

**The 2011/12
Greater Victoria
Extreme Weather
Response Plan**
www.vewp.net





The 2011/12 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 2011/12 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
- 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 Department
- Victoria Fire Department
- District of Saanich
- Saanich Police Department
- Saanich Fire Department
- Township of Esquimalt

Provincial:

- BC Housing
- Vancouver Island Health Authority



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Extreme Weather Response Plan

EWR 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 weather 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 -2 Celsius.

The Regional Coordinator will decide which facility or facilities will be open on a given night given the above mentioned factors and the relative occupancy and capacity of existing year-round shelters. It is possible that not all extreme weather facilities with capacity to open will do so on the same night. This will allow for rotation of which facilities are open which nights in case of an extended period of Extreme Weather.

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 EWRP shelter providers to confirm their operational readiness and participation.
- Contact all participating service agencies to notify and apprise of EWRP activated shelter facilities.
- Contact the Red Cross to implement volunteer deployment.
- Update the website (www.vewp.net) to reflect the status of the EWRP 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 EWRP 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 EWRP 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 EWRP has been activated and the contact information of facilities that will be open.



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Extreme Weather Response Activation

During the EWRP 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 EWRP activation and/or which resources will remain active. Contact will ideally be initiated by 11:00am each morning during EWRP activation.

During EWRP activation initiate daily contact as follows:

- Contact all active EWRP shelter providers to request overnight statistical data and preparation for possible EWRP continuation.
- Forward statistical data to the designated representatives of BC Housing, the City of Victoria, District of Saanich and the Township of Esquimalt.
- Update EWRP website to reflect overnight occupancy and current EWRP 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.)

During EWRP 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 EWRP 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 EWR activation.** Clients should instead be redirected to an appropriate facility or resource.



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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 EWRP shelter providers to confirm their deactivation and determine any required resources for future activation.
- Contact all participating service agencies to apprise of EWRP 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 EWRP 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 EWRP has been deactivated.



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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 Book
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 Book, 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 Book
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 Book, Community Representative for the City of Victoria, Municipality of Saanich and the Township of Esquimalt, British Columbia.



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Extreme Weather Alert Contact List

Name	Email Address
BC Housing CEO	bhceo@bchousing.org
Bruk Melles,	bmelles@bchousing.org
Cindy Rose	cindy.rose@gov.bc.ca
Victoria Police, Communications Centre Supervisor	info@vicpd
David Haslam	david.haslam@gov.bc.ca
Domonic Flanagan	dflanagan@bchousing.org
Fergus McCann	fmccann@bchousing.org
Heidi Hartman	hhartman@bchousing.org
Homeless BC Housing Contact	homelessnessservices@bchousing.org
Maryann Anderson	maryann.anderson@gov.bc.ca
Nicky Schnare	vi5385@vicpd.ca
Paul Woolley	paul.wooley@gov.bc.ca
Roberta Randall	rRANDALL@bchousing.org
Saanich Police Front Desk Supervisor	frontdesk@saanichpolice.ca
Sam Rainboth	srainboth@bchousing.org
Weather Alert	weatheralert@gov.bc.ca



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Transportation

Vehicles from the Native Friendship Centre and the Salvation Army will be transporting clients to and from EWRP locations.

Media Inquiries

EWRP participants and partners are encouraged to direct **all** media inquiries to the Regional Coordinator. Any media releases with regard to the EWRP will be forwarded in draft form to designated representatives of BC Housing, the City of Victoria and the District of Saanich for comments and final approval before release.

EWR 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 are a minimum of two back up participants available to carry out these tasks.

Derek Book (Previous coordinator of the program)

Phone: 250.896.4010

derekmbook@gmail.com

Erin Gibson (Committee member)

Phone: 250.889.5226

erinkgibson@gmail.com

Joann Connolly

Phone: 250.882.4670

jconnolly@coolaid.org



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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 EWR Policy.

Extreme Weather Response Agency Responsibilities

In order for a facility or premises to be considered as a possible overnight shelter resource for the EWRP 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 EWR 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 maximum 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
Victoria Cool Aid Society - Rock Bay Landing 525 Ellice Street Joann Connolly Cell 250-882-4670 Ph. 250-383-6945 ex 1 jconnolly@coolaid.org	+84 beds +20 mats Co-Ed / Pets ok Up to 30 days	
St John the Divine 1611 Quadra Street (Satellite EWP Shelter of the Victoria Native Friendship Centre)		+40 mats Co-Ed / Pets ok 10pm-7am
Victoria Cool Aid Society - Next Steps 2317 Dowler Street (Referrals and contact same as RBL)	+15 beds Co-Ed	
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 Gagan Grewal Cell 250-858-3397 ggrewal@victoriaarc.org	+21 beds Men Only Laundry 10-30 days	+30 mats in the Chapel 9pm-7am
Sobering and Assessment Centre 1125 Pembroke Street Ph. 250-213-4441 Fran Findlay fran.findlay@viha.ca	+20 beds Existing Client Base Regulations Exist	
Victoria Youth Empowerment Society Kiwans 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 -Regulations exist	
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 Adults No Pets 9pm-7am
Our Place Society 919 Pandora Avenue Ph. 250-388-0343 or 250-385-2454 Jordan Cooper Cell 250-727-5532 jordan.cooper13@shaw.ca		+50 spaces Co-Ed Cart parking 8pm-7am
Out of the Rain Night Youth Shelter 250-415-3856 c/o Beacon Community Services (www.outoftherainvictoria.ca) Jenn Mortimer Cell 250-884-3701 jennmortimer@hotmail.com (+30 October 15 th to April 15 th Only)	+30 beds Pets Allowed (Mon-Fri) Youth (15-25) Open 10pm-8am	
Total spaces: 370 Beds	175(+50 Seasonal)	145

IMPORTANT COMMUNITY CONTACTS

EWP Coordinator: Jen Book Cell 250-896-4012 jen@vewp.net
Victoria Police Watch Commander 250-995-7223 Saanich Police Watch Commander 250-475-4341
Victoria Fire Dept. Steve Smith 250-920-3350 Saanich Fire Dept. Brock Henson 250-475-5559
VIHA Street Nurses – Nursing services and referrals year round Mon-Fri (various sites) Kelly 250-818-3373 Shelby 250-480-8967 Stacey 250-361-7056
AIDS Vancouver Island – Erin Gibson - 250-896-AVIX (2849)
Communicable Disease Control Program - SI Kate Darling Ph. 250-388-2225 kate.darling@viha.ca
Red Cross Sonja Ruthe Ph. 250-382-2043 ex 3609 cell 250-661-1805 sonja.ruthe@redcross.ca
Victoria Emergency Management Agency Sara Walsh swalsh@victoria.ca Ph. 250-920-3377

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Year Round Emergency Shelters

Victoria Cool Aid Society
Rock Bay Landing (84)
Next Steps (15)
Sandy Merriman (25)

124 Beds

Salvation Army
Addictions &
Rehabilitation
Centre

21 Beds

VIHA
Sobering &
Assessment
Centre

20 Beds

**Victoria Youth Empowerment
Society**
Kiwanis Emergency Youth Shelter
(13-18 yrs)

10 Beds

Seasonal Emergency Shelters

**Out of the Rain
Night Youth
Shelter**
(15-25 yrs)
Oct 15 – Apr 15

30 Mats

**Victoria Cool Aid
Society**
Rock Bay Landing

20 Mats

Total Year Round Shelter Beds: 175 Beds
Total Seasonal Shelter Beds: 50 Beds

TOTAL: 225 Beds

EXTREME WEATHER PROTOCOL ACTIVATED

**Victoria Native
Friendship Centre**

25 Mats

Salvation Army
Addictions &
Rehabilitation
Centre

30 Mats

St John the Divine

40 Mats

**Our Place
Society**

50 Mats

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**. Factors taken into account include:

- Temperatures near zero with rainfall that makes it difficult or impossible for homeless people to remain dry
- Sleet/freezing rain
- Snow accumulation
- Sustained high winds
- Temperatures at or below -2 Celsius
- Feedback from clientele of the various facilities may also be considered

ADDITIONAL BEDS DURING EWP: 145 Mats

TOTAL: 370 Beds

Greater Victoria Extreme Weather Protocol Communication Plan

www.vewp.net will be updated daily regarding protocol status and shelter availability.

Once the decision has been made to activate the protocol, the EWP coordinator will communicate with participants to confirm their operational readiness. The EWP Coordinator will then:

- Inform the participating agencies and the Duty Staff Sergeants of both Victoria and Saanich (by email) that the EWP has been activated, an Extreme Weather Alert has been issued and which facilities will be operating that night.
- Inform the EWP Committee, BC Housing, the City of Victoria, City of Saanich and the EWP Community list (by email) that the EWP has been activated, an Extreme Weather Alert has been issued and which facilities will be operating that night.
- Initiate volunteer participation through the Red Cross.

Once the decision has been made to deactivate the protocol, the EWP Coordinator will communicate with participants to confirm their deactivation. An email notice will be sent to the EWP committee, BC Housing, City of Victoria, City of Saanich and the EWP Community Lists to indicate which year-round shelters will be available that night.

Updated October 2011