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SIGNIFICANT DISASTERS IN CANADA

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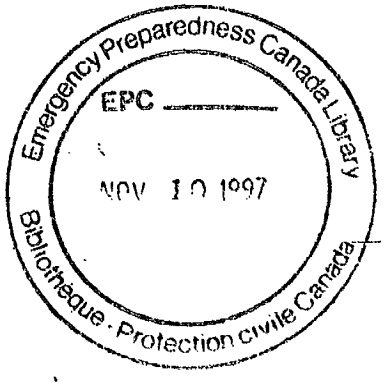
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SIGNIFICANT DISASTERS

IN CANADA



September, 1995

SIGNIFICANT DISASTERS IN CANADA

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SIGNIFICANT DISASTERS IN CANADA

For the purposes of this listing, "significant disaster" is defined as an unforeseen mischance resulting in widespread dislocation affecting everyday life and/or of sufficient seriousness as to warrant present-day coverage by national media.

SECTION I: HISTORICAL DISASTERS

General Disasters

1638	June 11. First earthquake reported in Canada.
1663	Earthquakes in New England
1689	August 5. Massacre of French settlers by the Iroquois at Lachine.
1757-58	Famine year in Quebec.
1788	"Scarce Year" in Upper Canada.
1816	"Year without a summer" in the Maritime provinces.
1832	Cholera epidemics.
1834	Cholera epidemics.
1849	Cholera epidemics.
1851	Cholera epidemics.
1854	Cholera epidemics.
1837	August 7. Fall of suspension bridge at St. John, N.B., kills seven.
1841	May 17. Fall of rock from Cape Diamond, Que., kills 25.
1847	Ship fever.
1854	October 27. Two trains collided at Baptiste Creek, Ont., killing 52 and injuring 48.
1856	April 30. Fall of the Montmorency suspension bridge in Que.
1857	March 12. A train broke through a bridge over the Desjardin Canal in Que., killing 70 people.
1861	August 14. Great Flood of Montreal. One quarter of the city inundated.
1864	June 29. Rail cars run through an open drawbridge in St. Hilaire, Que., killing 90.
1873	February 3. Mass of snow falls from Cape Diamond on to Champlain street in Quebec City.
1884	January 2. Humber Railway collision near Toronto kills 31.
1884	November 5. Tidal flood, Quebec and lower St. Lawrence river.
1885	A smallpox epidemic kills 5,864 in Montreal.
1887	May 3. Explosion in coal mine at Nanaimo kills 150.
1889	September 19. Landslide from Citadel Rock, Quebec kills 45.
1893	November 27. Earthquake creates heavy shocks at Montreal.
1894	April 27. Landslide at St. Alban, on River St. Anne. Four killed and immense loss of property.
1896	May 26. A span fell out of a bridge in Victoria, B.C., taking a streetcar with it and killing 55 people.
1899	June 16. Explosion of fire damp at Caledonia Mines kills 30.

Shipwrecks

1711 September 1. Part of Sir Hovenden Walker's fleet sinks off the coast of Labrador. Over 1,000 lives lost.
1725 August 27. *Le Chameau* near Louisbourg.
1759 September 25. *Tilbury* off St. Esprit, Cape Breton; 200 dead.
1761 November 15. *L'Auguste* off coast of Cape Breton; 114 dead.
1775 A great storm in Newfoundland destroys hundreds of fishing boats and over 300 lives are lost.
1797 November 16. *La Tribune* off Halifax.
1831 August 19. *Lady Sherbrooke* near Cape Ray; 273 dead.
1847 September 11. A great Hurricane off Newfoundland sinks many ships and hundreds of lives are lost.
1854 *Arctic* sinks off Cape Breton; 562 dead.
1857 May 31. *Canadian* disappears near Quebec.
1857 June 26. A 715-ton paddle steamer *The Montreal* burned near Quebec City killing 253.
1859 November 21. *Indian*; 27 dead.
1861 June 4. *Hungarian* sinks off Cape Sable; 205 dead.
1861 June 4. *Canadian* sinks in Strait of Belle Isle; 35 dead.
1861 November 5. *North Briton* sinks off Perroquet Island.
1863 April 27. *Anglo-Saxon* sinks off Cape Race; 237 dead.
1870 January 28. *City of Boston* sailed out of Halifax and was never heard of again; 191 aboard.
1873 April 1. *Atlantic* sinks 22 miles west of Halifax; 546 dead.
1873 August 24. Lord's Day Gale, Gulf of St Lawrence.
1881 April 15. The paddle steamer*Victoria* capsizes and sinks near London, Ont., killing 181.

Fires

1640 June 15. Chapel of Notre Dame de la Recouvrance.
1713 January 5. Intendant's Palace, Quebec destroyed.
1816 February 12. A fire in St. John's, Nfld., destroyed 120 homes, leaves 1,000 homeless and causes $500,000 in damages.
1817 November 7. A fire in St. John's, Nfld., destroyed 130 homes and causing $2.5 million in damages.
1817 November 21. A fire in St. John's, Nfld., destroyed 260 homes, left 2,000 homeless and caused $1.5 million in damages.
1825 October 6. The Great Miramichi fire destroyed 15,500 square km and the towns of Newcastle and Douglastown, killing 200-500. The timber trade in the area was crippled for many years.
1834 January 23. Chateau St. Louis, Quebec.

1838 Steamer *John Bull.*
1841 November 15. Public offices in St. John, N.B.
1845 May 28. St. Roch suburbs, Quebec City; 1630 houses.
1845 June 28. St. John suburbs, Quebec City; 1300 houses.
1846 June 9. A fire leveled what was left of St. John's.
1846 June 12. St. Louis Theatre, Quebec City; 70 dead.
1849 April 25. Houses of Parliament, Montreal.
1850 June 15. Griffintown, Montreal.
1850 August 23. St. Lawrence suburb, Montreal.
1852 July 8. East end of Montreal; 1100 houses
1854 February 1. Houses of Parliament, Quebec.
1857 June 26. Steamer *Montreal*, near Quebec City; 253 dead.
1866 October 14. St. Roch and St. Sauveur suburbs, Quebec City; five killed, 2,129 homes destroyed and 18-20,000 homeless.
1870 May. Huge fire in the Saguenay region of Quebec.
1870 May 24. St. Roch suburb, Quebec City; 422 houses.
1876 May 30. Montcalm suburb, Quebec City; 411 houses.
1876 July 18. St. Jean, Que.
1876 September 3. St. Hyacinthe, Que.; 500 houses
1877 June 20. St. John, N.B.; 1612 houses.
1880 February 25. Legislative building, Fredericton, N.B.
1880 April 21. Hull, Que.; 400 houses.
1881 June 8. St. John suburb, Quebec City; 642 houses.
1883 April 19. Parliament buildings in Quebec.
1886 June 13. Vancouver, B.C. Four houses left standing; 50 dead.
1890 May 6. St. Jean de Dieu Asylum for the Insane, Longue-Pointe.
1892 July 8, 9. A fire destroyed St. John's, Nfld.
1897 February 11. Part of Western Departmental Building in Ottawa.
1898 September 11. New Westminster, B.C.

SECTION II: NATURAL DISASTERS

Avalanches/Landslides/Rock Falls

Frank, Alberta
April 29, 1903

- 76 dead, 23 injured
- Seventy million tons of limestone came crashing down Turtle mountain on to the small town of Frank, covering roads, railways and homes.

Spence's Bridge, British Columbia
August 13, 1905

- 18 dead, 18 injured
- A large gravel bank broke away from a mountainside and came crashing down on to an Indian reserve destroying homes and the local church.

Notre Dame de la Salette, Quebec
April 26, 1908

- 33 dead, many injured
- A tract of land half a mile wide and extending five hundred yards back slid into the Lievre River, carrying with it two houses, and crashed into a row of buildings on the opposite side.

Roger's Pass, British Columbia
March 5, 1910

- 62 dead (CPR workmen), one survivor
- An avalanche struck workers as they cleared the tracks of snow dumped by a previous slide.

Coppermine, British Columbia
March 22, 1915

- 56 dead, 22 injured (approx.)
- An avalanche wiped out half the buildings at a mine campsite catching many miners in their bunkhouses.

Lake Louise, Alberta
July 11, 1955

- Seven dead, two injured
- A party of skiers was caught by an avalanche.

Nicolet, Quebec
November 12, 1955

- Three dead, six injured, 2,000 evacuated
- A landslide carries six buildings into a huge crater on the shore of the Nicolet river.

Hope, British Columbia
January 8, 1955

- Four dead
- Two vehicles and a large section of highway were destroyed when a large chunk of mountainside consisting of rock, snow and mud broke away and plunged into the valley below.

Granuc Mine, British Columbia
February 18, 1965

- 26 dead, 22 injured
- An avalanche destroys a miner's camp.

Saint-Jean-Vianney, Quebec
May 4, 1971

- 31 dead, 1,500 evacuated (entire town)
- During a lengthy rainstorm, a 213-metre hole appeared in the ground, swallowing 36 homes, several cars and a bus.

Terrace, British Columbia

- Seven dead, one survivor
- Eight people were waiting out a storm in a small cafe when an avalanche struck the building. One person survived.

Golden, B.C.
February 14, 1979

- Seven dead
- An avalanche took the lives of seven heli-skiers in the Purcell Range southwest of Golden, B.C.

Golden, B.C.
February 23, 1981

- Three dead
- An avalanche kills three heli-skiers near Conrad Icefield, west of Golden, B.C.

Squamish, British Columbia
October 28, 1981

- Nine dead
- A slide of mud, rock and trees washed out a bridge after heavy rainfall greatly increased water levels.

Blue River, British Columbia
March 23, 1987

- Seven dead
- An avalanche took the lives of six American heli-skiers and their Canadian guide.

Banff, Alberta
February 11, 1990

- Four dead
- Four people from Calgary were killed by an avalanche while cross-country skiing in Banff National Park.

Purcell Mountains, British Columbia
March 12, 1991

- Nine dead
- Nine heli-skiers were killed in a massive avalanche in Bugaboo Glacier Provincial Park.

Blizzards/Storms

Regina, Saskatchewan
January 30, 1947

- A blizzard raged for 10 days. The railway called it the worst storm in Canadian rail history. One train was buried in a snowdrift 1 km long and 8 m deep.

Newfoundland
February 16, 1959

- Described as the province's worst snowstorm, it claimed six lives, left 70,000 without electricity, and blocked roads with 5-m drifts.

Winnipeg, Manitoba
March 4, 1966

- A storm brought 36 cm of snow and 120 km/h winds, paralyzing the city for two days.

Montreal, Quebec
March 4, 1971

- The city's worst snowstorm dumped 47 cm of snow. Winds of 110 Km/h produced huge drifts. Electricity was cut for two to seven days.

Niagara Peninsula, Ontario
January 28, 1977

- This three-day storm was described as the worst winter storm in memory.

London, Ontario
December 9, 1977

- A fierce winter storm lasted for three days and left 100 cm of snow. Huge drifts blocked all roads. Emergency forces were brought into the city.

Iqualuit (formerly Frobisher Bay), Northwest Territories
February 8, 1979

- A temperature of -40 C and 100 Km/h winds with snow kept residents indoors for 10 days.

Prince Edward Island
February 22, 1982

- Islanders were marooned for five days in a crippling blizzard. Winds of 80 km whipped a 60-cm snowfall into 7-m drifts.

Southern Alberta
May 14, 1986

- A two-day storm, described as the worst spring storm in living memory in Alberta, bought knee-deep snow and 80 km/h winds. Dozens of communities were left without services.

Manitoba
November 7, 1986

- A major storm dumped 30 cm of snow on Winnipeg. Winds gusting to 90 km/h produced severe blowing snow and zero visibility. Clean-up costs approached $3 million.

Atlantic Provinces
February 1-2, 1992

- A 110-hour-long blizzard with gusts up to 140 km an hour brought a record snowfall of 163 cm to Moncton, N.B. Several other cities recorded more than 100 cm of snow. Traffic was brought to a standstill and many stranded motorists had to be rescued. Many schools and businesses throughout the Atlantic provinces were closed in the aftermath.

Avalon Peninsula, Newfoundland
October 6-8, 1992

- Insurance companies estimate about $9 million in damage was caused by a severe three-day storm with winds up to 120 km/hr dumping up to 50 mm of rain on some parts of the Avalon Peninsula. About 5,000 people filed insurance claims and about $2.5 million was inflicted on provincial and federal government buildings and facilities. About 2,000 trees in St. John's were destroyed and many boats and fishing vessels were destroyed or damaged.

Droughts

Western Canada (Prairie provinces)
1931 - 1940

- The Dirty Thirties. Dust storms, plant rust, heat waves, grasshopper plagues and water shortages plagued western Canada for almost a decade causing immense social and economic hardship. It is estimated 250,000 people left the area.

Western Canada
1961

Western Canada
1977

Western Canada
1980

Western Canada
1984

- Losses resulting from the drought were estimated at $1 billion. Over 10,000 farms were affected.

Western Canada
1985

- Losses resulting from the drought were estimated at $50 million.

Interior of British Columbia to Ontario
1988

- Net farm income fell by 16 per cent from the previous year (a drop from $5.24 billion to $4.43 billion).

Earthquakes

Vancouver Island, British Columbia
December 6, 1918
Magnitude: 7.0

- The earthquake was widely felt and caused some minor damage.

Charlevoix-Kamouraska region, Quebec
March 1, 1925
Magnitude: 7.0

- The earthquake was widely felt and caused damage along the St. Lawrence River near the epicentre and at Quebec City and Shawinigan.

South of Queen Charlotte Islands, British Columbia
May 6, 1929 --
Magnitude: 7.0

Atlantic Ocean, south of Newfoundland
November 18, 1929
Magnitude: 7.2

- This offshore earthquake generated a large ocean wave (tsunami) which drowned 27 people when it struck the Burin Peninsula.

Baffin Bay, Northwest Territories
November 20, 1933
Magnitude: 7.3

- The largest earthquake ever known inside the Arctic Circle.

Témiscaming region, Quebec-Ontario border
November 1, 1935
Magnitude: 6.2

- Widely felt. There was minor damage at Témiscaming, Que., and North Bay and Mattawa, Ont.

Cornwall region, Ontario-New York border
September 5, 1944
Magnitude: 5.6

- Widely felt. There was damage in Cornwall, Ont., Massena, N.Y., and several adjacent communities.

Vancouver Island, British Columbia
June 23, 1946
Magnitude: 7.3

- Widely felt. Damage in central Vancouver Island.

Offshore Queen Charlotte Islands, British Columbia
August 22, 1949
Magnitude: 8.1

- Widely felt. This was Canada's largest and one of the world's greatest earthquakes. There was some damage on the Queen Charlotte Islands and chandeliers in Jasper, Alta., were observed to sway.

Alaska-British Columbia border
July 10, 1958
Magnitude: 7.9

- Widespread damage in Alaska and widely felt in northern B.C. and the Yukon.

South of Queen Charlotte Islands, British Columbia
June 24, 1970
Magnitude: 7.4

- Widely felt.

West of Vancouver Island
December 20, 1976
Magnitude: 6.8

Southern Yukon-Alaska border
February 28, 1979
Magnitude: 7.2

- Felt strongly in Canada.

West of Vancouver Island
December 17, 1980
Magnitude: 6.8

Miramichi region, New Brunswick
1982
Magnitude 5.7 and 5.4

Nahanni region, Northwest Territories
December 23, 1985
Magnitude: 6.6 and 6.9

- Widely felt in the NWT, and northern Alberta and B.C.

Saguenay region, Quebec
November 25, 1988
Magnitude: 6.0

- Some minor damage was caused at Jonquière, Chicoutimi, La Baie and Quebec City.

Extreme Cold

Labrador City, Newfoundland
January 19, 1982

- 200 evacuated
- Temperatures of -30 F and colder caused power lines to snap from weight of ice. The city was left without power and homes were evacuated.

Floods

Winnipeg, Manitoba
May 5 - 25, 1950

- 1 dead, 107,000 evacuated (one-third of city), 5,000 buildings damaged, $100 million in damages

Manitoba
April-May, 1974

- $14.5 million in damages
- Severe flooding in Central and Southern Manitoba on practically all rivers and river systems. Many people had to be evacuated.

Quebec
January to June, 1974

- $75 million in damages
- Over 300 municipalities were affected by the province-wide flooding and many people had to be evacuated. The flooding was caused by an unusually wet spring combined with excessive run-off.

Quebec
Spring, 1976

- $20 million in damages
- Province-wide flooding caused by an unusually wet spring combined with heavy run-off affected several areas of the province; most notably the Montreal area, Trois Rivieres, Eastern Townships and the Outaouais.

Manitoba
April-May, 1979

- $18.6 million in damages

Gaspe and North Shore of St. Lawrence River, Quebec
December 7-8, 1983

- $58 million in damages
- High tides combined with a severe windstorm caused severe damage to roads and municipal and private property.

Central Alberta
July 15 - 19, 1986

- 1500 houses damaged and costs in excess of $30 million

Perth-Andover, New Brunswick
April 2, 1987

- $11 million in property damage

Lesser Slave Lake, Alberta
June, 1988

- Two dead, $15 million in damages

South-Western British Columbia (including Vancouver Island)
November 8 - 13, 1990

- 309 people evacuated and eight homes destroyed
- Heavy rains caused widespread flooding over a wide area of south-western B.C., and Vancouver Island. The B.C. interior was cut off from the coast for several days as highways were shut down by landslides and road washouts. Damage was estimated to be between $5 and $10 million.

Peace River, Alberta
February 28, 1992

- 4,000 evacuated, extensive damage to homes, businesses and infrastructure
- About 4,000 people, nearly two-thirds of the town's residents, were forced to evacuate their homes for at least three days when unseasonably warm weather broks up the frozen Peace River; water levels reached a peak of 15 metres, about 4 metres above normal.

Ste. Brigitte-de-Laval, Quebec
March 12, 1992

- 80 people airlifted to safety, 85 homes flooded
- A huge ice jam on the Montmorency River caused flooding that forced the airlift of 80 residents of Ile Enchanteresse, a mile-long island 40 km north of Quebec City.

Hay River, Northwest Territories
April 25, 1992

- 100 people evacuated from their homes, town flooded
- A 10-kilometre-deep ice jam at the mouth of the Hay River flooded the town of 3,100 on the sourthern shores of Great Slave Lake.

Forest Fires

Cochrane (and northern region), Ontario
July 11, 1911

- 73 dead (unofficially in the hundreds), hundreds made homeless, 500,000 square miles destroyed

Cochrane and Matheson
July 29, 1916

- 228 dead (unofficially as high as 400), 8,000 made homeless, more than $2.5 million in property damage
- The towns of Cochrane and Matheson were both destroyed. The fire resulted from a small blaze started by lightening and augmented by fires started by sparks from a passing locomotive

Haileybury (and northern region), Ontario
September 30 - October 5, 1922

- 43 dead (unofficially as high as 150), 11,000 homeless, 2,000 square miles burned, $8 million in property damage

Dance Township, Ontario
October, 1938

- 20 dead, hundreds homeless, 92,000 acres of forest destroyed

Gogama, Ontario
May 14 - June 15, 1941

- no dead, 330,700 acres destroyed

Mississagi/Chapleau
May - late October, 1948

- 645,000 acres destroyed

Red Lake, Ontario
Summer of 1980

- 107,900 acres destroyed, 5,000 people evacuated (3,600 airlifted to Winnipeg)

Grand Falls, Newfoundland
Upper George Town and Burton, New Brunswick
May 15 - 16, 1986

- 1,000 evacuated at Grand Falls, 1,000 evacuated between Upper George Town and Burton
- These were the worst of a series of more than 100 forest fires burning across eastern Canada as a result of unseasonably warm, dry weather.

Northern Manitoba
July - August, 1989

- 25,000 evacuated, many airlifted to Winnipeg
- The worst forest fires in Canadian history raged across northern Manitoba forcing the evacuation of 25 communities. Damage and fire-fighting costs were estimated at $72 million.

Hurricanes

Toronto, Ontario
October 15, 1954

- 83 dead, 10 cm of rain in 12 hours
- Hurricane Hazel hit Toronto causing extensive flooding and massive property damage.

Tornadoes

Regina, Saskatchewan
June 30, 1912

- 28 dead, hundreds injured, 2,500 homeless, damage in excess of $5 million
- More than 400 of the finest buildings in the city were destroyed.

Portage la Prairie, Manitoba
June 22, 1922

- five dead, scores injured, $2 million in damage

Windsor, Ontario
June 17, 1946

- 17 dead, damage to property estimated at $500,000

Saint Bonaventure, Quebec
July 25, 1975

- 40 injured, 300 homeless, $2.5 - 3 million in damage

Eastern region, Ontario
Western region, Quebec
July 15, 1984

- one dead, 38 injured

Barrie, Ontario
May 31, 1985

- 12 dead, hundreds injured, 800 homeless, $117 million in property damage

Edmonton, Alberta
July 31, 1987

- 26 dead, 250 injured, $330 million in property damage

Tsunamis

Burin Peninsula, Newfoundland
November 18, 1929

- An offshore earthquake (magnitude 7.2) in the Atlantic generated a large ocean wave (tsunami) which drowned 27 people when it struck the Burin Peninsula.

Port Alberni, British Columbia
March 28, 1964

- An earthquake in Alaska (magnitude 8.6) generated a 3.6 m tsunami which caused $4.7 million in damages and caused the death of one man.

SECTION III: TRANSPORTATION DISASTERS

Aviation

Victoria, British Columbia
August 6, 1913

- one dead
- First aeroplane-related death in Canada.

St-Donat, Quebec
October 19, 1943

- 24 killed
- A Liberator bomber crashed. Many of the passengers were going on leave. The wreckage was not located until June 1946.

Estevan, Saskatchewan
April 7, 1946

- 20 dead
- An RCAF transport plane crashed near Estevan.

Saint Joachim (near), Quebec
September 9, 1949

- 32 dead
- A Quebec Airways DC-3 was sabotaged with a bomb. The plane exploded and crashed. The saboteur, J.A. Guay and his two accomplices were later convicted and hanged.

Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan
April 7, 1954

- 37 dead
- A Trans-Canada Airlines airliner collided with an RCAF trainer.

Pacific coast, British Columbia
June 3, 1963

- 101 dead
- A chartered Northwest Airlines DC-7 went down off the coast of B.C. en route to Alaska.

Ste-Thérèse-de-Blainville, Quebec
November 19, 1963

- 118 dead (all aboard)
- A Trans Canada Airline flight crashed four minutes after take-off from Dorval Airport in Montreal. The crash has never been satisfactorily explained.

Tokyo, Japan
March 4, 1966

- 64 dead, 8 survivors
- A CP Air DC-8 caught its wheels in the approach lights while landing in dense fog at Tokyo International Airport and smashed into a retaining wall.

Toronto Airport, Ontario
July 5, 1970

- 109 dead (all aboard)
- An Air Canada DC-8 lost one starboard engine during a landing attempt. On the second attempt, the second starboard engine fell off and the plane crashed.

Rae Point, Northwest Territories
October 30, 1974

- 32 killed, two survivors
- A Pan-Arctic Oils Lockheed Electra crashed.

Cranbrook, British Columbia
February 11, 1978

- 43 dead, four seriously injured
- A Pacific Western Airlines Boeing 737 coming in to land was destroyed when it tried to avoid hitting a snow plow on the runway.

Quebec, Quebec City
March 29, 1979

- 17 dead, seven injured
- A Québecair F27 was destroyed.

Cincinnati, Ohio, U.S.A.
June 2, 1983

- 23 dead, 18 injured
- An Air Canada DC-9 was destroyed when it caught fire en route to Toronto from Texas and landed in flames at Cincinnati Airport.

Ireland (West coast)
June 25, 1985

- 329 dead (280 Canadians)
- Air India flight 182 en route from Toronto to India crashed in the North Atlantic. The crash was believed to have been caused by a terrorist bomb.

Gander, Newfoundland
December 12, 1985

- 256 dead (246 American soldiers and an aircrew of eight)
- A chartered Arrow Air DC-8 crashed seconds after take-off from a refueling stop; all aboard perished.

Dryden, Ontario
March 10, 1989

- 24 dead, 45 injured
- An Air Ontario F-28 passenger plane crashed shortly after take-off from a scheduled stop in Dryden.

Highway

Louiseville, Quebec
August 15, 1936

- 22 killed, 20 injured
- A 16-car freight train smashed into a farm truck carrying more than 40 people from a Friday night political rally.

Aldershot, Ontario
September 10, 1943

- 12 killed, two injured
- A Canada Coach Lines bus collided with a CPR passenger train at the Aldershot crossing near Hamilton, splitting the bus in two.

Coniston, Ontario
February 9, 1951

- nine dead, 31 injured
- A bus collided with a CPR passenger train at the Coniston railway crossing near Sudbury.

Morrisburg, Ontario
July 31, 1953

- 20 dead
- A speeding express train hit a stalled truck and plunged into a canal.

Eastman, Quebec
August 4, 1978

- 40 killed
- A chartered bus' brakes failed and plunged into Lac d'Argent. The bus was carrying physically and mentally handicapped people.

Webb, Saskatchewan
May 28, 1980

- 22 dead, 11 injured
- A bus and truck collided on the Trans-Canada highway near Webb. The bus was carrying CPR workers.

Marine

Lake Huron, Ontario
November 7 - 9, 1913

- 235 sailors drowned
- Thirty ships went down during a fierce weekend storm. Eight entire ship's crews were lost.

St. Lawrence river, Quebec
May 29, 1914

- 1,014 dead
- The CP liner *Empress of Ireland* collided with a Norwegian coal ship and sank in 14 minutes.

West coast, British Columbia
October 23, 1918

- 343 dead
- The CP steamship *Princess Sophia* ran into a reef while sailed from Alaska to Vancouver. Two days later on the 25, the ship sank.

Halifax, Nova Scotia
April 14, 1928

- 115 dead
- The 18-gun sloop *Acorn* sank near Halifax.

St. Lawrence, Newfoundland
February 18, 1942

- 203 dead
- One of the worst disasters in U.S. naval history. Three U.S. navy ships, the destroyers *Wilkes* and *Truxton* and the supply ship *Pollux*, went off course during a blizzard and crashed into the rocks near St. Lawrence at the entrance to Placentia Bay. The ships had been unable to check their position as they had been ordered to keep radio silence. The *Wilkes* floated off the rocks but the other two ships were pounded to pieces. The heroic rescue efforts of the villagers of St. Lawrence saved the lives of many sailors. As a gesture of gratitude, the U.S. government constructed a hospital in the town which was closed down by the Newfoundland government in 1989.

Escuminac, New Brunswick
June 20, 1959

- 35 killed
- Twenty-two boats were destroyed when a massive storm hit a fishing fleet off Escuminac.

Lake Superior, Ontario
November 10, 1975

- 29 dead (entire crew)
- The 218-metre ore carrier *Edmund Fitzgerald* sailing out of Sault Ste. Marie sank during a gale in 156 metres of water.

Newfoundland
July 3, 1981

- 13 dead, 19 survivors
- The ship *Arctic Explorer* apparently hit an iceberg and sank in icy waters off Newfoundland's northern coast.

Newfoundland
February 15, 1982

- 84 dead
- The ocean-drilling rig *Ocean Ranger* overturned and sank during a storm of the east coast of Newfoundland.

Madeleine Islands (off), Gulf of St. Lawrence, Québec
December 16-17, 1990

- 8 dead, 2 survivors
- The fishing trawler, *M.V. Nadine* sank in stormy seas after taking on water when pumps failed and navigation equipment malfunctioned. Human error and lack of emergency training and properly maintained equipment were blamed for the fatalities.

Cape Sable Island (off), Nova Scotia
January 30, 1993

- 5 dead, 11 survivors
- The 126-foot steel scallop dragger, Cape Aspey from Lunenburg, N.S., capsized during a storm, dumping all 16 fishermen overboard. Heavy ice on the deck was blamed. Survival suits helped save lives of ll rescued from icy seas.

Railways

Spanish River, Ontario
January 21, 1910

- 63 dead, 20 injured
- The back half of a CPR passenger train, en route to Minneapolis, left the track after it struck the end of a bridge.

Dugald, Manitoba
September 1, 1947

- 31 dead, many injured
- A CNR passenger train and a special CNR campers train, filled with people returning from vacation, collided head on at Dugald.

Canoe River, British Columbia
November 21, 1950

- 21 dead, 53 injured
- A special force troop train westbound and an eastbound train collided head on at Canoe River, 312 miles west of Edmonton.

Mississauga, Ontario
November 10, 1979

- 225,000 people evacuated
- A CPR train of 106 cars carrying many dangerous chemicals derailed near Morris Road in Mississauga and burst into flames, creating a spectacular explosion. The proximity of tank cars containing chlorine to propane tank cars that might have exploded and sent a toxic cloud of chlorine over the community was the reason behind the massive evacuation.

Orillia, Ontario
February 28, 1982

- 1,200 evacuated
- A CPR freight train hauling toxic chemicals and inflammable liquids was derailed near Orillia.

Carstairs, Alberta
March 23, 1983

- five dead, 10 injured
- A VIA Rail passenger train travelling from Edmonton to Calgary ran through an open switch and slammed into four empty cars on a siding near Carstairs.

Hinton, Alberta
February 8, 1986

- 23 killed, 71 injured, property damage estimated at $30 million
- A westbound CN freight train collided with an eastbound VIA Rail passenger train on the CN main line, 11 miles east of Hinton.

Quebec City, Quebec
February 15, 1986

- 42 injured
- A VIA Rail passenger train rammed a CNR freight train just outside Quebec City.

St. Lazare, Manitoba
July 9, 1991

- Twenty cars in an 80-car CN train jumped the tracks near the village of St. Lazare. Ten of the derailed cars contained chlorine (three cars), methanol (three cars), caustic soda (two cars) and acetic anhydride (two cars). Three types of chemicals, including the acetic anhydride, spilled causing the evacuation of the 400 residents of St. Lazare. One woman was treated briefly in hospital. The evacuation lasted for six days.

Coteau du Lac, Quebec
February 12, 1992

- 4 killed, 48 injured
- A Toronto-bound VIA Rail train hit a tractor-trailer at a level crossing on Highway 201 during a snowstorm in this town, 60 km west of Montreal.

Nakina, Ontario
July 17, 1992

- 2 killed, 1 injured
- A Winnipeg-bound CN 84-car freight train derailed on a washed-out section of track, causing the locomotive and four rail cars to plunge into a pond in a remote area inaccessable by road, about 240 km northeast of Thunder Bay. Two train engineers were killed and one other person was injured when thrown from the crash, but managed to swim to safety.

Oakville, Manitoba
December 18, 1992

- 400 evacuated (entire town)
- The 29-car derailment of a 41-car CN freight train and subsequent chemical spill necessitated the evacuation of the 400 residents of Oakville near Portage la Prairie during the Christmas-New Year period.

SECTION IV: INDUSTRIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL DISASTERS

Explosions and Fires

Ottawa, Ontario
February 3, 1916

- 7 killed
- A fire destroyed the Centre Block of the Parliament buildings. Only the library survived intact.

Halifax, Nova Scotia
December 6, 1917

- 1,600 dead, 9,000 injured, 6,000 homeless, property damage in excess of $35 million
- Two ships, one filled with explosives and munitions, collided in Halifax harbour. The munitions ship, the *Mont Blanc*, caught fire and later exploded. An idea of the force of the explosion can be gained from the fact that one ship was tossed 1,000 metres into the air.

Montreal, Quebec
January 9, 1927

- 76 dead
- A fire started in the Laurier Place Theatre but was quickly extinguished. However, in the ensuing panic 12 people were crushed to death and 64 died of asphyxiation. Many were children.

St. John's, Newfoundland
December 12, 1942

- 99 dead, 100 seriously injured
- An arsonist set fire to the packed Knights of Columbus Hostel. Exits were restricted, all doors opened inwards and there was no emergency lighting system.

Toronto, Ontario
September 17, 1949

- 118 dead
- A blaze broke out on the ship *Noronic*, apparently due to a spontaneous combustion in a closet. The ship was docked in Toronto harbour at the time of the fire.

Notre-Dame-du-Lac, Quebec
1969

- 38 dead

Montreal, Quebec
September 1, 1972

- 37 dead
- The fire was set in a nightclub by three patrons who were ejected from the establishment earlier in the evening.

Pincher Creek, Alberta
February, 1976

- A sour gas well blowout. The resulting fire and gas plume caused the evacuation of 400 square miles.

St. John's, Newfoundland
December 26, 1976

- 21 dead
- A fire broke out in a nursing home.

Chapais, Quebec
December 31, 1979

- 44 killed, 50 seriously injured
- The fire began during a New Year's Eve party at a social club when a man playing with a lighter set decorations on fire.

Mississauga, Ontario
July 14, 1980

- 21 dead, 35 injured
- A fire spread quickly through a nursing home.

Lodgepole, Alberta
February , 1982

- two dead
- A blowout at a sour gas well resulted in a fire. The subsequent gas plume extended for more than 400 km. As much as 115 million cu. ft. of natural gas leaked from the well per day for 67 days until it was capped.

St.-Basile-le-Grand, Quebec
August 23, 1988

- 3,800 people evacuated
- A fire broke out in a warehouse containing 3,800 barrels of PCBs. The potential health threat posed by the smoke from the fire caused the evacuation.

Hagersville, Ontario
February 12, 1990

- 4,000 residents advised to move, $1.5 million to put out the fire but millions more in indirect costs
- A fire was set by arsonists in a pile of 14 million used tires. The fire took 17 days to extinguish. The toxic run-off from the melting tires and the fear of toxins in the oily smoke became a prime focus for media attention.

Saint-Amable, Quebec
May 16, 1990

- A fire started accidentally in a pile of 3.5 million tires and took three days to extinguish. As with Hagersville, the environmental pollution aspects of the emergency dominated the media coverage of the fire.

Niverville, Manitoba
May 1, 1991

- A fire broke out in a warehouse containing thousands of litres of toxic farm chemicals. More than 1,000 people between Niverville and Steinbach were evacuated for about three hours.

Grand Coulee, Saskatchewan
November 20, 1991

- A fire in a storage depot containing 45 gallons of cyanide salts and 2,500 gallons of bulk farm pesticide, phosphorus and a sodium-based chemical forced the evacuation of the 200 residents of Grand Coulee. The evacuation lasted for about three hours.

Montreal, Quebec
February 16, 1992

- $3 million + damage
- Four large, commercial heritage buildings in Old Montreal near historic Notre Dame Basilica were totally destroyed in a 10-hour blaze fought by more than 100 firefighters. The Basilica, constructed between 1824 and 1829 sustained smoke damage and broken windows.

St. John's, Newfoundland
December 21, 1992

- 500 evacuated, $ millions damage
- The city's worst fire in 50 years touched off a series of propane tank explosions and forced the evacuation of approximately 500 people, destroyed 11 businesses and left approximately 100 people homeless. The fire started in the 82-year-old Church Lads Brigade armory. Arson is suspected.

Hazardous Chemicals

Timmins, Ontario
March 31, 1986

- 4,500 - 5,000 evacuated
- A railway tank car leaked thousands of gallons of gasoline into storm sewers prompting an evacuation.

Canning, Nova Scotia
May 30, 1986

- 500 evacuated
- Residents of the small farming community of Canning had to leave home after a chemical supplies warehouse caught fire and spewed hazardous fumes and smoke over the town.

Mining Accidents

Hillcrest, Alberta
June 19, 1914

- 189 dead, 48 survivors
- A dust explosion occurred in the mine.

New Waterford, Nova Scotia
July 25, 1917

- 65 dead
- An explosion took place in mine no. 1 of the Dominion Coal Company.

Pictou County, Nova Scotia
January 23, 1918

- 88 dead, 11 survivors
- An explosion at the Allen Shaft between Stellarton and New Glasgow.

Sydney Mines, Nova Scotia
December 6, 1938

- 20 dead
- A chain of small cars known as a "man rake" was being lowered into the shaft when a cable snapped sending the cars, laden with more than 200 men, crashing to the bottom.

Pictou County, Nova Scotia
January 14, 1952

- 19 killed
- There was a gas explosion in the McGregor Mine and 19 men who stayed behind to block off the dangerous area died.

Springhill, Nova Scotia
November 1, 1956

- 39 dead, 88 survivors
- A gas explosion blasted Cumberland's No. 4 colliery. The 88 survivors were trapped underground but later rescued.

Springhill, Nova Scotia
October 23, 1958

- 75 dead, 99 survivors
- A tunnel collapsed in the No. 2 colliery causing an explosion. The 99 survivors were trapped underground but later rescued.

Glace Bay, Nova Scotia
February 24, 1979

- 12 dead, four injured
- The deaths and injuries were the result of an explosion in the No. 26 mine.

Plymouth, Nova Scotia
May 9, 1992

- 26 dead, no survivors
- A coal-dust explosion detonated by burning methane gas at the Westray Mine (on the Foord Seam) caused the death of 26 miners -- 11 bodies were recovered but the other 15 bodies were never recovered because rescue attempts were abandoned due to dangerous conditions and fear of another explosion.

Yellowknife, Northwest Territories
September 18, 1992

- 9 killed, no survivors
- An explosion in a 230-metre-deep tunnel at the strike-bound Giant Yellowknife gold mine killed nine miners who had crossed the picket line. RCMP investigators blamed the blast on a home-made bomb deliberately set to go off when the miners' undground rail car hit a detonator. The four-month strike had previously been marred by picket-line violence, arson and at least two previous explosions.

Satellites

Northwest Territories
January 24, 1978

- A Soviet satellite, COSMOS 954, came down in the Northwest Territories scattering 65 kg of radioactive material over a wide area. The search for radioactive material covered 124,000 km and cost $10 million.

Structural Collapse

Quebec City, Quebec
August 29, 1907

- 75 dead
- The southern span of the Quebec bridge over the St. Lawrence River collapsed during construction killing 75 workmen.

Quebec City, Quebec
September 11, 1916

- 13 dead
- A new centre span being hoisted into position fell into the St. Lawrence killing 13 workmen.

Vancouver, British Columbia
July 17, 1958

- 18 dead
- A section of the Second Narrows bridge over Burrard Inlet collapsed during construction. Design error was later determined to be the cause.

SECTION V: EPIDEMICS

Human Diseases

Canada, nation-wide
1918-25

- more than 50,000 dead, two million affected
- As part of a world-wide outbreak, Spanish Influenza hits Canadians hard, affecting more than one quarter of the population.

Canada, nation-wide
1953

- 481 dead
- Polio affected more than 8,000 Canadians.

Canada, nation-wide
December/January 1991-1992

- 7 dead
- A rash of meningitis deaths in Ontario, Quebec and P.E.I. sparked widespread public fears of a meningitis epidemic. However, statistics revealed that the number of cases were in keeping with those experienced in previous years. Between 300 and 400 cases of meningitis are reported in Canada each year. Public fear was so great however, that it sparked mass immunization programs in most provinces, particularily among teenagers who were identified by medical authorities as being a high-risk group.

SECTION VI: TERRORISM AND CIVIL UNREST

Vancouver, British Columbia
1903

- A union organizer was attacked and killed.

Buckingham, Quebec
1906

- Three people were killed during a strike clash.

Quebec City, Quebec
1918

- Four people were killed during riots over conscription.

Winnipeg, Manitoba
1919

- Two people were killed during a clash in the midst of a general strike.

British Columbia
1924

- Nine people were killed when a bomb went off in a railway car carrying a Doukhobor leader.

Nova Scotia
1925

- One death resulted from a strike clash.

Estevan, Saskatchewan
1931

- Three people were killed during a strike clash.

Regina, Saskatchewan
1935

- One person was killed during a clash between police and workers taking part in the On to Ottawa trek.

Sorel, Quebec
1938

- One person was killed during a municipal election "battle".

British Columbia
1944

- One person was killed during an arson attack carried out by the radical Doukhobor sect, the Sons of Freedom.

Murdochville, Quebec
1958

- A striker was killed by his own bomb.

British Columbia
1958

- A member of the Sons of Freedom was killed by his own bomb.

Badger, Newfoundland
1959

- One person was killed during a strike clash.

Kootenay region, British Columbia
July 2, 1960 - March 7, 1963

- Dozens of arson and bomb attacks were carried out by the radical Doukhobor sect, the Sons of Freedom, during this period. Favourite targets were railways, utility poles and lines belonging to the West Kootenay Power and Light Company and the homes and buildings of Orthodox Doukhobors. The only fatality was a Sons of Freedom follower who was killed by his own bomb.

Quebec/Ontario
March 7, 1963 - September 13, 1980

- Dozens of bomb and arson attacks were carried out by the Front de libération du Quebec (FLQ) during this period, resulting in several fatalities and injuries, and damage to public and private buildings. The most notorious single event during this period was the October Crisis of 1970 (see entry below).

Edmonton, Alberta
January 2, 1965

- Two U.S. jets (F-84s) being overhauled by Northwest Industries in Edmonton were destroyed and a third damaged when a left-wing group protesting the Vietnam War dynamited the planes. A security guard was killed during the incident. The value of the planes was put at $750,000 each.

Toronto, Ontario
September 24, 1968

- Bombs were placed at the homes of 12 senior executives of the de Havilland company in Toronto. Seven exploded but there were no deaths or injuries. A left-wing group protesting the Vietnam War claimed responsibility for the attack.

Montreal, Quebec
November 3, 1968

- Bombs were placed at the homes of four senior executives of the United Aircraft of Canada Ltd. One bomb exploded but there were no deaths or injuries. A left-wing group protesting the Vietnam War claimed responsibility for the attack.

Montreal, Quebec
October Crisis
October 5, 1970

- British commercial attaché James Cross was kidnapped by the FLQ on October 5. Encouraged by their success the FLQ then kidnapped Quebec Minister of Labour and Acting Premier Pierre Laporte on October 10. He was murdered on October 17. In response, the federal government implemented the War Measures Act. Cross was held for 59 days and then released after negotiations which resulted in his kidnappers being allowed to leave the country.

Kootenay region (and Vancouver area), British Columbia
January 1, 1972 - September 24, 1986

- Dozens of arson and bomb attacks were carried out in a resurgence of activity by the radical Doukhobor sect, the Sons of Freedom. Favourite targets were railways, utility poles and lines belonging to the West Kootenay Power and Light Company and the homes and buildings of Orthodox Doukhobors.

Ottawa, Ontario
April 8, 1982

- An Armenian nationalist group (ASALA) tried to assassinate the Turkish commercial attaché. The attaché was paralyzed for life. Three Armenians were later sentenced for conspiracy to commit murder.

Dunsmuir, British Columbia
May 31, 1982

- A B.C. Hydro substation on Vancouver Island was dynamited by a left-wing group called Direct Action. The explosion caused $5 million in damage. The group said they were protesting against industrial expansion which has "raped and mutilated the earth for 200 years".

Ottawa, Ontario
August 27, 1982

- The Turkish military attaché was murdered on his way to work by Armenian terrorists.

Toronto, Ontario
October 14, 1982

- Litton Industries' Toronto plant was bombed. The Direct Action group claimed responsibility for the attack which injured 10 and caused $3.87 million in damage. The plant was manufacturing components for Cruise missiles.

Montreal, Quebec
September 3, 1984

- A retired U.S. military officer planted a bomb in Montreal's Central Station to protest a papal visit to Canada scheduled to take place the following week. The bomb killed three and wounded 30.

Ireland (off the west coast)
June 23, 1985

- Air India flight 182 en route to India from Toronto went down in the Atlantic off the Irish west coast killing all 329 on board (279 Canadians). A bomb was suspected to be the cause of the crash but the matter is still under investigation.

Tokyo (Narita Airport), Japan
June 23, 1985

- A bomb went off at Narita Airport killing two baggage handlers and injuring four. The bomb was in a bag taken off a CP Air flight from Vancouver.

Ottawa, Ontario
March 12, 1986

- Three Armenian terrorists stormed the Turkish embassy in Ottawa using a rented truck and automatic rifles. A security guard was killed and 11 hostages held for four hours. The terrorists eventually surrendered.

Gold River, British Columbia
May 25, 1986

- A car carrying four passengers including a visiting Punjabi cabinet minister was ambushed near Gold River on Vancouver Island. Four men attacked the car and fired five shots, two of which hit the minister. He feigned death and the attackers fled. Four Canadian Sikhs were later convicted for the attack.

Montreal/Ottawa
April 7, 1989

- A Montreal resident claiming to represent the Liberation Front for Christian Lebanon hijacked a Montreal-New York Greyhound bus and diverted it to Parliament Hill. Several shots were fired but no one was injured. Nine passengers were held hostage during the eight-hour incident, although four were released part way through the hijacking. The gunman eventually surrendered.

Oka, Quebec
March 11 - September 26, 1990

- Members of the militant Mohawk Warrior's Society set up roadblocks over a dispute involving Mohawk claims to land being used for expansion of the Oka golf club. This set in motion a chain of events that led, on July 11, to the death of a Quebec provincial policeman during a failed assault on the barricades and the blocking of the Mercier bridge near Chateauguay, southwest of Montreal. The army was eventually called in to handle the situation. The standoff continued all summer with attention focused on the Kahnesatake reserve at Oka and the Kahnawake reserve near Chateauguay. The crisis also gave rise to native protests and sympathy blockades across Canada. The crisis came to an end when a hard core of Mohawk warriors holed up in a treatment centre in Kahnesatake surrendered to the army on September 26, thus ending the 78-day standoff.

Description	Federal JEPP commitment*	Community commitment
Village of Lytton update emergency plan/ emergency ops centre vehicle	$2,750	$ 2,750
Village of New Denver communications system	$ 2,697	$ 2,697
Village of Burns Lake emergency plan	$ 2,664	$ 2,664
Village of Belcarra emergency operations centre generator	$ 2,657	$ 2,657
City of Terrace exercise emergency plan	$ 2,349	$ 2,349
City of Quesnel emergency plan	$ 2,000	$ 2,000
Township of Esquimalt mobile emergency operations centre computer	$ 1,785	$ 1,785
City of Port Coquitlam communications system	$ 1,375	$ 1,375
District of Pitt Meadows emergency program exercise	$ 1,028	$ 1,028

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