



Vancouver ESS Newsletter

**March
2009**

Inside

**2008
Review**

EP Week

Training

**Intro to
ESS**

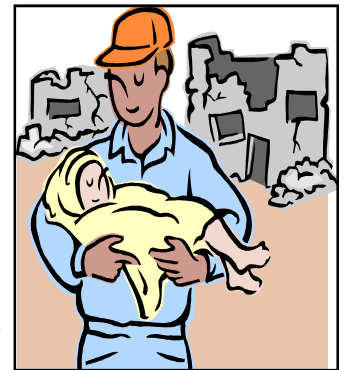
**Coming
Up**

Kitsilano Exercise Ready to Roll

The Kitsilano ESS team will host the annual emergency planning exercise this year that will include setting up a Group Lodging Facility. It will take place Saturday, April 4, 9:30-3:30 at Kitsilano Community Centre, 2690 Larch Street. It will provide an excellent opportunity for volunteers to set up and operate both a Re-

ception Centre and a Group Lodging Facility.

Many volunteers, both ESS members and non-members, are needed to make this exercise a success. Invite your neighbours to participate as evacuees. Members are asked to sign up at vancouver.ca/ess; non-members by email to ess@vancouver.ca.



ESS Introduces Software for Volunteers

The Vancouver Office of Emergency Management has introduced its eagerly anticipated new on-line volunteer software program for the Vancouver ESS team. Volunteers are now able to log on to their personal profile to sign up for training or exercises, to get information

on upcoming meetings, to update their contact information, and to reach other ESS team members quickly.

With this software, ESS and NEPP will be able to maintain a single call-out list that can be updated by the vol-

unteers themselves. This will hopefully ensure the list contains current information on every volunteer so they can be contacted quickly during an emergency. Visit vancouver.ca/ess to sign up, or log on to myvolunteerpage.com.



Pet Care in an Emergency

Vancouver ESS is releasing a new NEPP program called "Emergency Preparedness for You and Your Pets". Since Hurricane Katrina, ESS has had many enquiries from pet owners asking how they can prepare themselves and their pets to withstand an emergency. This session will take place at the West End Community Centre, Tuesday, May 5 at 7 p.m. Register by calling the center at 604-257-8333. Remember, poodles like Phoebe and Norman, shown here on the left, will be as distressed as their owners during an emergency.



The Washington Hotel in flames in February, 2009.

This Year So Far – Busy!

2009 has already proven to be a busy year, with ESS responding to two large apartment fires in the Downtown East Side.

A mass evacuation was required during The Washington Hotel at Main and Hastings in February. ESS was called in to assist with ap-

proximately 85 evacuees. When it was determined that a Group Lodging Facility would be required due to the number of evacuees, the Vancouver ESS team was enlisted to open a container and distribute blankets and cots to assist the evacuees. All 100 cots and blankets were dispatched from National Yards and were de-

livered by Vancouver Engineering Services to the Group Lodging Facility at one of Portland Society’s hotels.

Vancouver ESS was also called on to assist at a fire at the Alexander Hotel in January, when some 50 residents were evacuated.

“Just because something doesn't do what you planned it to do doesn't mean it's useless” –

Thomas Edison

2008 In Review

Last year was a record year for the Vancouver ESS team, whose members responded to 35 activations involving more than 265 evacuees

While the majority of these call-outs were house fires, the Disaster Assistance Team (DAT) also responded to two

drug lab incidents and provided mutual aid during an apartment fire at UBC.

One of the downtown Vancouver drug lab incidents required the opening of a Reception Centre at the Roundhouse Community Centre in April, 2008.



Jackie Kloosterboer, Emergency Planning Coordinator for the City of Vancouver, helped disburse blankets and cots for the Washington Hotel fire evacuees.

Brian Donat of the Disaster Assistance Team and Lorin West of the West End Team helped set up a Reception Center at the Roundhouse Community Center following a lab incident last year.

Containers Get Makeover

New ESS containers were purchased to replace approximately 24 old containers at various community centres throughout Vancouver. In addition, the contents of the containers were rearranged

and now are stored on shelves, providing much easier access. Each container is equipped with sufficient cots, blankets and other supplies to accommodate up to 100 evacuees.

EP Week Across Canada

Emergency Preparedness Week, held annually across Canada, will take place this year from May 3-9. As part of EP week, volunteers from ESS, the Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Program (NEPP) and VECTOR will be recognized for their outstanding commitment to the com-

City of Vancouver Emergency Program. In addition, ESS will be involved in setting up and manning displays and demonstrations on emergency preparedness in the community, in an ongoing endeavor to educate Vancouverites about ESS and emergency planning. You can get involved by visiting Vancouver.ca/ess.



Looking Ahead to 2010

With the Olympic Games looming, ESS is planning how it will handle evacuees if one or more emergency events occur during the Games. Currently, with a typical house fire, evacuees are assigned to one or more hotels for 72 hours. During the Olympics and Paralympics, these hotels will likely be 100% occupied.

We expect they will be unavailable to us throughout January and February 2010. Group lodging, therefore, looks like it will be our only alternative during these times. A committee has been formed with ESSDs from across the Lower Mainland to develop a regional group lodging plan for this period.



Douglas Park ESS team hosted a potluck dinner recently. Attending were (L-R): Vera Roberts, Janine Aussem, Executive Director, Emergency Social Services Association, Jackie Kloosterboer, and Kathryn Willey.

Volunteer Training

Training proceeded last year at a good pace. ESS offered many of the Justice Institute courses in Vancouver and also had many volunteers travel outside Vancouver to attend training sessions in other communities. Remember: training should be updated every two years to ensure all ESS members are up to date on current with ESS procedures.

“Knowledge must come through action; you can have no test which is not fanciful, save by trial.” – Sophocles

Justice Institute of BC Courses

The following Justice Institute courses will be held in the next few months. Volunteers will be able to register for them online. Also, courses will be posted on the ESS website as they become available.

May 2: Managing Walk-In Volunteers, Vancouver

May 9: Group Lodging, Delta

May 9: Registration and Referrals, JIBC

May 23: Reception Centre, Vancouver

June 8: Documentation, JIBC

June 13: Group Lodging, Vancouver



ESS courses cover everything from group lodging to food safety.

For information on courses, visit Vancouver.ca/ess.

All Teams Meeting

This year's All Teams Meeting is set for Saturday, May 9 at Langara Golf Course in South Vancouver, located south of 49th Avenue, between Cambie and Main streets. A guest speaker will conduct a session on Leadership. It will also include a debriefing on the Kitsilano ESS exercise. Register at Vancouver.ca/ess.

Introduction to ESS Workshops

Community centres are continuing to offer basic Introduction to ESS courses. The sessions include explanations of Reception Centres and Group Lodging facilities to help prepare Vancouverites for an emergency such as a major earthquake, fire, flood or any other disaster

The workshops cover: Basic Emergency Social Services - What is it? How the Vancouver emergency structure works; What is the Provincial Emergency Program; and more. All sessions run from 7 to 8:30 pm.
April 21, Tuesday, Killarney Community Centre; April 23, Thursday,

Hastings Community Centre; April 28, Tuesday, West End Community Centre; May 6, Wednesday, Kitsilano Community Centre; May 7, Thursday, Dunbar Community Centre, and May 12, Tuesday, Kerrisdale Community Centre.



The 15 members of the Vancouver ESS Disaster Assistance Team were recognized last year for their community work in assisting fire victims. The awards were presented by the then Vancouver Director of Emergency Management, Kevin Ramsay.

Basic Survival Kit

Basic items you will need to survive for 72 hours: Water, at least four liters of water per person per day, Food that won't spoil, Manual can opener; Flashlight and batteries; Candles and matches or lighter; Battery-powered or wind-up radio, with extra batteries; First Aid Kit; Personal items such as prescription medications.

ESSA Conference

The ESSA Conference is set for Saturday, May 20, at Williams Lake. Registration costs \$30 and includes lunch. For information, visit www.essa.ca

Vancouver ESS Newsletter Volume 1 Issue 1

Jackie Kloosterboer
Emergency Planning
Coordinator
City of Vancouver
3301 E. Pender St.
Vancouver V5K 5J3
604-829-4373
fax 604-829-4499
Jackie.kloosterboer@
vancouver.ca
Website:
vancouver.ca/ess

Editor
Lynda Cumming
lyndacumming@shaw.ca

Staff Changes

The Vancouver Office of Emergency Management has undergone some recent changes.. Kevin Wallinger was appointed as the Director of Emergency Management and Kevin Ramsay moved into the position of General Manager of Human Resources.



www.vancouver.ca/ess

