



# Vancouver ESS Newsletter



**December  
2011**

**NEPP  
Record**

**Safety  
Tips**

**Training**

**And**

**Season's  
Greetings**

## Wrapping up 2011, and looking ahead

Overall, 2011 has been a very quiet year for the ESS Team, which has responded to 15 activations, substantially fewer than in past years. Also, the activations have been smaller. Of course, the year is not over yet, and my fingers are staying crossed.

The big change in ESS this year has been our move away from the Community Centre team format, and the establishment of a variety of committees in which the 350 ESS volunteers are encouraged to join. Each of these committees has established, or is in the process of establishing, goals for 2012.

The Major Event Team (MET) and the Volunteer Committee have both met twice and are well on their way to setting and accomplishing some pretty hefty goals. The Major Event Team is tasked with developing plans for each of the Community Centres in Vancouver. Then, when ESS is activated during an emergency, ESS will have its plans in place and be ready to respond.

The Volunteer Committee is looking at how we can better connect with our Volunteers and is developing new processes to ensure we are on track to meet these goals. The first objective is to update the volunteer list by emailing all volunteers to confirm their continuing involvement, if any, with ESS. Overall, the response has been low but we did discover we have volunteers living in many parts of the world. Another email will be going out shortly to further identify our active and local volunteers. If you haven't done so already, let me know your status.

On the positive side, this year has seen an increase in the number of new volunteers joining the Vancouver ESS team. Many new volunteers have already attended the Justice Institute to obtain their basic training.

One Reception Centre course was taught Dec 3 at Sunset Community Centre with 18 ESS volunteers attending, and a Registration and Referrals Course will be held Jan 14 at ECOMM. There is still some space left for this course.

The 2011/12 Justice Institute of BC training calendar ends March 31, and we will be submitting a request for additional courses over the coming months.

We have also had requests for refresher courses, and are looking at how we can offer this. One way is to conduct table top exercises at the All Teams Meetings, to provide volunteers with an opportunity to practice their ESS training. We are also looking at having an exercise at one of the Community Centres next fall, which would entail setting up a Reception Centre and a Pet Area. The planning for this would be done by the Exercise Committee.

I am really looking forward to 2012. I know we are going to see a lot of forward movement with ESS, and we are going to have a great time doing it.

Wishing you and yours a happy holiday season.

Jackie Kloosterboer  
Emergency Planning Coordinator, City of Vancouver



# NEPP Thrives with Record Sessions in 2011

NEPP, the Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Program, has participated in a record number of educational sessions this year, due in some part to the major earthquakes in Japan, New Zealand and elsewhere.

Over the last several months NEPP has seen a significant increase in the request for NEPP sessions.

In 2010, NEPP participated in 47 sessions, with some 898 participants. In the first ten months of this year, NEPP has held 243 sessions, educating some 7,200 participants in how to prepare for emergencies or disasters.

In a recent contest among NEPP volunteers, which asked them to estimate how many NEPP sessions had been con-



*Henry Hui, one of the many NEPP volunteers charged with bringing ESS awareness to the Vancouver community, is seen here teaching a NEPP Session at the Fu-Hui Buddhist Temple in the Killarney neighbourhood of Vancouver, earlier this year.*

ducted and how many people had attended the sessions this year, one winner emerged.

Congratulations to Paul Kilpatrick, a NEPP volunteer, who won a radio for coming closer than anyone else in guessing the total count.

While NEPP has been going full speed in conducting sessions on emergency preparedness, there is still a lot of work to be done to educate Vancouver residents, many of whom don't realize they will be on their own for the first 72 hours or more, during a major disaster.



## Major Event Team gets rolling at first meeting

The MET (Major Event Team) specializes in the activation, set up and operating of the Reception Centres and Group Lodging

Centres in the event of an emergency. Similar in design to the Regional Group Lodging Team (Vancouver - Richmond - North Shore) that was created to

handle any major disaster during the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, (which didn't happen) this team is comprised of volunteers who are

trained in and interested in preparing for major ESS events.

MET has the responsibility of opening RC and GL centers as needed across the city. MET would be activated when an event exceeds the capabilities of DAT, the Disaster Assistance Team, which handles smaller emergencies. MET would also be responsible for the supplies that would be required for the RC activations.

MET will meet at the Dunbar Community Centre, on Monday, January 16 at 7 pm. Register at [www.vancouver.ca/ess](http://www.vancouver.ca/ess).



*Getting together at the second meeting of the Major Event Team at Douglas Park CC recently were (front row L-R): Sven Braune, Helga Topp, emergency planning coordinator Jackie Kloosterboer, and Pat Cullen. Back row L-R: Jim Slade, Brian Donat, John Topp, Pamela Bromley, Laura Langs, Dilpreet Dhillon, Ken Dodge, and Ryan Gabel.*



# All Teams Meet, and learn from NZ earthquake

At the November All Teams Meeting, Daniel Stevens from the office of Emergency Management presented a session on his experiences in New Zealand.

Stevens spent three weeks in New Zealand following a major earthquake on the South Island in February, a quake that was

followed by a series of large aftershocks. The presentation in Vancouver provided insight on how an earthquake could affect residents in the Vancouver Lower Mainland. Stevens also explained a number of emergency management initiatives employed in New Zealand that may prove useful in Vancouver.

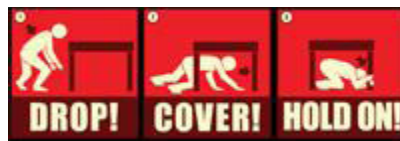


*Daniel Stevens from the Office of Emergency Management presented a slide show and discussion to Vancouver ESS members at an All Teams Meeting November 21 at Kits Community Centre. He is seen here discussing his observations on the NZ experience with ESS volunteer Elizabeth Jang.*

## ShakeOut 2011 rocks through BC

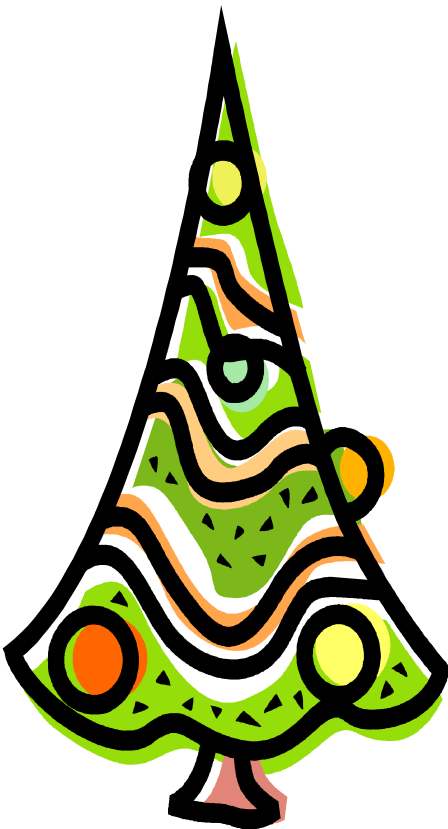
The Great British Columbia ShakeOut earthquake drill – the largest such drill in Canadian history – was held at 10:20 am October 20, 2011. More than half a million people participated. The drill, which emphasizes “Drop, Cover and Hold On” during an earthquake, will be held annually on the third Thursday of October.

For more information, visit <http://www.shakeoutbc.ca/index.html>



# Oh Christmas Tree, How Safe Art Thou?

*Contributed by Gabe Roder, Captain, Fire & Life Safety Education  
Public Relations & Media Liaison, Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services*



If you're buying a fresh-cut Christmas tree this year, pick a tree with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched. Make sure to water your tree regularly to help it retain moisture. If you purchase an artificial tree, make sure it is fire retardant.

Be cautious when climbing a ladder to install and remove Christmas lights. Ensure someone secures the base of the ladder. Inspect lights for excessive wear. If you have any doubt about the age and safety of your strand of lights, throw them out and purchase new low wattage LED lights, which are more economical to run.

Use only CSA-approved and UL-tested extension cords for all your needs.

Kitchen fires are a major cause of fires this time of year. Don't leave pots unattended on the stove and be extremely cautious when cooking with oil. Keep candles away from combustible materials. Never use lighted candles on or near a Christmas tree. Never leave candles burning when you go to bed or leave the house. Keep flammable items at least three feet from your space heaters. Ensure space heaters are CSA or UL approved.

Test your smoke alarm to ensure it is working. If your smoke alarm is more than ten years old, it's time to change it. (Consider giving one as a Christmas gift instead of a box of chocolates.)

Sleep with your bedroom door closed. Smoke is the killer in most fires, not the flames. This is secondary protection if your smoke alarm doesn't wake you.

Get a carbon monoxide (CO) detector. CO is a colourless, odourless gas that can kill if inhaled.

# VECTOR holds Major Exercise

VECTOR's Communications Exercise was held on October 22. Although similar to last year's, this year's exercise was larger and required more ESS Reception Centers to be active. Each center required one VECTOR member and one ESS volunteer on site.



VECTOR had its new Grab and Go Kits deployed at the Reception Centers. For more info on VECTOR (Vancouver Emergency Community Telecommunications Organization) and the exercise, visit the VECTOR website at [www.vectorradio.ca](http://www.vectorradio.ca).

## Pet Committee set to meet

The Vancouver ESS Pet Committee operates in conjunction with Vancouver Animal control, the SPCA and ESS. Its focus is to develop plans for the pet population within City of Vancouver during an emergency. A full

description of duties and requirements is currently being developed.

This committee will meet Monday, Jan 9 at 7 pm at the Animal Control Office, 1280 Raymur Avenue.

## Committees open to New Volunteers

There is still room on the various ESS committees for more participants.

A full description of the committees and their goals are listed at

[www.vancouver.ca/ess](http://www.vancouver.ca/ess). If you are interested in joining a committee, you may sign up on line or contact Jackie Kloosterboer at [jackie.kloosterboer@vancouver.ca](mailto:jackie.kloosterboer@vancouver.ca). Some committees will have limits on how many volunteers may join.

## All Teams Meeting

Open to all Vancouver ESS Volunteers, the next All Teams Meeting will be held at the Hastings Community Centre, Monday, January 23, 6:30-8:30 pm. Pizza will be served at 6:30 pm before the start of the meeting. You must register at [www.vancouver.ca/ess](http://www.vancouver.ca/ess).



[www.vancouver.ca/ess](http://www.vancouver.ca/ess)



*Emergency planning coordinator Jackie Kloosterboer conducted a Reception Centre course earlier this month at Sunset Community Centre. The five-hour session trains ESS volunteers to open and operate a Reception Centre during emergencies.*

## Training Sessions

Jan 14 ESS Registration & Referrals, Vancouver  
Jan 21 ESS Registration & Referrals, Abbotsford  
Feb 5 ESS Site Management, Sechelt  
Feb 11, ESS Registration & Referrals, Justice Institute  
Feb 11, ESS Group Lodging, Richmond  
Feb 18, ESS Managing Walk-in Volunteers, North Shore  
Feb 22, ESS Resource Acquisition, Justice Institute  
Feb 26, ESS Registration & Referrals, Langley  
March 10, ESS Group Lodging, Chehalis  
March 10, ESS Reception Centre, Justice Institute  
March 15, ESS Site Management, Justice Institute

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