

# TELECOMMUNICATIONS DURING AN EMERGENCY

New Zealand has a lot of natural hazards - earthquakes, floods, landslides, severe weather events, tsunami, volcanic activity and other hazards can happen any time and often with only limited warning.

Telecommunications services help us to communicate and receive information. In an emergency event telecommunications services may not be available, and your devices may not be able to make or receive calls or access the internet.

In an emergency telecommunications services may not be available for a number of reasons:

## POWER OUTAGES:



Sustained power outages during an event can impact telecommunications which require power to operate.

## SIGNAL INTERFERENCE:



Heavy rain, snow, fog and even ash clouds from volcanoes can weaken or block signals, impacting call quality and internet connectivity.

## INFRASTRUCTURE DAMAGE:

High winds, floods, earthquakes and storms can impact cell towers, damage fiber optic cables, and knock out power, leading to network disruptions.

## INCREASED DEMAND:



Surges in use during emergencies can overload networks, causing slowdowns and calls to drop out.

It's important to know the different ways you can stay informed during an emergency event and how you can be prepared if telecommunications services become unavailable in your area.

- Follow weather warnings and updates from official channels.
- Listen to updates over the radio, TV or across social media.
- Pay attention to information issued by Civil Defence and emergency mobile alerts.

## WAYS TO STAY INFORMED



TV



RADIO



SOCIAL MEDIA



INTERNET



EMERGENCY ALERT

## Using telecommunications services:

- Limit non-essential calls and data usage during peak demand periods to prioritise emergency communication.
- Use text messages instead of calls for short and essential messages.
- Use technology only if it is urgent to conserve batteries and powerbanks.

## Emergency Mobile Alert:

An emergency mobile alert is a message sent to your mobile phone by an authorised agency. This will include instructions on what to do next if your area is likely to be affected by an emergency. You do not need to sign up or download an app. Alerts are targeted to specific areas and if your phone is on and capable of receiving an alert, you will receive the notification.

Emergency mobile alerts is only one communication channel to keep you safe and informed during an emergency. Find out more about emergency alerts [here](#).

# BEING PREPARED FOR AN

## EMERGENCY



### KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOURS AND COMMUNITY

In an emergency the most immediate source of help will be your neighbours and your community. Get together to be prepared and know what to do before an event.



### HAVE A PLAN

Having a plan and being connected with your community before an emergency will make a big difference during and after. A plan can help you and your whānau be prepared and stay informed if telecommunications services go down.

## BE PREPARED CHECKLIST

- Check that your phone can receive emergency mobile alerts to stay up to date.
- Prepare an emergency plan for how you will communicate if your mobile, landline and internet services are not available. Share these plans early with whānau and your neighbours before you need to act on them.
- Keep a portable battery powered radio with a spare set of batteries in your emergency kit, so you can stay up to date with emergency information being broadcast over the radio.
- Consider investing in power banks or solar chargers to allow you to keep your device charged.
- Downloading or printing important information like maps and emergency contacts can also make important information readily available even if you lose internet connection.
- Having a small amount of cash on hand helps, as EFTPOS or ATMs may not be working if there is a telecommunications or power outage.

