

From: ["Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>](mailto:Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca)  
 To: ["Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"](#)  
 Date: 11/15/2024 8:25:59 AM  
 Subject: Upcoming info bulletin: City ready to support residents as winter approaches (Nov. 15, 2024)

---

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing to inform you that the City will be issuing the below information bulletin on Friday, Nov. 15, relating to the City's cold-weather response in preparation for winter, for which planning is underway.

Maria will reply to this email with the relevant Vancouver.ca and social media links, once these are live.

Best,  
Paul

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



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the x̱m̱ ḵ y̱ m̱ (Musqueam), S̱ wxwú7mesh (Squamish), and s̱ lilw̱ ta̱ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

**City of Vancouver**  
**Information bulletin**  
**November 15, 2024**

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

Forecast models suggest a high chance of La Niña conditions this upcoming winter, which could bring colder, wetter weather across Vancouver. As temperatures begin to dip, the City is opening additional shelter beds and warming centres, and is ready to activate the winter maintenance plan for our streets and sidewalks.

### **Shelters and warming centres**

In partnership with BC Housing and non-profits, the City is 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.

### **Temporary winter response shelters**

- For the 2024-2025 winter season, there are four temporary winter shelters that will be open every night between November 2024 and March 2025, providing 97 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 194 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 -4°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.

## Where to find more information about indoor spaces

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. EWR and Warming centre alerts are also highlighted on the [City's homepage](#) and social media when spaces are activated.

More information on the winter strategies and shelters can be found by visiting the [shelter and winter response strategy webpage](#).

## Winter maintenance of streets and sidewalks

Our [winter maintenance plan](#) includes street brining, salting and plowing, with a priority focus on major roads, bus routes and bridges within City limits (including bridge sidewalks). 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 snow and ice treatments on 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 your 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, and allow more time for travel. Snowplows move slower than regular traffic, so if you are travelling near one, please be patient and give them space to do their work.
- 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](mailto:media@vancouver.ca)