

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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EPACT LAUNCH ANSWERS NEED FOR ONLINE EMERGENCY NETWORK ***Recent Crises Demonstrate Gaps in Preparedness & Response Systems***

Vancouver, B.C. – B.C. based ePACT Network announces launch of its online emergency system, better connecting and protecting families, organizations and communities through any crisis.

Natural and man-made disasters are increasing (905 natural catastrophes occurred in 2012, resulting in 9,300 deaths and millions displaced), and personal medical emergencies occur every day. Yet over 50% of North American families are not prepared for a crisis and 70% of Canadian businesses do not have disaster plans in place. On top of this, organizations families rely on are using antiquated emergency management processes.

In North America, Super Storm Sandy, floods in Alberta and Colorado, train derailments like Lac-Mégantic, cruise ship accidents and the Boston Marathon tragedy are all recent crises that demonstrated failures and gaps in emergency systems. This included:

- Paper emergency forms being lost, misplaced or not available (paper forms are used by organizations 900 million times every year);
- Reliance on phone calls and phone trees for communications (landline and cell phone calls are proven to be first impacted in a crisis, while internet remains the most reliable communication channel);
- Lack of connectivity and understanding of processes across families, organizations and communities, resulting in delayed evacuations, family separation/ reunification impeded, and limited access to resources.

Communities are now recognizing these emergency management issues and demanding improvements. ePACT answers this need as an innovative online replacement to dated systems, acting as the "LinkedIn for emergencies", providing anytime, anywhere access to critical emergency information and communications.

ePACT directly addresses existing gaps by:

- Replacing paper-based emergency processes with a secure online system;
- Acting as the single emergency record for families to store and share their information (contact details, allergies, medications, special needs);
- Providing redundant communications via web and mobile;
- Ensuring understanding of roles across organizations, families and support networks of emergency contacts.

Co-founders, Christine Sommers and Kirsten Koppang Telford, were inspired to build ePACT by survivors of the 2011 Japanese earthquake and tsunami. Stories of separation, lack of information and broken communications hit home to the founders, who are based in B.C., a high risk area for natural disasters. This motivated them to research emergency management and identify gaps in current systems.

Additionally, Mayor Nenshi's use of Twitter during the Calgary floods, Google's Person Finder reuniting family and friends after the Boston Marathon attacks, and critical updates spread via blogs and social media posts during Sandy, are just some examples of online networks supporting communities during crises.

As a mother of two, Koppang explains, "The power of online networking was obvious, yet where was the dedicated network that would directly support my family in an emergency? That's why we built ePACT."

Sommers adds, "We had to replace antiquated emergency management systems with technology because that's where we can make a real difference. That's the power of our system."

The North Vancouver School District trialed ePACT in early 2012, followed by sports associations, daycares and community programs. It is now open to all organizations and families. Lanny Young, a Principal using ePACT in her school explains, "When it comes to emergency management, I want everyone connected. ePACT lets schools communicate and share information across all parents and emergency contacts. It absolutely helps schools be a safer place."

Jason Fothergill, Arbutus Hockey League Director who uses ePACT for all his minor hockey players, further stresses the importance of the system, "Everyone knows how demanding hockey is for players. Serious injuries like concussions or fractures are a real possibility during play or practice. ePACT gives us quick access to the emergency information we need so we can provide the best possible care for our athletes during critical situations."

For more details on the ePACT network, to register yourself, your family or your organization or obtain important safety tips and information on emergency preparedness, visit www.ePACTnetwork.com

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About ePACT Network Ltd.

ePACT is the emergency network, better connecting and protecting communities through any crisis. Whether dealing with an individual injury or illness, community crisis like flood or fire, or large-scale disaster like an earthquake, ePACT provides greater connectivity and safety for all.

ePACT Network Ltd. is based in North Vancouver, British Columbia. The company was founded by Christine Sommers and Kirsten Koppang Telford in 2012 after speaking with survivors of the 2011 Japan earthquake and tsunami. The ePACT team is made up of emergency management specialists and web technology experts, committed to helping North American communities better manage any crisis.

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Additional Resources Available:

- ePACT Founders and Clients for interviews
- Case studies, infographics, videos and images
- Screen shots and demos of ePACT system
- Research on emergency preparedness and response in North America
- Tips and best practice emergency preparation support materials