

From: **"Mochrie, Paul"**
To: **"Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"**
Date: 1/11/2024 4:21:15 PM
Subject: Upcoming Information bulletin: City ready to support residents for first blast of winter (January 11, 2024)

Dear Mayor and Council,

Given we are currently in a weather event, the City will be reissuing a version of yesterday's information bulletin reminding residents of City actions during cold weather and snow fall. This media release includes key information on our winter maintenance plan, how residents can help, and warming centre and shelter availability, as well as snow clearing obligations. City communications has been working closely since yesterday with major media outlets to field inquiries and provide interviews related to snow, shelter and warming centre preparations.

All of this information will continue to be amplified through the evening on the City's social networks. We appreciate your partnership across your social media channels to help share in snow preparation efforts and keep residents and businesses informed.

Best,
Paul

Paul Mochrie (he/him)
City Manager
City of Vancouver



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

City of Vancouver
Information bulletin
January 11, 2024

City reminding residents of supports during first winter snow event

*1,400 year-round shelter spaces, 67 temporary winter response spaces, 172 extra shelter spaces at 8 sites
(Extreme Weather Response)
and 7 warming centres with 146 spaces ready to serve Vancouverties*

With freezing temperatures and snow in Vancouver, the City is working to help keep residents safe on streets, sidewalks and bikeways. For those sheltering outside, the City and its partners have activated options for people to come indoors.

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, the following indoor spaces form the winter shelter strategy:

Temporary winter response shelters

- For the 2023-2024 winter season, there are two new temporary winter shelters that will be open every night until March 2024, providing 67 additional shelter spaces. The City is

also working with BC Housing to identify opportunities to add additional shelter capacity during the cold season.

Extreme Weather Response (EWR) shelters

- There are approximately 172 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.

The City of Vancouver funds the activation of additional Warming Centres during periods of extreme cold.

Warming Centres

- The City of Vancouver also activates Warming Centres as a life-saving measure when the temperature reaches -4 degrees Celsius or below (or it feels like -5°C or below).
- 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.

Tonight there are 7 warming centres activated with capacity for total of 146 people.

Where to find more information

- The attached PDF provides the latest information on activated shelter spaces and warming centres, their locations and hours. Also see attached a PDF for a map of these spaces across the city.
- Information on winter strategies and shelters can be found by visiting the City's [shelter and winter response strategy webpage](#).
- EWR and Warming Centre alerts are also highlighted on the [City's homepage](#) and across all City of Vancouver social media channels when spaces are activated.
- 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. The [HSABC X account](#) (Twitter) also provides up to date information on activations.

Our [winter maintenance plan](#) includes street brining, salting and plowing with a priority focus on major roads, bus routes, bridges within City limits, 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. Failure to remove snow and ice within a 24 hour period could result in a fine of \$250 to \$750 per offence.
 - 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. [Use our traffic cameras](#) to check road conditions on your commute.
- 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](#).