

Greenhills Centre Emergency Management Plan

Updated: October 2025 | Next Review: October 2026

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Executive Summary

This Emergency Management Plan (EMP) outlines procedures to ensure the safety of staff, guests, and visitors at the Greenhills Centre. It provides clear guidance on prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery from potential incidents. The plan aligns with Australian Standard AS 3745:2010 – Planning for emergencies in facilities and the ACT Emergency Management Framework.

Emergency Contact Numbers

Service	Contact Number
Fire / Police / Ambulance	000 (dial 0 first if using internal phone)
AFP (non-urgent)	13 14 44
Canberra Hospital	02 5124 0000
SES (storm/flood)	13 25 00
EvoEnergy (electricity)	13 10 93
Icon Water (supply)	02 6248 3111 (option 1)
Southern Sullage Services	0419 625 577

Roles and Responsibilities

The following roles apply during an emergency situation. Clear command and communication ensure an effective response.

Role	Responsibility
Chief Warden	Coordinate all emergency responses and liaise with emergency services.
Deputy / After Hours Chief Warden	Assume control when Chief Warden unavailable.
Managers	Maintain EMP, ensure training and site readiness.
Staff	Assist in implementing emergency actions, communicating with group leaders, and supporting guests.
Guest Group Leaders	Supervise guests, initiate evacuation as directed, and report to Greenhills staff.

In an Emergency: Response Steps

Follow these four key steps in every emergency:

Step	Action
1. VERIFY	Confirm the details of the emergency with staff, guests, or emergency services.
2. ASSESS	Use all senses to identify danger, consider alternatives, and decide the safest course.
3. ACT	Ensure personal safety, contain if possible, and evacuate or shelter as required.
4. NOTIFY	Inform Chief Warden, staff, group leaders, and emergency services.

Major Threats and Procedures

The following table summarises key emergency scenarios and primary responses.

Threat Type	Immediate Actions
Electrical Failure	Notify staff, check fuses, use torches, avoid naked flames.
Water Disruption	Contact Icon Water or plumber.
Gas Leak	Evacuate upwind, turn off power/gas if safe, call 000.
Bushfire / Fire Danger	Monitor ESA updates, sound siren, evacuate or shelter in Moore Auditorium.
Building Fire	Evacuate to designated assembly area; use extinguisher only if trained and safe.
Intruder / Lockdown	Find a secure location indoors, lock doors, stay quiet, and await all-clear.
Missing Guest	Notify staff, search immediate area, and call police if unresolved.
Medical Emergency	Call 000, provide first aid, direct ambulance, record details.

Calling Triple Zero (000)

- Stay calm and from a safe location call Triple Zero (000)
- An operator will ask you if you need Police, Fire or Ambulance. Say the service that you require
- You will then be connected to an emergency service operator, who will take details of the situation
- Speak clearly and answer the operator's questions
- Give the operator the details of where you are [1437 Cotter Road, Stromlo], and nearest cross street [7 km from Eucumbene Drive, Duffy].
- Don't hang up until the operator has all the information they need.

If possible, wait outside at a prearranged meeting point or in a prominent location for emergency services to arrive to assist them to locate the emergency.

Contents

1. Introduction	4
1.1 Site Information	5
1.2 Site Utilities	5
1.2.1 Water	5
1.2.2 Electricity	6
1.2.3 Telephone	6
1.3 Major Threats	6
1.4 Site Overview	7
2. Possible Incidents	8
2.1 Electrical Failure	8
2.2 Water Disruption	8
2.3 Gas Leak	8
2.4 Very High or Severe Fire Danger Days	8
2.4 Extreme or Catastrophic Fire Danger Days	9
2.5 Bushfire	10
2.6 Building Fire	10
2.7 Intruder	10
2.8 Lockdown	11
2.9 Missing Guest	11
2.10 Accident or Medical Emergency	11
3. Post Emergency Debrief	12
Staff Training and Emergency Plan Review	13

1. Introduction

This Emergency Plan sets out broad guidance for staff and guests but relies on individuals to assess what is required in each circumstance to avoid or minimize injury or death.

As a general principle, get away from the danger. In case of:

- bushfire
 - evacuate to suburban Canberra, or if it is too late
 - evacuate to the Moore Auditorium in the main building, and if it is too late for that
 - evacuate to any block building and close all windows and doors;
- building fire – evacuate away from the fire to the Hill Building or Rotary Hall as required;
- wildlife – evacuate to a room and close the door;
- intruder – evacuate to a room, lock the door, close the curtains, stay out of sight, be quiet.

Clear communication in an emergency is essential.

Greenhills relies on face-to-face communication, two-way radios, the Dining Room siren, landline telephones and Wi-Fi calling. Learn how to use these facilities.

Greenhills has limited mobile phone coverage and mobile phones cannot be relied on in an emergency.

The Dining Room siren is the rightmost button (of four black buttons) near the coffee machine:

- to signal meals use three short bursts;
- to signal an **emergency, one long blast** (20-30 seconds) is used to alert staff, visitors and guests to an emergency.

This procedure must be outlined to Groups as part of the welcome briefing.



The Dining Room siren is located near the coffee machine

Guests supply rooming lists and will have a nominated Group Leader. Greenhills will roster staff to undertake Host duties including contact with Group Leaders. Greenhills Managers need to know generally which Guests, Staff and other Visitors are on site.

Guests are expected to have First Aid trained staff and equipment. Greenhills has some First Aid trained staff and equipment. In the event of an emergency Greenhills staff must be informed so that they can take appropriate actions to assist as required and notify authorities.

1.1 Site Information

Greenhills is a facility of the Uniting Church in Australia and provides group accommodation for up to 200 people in rooms that accommodate 4, 5 or 6 people with some rooms for group leaders and bus drivers. Greenhills aims to provide a high standard of care for staff and guests by implementing good practices and procedures in compliance with its obligations within the ACT.

Greenhills is located in a rural location and is bordered by Camp Cottermouth (Scouts ACT) and the Murrumbidgee River Corridor Nature Park. Police, ambulance and fire brigade are approximately 20 to 30 minutes away. The single access road into Greenhills must be kept clear of vehicles and obstructions at all times.

The accommodation is mainly of concrete block construction. All sleeping areas have smoke detectors. All kitchens have fire blankets and fire extinguishers. Kitchenettes have fire blankets. The Max & Zeta Hill Building, Rotary Hall, and the accommodation blocks have fire hose reels.

Office hours are generally 9 am to 5 pm Monday to Friday. A staff member is rostered on and available to assist groups when they arrive and throughout their stay (including weekends). The Operations Manager resides in the Manager's Residence on the site but it should not be assumed that they are available in an emergency.

The entrance to Greenhills is to the south off Cotter Road. Road and driveway signs give adequate notice of the turn-off and directions to Reception. The Cotter Road and the internal roads are generally all-weather sealed roads suitable for large coaches and other vehicles. The only vehicle escape route is via the entrance off Cotter Road. As a last resort, pedestrian escape routes are possible in all directions into Camp Cottermouth or the nearby bush land.

1.2 Site Utilities

Site utility mapping can be found in Annexure A at the end of this document. The mapping is approximate only and mostly based on historic maps, guides and photos. It is updated as required when new information is obtained.

1.2.1 Water

Greenhills is connected to Canberra's domestic water supply and is tested by Icon Water every month. Greenhills treats waste water on site in septic tanks before it is piped to the Stromlo evaporation pond.

1.2.2 Electricity

Electric power is provided by ActewAGL who require us to contact EvoEnergy (13 10 93) for disruptions to the distribution system. Two solar arrays supply power to the grid but are not designed to provide power in the event of a mains power failure.

1.2.3 Telephone

Greenhills has a PABX telephone system connecting via the internet to two numbers – the main number (02 6288 1074) and the kitchen (02 6288 1841). Some extensions are able to dial “0” to get an outside line to ring emergency numbers.

In the event of a power failure, batteries will maintain all internal phone lines for 6-8 hours. If these batteries fail, access is via mobile phone where you can get signal on the road towards the city.

Telstra provides a public phone in the foyer of the Hill Building and will work for several days in the event of a power failure. Telstra has made all mobile and national calls free.

Internet is provided by underground optic fibre but with powered devices in the distribution box at the main entrance, in Rotary Hall, the PABX cupboard, and Reception. In the event of a power failure, batteries will maintain the connection to the internet and the Wi-Fi access points in the Hill Building and Rotary Hall for several hours.

In the event of an interruption to mains power, the Telstra mobile phone repeater in Reception in the Hill Building will fail as well as Wi-Fi access points in Blocks B, E, F, G, Maintenance Shed, Manager’s Residence, Coorumbene Cottage and Cabins 2 & 3. Access points in Reception, Dining Room, Moore Auditorium and Rotary Hall are connected to battery backup.

1.3 Major Threats

The major threats to Staff and Guests are accidents and medical emergencies, building fires, bushfires, motor vehicle accidents, lost guests, assault, and injury from animals.

1.4 Site Overview



Greenhills has developed over the past 50 years and comprises:

- Hill Building - reception, kitchen, dining, auditorium and break-out rooms
- Murrumbidgee Centre – accommodation blocks A, B, C & D and Games Room
- Cotter Centre – accommodation blocks E, F & G, and Rotary Hall
- Coorumbene Cottage – 3-bedroom accommodation
- Christie Cabins 1 & 2, 3 & 4 – single room accommodation
- Manager Residence
- Workshop and machinery sheds
- Grassed playing areas
- Vertical Challenge high ropes course
- An outdoor chapel with camp fire.

The buildings are of concrete block and metal roof construction. The workshop and machinery sheds are clad in metal.

2. Possible Incidents

2.1 Electrical Failure

Electrical failure may cause lights and appliances (including some Wi-Fi access points) to stop working. Emergency lighting will automatically come on in some areas for approximately an hour. Most outages are short but occasionally may last three hours or more.

1. Notify Greenhills staff who will investigate and contact EvoEnergy if necessary.
2. Determine if the electrical outage is the whole site or specific buildings.
3. Check fuse and breaker boxes and rectify if possible. If staff are unable to fix, or the fault continues, notify the Chief Warden, or an electrician if required.
4. If the failure continues, undertake appropriate actions, such as:
 - Organising torches;
 - Contact Group Leaders and account for all guests and, if required, staff and group leaders to check rooms and public areas to determine whether there has been an incident that requires action;
 - Depending on the circumstances it may be possible to let guests resume activities including sleeping or programs.
5. Meals may still be available. Contact the Greenhills Catering Manager.
6. Staff must inform and consult with group leaders as required.
7. Do not use candles or naked flames in sleeping areas and under no circumstances leave naked flames unattended.

2.2 Water Disruption

1. If it can be determined that the problem is on the Icon Water side of the meter, contact Icon Water.
2. If the problem appears to be on the Greenhills side of the meter, contact the Chief Warden or a plumber if necessary.
3. Advise the Group Leader of the problem and manage accordingly.

2.3 Gas Leak

1. Greenhills does not have any plumbed gas on site since removal in 2024.
2. The only risk from a gas leak is for portable gas bottles used by guests.
3. If a gas leak from a bottle is detected, it should be turned off and secured if safe to do so.
4. Notify Hosts or the Chief Warden and if necessary, call emergency services.

2.4 Very High or Severe Fire Danger Days

1. Greenhills Staff, in consultation with Group Leaders, will monitor and assess the situation.
2. Factors that need to be considered:
 - a. availability of transport;
 - b. abilities of Guests;

- c. activities of the Group (indoor, outdoor and offsite). Generally, Bushwalks should only be conducted in the morning and routes adjusted to maximise safety.
3. If guests may be compromised in their ability to efficiently evacuate, or there is a direction from Emergency Services, then they must evacuate.
4. Greenhills Staff should continue to monitor esa.act.gov.au for fires in the immediate area.
5. If there is a threat, Staff will contact Group Leaders or sound the Dining Room horn using a 20-30-second-long continuous blast. If safe to do, groups should evacuate to urban areas designated by ESA or ABC Canberra. If for any reason guests are unable to evacuate, they should move to the Moore Auditorium, or if this is not possible, the closest concrete block building and shelter in place until it is safe.
6. Ensure all guests are accounted for. If a search is needed, and it is safe to do so, take the opportunity to turn off appliances and close all doors and windows.
7. Everybody must remain in a shelter until it is safe.
8. Any group using Greenhills during the fire danger season may be asked to participate in a fire drill under the direction of Greenhills Staff.

2.4 Extreme or Catastrophic Fire Danger Days

1. Greenhills Staff, in consultation with Group Leaders, will monitor and assess the situation.
2. Factors that need to be considered:
 - a. availability of transport;
 - b. abilities of Guests;
 - c. activities of the Group (indoor, outdoor and offsite). No offsite activities are to be undertaken.
3. On Extreme or Catastrophic Fire Days the group must evacuate to a safe location.
4. If guests may be compromised in their ability to efficiently evacuate, or there is a direction from Emergency Services, then they must evacuate.
5. Greenhills staff should monitor esa.act.gov.au for fires in the immediate area.
6. If there is a threat, Staff will contact Group Leaders or sound the Dining Room horn using a 20-30-second-long continuous blast. If safe to do, groups should evacuate to urban areas designated by ESA or ABC Canberra. If for any reason guests are unable to evacuate, they should move to the Moore Auditorium, or if this is not possible, the closest concrete block building and shelter in place until it is safe.
7. Ensure all guests are accounted for. If a search is needed, and it is safe to do so, take the opportunity to turn off appliances and close all doors and windows.
8. Everybody must remain in a shelter until it is safe.
9. Any group using Greenhills during the fire danger season, may be asked to participate in a fire drill under the direction of Greenhills Staff
10. Any group with a booking during the fire danger season must be made aware that Greenhills is in a Bushfire Prone Zone and must be prepared accordingly including the potential cancellation of their booking.

2.5 Bushfire

1. In the event of a bushfire in the area, Greenhills Staff, in consultation with Group Leaders, will monitor and assess the situation.
2. Factors that need to be considered:
 - a. proximity, direction and speed of the fire with trigger points established in conjunction with the Emergency Services Authority;
 - b. availability of transport;
 - c. abilities of guests;
 - d. activities of the group (indoor, outdoor and offsite).
3. If there is a threat to guests, or Emergency Services make a direction, guests must be evacuated.
4. Greenhills Staff will sound the Dining Room horn using a 20-30-second-long continuous blast and all staff and guests should move to the Moore Auditorium and prepare for an evacuation or if this is not possible, the closest concrete block building and shelter in place until it is safe.
5. Ensure all guests are accounted for. If a search is needed and it is safe to do so, take the opportunity to turn off all appliances and close all doors and windows.
6. Everybody is to remain in a shelter until it is safe.

2.6 Building Fire

1. In the event of smoke detectors sounding or other notification of a fire, Staff, Group Leaders or a responsible person is to check the area being indicated by the alarm.
2. If smoke or fire is present, the immediate buildings are to be evacuated to one of the Emergency Assembly Areas away from the emergency (the Oval, the Moore Auditorium or Rotary Hall) where Group Leaders will account for all guests. If it is safe to do so, Staff or Group Leaders are to undertake room checks to ensure the building is empty.
3. If there is a fire, staff or guests can use extinguishers, fire blankets or hoses if it is safe to do so. If it is not safe, or staff and guests are not trained, no attempt should be made to fight the fire. All doors should be closed and the building evacuated.
4. If safe to do so, electricity and gas to be turned off.
5. Do not re-enter the building until told by relevant authorities that it is safe to do so.
6. If there is no evidence of an emergency, Staff or Group Leaders should investigate to determine the likely cause of the alarm and manage appropriately.
7. If Greenhills Staff is not present, they are to be notified.

2.7 Intruder

1. If Group Leaders notice or receive a report of unknown or suspicious persons, they should notify Greenhills Staff.
2. Staff should approach the unknown person and ask relevant questions such as who they are and why they are at Greenhills.
3. If Staff do not receive satisfactory answers, they should ask the unknown person to leave immediately.
4. If the unknown person does not leave, the Police are to be notified.
5. If safe to do so, the unknown person should be monitored until the Police arrive.
6. Staff may use the lockdown procedure if necessary.
7. Staff and Group Leaders are to record details such as description of the person, vehicle description and registration, and any other observations.

2.8 Lockdown

1. If Staff or Group Leaders determine that there is a threat to guests (e.g. a threatening person or animal) that is best managed by a Lockdown, Staff should use the Dining Room siren (two short blasts followed by a long blast repeated every so often) to indicate a Lockdown to guests.
2. Staff and guests should enter a room and lock the door and wait for the all-clear signal.
3. Staff or Group Leaders should assess the situation and manage accordingly including calling appropriate authorities if required.
4. When safe, Staff and Group Leaders will notify guests and ensure that everyone is safe and accounted for.

2.9 Missing Guest

1. Notify Staff of the missing person including name, age, height, gender, build, hair colour, clothing, last known contact, relevant medical details and any relevant history.
2. Staff and Guest Leaders to conduct an initial search of the immediate areas.
3. If the individual has not been located, call the police and notify Camp Cottermouth staff.
4. If safe, and there are sufficient resources, organize a systematic and documented search of the surrounding areas. All searchers should have two-way radios and check in regularly. Otherwise, it will be necessary to wait for emergency personnel.
5. Ensure remaining guests are supervised and reassured.
6. Group Leaders to follow their group's incident plans including communicating with their organisation and the guest's emergency contacts.
7. If there are medical concerns, staff should check with emergency personnel if ambulance services are required and who is to contact them. Staff should contact group leaders who should have relevant medical plans and contact details.
8. Upon locating the missing guest, staff and group leaders must ensure the police, emergency services, neighbours and emergency contacts are notified.

2.10 Accident or Medical Emergency

1. Notify Staff of the accident or emergency and state clearly if an ambulance is required.
2. Staff to ring Triple Zero and arrange for somebody to look out for and direct emergency vehicles as required. Ambulance services usually require age, gender, and nature of injury (including clear details of head, circulation or spinal injuries).
3. First aid kits are available in the Reception, Kitchen, Norma Heath Lounge and Rotary Hall. Each visiting group is required to bring their own First Aiders and First Aid Kits.
4. A defibrillator is located near the main entrance to the Hill Building. Follow the instructions on the defibrillator.
5. Staff are to manage the incident as required including ensuring the ill or injured person is monitored, not moved unless there is further danger, and protected from bystanders.
6. Staff must record the incident in the accident register.

3. Post Emergency Debrief

After any incident, a debrief will occur as soon as practicable after the situation has been resolved. This is to discuss the event, why it occurred, what can be done to prevent any recurrence, and to listen to any concerns from staff. If the fault was caused by an individual/staff member, that person may be counselled privately. The level of debrief will be determined by the seriousness of the incident. The debrief is aimed at assessing the cause of and response to the emergency and identifying any improvements required.

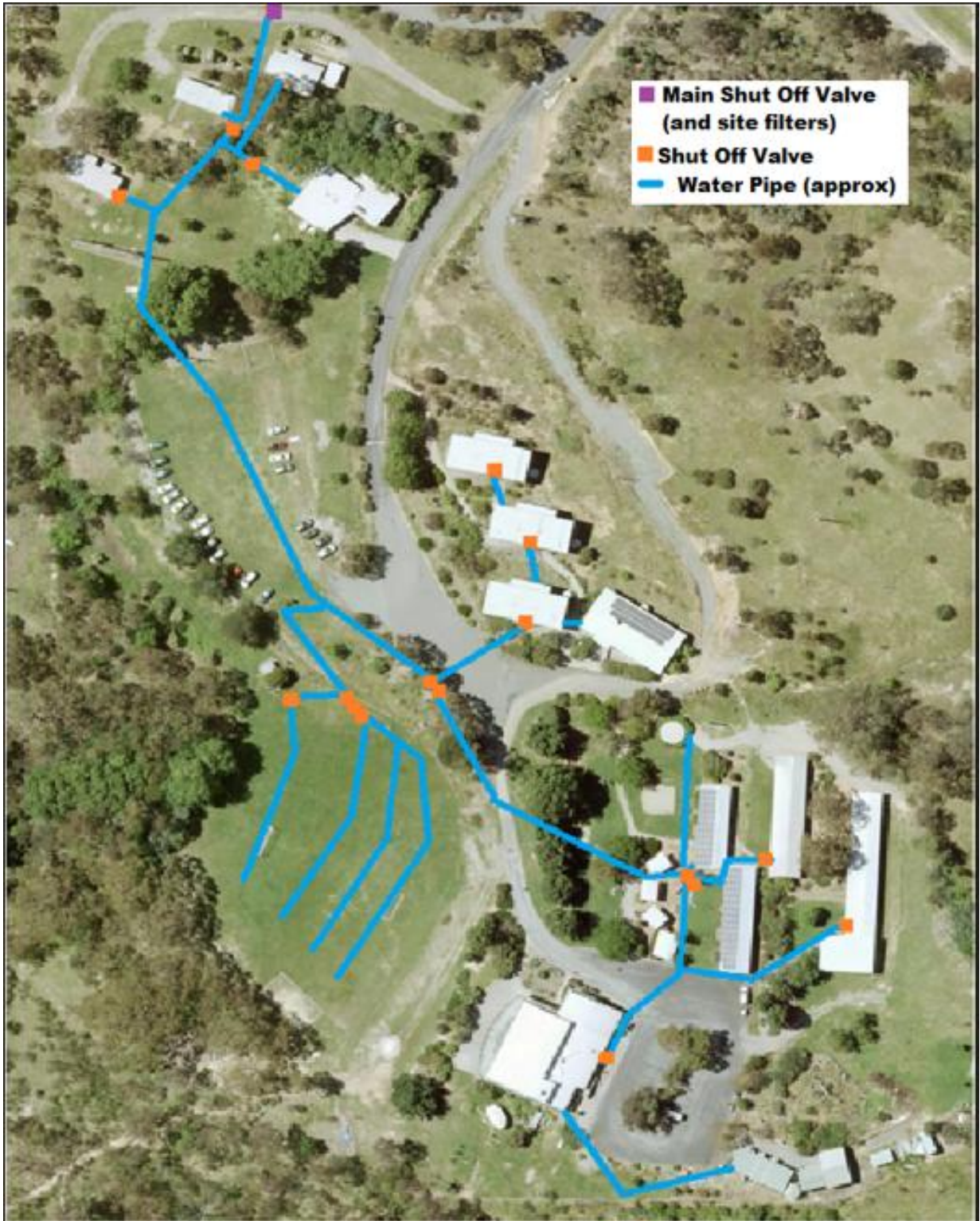
Minor incidents – where the matter has been handled internally and no injuries or apparent exposure to potential trauma has occurred, a discussion between those involved in the incident and Greenhills staff should occur. Notes of the incident and the response are to be made. Any problems with the response and lessons learned will be noted and may be adopted. This plan may have to be updated to reflect any changes in procedures.

Major incidents – Where injury or trauma has occurred or emergency services have been involved, a full debrief with all parties involved, including emergency services, and formal recommendations as to any adjustments to the response is to be undertaken. This plan may have to be updated to reflect any changes in procedures.

Annexure A

Utilities mapping for Greenhills Centre:

Water:



Electrical:



Fire Equipment:

