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To: ["Direct to Mayor and Council"](#)  
Date: 7/4/2025 4:17:00 PM  
Subject: Council Prep Package: Heat and Wildfire Smoke Communications 2025 (VEMA)

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Good afternoon Mayor & Council,

As a companion piece to the July 3 memo shared by Sandra Singh as it relates to preparations for this summer and possible heat and wildfire smoke season, staff have prepared a brief package with key messages, key facts and relevant Q&As that may be helpful to you in media interviews or conversations with interest holders and constituents.

### **Item in brief**

This summer, Communications will launch a communications campaign on heat and wildfire smoke safety, to increase awareness of risks posed by heat and wildfire smoke, and how to avoid those risks. The campaign will communicate clearly and concisely in a timely manner during a heat or wildfire smoke event to affected audiences, especially those who experience homelessness, with pre-existing chronic health conditions illnesses, seniors and elders, or whose primary language isn't English. The City will also amplify key information of other lead stakeholders throughout the year, and during heat and smoke events.

### **Communications approach in brief**

- **Media relations**

- A pre-season information bulletin was issued on Friday, June 6, ahead of the first stretch of warmer weather this season.
- Staff have identified spokespersons within VEMA, ENG, SUS, ACCS and Park Board to speak on City's work to prepare for the season.
- Community partners also will be available for media interviews, in order to highlight the partnership between the City and community groups.
- A follow-up information bulletin is prepared to highlight cooling centre and safety information when Environment Canada issues a heat warning or declares an extreme heat emergency. To extend the reach to ethnocultural media, a brief synopsis in Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese, Tagalog, Punjabi and Vietnamese will be added to this information bulletin.

- **Social media**

- The following thematic messages have been and will be pushed to the public on City's social media channels:
  - Week of June 9 – Extreme heat risk awareness
  - Week of June 16 – Tips on keeping the home safe, especially for seniors and citizens with limited mobility
  - Week of June 23 - Providing information of cooling centres and misting stations
  - Week of July 7 – Risks of wildfire smoke and the importance of planning ahead
  - Week of July 14 – How to stay safe in case of a smoke event

- Staff have also prepared the following messages when the outdoor temperature reaches a certain threshold:
  - 24-27 C – Highlight the need to have a plan to get cool, learn about wellness checks, and ways to stay informed.
  - 27-29 C – Monitor indoor temperatures, beat the heat tips, check on others.
  - 29 C and above – Monitor indoor temperatures, go to a cool space, activated cooling centres, checking on people can be life-saving.

- **Vancouver.ca**

- Update maps and printable materials on [vancouver.ca/hotweather](https://vancouver.ca/hotweather), and [vancouver.ca/wildfiresmoke](https://vancouver.ca/wildfiresmoke).
- To align with the City's [Language Access Policy](#), posters, printable maps and social media graphics are translated into 11 languages and have been uploaded to [Vancouver.ca/heat-translations](https://Vancouver.ca/heat-translations).

- **Community outreach: Multilingual and Inclusive Communications**

- In alignment with the City's Language Access Policy (LAP), the comms team is ensuring that messaging and resources are available in English and 11 additional commonly spoken languages in Vancouver.
- Translated materials will be distributed via the City's website, social media, ethnic-language media outlets, and community partners—including over 85 community-serving organizations and 40 civic agencies such as libraries, community centres, and social service providers.
- Partners will be equipped with printed and digital materials—such as translated posters, social media graphics, and maps of cooling centres and clean air spaces—to ensure wide reach in culturally appropriate ways.

## **Role of Mayor and Council**

- Mayor and Council can be key amplifiers of public safety information during extreme heat and wildfire smoke events.
- Council can support this work by:
  - Amplifying City's social media posts on your personal channels, especially during a heat event.
  - Reposting the City's translated resources and cooling centre maps in multiple languages.
  - Engaging with local neighbourhood groups and community-serving organizations to highlight the availability of supports in the course of your regular business.
  - Reinforcing heat and smoke messaging during media interviews, and public appearances.

## **Key messages**

- The City of Vancouver is committed to ensuring residents stay safe during hot weather events and wildfire smoke events. To fight the negative effects of heat and wildfire smoke, the City operates cooling centres and cleaner air spaces, increases access to drinking water, monitors outdoor spaces for those suffering from heat-related illness, and looks out for residents at risk of heat-related impacts.
- During periods of extreme heat, the City encourages people to prepare by staying hydrated, keeping cool, checking in on others, and staying informed by checking weather updates and using information on the City website and social media channels.
- During periods of wildfire smoke, the City encourages people to spend time in indoor spaces with

- filtered, cleaner air; stay hydrated, check on others; stay informed about wildfire smoke levels outdoors; and use information on the City's website and social media channels.
- As part of our Extreme Heat response and wildfire smoke response, the City works closely with Vancouver Coastal Health and other partners to help protect residents susceptible to the adverse effects of heat.
- Learn more at [vancouver.ca/hotweather](https://vancouver.ca/hotweather), and [vancouver.ca/wildfiresmoke](https://vancouver.ca/wildfiresmoke), or follow us on social media on [X](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

## Key Facts

Myth: There is nowhere to stay cool when a heat warning is not in effect.

Fact: Although cooling centres are activated when Environment Canada issues a heat warning, community centres, public libraries or any other air-conditioned public spaces across the city are available for people to take a break.

Myth: It is safer to stay home when it is hot outside.

Fact: Indoor temperatures can be as dangerous as outdoor temperatures. If it is 31C or higher in your home, go to an air-conditioned space to cool down.

Myth: The City only requires heating of a building, not cooling.

Fact: The Vancouver Building Bylaw was recently updated, which requires increased air filtration and air conditioning for new multi-family residential buildings.

## Questions & Answers

### What has the City done differently since 2021?

- The City of Vancouver has had an extreme heat response plan since 2010. Since 2021, enhancements to extreme heat plans have been made.
- Building bylaw change to require mechanical cooling by [in new buildings](#).
- Launched an [accelerator grant](#) for cooling.
- Through the Resilient Neighbourhoods Program, the City has established partnerships with Neighbourhood Houses and the Aboriginal Friendship Centre that recognize the capacity within community to support extreme heat response and the role local government has in enabling and supporting that effort. We work with partners to prepare for heat and coordinate with them during heat events.

### What is the City doing to help people protect their health from wildfire smoke?

- The City operates facilities with cleaner air available throughout the year and adds additional spaces when an air quality advisory is issued. Cleaner air spaces have high level air filtration. People can also get

- relief from locations with air conditioning, such as most community centres and libraries.
- DIY air cleaner workshops:
  - Starting in 2023, the City of Vancouver launched Do-It-Yourself (DIY) air cleaner workshops with SFU BREATHE and BC Lung Foundation.
  - The workshops are co-organized by City of Vancouver, SFU BREATHE, and community partners, with all materials provided for free by the City. Attendees can build their own air cleaner.
  - The aim is to help seniors, low-income residents, and people who are most vulnerable to wildfire smoke filter the air in their homes.
  - In 2023, more than 230 air cleaners have been built and sent home with people who need them.

## Related links

- [City's heat resource page](#)
- [City's translated resources page on heat](#)
- [City's wildfire smoke resources page](#)
- [City's translated resources page on wildfire smoke](#)
- [Information bulletin: City of Vancouver shares tips to beat the heat](#) (Issued on Friday, June 6)

If you have any questions about the foregoing, please reach out to Maria at [maria.pontikis@vancouver.ca](mailto:maria.pontikis@vancouver.ca).

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.