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To: ["Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"](#)  
Date: 11/9/2022 10:03:19 AM  
Subject: [Upcoming information bulletin: Cold Weather Preparedness \(Nov. 9, 2022\)](#)

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Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing to inform you that the City will be issuing the below information bulletin outlining the City's winter response plan.

The plan includes operational response (i.e., prioritized routes), snow and ice removal enforcement, support for people sleeping outside, and community engagement programs such as Snow Angels and Adopt a Catch Basin. Staff look forward to sharing more in detail with you at the scheduled Council Briefing at National Yard on November 30.

Best,  
Paul

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The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the x̱m̱əθḵʷəy̱əm (Musqueam), Sḵw̱x̱w̱ú7mesh (Squamish), and sə̱lilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

**City of Vancouver**  
**Information Bulletin**  
**November 9, 2022**

## **City ready to support residents as another cold winter approaches**

For a third year in a row, La Niña conditions will likely mean a colder, wetter winter for Vancouver residents. Fortunately, we have a robust strategy to deal with snow and ice, and to support those in need of shelter.

### **Winter maintenance**

Our [winter maintenance plan](#) includes street brining, salting and plowing with a priority focus on major roads, bus routes, bridges, bridge sidewalks, and main streets adjacent to major hospitals. The plan also includes our four major pedestrian pathways (Arbutus Greenway, Central Valley Greenway, False Creek Seawall, and Coal Harbour Seawall) and the 16 most-used bike routes.

Crews prioritize treatment of pedestrian pathways before adjacent bikeways. Residential side streets are not included as part of the City's treatment plans, with the exception of priority hills and access routes to hospitals and schools.

## **What residents can do**

1. If you drive through the winter, equip your vehicle with the right tires for the conditions. [Learn more about winter tires.](#)
2. Make only essential trips on snow days to help keep roads clear for our plows and crews.
3. Keep catch basins clear of snow and ice to prevent flooding. If your local catch basin is blocked, break up and remove any built up ice. If this does not help, report the blockage to 3-1-1 or via Van311. Learn more about [adopting your own catch basin.](#)
4. Help others in need. Snow and ice on the sidewalk can be a barrier for many people, particularly seniors and people with mobility challenges. Consider [becoming a snow angel](#) and help others when it snows.
5. Excess road salt damages vehicles and infrastructure, harms our pets and plants, and degrades waterways. [Learn about sustainable salt use.](#)
6. Clear sidewalks by 10 am. All property owners and tenants must clear snow and ice from sidewalks adjacent to their address by 10 am the morning after a snowfall, seven days a week. Failure to do so may result in fines.

## **Support for people sleeping outside**

The City and its partners are once again activating a variety of spaces to ensure that people sleeping outside can come into warm, safe spaces during the coldest months.

In partnership with BC Housing, we open the following warm spaces during the winter:

### **Temporary winter response shelters**

1. For the 2022-2023 winter season, there are five temporary winter shelters that will be open every night between November 2022 and March 2023, providing 151 additional shelter spaces. We're also working with BC Housing to identify opportunities to add additional shelter capacity over this winter season.

### **Extreme weather response (EWR) shelters**

1. There are approximately 88 EWR beds at five sites that are providing additional shelter spaces funded by the provincial government. EWR sites provide mats to sleep on, and are opened when [Extreme Weather Response](#) alerts are issued by the Homelessness Services Association of BC (HSABC). These are based on criteria including temperature near zero, heavy rainfall, snow, sleet and high winds.
2. Alerts are shared with service providers, outreach teams, TransLink, and other partners who can inform people who are experiencing homelessness.
3. The City of Vancouver also activates additional warming centres during periods of extreme cold.

### **Warming centres**

1. There are two warming centre sites confirmed as of November. We activate warming centres as a life-saving measure when the temperature reaches -5 degrees Celsius or below (or it feels like -5°C or below). While only some have mats, and they are not set up with beds, they provide a safe, warm space for people to come inside.
1. The centres are open to all, and depending on the site, visitors may bring their pets, bikes,

and carts with them. Hot drinks and snacks are available.

2. These sites are in addition to Extreme Weather Response shelters. Warming centre alerts are circulated in partnership with Homelessness Services Association of BC (HSABC) with EWR alerts to partner agencies, community centre staff, outreach program staff, and a variety of agencies serving individuals experiencing homelessness. The homepage of the City's website shows an alert when warming centres are activated.
3. HSABC [twitter account](#) is the most up to date.

These winter spaces are in addition to the existing 1,250+ year-round beds currently available. We continue to seek partnerships to add more shelter spaces while more permanent housing is developed.

Those looking for shelter space can call 2-1-1 to check availability, or [find a full list of shelters online](#).

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