

From: ["Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>](mailto:Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca)
To: ["Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"](#)
Date: 11/2/2023 9:16:32 AM
Subject: Upcoming information bulletin: City ready to support residents as winter approaches (November 2, 2023)

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing to inform you that the City will be issuing the below information bulletin today, November 2, 2023, regarding the City's forthcoming cold weather response. Please keep this information bulletin embargoed until it goes live from the City media email account 11am.

In addition to our regular social posts, on an ongoing basis throughout the cold weather season, we will be providing the public with key information via our social media channels on how to stay safe in event of extreme winter weather, while also highlighting the work City crews do to keep our streets and bridges clear. In addition, social media will play a key role in communicating shelter activations in the coming months.

Maria will share today's social links when ready We invite you to share and amplify our social posts as you see fit.

Best,
Paul

Paul Mochrie (he/him)
City Manager
City of Vancouver
paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

City of Vancouver
Information bulletin
November 2, 2023

City ready to support residents as winter approaches

As temperatures begin to dip and we approach winter, the City and its partners are once again activating a variety of additional indoor spaces to ensure that people sleeping outside can come into warm, safe spaces during the coldest, wettest months.

In partnership with BC Housing, we are opening the following spaces this winter:

Temporary winter response shelters

- For the 2023-2024 winter season, there are two temporary winter shelters that will be open every night between November 2023 and March 2024, providing 67 additional shelter spaces. The City is also working with BC Housing to identify opportunities to add additional shelter capacity during this winter season.

Extreme Weather Response (EWR) shelters

- There are approximately 70 EWR beds that provide additional shelter spaces. EWR sites are provincially funded and delivered through partnerships with community-based service providers and faith-based organizations to provide additional temporary emergency shelter spaces during periods of extreme winter weather.
- These spaces are activated based on criteria including:
 - Temperatures near zero with rainfall that makes it difficult or impossible for those experiencing homelessness to remain dry
 - Sleet or freezing rain or snow accumulation
 - Sustained high winds
 - Temperatures at or below 0°C, or "feels like" 0°C with wind chill
 - Rainfall of at least 50 mm in a 24-hour period
- Alerts are shared with service providers, outreach teams, TransLink, and other partners who can inform people who are experiencing homelessness that there are places to come inside and get warm.

Warming Centres

The City of Vancouver funds the activation of additional warming centres during periods of extreme cold.

- Warming Centres are opened as a life-saving measure when the temperature reaches -4 degrees Celsius or below (or it feels like -5°C or below). The centres have mats, but do not provide beds.
- Warming 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.

Where to find more information

Warming Centre and EWR alerts are circulated in partnership with the Homelessness Services Association of BC (HSABC) to a variety of agencies serving individuals experiencing homelessness. [HSABC X account](#) (Twitter) also provides up to date information on activations.

More information on the winter strategies and shelters can be found by visiting www.vancouver.ca. EWR and Warming Centre alerts are also highlighted on the City's homepage when spaces are activated.

Winter maintenance

Our [winter maintenance plan](#) includes street brining, salting and plowing with a priority focus on major roads, bus routes, bridges within City limits including 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:

- Be on alert for winter weather forecasts, and make sure you are prepared:
 - Have snow shovels and de-icing materials available and ready to remove snow and/or ice from sidewalks adjacent to private property by 10am the morning after a snow fall.
 - Be safe, be seen. In darker, wet weather, visibility is limited and changing conditions can make it harder to travel. Dress for the weather, including wearing proper footwear, lights and reflective gear and make eye contact with other road users.
- Look for alternatives to driving during winter weather conditions. If you must drive, watch out for pedestrians, take care and be prepared with winter tires, allow more time for travel.
- 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.

- Avoid over salting. Excess road salt damages vehicles and infrastructure, harms our pets and plants, and degrades waterways. Learn about sustainable salt use.
- 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](#).

-30-

Media contact:

Civic Engagement and Communications

media@vancouver.ca