for toilets.
- 3) When possible, use gender neutral language for signage.
- 4) Encourage clear labelling of foods to reduce the risk of allergic or anaphylactic reactions

## 6.5 Weather Monitoring & Extreme Weather

Every event that takes place outdoors needs a clear process in place for monitoring weather conditions. Below we have provided an example of a rating system used by meteorologists, which may be useful. In addition to monitoring evolving weather conditions, you should provide information about your actions for yellow and red weather conditions.

Weather Trigger	Green	Yellow	Red	Thunderstorm Severity Definitions
Wind Gusts	< 48 km/hr	≥ 48 km/hr	≥ 64 km/hr	<b>General Thunderstorms (Green)</b> - If thunderstorms develop, they are unlikely to become severe. <b>Strong to Severe Thunderstorms Possible (Yellow)</b> - If thunderstorms develop, they pose an increased threat of producing wind gusts in excess of 40 mph (35 knots), hail, and potentially tornadoes. <b>Severe Thunderstorms Likely (Red)</b> - If thunderstorms develop, they pose a significant threat of producing wind gusts in excess of 58 mph (50 knots), large hail, and tornadoes.
T-storm/Lightning Probability	< 30 %	≥ 30 %	≥ 60 %	
T-storm Severity	General T-Storms	Strong to Severe T-Storms Possible	Severe T-Storms Likely	
Heavy Precipitation	< 3.0 mm	≥ 3.0 mm	≥ 7.0 mm	
Wind Chill	> -12 C	≤ -12 C	≤ -18 C	
Heat Index	< 32 C	≥ 32 C	≥ 35 C	
Snow Accumulation	< 15 mm	≥ 15 mm	≥ 25 mm	
Ice Accumulation	< 0.2 mm	≥ 0.2 mm	≥ 0.7 mm	

## 6.6 Insurance

Insurance is required for all special events and is a requirement for events taking place on public property. It provides coverage for event organizers, host venue, supporting public agencies and volunteers for third party liability claims resulting from an injury to the third party and/or damage to their property. Insurance limits should be established on the risk profile of the event. It is important that the host venue, event promoters and all contracted services understand their risks and carry appropriate insurance coverage. It is recommended that events carry coverage of a minimum of \$5 million per occurrence. If you are insuring, please consult your insurer. For the Township’s insurance requirements please contact the Treasurer at 705 765 3156.

## 7.0 Prevention

Depending on the type of event you are offering, there may be unique risk factors that need to be addressed in a proactive fashion.

### 7.1 Public Health Messaging

In keeping with our shared goal of hosting world class events and ensuring that event participants return home, safe and sound after attending your event, we ask that you consider providing public health messaging. Per your event type, health messaging about drinking to thirst, hand washing, not partying alone, sheltering from the sun etc., can contribute to positive outcomes for your events. For an example, see [Manitoba's Marathon Race Day Medical Information](#).

- 1) **Infection Control:** Hand wash stations must be placed in accessible areas for patrons to adequately wash their hands, including but not limited to areas near washroom facilities. The event organizer should only accept inspected “personal service settings (PSS)” for mobile and on-site services. Proof of inspection is the burden of the vendor. Each PSS vendor, including sponsorship activations, shall, independently, notify SMDHU of their intent to offer a personal service, at least 14 days prior to the event through the submission of the Event Vendor Application. All PSS operations shall adhere to municipal licensing, guidelines and Fire Code where applicable.
- 2) **Sexual Health:** It is recommended that event coordinators make available information on where and how to obtain Emergency Contraceptive Pills. Condoms should also be made available for participants. Condoms should be in a location where the integrity of the product is secured and there is no risk of tampering. Condoms should be stored in cool, dry spaces at room or below room temperature.
- 3) **Rabies:** All bites and scratches from an animal must be reported to the health unit in accordance with Regulation 557 Communicable Diseases. Petting zoos can be a great popular attraction for families and kids, however they can also be a source of infection for eventgoers. It is recommended that event coordinators inform the health unit of their intention to operate a petting zoo and/or have animals on site at their event. Furthermore, the health unit can work with event coordinators to discuss and provide information regarding vector-borne diseases that can be acquired through the bite of an infected tick or mosquito.

### 7.2 Sun Exposure, Heat, and Hydration

Being in the sun too long can cause sunburns and increase the risk of developing skin cancer. Providing sun safe environments is a great way to help event participants reduce the risk of sunburn and skin cancer. It is recommended that event organizers ensure there is natural shade (tree cover) or man-made shade (e.g., shade structures, tents, canopies, shade umbrellas) for protection from the harmful effects

of the sun. In addition, event organizers are encouraged to promote sun safe behaviours by providing promotional information/materials to event participants. It is further recommended that event organizations provide cooling areas (e.g., misting stations) and potable water and promote personal hydration by providing promotional information/materials to event participants.

For more information regarding sun exposure and heat health effects contact the health unit or visit the [SDMHU website](#).

### 7.3 Overdose Prevention

If you anticipate that recreational drug use and/or overuse of alcohol may occur during your event, we advise that you incorporate some prevention strategies including:

- 1) Consider clearly stating the event policy regarding recreational drug use on the event website.
- 2) Consider integrating Festival Health services with onsite medical services (e.g., health promotion, illness prevention, and harm reduction).
- 3) Ensure that multiple doses of naloxone/Narcan are onsite and available to both the public and attendees.
- 4) Discuss strategies that might reduce the amount of drugs onsite during your event.
- 5) Consider offering public health information about safer drug and alcohol use.

Please consider that there is a risk for participant or staff overdose at any time during the pre/during/post event phase. Those who are constructing the site, managing the site, attending the site (e.g., work related visitor), or simply on the site may be substance users who are at risk of an overdose during work hours. It is endorsed to have Naloxone and an AED accessible for the duration of the build and strike.

Starting June 1, 2023, employers must provide naloxone in the workplace (source: [Naloxone Workplace Requirements](#)) if [certain circumstances](#) described in the Occupational Health and Safety Act apply. For a limited time, those employers can get free naloxone training and nasal spray naloxone kits through [Ontario's Workplace Naloxone Program](#). Naloxone (pronounced na-LOX-own) is a drug that can temporarily reverse the effects of an opioid overdose. Opioids are drugs that are prescribed by a medical practitioner to treat pain.

### 7.4 Tobacco, Cannabis, and Vaping Management

Planning for vaping, tobacco and cannabis retailing and use is part of organizing a successful event and is regulated provincially under the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017 and Cannabis Control Act, 2017. We recommend the following resources from the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit:

[Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit - Cannabis Use](#)

[Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit - Tobacco and Vaping Use](#)

An event will be operated in accordance with the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017 (SFOA). Violators may be charged with fines as set out under the SFOA and/or be removed from the event.

**PATIOS/FOOD SERVICE AREAS** – Smoking of tobacco and cannabis and vaping of any substance is prohibited on patios and prohibited within nine (9) metres of a patio where food and drink is served including outdoor areas where seating tables are provided for patrons to consume their meal or beverage.

**SIGNS** – Event organizers are required to post SFOA, 2017 dual no-smoking/no-vaping signs as required by law throughout the venue at: entrances and exits to all buildings and their washroom facilities including outdoor washrooms; smoke-free outdoor patios serving food and/or beverages; and work vehicles. Signs are available at no cost from the health unit.

**BUILDINGS, WORK VEHICLES, AND TOILETS** – Smoking of tobacco and cannabis and vaping of any substance is prohibited inside buildings, temporary structures that are covered, work vehicles, and washrooms (including portable toilets) at the event.

**TOBACCO SALES** – Cigarettes and other tobacco products cannot be sold at the event without regulatory compliance with the SFOA, 2017 and the Tobacco Tax Act as enforced by health unit tobacco enforcement and the Ministry of Finance. The sale of cigarettes and tobacco products is prohibited to persons under the age of 19. Two or more convictions for selling tobacco to a minor can result in an automatic prohibition preventing the future sale of tobacco at the event and venue.

**VAPOUR PRODUCT SALES** – Vapour products cannot be sold at the event without regulatory compliance with the SFOA, 2017 as enforced by health unit tobacco enforcement. The sale of vapour products is prohibited to persons under the age of 19.

**TOBACCO PROMOTION** – Tobacco brands and products cannot be promoted or displayed at the event as per section 5. of the SFOA, 2017.

**VAPOUR PRODUCT PROMOTION** – Vapour product brands and products cannot be promoted or displayed at the event as per section 5. of the SFOA, 2017.

**WATERPIPE & HOOKAH USE** – The SFOA, 2017 prohibits the use of tobacco in waterpipes and hookahs inside public places.

**CANNABIS SALES, PROMOTION, POSSESSION, AND TRANSPORTATION** – Cannabis sales and promotion, possession, and transportation are enforced by the regulatory compliance

## **7.5 Sexual Violence Prevention**

There are increasing reports in the literature, and by the media, that sexual harassment and assault are not uncommon at some types of special events. Depending on the type of event you are organizing, you may be asked to submit your plan for reducing the risk of sexual assault and sexual harassment. When

you are planning your event, consider lighting carefully. Eliminate poorly lit areas. Consider embedding messaging about zero tolerance of sexually aggressive behavior on the event website. If possible, provide a women's safe space on the grounds of the event.

Resources that are advised to promote: Project [Sound Track](#), [Characteristics of Sexual Assaults at Mass Gatherings](#), [Good Night Out](#)

## 8.0 Event Resilience & Stewardship

### 8.1 Environmental Footprint

Special events can create an unintended environmental burden. We ask that you make efforts to reduce the environmental footprint of your event. A variety of strategies are being adopted by organizers of special events and a few are listed below.

- 1) Support a recycling program for plastic, paper and organic materials.
- 2) Take action to reduce the amount of paper used before, during and after your event.
- 3) Encourage vendors to use packaging that is environmentally friendly.
- 4) Ask food vendors to, when possible, use locally sourced ingredients.
- 5) Encourage event participants to bring reusable beverage containers to the event.
- 6) Consider banning sale of individual plastic beverage bottles onsite.
- 7) Consider creating a “green team” for your event.
- 8) Consider doing a “garbage audit” to see what could be changed the next time your event occurs.
- 9) Support a Ride Share program and encourage the use of public transit to attend your event.
- 10) Ask your contractors to use green products, wherever possible

### 8.2 Noise Impact

The Township of Muskoka Lakes has a [Noise By-law](#) in place that should be reviewed prior to the event. Additional monitoring may be required depending on the nature of the event.

### 8.3 Post Event Reporting

To support the evolution of event safety, short and long term, we support clear post-event reporting. Understanding “what happened” during an event can lead to improvements in operations during future events. Well before your event takes place, consider the types of data that you would find useful for future planning. For example, you probably want to know how many people attended the event, how many tickets were sold, and how many patients were seen by the onsite medical team.

### 8.4 Community Impact

Special events present a unique opportunity that can benefit all residents and visitors to Muskoka Lakes. Event organizers have an obligation to residents and businesses that may be impacted by a special event. Depending on the size and scope of the event taking place, event organizers may be required to create and deploy a Community Notification Strategy. The strategy may include:

- Direct letters to residences and business
- Temporary signage



- Advertisement in local media outlets
- Direct contact with businesses
- Township website
- Chamber of Commerce and Tourism boards newsletter

The Township of Muskoka Lakes recognizes the positive economic impact special events bring to the community of Muskoka Lakes; and from a regional perspective, the District of Muskoka as a whole. We encourage special event organizers, as much as they can, to utilize local businesses regarding logistical (i.e. portable toilets, security, fencing etc.) and vendor (i.e. food, artisans, musicians etc.) components of special events. Taking into consideration that local businesses located within Muskoka Lakes are familiar with, and connected to the community, it is beneficial for the region to have a stronger economic impact directly in the municipality. If you would like help to make connections with local businesses, please contact the Economic Development Office at the Township – 705-765-3156 ext 279.