States of Emergency Q&A

The Emergency Management Act allows for two separate types of states of emergencies. The first is known as a “local state of emergency” and is enacted by a municipal government either through a resolution of council, or by the direct request of the municipal mayor or warden.

The second type is a “state of emergency” which is declared by the Minister responsible for Emergency Management.

States of emergencies can be declared for a specific portion or for an entire jurisdiction (i.e. a specific geographical portion of the province or provincewide).

Why is a state of emergency called?
A state of emergency provides the authority to do whatever is necessary to ensure the safety of people and the protection of property and the environment. More specifically, a state of emergency permits:
- Control or prohibit of travel
- Entry without warrant
- Ordered evacuation
- Confiscation of property
- Order of assistance

How are citizens affected by a state of emergency?
During states of emergencies the public is expected to listen to and follow the instruction given by authorities, and to comply with any orders given by the province or municipality. These may include such things as restricted travel and evacuations. Certain circumstances may require citizens to stay in their homes (shelter in place) or to evacuate to a reception centre/shelter.

How long does a state of emergency last?
Local states of emergencies, those declared by a municipal council, mayor or warden, are valid for seven days after which time they can be renewed. A provincewide state of emergency is valid for 14 days and can also be renewed should the special powers still be required to manage the event.

Can individuals be charged more for essential items or services during an emergency?
The Emergency Management Act makes it an offence to inflate (gouge) the price of essential items and services in times of emergencies. These can include such things as food, water, clothing, essential equipment, medical supplies or otherwise deemed essential goods and services. Citizens are encouraged to
contact their local police of jurisdiction to report any suspected cases of price inflation during times of emergencies. Anyone who suspects they have been the victim of price gouging should retain all relevant receipts.