

**The 2016/17
Greater Victoria
Extreme Weather
Response Plan
www.vewp.net**





The 2016/17 Greater Victoria Extreme Weather Response Plan

Introduction

The Greater Victoria Extreme Weather Response Plan represents a strategy for coordinating the response in the Greater Victoria area to meet the overnight shelter needs of homeless persons during times of extreme weather conditions. It documents the framework for extending resources in order to prevent hardship and incorporates the expansion and development of previous year's protocols.

The 2016/17 Greater Victoria Extreme Weather Response has been developed through the involvement and efforts of the following organizations:

Community Organizations:

- Canadian Red Cross
- Cool Aid Society
- Our Place Society
- Beacon Community Services
- Pacifica Housing
- The Salvation Army
- Victoria Native Friendship Centre
- Victoria Emergency Management Agency
- Esquimalt Emergency Social Services
- Victoria Youth Empowerment Society
- AIDS Vancouver Island
- Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness

Municipal:

- City of Victoria
- Victoria Police and Fire Departments
- District of Saanich
- Saanich Police and Fire Departments

Provincial:

- BC Housing
- Vancouver Island Health Authority



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Extreme Weather Response Plan

EWP Triggers

Implementation of the Extreme Weather Response Plan will be called by the Regional Coordinator when weather conditions are deemed **severe enough to present a substantial threat to the life or health of homeless persons**. Anticipated weather factors from Environment Canada forecasts taken into account include:

- Temperatures near zero with rainfall that makes it difficult or impossible for homeless people to remain dry; and/or
- Sleet/freezing rain; and/or
- Snow accumulation; and/or
- Sustained high winds; and/or
- Temperatures at or below -1 Celsius.

The Regional Coordinator will decide (based on availability and the activation plan determined by the committee) which EWP Tier level will be activated on a given night given the above-mentioned factors and the relative occupancy and capacity of existing shelters.

In the event that there is an activation of the EWR in the Victoria/Saanich region of the Greater Victoria area, the coordinator will make available supports to the outer lying municipalities on a case-by-case basis. All municipalities in the Greater Victoria area are encouraged to contact the coordinator in the event that they are concerned about the welfare of an individual(s) in their municipality and are unable to secure local, existing community supports.



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Extreme Weather Response Notification

Once the decision has been made to activate the Extreme Weather Response Plan the Regional Coordinator is responsible to notify the participants and partnering agencies using the following procedure and contact information.

- Contact each designated representative of the activating EWP shelter providers to confirm their operational readiness and participation.
- Contact all participating service agencies to notify and apprise of EWP activated shelter facilities.
- Contact the Red Cross to implement volunteer deployment if surge support is required.
- Update the website (www.vewp.net) to reflect the status of the EWP and the shelter availability for that night.
- Contact the designated representatives of BC Housing, the City of Victoria, District of Saanich and the Township of Esquimalt to apprise that the EWP has been activated, an Extreme Weather Alert has been issued and which facilities will be operating that night.
- Contact the Duty Staff Sergeants of both the Victoria Police Department and the Saanich Police Department to apprise that the EWP has been activated, an Extreme Weather Alert has been issued and which facilities will be operating that night.
- In addition to the above, there is a wide range of drop-in centers, community centers, health centers and other agencies that may be notified that the EWP has been activated and the contact information of facilities that will be open.

Extreme Weather Response Activation

During the EWP activation period the Regional Coordinator is responsible for daily contact with each of the participating shelter providers, including the year round shelters, to collect statistical data on occupancy, gender, approximate age, turnaways, and hours of operation. These statistics on resource usage along with ongoing weather triggers will inform the Regional Coordinator's decision to continue or discontinue EWP activation and/or which resources will remain active. Contact will ideally be initiated by 11:00am each morning during EWP activation.

During EWP activation initiate daily contact as follows:

- Contact all active EWP shelter providers to request overnight statistical data and preparation for possible EWP continuation.
- Forward statistical data to the designated representatives of BC Housing, the City of Victoria, District of Saanich and the Township of Esquimalt.
- Update EWP website to reflect overnight occupancy and current EWP activation status.
- Initiate an Extreme Weather Alert by notifying all police forces in the geographical area to which the alert applies using the notification templates provided by BC Housing. (As indicated in the Extreme Weather Alert section below.)



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Extreme Weather Response Activation (Cont'd)

During EWP activation the Regional Coordinator, Duty Staff Sergeants of the Saanich and Victoria Police Departments and inspectors from the Victoria and Saanich Fire Departments may conduct nightly occupancy and safety checks of operational facilities. Members of the Victoria and Saanich Police will conduct routine patrols and assist as required with a police presence during EWP activation.

Agencies should have the ability to communicate with each other to ensure that clients are being directed to the most appropriate facility. For instance, youth under the age of 25 can be directed to Out of the Rain and clients under the influence can be directed to the VIHA Sobering Centre. **At no time should anyone be turned away during an EWP activation.** Clients should instead be redirected to an appropriate facility or resource.

Extreme Weather Response Deactivation

Once the decision has been made to de-activate the Extreme Weather Response Plan the Regional Coordinator is responsible to notify and contact the participants and partnering agencies using the following procedure.

- Contact each designated representative of the activated EWP shelter providers to confirm their deactivation and determine any required resources for future activation.
- Contact all participating service agencies to apprise of EWP deactivation and which year round shelter facilities remain in operation. Request that they update client information posters to reflect which options are available that night.
- Contact the designated representatives of BC Housing, the City of Victoria, District of Saanich and the township of Esquimalt to apprise that the EWP has been deactivated and which year round shelter facilities will be operating.
- Deactivate the Extreme Weather Alert by notifying all police forces in the geographical area to which the alert applies using the notification templates provided by BC Housing. (As indicated in the Extreme Weather Alert section below.)
- Contact other community agencies that the EWP has been deactivated.

*** If there are no clients in attendance at the activated EWP shelter by midnight on the day of the activation, the shelter will be closed and the other shelters in the area will be notified of the closure. Local police departments will also be notified of the closure and given directions to an available shelter location. The coordinator will inform BC Housing and the EWP committee on the following morning that the shelter was closed due to lack of attendance.



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Extreme Weather Alert Activation Procedures

Once the decision has been made to activate an extreme weather alert, the Regional Coordinator will issue a statement to the appropriate recipients as identified in the Extreme Weather Alert Contact List (See page 8) using the following template:

Email Subject Line: VICTORIA – Extreme Weather Alert Issued

Hello,

I have been designated under the Assistance to Shelter Act as the Community Representative for the City of Victoria, Municipality of Saanich and the Township of Esquimalt, British Columbia. I am issuing an Extreme Weather Alert (EWA) for the City of Victoria, Municipality of Saanich and the Township of Esquimalt, British Columbia.

It would be appreciated if the police department in receipt of this e-mail acknowledged receipt of this message to me only – no other recipients need to reply. You will be advised via e-mail when the EWA has been cancelled.

Thanks in advance for your assistance,

Jen Wilde
Regional Coordinator
Greater Victoria Extreme Weather Protocol

Extreme Weather Alert

Pursuant to sec. 2(2)(b) of the Assistance to Shelter Act an Extreme Weather Alert (EWA) is being issued for the City of Victoria, Municipality of Saanich and the Township of Esquimalt, British Columbia. This EWA activates the authorities in the Assistance to Shelter Act for police to assist persons at risk due to extreme weather conditions and remains in effect until it is cancelled.

This EWA is being issued on (date) at (time), due to the following weather conditions and forecast: (description of conditions and forecast.)

***The following shelter(s) will be providing spaces during this EWA:
(Name of shelters and locations)***

EWA issued by: Jen Wilde, Community Representative for the City of Victoria, Municipality of Saanich and the Township of Esquimalt, British Columbia.



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Extreme Weather Alert Deactivation Procedures

Once the decision has been made to cancel the Extreme Weather Alert, the Regional Coordinator will issue a statement to the appropriate recipients as identified in the Extreme Weather Alert Contact List (See page 8) using the following email template:

Email Subject Line: VICTORIA – Extreme Weather Alert Cancelled

Hello,

I have been designated under the Assistance to Shelter Act as the Community Representative for the City of Victoria, Municipality of Saanich and the Township of Esquimalt, British Columbia.

On (date), I issued an Extreme Weather Alert (EWA) for the City of Victoria, Municipality of Saanich and the Township of Esquimalt, British Columbia.

There is no longer a need for the EWA to remain in effect and, as such, I am issuing a Cancellation of an EWA. It would be appreciated if the police department in receipt of this e-mail acknowledged receipt of this message to me only – no other recipients need to reply.

Thanks again for your assistance,

Jen Wilde
Regional Coordinator
Greater Victoria Extreme Weather Protocol

Cancellation of an Extreme Weather Alert

Pursuant to sec. 2(2)(e) of the Assistance to Shelter Act the Extreme Weather Alert (EWA) issued on (date) for the City of Victoria, Municipality of Saanich and the Township of Esquimalt, British Columbia, is now cancelled. The authorities in the Assistance to Shelter Act for police to assist persons at risk due to extreme weather conditions are no longer in effect.

This Cancellation of an EWA is being issued on (date) at (time), due to improved weather conditions and forecast.

Cancellation of an EWA issued by: Jen Wilde, Community Representative for the City of Victoria, Municipality of Saanich and the Township of Esquimalt, British Columbia.



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Template For Changing Location During An Extreme Weather Alert

In the event that a shelter needs to be changed or moved during an extreme alert, the following template will be utilized:

Email Subject Line: VICTORIA – Extreme Weather Alert – location amendment

Hello,

I have been designated under the Assistance to Shelter Act as the Community Representative for the City of Victoria, Municipality of Saanich and the Township of Esquimalt, British Columbia.

On (date), I issued an Extreme Weather Alert (EWA) for the City of Victoria, Municipality of Saanich and the Township of Esquimalt, British Columbia.

Effective (date), the following changes have been made to the site(s) that are open for the current EWA:

Shelter Site(s) Now Closed:
(Shelter details, including address)

Shelter Site(s) Now Open:
(Shelter details, including address)

I have been designated under the Assistance to Shelter Act as the Community Representative for the City of Victoria, Municipality of Saanich and the Township of Esquimalt, British Columbia. I am issuing an Extreme Weather Alert (EWA) for the City of Victoria, Municipality of Saanich and the Township of Esquimalt, British Columbia.

It would be appreciated if the police department in receipt of this e-mail acknowledged receipt of this message to me only – no other recipients need to reply. You will be advised via e-mail when the EWA has been cancelled.

Thanks in advance for your assistance,

Jen Wilde
Regional Coordinator
Greater Victoria Extreme Weather Protocol



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Extreme Weather Alert Contact List

Name	Email Address
Heidi Hartman	hhartman@bchousing.org
Brak Melles	bmelles@bchousing.org
Dominic Flanagan	dflanagan@bchousing.org
Paul Woolley	Paul.wooley@gov.bc.ca
Darren Harbord	Darren.harbord@gov.bc.ca
Weather Alert	weatheralert@gov.bc.ca
BC Housing CEO	bhceo@bchousing.org
Homeless BC Housing Contact	homelessnessservices@bchousing.org
Saanich Police Front Desk Supervisor	frontdesk@saanichpolice.ca
Victoria Police, Communications Centre Supervisor	info@vicpd.ca



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Transportation

A vehicle from the Native Friendship Centre will be transporting clients to and from EWP locations.

Media Inquiries

EWP participants and partners are encouraged to direct **all** media inquiries to the Regional Coordinator. In the event that the media approaches an organization that is hosting an extreme weather shelter, the organization may respond with a member of the EWP committee. Any media releases with regard to the EWP will be forwarded in draft form to designated representatives of BC Housing (Ally Skinner-Reynolds - asreynolds@bchousing.org, Mon-Fri and media@bchousing.org Sat & Sun), the City of Victoria and the District of Saanich for comments and final approval before release.

EWP Coordinator Back up

In the event that the coordinator becomes ill, injured or otherwise unable to perform the task of activating or deactivating the alert, there is a minimum of two back up participants available to carry out these tasks.

Joann Connolly
Victoria Cool Aid Society
250-882-4670

Heather Hobbs
AIDS Vancouver Island
778-679-2602



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Participation in Extreme Weather Response Plan

Agencies, groups or individuals wishing to participate in the Greater Victoria Extreme Weather Response Plan should contact the Regional Coordinator. There are many options for participation including volunteering, donating resources, or as a participating agency.

Funding for the provision of overnight shelter through this plan is provided under BC Housing's Extreme Weather Response Policy. Partnering and participating agencies providing overnight shelter services are expected to meet the specific eligibility, budgeting, statistical reporting, invoice and expense claim requirements as described in BC Housing's EWP Policy.

Extreme Weather Response Agency Responsibilities

In order for a facility or premises to be considered as a possible overnight shelter resource for the EWP the following requirements must be met

- Inspection and approval by the municipal fire department responsible including overnight sleeping occupancy
- Appropriate zoning for residential or assembly use
- Adequate liability insurance coverage for building owner or operating agency
- Adequate washroom facilities
- Operating hours sufficient to allow a minimum of eight hours uninterrupted sleep per night with 12 hours of operation being preferred.
- Provide EWP nightly budget to BC Housing for approval

In addition to a facility or premises meeting the above requirements, other resources required to operate an overnight shelter resource include:

- Appropriately trained and experienced staff. A minimum of a 1 to 30 staff to client ratio is preferred with a 2 staff minimum.
- A level one first aid kit and at a least one staff on site with current emergency first aid certification.
- Fast access to an emergency phone, either cell or land based.
- Up to date contact list with emergency and support numbers listed in addition to other shelter providers
- Staff communication log with statistical data and incident recording form
- Sharps container for bio-hazardous materials.
- Adequate sleeping materials such as cots, mats and blankets for capacity.
- Appropriate cleaning and protective materials for both general and specific cleaning duties
- Good supply of strong garbage bags to give out to clients with belongings



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Organization / Contact	Year Round Shelters	EWP - 1	EWP - 2
Victoria Cool Aid Society - Rock Bay Landing 535 Ellice Street Ph. 250-383-1951 Don McTavish Cell 250-888-7103 dmctavish@coolaid.org Joann Connolly Cell 250-882-4670 jconnolly@coolaid.org	+84 beds +25 Mats (Seasonal) Co-Ed Up to 30 days		
Victoria Cool Aid Society – Cool Aid Seasonal Shelter 755 Pandora Ave (Referrals and contact same as Rock Bay Landing)	+40 Mats (Seasonal) Co-Ed 9pm-6:30am		
Victoria Cool Aid Society – Sandy Merriman 809 Burdett Avenue. Ph. 250-480-1408 Christine O'Brien Cell 250-893-7103 cobrien@coolaid.org	+25 beds Women Only		
Salvation Army – Addictions & Rehabilitation Centre 525 Johnson Street Ph. 250-384-3396 Jeff Baergen jbaergen@victoriaarc.org Fiona Robson frobson@victoriaarc.org **Temp Loc. from Nov-Dec @ 612 David St HOURS: 9pm-9am**	+21 beds Men Only No Pets	+30 mats Co-Ed 7pm-7am **See notes re:	+30 mats Co-Ed 7pm-7am Temp. Location**
Sobering and Assessment Centre 1125 Pembroke Street Ph. 250-213-4441 Bob McKechnie bob.mckechnie@viha.ca	+20 beds Existing Client Base Regulations Exist		
Victoria Youth Empowerment Society Kiwanis Emergency Youth Shelter 2117 Vancouver Street Pat Griffin Ph. 250-383-3514 pat.griffin@vyes.ca Leigh Heard Ph. 250-386-8282 keys@vyes.ca	+10 beds 5 Female 5 Male Youth (13-18) Co-Ed		
Victoria Native Friendship Centre 231 Regina Ave. Ph. 250-888-0548 Ph. 250-384-3211 Kari Hutchison Cell 250-213-5987 kari@vnfc.ca Bruce Parisien Cell 250-888-8059 brucep@vnfc.ca		+25 mats Co-Ed No Pets 9pm-7am	+25 mats Co-Ed No Pets 9pm-7am
Our Place Society 919 Pandora Avenue Ph. 250-388-7112 Don Evans Cell 778-977-4921 don@ourplacesociety.ca Debbie Berg Cell 778-587-5227 debbieb@ourplacesociety.ca	+55 mats (First Met) Co-Ed 7:30pm-7am (Seasonal)	+30 mats Co-Ed No Pets 7:30pm-7am	+50 mats Co-Ed No Pets 7:30pm-7am
Out of the Rain Night Youth Shelter 250-415-3856 c/o Beacon Community Services (www.outoftherainin victoria.ca) Jenn Mortimer Cell 250-884-3701 jmortimer@beaconcs.ca Elaine Venables Cell 250-3607848 evenables@beaconcs.ca (+30 October 15 th to April 15 th Only)	+30 mats (Seasonal) Pets Allowed (Sun-Fri) Youth (15-25) Open 9pm-8am		
Total Spaces: 310 Beds	160 (+145 Seasonal)	85	105

IMPORTANT COMMUNITY CONTACTS

EWP Coordinator: Jen Wilde Cell 250-896-4012 jen@vewp.net
Victoria Police Watch Commander: 250-995-7223 Saanich Police Watch Commander: 250-475-4341
Victoria Fire Dept.: Paul Bruce 250-920-3362 Saanich Fire Dept.: Maegan Thomson 250-475-5559
Island Health Street Outreach Nurses: Nursing services and referrals year round Mon-Fri (Various hours and sites; please call for more info) Lisa 250-361-7056
AIDS Vancouver Island: Heather Hobbs – 250-384-2366 ext 3104 Evening Harm Reduction Services Staff 250-889-0268
Red Cross: Gary Carleton Ph. 250-995-3525 cell 250-661-1805 gary.carleton@redcross.ca
Victoria Emergency Management Agency: Rob Johns rjohns@victoria.ca Ph. 250-920-3377