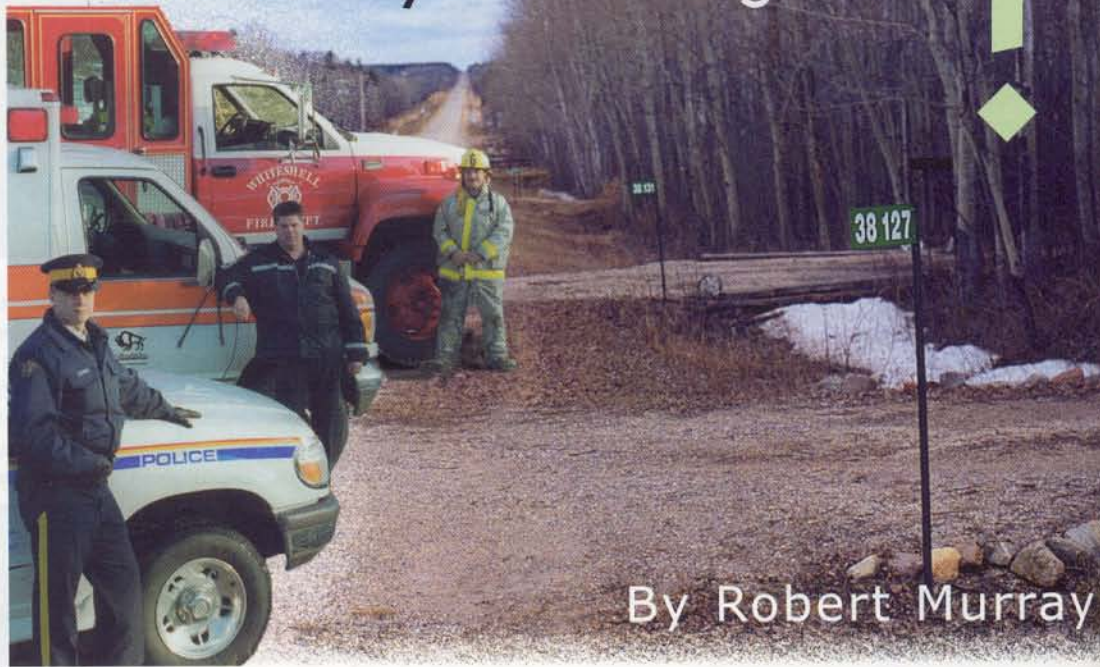


Do you know **HOW TO ACCESS** emergency services in your cottage area?

It all looks so easy on television.

An accident happens, someone's medical condition takes a turn for the worse, what do you do?

Dial **911** of course. In minutes the emergency services are at the door and you are receiving professional care.



By Robert Murray

This composite photo features representatives of emergency service providers in the southeast Whiteshell along with new civic address signs being introduced by RM's in cottage country. Park cottagers will be familiar with fireroad signage.

service, likely the nurse's desk at the local hospital or other health care facility, they will activate the Emergency Medical Services (EMS). The dispatcher will page the people who are on-call. A trained Ambulance Attendant will leave his/her bed, or job, go to the ambulance garage, and head out to help you. It pays to know where those services are.

In the Whiteshell area there are ambu-

ulance services in Pine Falls, Lac Du Bonnet, Pinawa, Whitemouth, Reynolds, and Falcon Lake. Take a look on the map and remember that in the busier summer season the closest ambulance service may already be out and the next

We know it isn't always that easy, but in most major centres you can phone 911 and have emergency care within 15 or 20 minutes, even less. So what happens when city folks are out at the cottage? Think about it. It's been a long winter and you haven't done a bit of physical labour since you closed the place up last fall. When the tightness in your chest that seemed uncomfortable at 10 p.m. becomes unbearable at 2 a.m.— what do you do?

It isn't as easy as television, and it isn't the same as the city. First, don't call 911 unless you are sure it is activated in your area! Although the service is spreading quickly, most of cottage country is not served by 911 and you will waste valuable time as the operator tries to connect you with a local emergency service. Call your local emergency services number. When you reach the local emergency

The following areas are serviced by the Manitoba Provincial Public Safety Answering Point or 911 service:

- Assissippi Provincial Park
- Dauphin Beach and Ochre Beach
- Duck Mountain Provincial Park (Manitoba side)
- Oak Lake
- Pelican Lake
- Riding Mountain National Park and surrounding area and lakes except for the Rural Municipality of McCreary Rivers
- Rural Municipalities of Bifrost, Gimli and St. Andrews along the southwest edge of Lake Winnipeg
- Shoal Lake (Manitoba)
- Spruce Woods Provincial Park
- Turtle Mountain Provincial Park and surrounding area/lakes
- Victoria Beach (the only area on the east or south border of Lake Winnipeg)



closest will be called, How far are you from ambulance care? How far are you in bad weather? It is only prudent to consider that the quickest possible response might still take an hour or more to reach you, and that the journey out to receive hospital care may take even longer. This isn't meant to scare you but to encourage you to plan ahead.

The best thing, of course, is not to need EMS in the first place. Be extra careful in cottage country. If your chain saw experience is strictly seasonal, consider hiring a professional. Take that extra five minutes to tie off the ladder and secure it before you climb up to clean the gutters. Don't mix alcohol consumption with any task more complicated than swinging in a hammock. Before you leave for the cottage, check that any regular medications are up-to-date and that you have enough to last the trip. If, however, all your planning fails and you need emergency medical care at the cottage, what should you do?

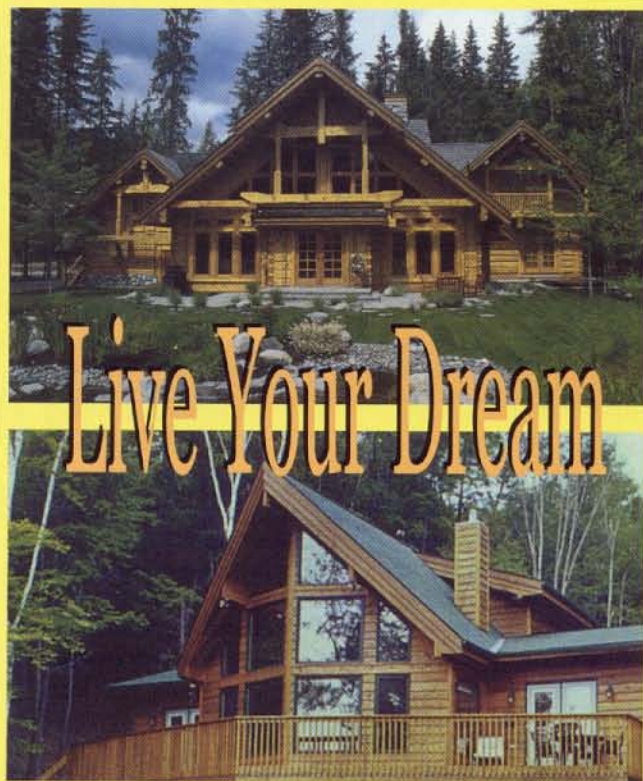
1. Decide to call sooner rather than later. No one likes to make a fuss but remember how far away help can be. Some situations are obvious emergencies. Many are not. Learn the signs and symptoms of heart attack and stroke. Any time someone falls more than a few metres, loses consciousness or becomes disoriented, has pain or discomfort they can't control, or has bleeding that won't stop with simple direct pressure, you should be concerned and call EMS. Call as soon as there is a situation that you feel is beyond your experience or ability to handle.

2. Know where to call. As soon as you finish this article look up the local numbers for police, fire and ambulance and post them by all your phones. It will be very difficult to get that information quickly when you are anxious.

3. Know where you are. This may sound silly, but can you describe how to get to your cottage or country home in a way that someone who has never been there can easily understand and follow at three o'clock in the morning? How would you do if you were sick or frightened? What if you weren't able to speak and a friend or visitor had to describe the way there? There is nothing more frustrating for EMS personnel than driving through back roads and cottage bays when they know someone is waiting for help. Write out a simple description of how to get to where you are from some major highway.

4. If you have a chronic medical condition write a few notes and stick them on the fridge or by the phone. A simple list with your name, health number, regular medications, known allergies, and a brief description of your condition can be critical information in an emergency. Consider wearing a medic-alert bracelet or necklace to identify life threatening conditions or allergies.

5. When you call, identify yourself and describe the situation simply and completely. Who are you, what happened, when did it happen, where are you?



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"My name is John Doe, My wife was stung by a bee about fifteen minutes ago. She's having trouble breathing and her face is swollen. We're at lot #1, Bay 12, happy acres. That's the first turn on the left 2 kilometres west of the junction of highways 2 and 3. Look for a big green camper out front. My number is 204-123-4567." Make sure they have your phone number so EMS can call if they have trouble finding you or to check on the status of the patient.

The country isn't just the city with more trees and less stress. Your rural EMS train to the same standards as city EMS. Just remember, there are fewer personnel, spread over a greater distance. When you need help, call. A dedicated team of health care professionals are there to help. ☀

If your cottage is not located in one of the 911 areas it is important to know the emergency numbers for your area:

Ashern

Ambulance/fire.....768-2345
RCMPolice.....768-2324

Falcon Lake

Ambulance/fire.....349-2323
RCMPolice.....349-2588

Flin Flon

Ambulance.....687-7171
Fire.....687-3491
Police.....687-3491

RM of Armstrong

Ambulance...Gimli 642-5116
Fire...Selkirk 482-3551
RCMPolice...Gimli 642-5104

Grand Beach

Ambulance...
Pine Falls 367-2333
Fire...Selkirk 785-2400
Police...St. Clements cellular
Mobile..Selkirk 482-0911
RCMPolice...754-2300

Gull Lake

Ambulance...
Pine Falls subscribers...367441
Beausejour subscribers...
268-2100
Fire...Selkirk 785-2400
RCMPolice...
Beausejour 268-1234
St. Clements Police cellular
mobile...Selkirk 482-0911

Lac Du Bonnet

Ambulance.....345-2997
Fire.....345-2997
RCMPolice..345-86853

Pinawa

Ambulance...753-8888
Fire.....753-2585
RCMPolice...753-2919

Pine Falls

Ambulance
Pine Falls subscribers..
367-2333

Lac Du Bonnet
subscribers...345-2997
Fire

Pine Falls subscribers...
367-8888

Lac Du Bonnet
subscribers...345-2997
Little Black River
subscribers...367-4085
RCMPolice

Pine Falls...367-2222
Lac Du Bonnet..345-8685

Rennie

RCMPolice Whitemouth...
348-7177

Riverton(Hecla Island)

Ambulance..Gimli 642-5116
Fire... Gimli..642-5116
RCMPolice..Arborg..376-5251

St. Laurent

Ambulance...
Lundar...762-5550
Fire.....646-2455
RCMPolice...Lundar 762-5678

Snow Lake

Ambulance 358-7222
Fire....358-2300
RCMPolice..358-7722

West Hawk

Fire/Ambulance..349-2323
RCMPolice...349-2588

Winnipeg Beach

Ambulance....
Teulon...886-3300
Fire... Teulon...886-2345
RCMPolice ...Gimli...642-5104

Winnipegosis

Ambulance.....656-4844
Fire....656-4844
RCMPolice...656-7000