



Chief Joseph Custer I.R. #201  
Main Floor, 2300 10th Avenue West  
Prince Albert, SK. S6V 6Z1



*"Reflect, Respond, Improve"*

*What We Have Learned and How We Are  
Moving Forward*

# NITHA Emergency Management and Response Forum 2026

March 24-26, 2026



Kings Court at Plaza 88 - 888 Central Ave, Prince Albert, SK



## WELCOME

The **NITHA Emergency Management and Response Forum** will provide a coordinated space for reflection, learning, and forward-looking planning following the recent fire and smoke seasons that have significantly affected Northern Saskatchewan. Guided by the themes *“Reflect, Respond, Improve”* and *“What We Have Learned and How We Are Moving Forward,”* the event focuses on strengthening emergency response systems, enhancing community preparedness, and improving collaborative approaches to evacuations, EOC operations, and smoke and fire mitigation. Through shared experiences, collective knowledge, and strategic dialogue, the Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority aims to advance a unified and resilient path forward for the NITHA Partnership communities.



## Conferenced Co-Chairs



Devin Bernatchez  
**Constituency Assistant**  
Office of MP Buckley Belanger



Patrick Hassler  
**Emergency Response Coordinator**  
Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority

## Speakers



Shaylene Kenaschuk  
**MOH Emergency Management Unit**  
Ministry of Health



Katelyn Gateman  
**Health Emergency Management Unit**  
Saskatchewan Health Authority



Yolanda Ducharme  
**Senior Environmental Health Officer**  
Meadow Lake Tribal Council



Joan Hrycyk  
**Director of Emergency and Community Support**  
Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency



Tyler Harrison  
**Manager, Emergency Services**  
Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency



Teresa Miller  
**Emergency Crisis Support Coordinator**  
Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency



Duane Hiebert  
**Emergency Response Coordinator**  
Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation



Rob Ferland  
**Emergency Response Coordinator**  
Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation, Health Services



Dr. Veronica McKinney  
**Director**  
Northern Medical Services



Pamela Goulden-McLeod  
**Director**  
Saskatoon Fire Department



Matt Walz  
**Staff Sergeant**  
Saskatoon Police Service



Luc Mullinder  
**Vice President**  
Canadian Red Cross



Jacqueline Hall  
**Director, Granting - Recovery Services**  
Canadian Red Cross



Melanie Horton  
**Senior Manager, Relief Operations**  
Canadian Red Cross



Jack Lee  
**Engineer-in-Training**  
**Flow Forecasting & Operational Planning**  
Saskatchewan Water Security



Candyce Paul  
**Emergency Management Coordinator**  
English River First Nation



Cindy Roache  
**Regional Director, Primary Health Care and Population Health**  
Indigenous Services Canada / FNIHB



Pauline Busch  
**Regional Director, Health Promotion and Disease Prevention**  
Indigenous Services Canada



Michelle Ring  
**Regional Emergency Management Coordinator**  
Indigenous Services Canada - Saskatchewan Region



Donald Halkett  
**Emergency Protective Service Officer**  
Saskatchewan First Nations Emergency Management



# Day 1

Tuesday, March 24, 2026

<b>12:30 PM</b>	<b>Registration</b>
<b>1:00 PM – 1:30 PM</b>	<b>Opening Prayer – Elder Emile Highway</b> <b>Welcome, Land Acknowledgement and Opening Remarks</b> – Patrick Hassler, Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority Devin Bernatchez – Forum Chair
<b>1:30 PM – 2:15 PM</b>	<b>Shaylene Kenaschuk</b> , MOH Emergency Management Unit, Ministry of Health <b>Katelyn Gateman</b> , Health Emergency Management Unit, Saskatchewan Health Authority <b>Topic:</b> <i>SHA and MOH Roles and Responsibilities</i>
<b>2:15 PM – 3:00 PM</b>	<b>Yolanda Ducharme</b> , Meadow Lake Tribal Council <b>Topic:</b> <i>MLTC Emergency Response Program: Building Capacity to Enhance and Improve Emergency Preparedness</i>
<b>3:00 PM – 3:15 PM</b>	Networking Break and Refreshments
<b>3:15 PM – 4:15 PM</b>	<b>Joan Hrycyk</b> , Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency <b>Tyler Harrison</b> , Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency <b>Teresa Miller</b> , Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency <b>Topic:</b> <i>Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency 2026 Outlook and Community Evacuation Information</i>
<b>4:15 PM – 4:30 PM</b>	<i>Day 1 Closing Remarks from Forum Chairs and adjourns until Day 2</i>



## Day 2

Wednesday, March 25, 2026

<b>08:25 AM</b>	Opening Remarks from NITHA
<b>08:30 AM – 09:30 AM</b>	<b>Duane Hiebert</b> , Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation <i>Topic: PBCN Response</i>
<b>09:30 AM – 10:30 AM</b>	<b>Rob Ferland</b> , Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation, <i>Health Services</i> <i>Topic: PBCN Health Response</i>
<b>10:30 AM – 10:45 AM</b>	Networking Break and Refreshments
<b>10:45 AM – 11:45 AM</b>	<b>Dr. Veronica McKinney</b> – Director, Northern Medical Services <i>Topic: Wītatōskēmitōwin – Working Together</i>
<b>12:00 PM – 1:00 PM</b>	Networking Lunch
<b>1:00 PM – 1:45 PM</b>	<b>Pamela Goulden-McLeod</b> , Director, Saskatoon Fire Department/City of Saskatoon <b>Matt Walz</b> S/Sgt, Saskatoon Police Service <i>Topic: Saskatoon Host Response</i>
<b>1:45 PM – 2:45 PM</b>	<b>Luc Mullinder</b> – Vice President, Canadian Red Cross <b>Jacqueline Hall</b> – Director of Granting, Canadian Red Cross <b>Melanie Horton</b> – Senior Manager, Relief Operations, Canadian Red Cross <i>Topic: How the Canadian Red Cross supports First Nation Lead Responses</i>
<b>2:45 PM – 3:00 PM</b>	<b>Jack Lee</b> – Zoom/Virtual meeting – Engineer-in-Training, Saskatchewan Water Security <i>Topic: North Saskatchewan Spring Runoff Outlook</i>
<b>3:00 PM – 3:15 PM</b>	Networking Break and Refreshments
<b>3:15 PM – 4:15 PM</b>	<b>Candyce Paul</b> – Emergency Management Coordinator, English River First Nation <i>Topic: MLTC Emergency Response</i>
<b>4:15 PM – 4:30 PM</b>	Day 2 Closing Remarks from Forum Chairs and adjourns until Day 3

# Day 3

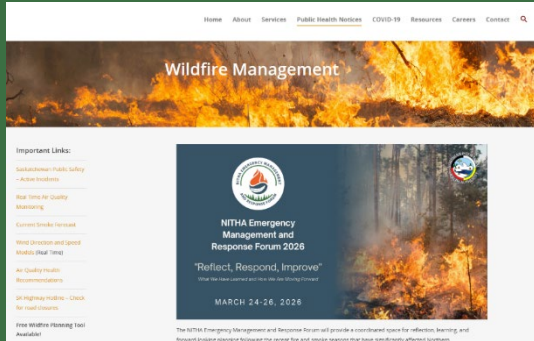
Thursday, March 26, 2026

<b>08:25 AM</b>	Opening Remarks from NITHA
<b>08:30 AM – 09:00 AM</b>	<b>Cindy Roache</b> , Regional Director, Primary Health Care and Population Health, Indigenous Services Canada <b>Pauline Busch</b> , Director, Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Indigenous Services Canada <b>Topic:</b> <i>Health Emergencies and Mental Wellness</i>
<b>09:30 AM – 10:00 AM</b>	<b>Michelle Ring</b> , Indigenous Services Canada <b>Topic:</b> <i>Emergency Management Assistance Program</i>
<b>10:00 AM – 10:15 AM</b>	Networking Break and Refreshments
<b>10:15 AM – 11:00 AM</b>	<b>Patrick Hassler</b> , Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority <b>Topic:</b> <i>Assessing Smoke Risk</i>
<b>11:00 AM – 12:00 PM</b>	<b>Donald Halkett</b> , Saskatchewan First Nations Emergency Management <b>Topic:</b> <i>Saskatchewan First Nations Emergency Management</i>
<b>12:00 PM</b>	<i>Day 3 Closing Remarks from Forum Chairs and Forum Concludes</i>
<b>12:00 PM – 1:00 PM</b>	Networking Lunch



# Wildfire Season: Maps, Updates & Key Resources

NITHA offers a dedicated Wildfire Resources page that provides up-to-date information on wildfire activity throughout the summer months. This page features a map, current Public Health Advisories, and a collection of important links and resources to help community members stay informed and prepared during wildfire season.



## Access Your Forum Materials:

You can access all Emergency Response Forum materials through the "Materials" link on the NITHA Wildfire Management page website.

Please note that presentations submitted during the forum may take a few days to be posted.

## Emergency Preparedness Guide for Community Members

Our Emergency Preparedness Guide for Community Members is available on our website. Scan the QR code to download your copy.



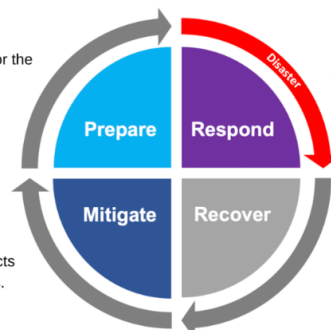
### 4 Phases of Emergency Management

**Prepare**  
Getting ready for the next disaster.

**Respond**  
Addressing immediate threats.

**Mitigate**  
Reducing impacts of future threats.

**Recover**  
Rebuilding to be more resilient.





# Thank you. Tiniki, Merci cho'

Thank you to all participants, presenters, Elders, and community representatives for your meaningful contributions to the NITHA Emergency Management and Response Forum. Guided by “**Reflect, Respond, Improve,**” your shared experiences and insights help strengthen emergency response systems, enhance community preparedness, and support a more unified approach across NITHA Partnership communities.

As we move forward together, may the knowledge shared here continue to support a unified, resilient path for all NITHA Partnership communities. Thank you for your time, your commitment, and your ongoing work to protect and strengthen our northern communities.

---

## CONTACT PERSON

Patrick Hassler  
Phone: 306-953-5000

## CONNECT

phassler@nitha.com  
www.nitha.com

## OUR LOCATION

Chief Joseph Custer I.R. #201  
Main Floor, 2300 10th Avenue West  
Prince Albert, SK. S6V 6Z1