

## Esquimalt Emergency Program Update

### Introduction

As per the *Emergency Program Act* and the Township of Esquimalt's Operational Strategy to "promote emergency preparedness through shared initiatives and training," the Esquimalt Emergency Program (EEP) is responsible for coordinating the mitigation of, preparation for, response to, and recovery from emergencies. EEP staff work in partnership with local first response agencies, Township departments, Emergency Management BC, volunteer teams, and other stakeholders to develop and implement plans and programs to ensure community safety during and after disasters.

The Esquimalt Emergency Management Bylaw, 2015, No. 2853, establishes the Emergency Management Organization and clearly outlines roles and responsibilities of:

- Mayor and Council - Overall responsibility for ensuring legislative requirements are met, and receive relevant reports from the Emergency Executive Committee.
- Emergency Executive Committee – comprised of the Mayor, CAO, EPC, and provides input and approval to emergency program work plan.
- Emergency Planning Committee - comprised of the CAO, Directors, Fire Chief, VicPC representative, DND representative, and Emergency Program Manager, who meet at least twice per year for strategic planning, program evaluation, review, and development of an annual work plan and training and exercise schedule (attached).
- Emergency Program Coordinator (EPC) – works in collaboration with the Emergency Program Manager to develop and implement annual work plans.
- Emergency Program Manager - works together with internal and external stakeholders to develop and implement the work plan (including implementation and delivery of training, exercises, and public education) in conjunction with corporate emergency subcommittees, based on guidance and recommendations of Emergency Planning and Executive Committees.

Effective emergency management is a community wide responsibility and EEP reflects this through the multi-dimensional nature of its work across Township departments, volunteer groups and public campaigns to increase emergency preparedness knowledge. 2017 will see the EEP continue to engage in productive local, regional, and provincial partnerships for joint planning and training initiatives.

## Emergency Plans

### Comprehensive Emergency Response and Recovery Plan

The Township's foundational document for response and recovery to disasters, this all hazard plan is updated on an annual basis and aspects are utilized and exercised for staff training. This is the overarching document that ties together all emergency plans and procedures in the Township.

This plan outlines the authority and responsibilities of Esquimalt to act in major emergencies and disasters. It provides an understanding of the authorities, working relationships, and functions of municipal government, senior levels of government and various support organizations in the context of response to a major emergency or disaster. The plan is a tool for optimizing response operations including activation of the EOC, coordination of multi-jurisdictional activity, and mobilization of critical resources.

### Community Risk Assessment

Under the British Columbia *Local Authority Emergency Management Regulation*, the Council for the Township of Esquimalt is required to reflect in emergency plans:

*The potential emergencies and disasters that could affect all or any part of the jurisdictional area for which the local authority has responsibility, and;*

*The local authority's assessment of the relative risk of occurrence and the potential impact on people and property of the emergencies or disasters.*

The Township's Community Risk Assessment, 2010, addresses hazards, vulnerabilities, and the resulting risk that could affect the residents, institutions and businesses of the Township of Esquimalt and lead to a major emergency or disaster. This information provides important community elements when preparing emergency response, business continuity, and recovery plans.

While the hazards and vulnerabilities in the Township remain relatively stable, the plan is in the process of being updated to ensure any changes are reflected accordingly.

### Crisis Communications Plan

When an emergency occurs, the need to communicate with the public is immediate. With the increased use of social media and the internet, the Township must be able to respond promptly, accurately, and confidently during an emergency in the hours and days that follow.

A Crisis Communication Plan is currently being developed in conjunction with the Victoria Police Department and Township departments to ensure that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined so that information can be quickly and accurately conveyed to the public at any time of day following an emergency.

## Emergency Plans

Evacuation Plan	<p>A hazard specific plan, the purpose of the Evacuation Plan is to document the principles, legislated authorities and processes for coordinated evacuation planning in the community of Esquimalt within the context Capital Regional District. The plan specifies arrangements, agency roles and responsibilities and a range of considerations and actions for evacuation of people from hazardous environments to a place of safety.</p> <p>The Township’s evacuation plan is currently being updated in conjunction with regional evacuation training, procedures, and exercises to ensure consistency across the Region.</p> <p>The Evacuation Plan is designed to be a ‘living plan’ for the Township, associated agencies, and their representatives during the evacuation process, and has a strong operational focus.</p>
Water Distribution Plan	<p>Provision of emergency water supply involves collaboration and partnership between various levels of government. There are several options for supplying potable water in an emergency.</p> <p>In 2013, The Township purchased a desalination unit for production of potable water. Operators (staff and volunteers) have been trained and the unit is testing on a regular basis to ensure it will be operational following an emergency.</p> <p>Potable water may also be supplied in tanker trucks or pre-packaged, and all delivery methods require a plan for distribution to the public. This plan is currently under development and will be completed in 2017.</p>
Business Continuity Plan	<p>The Business Continuity Plan for the Township of Esquimalt, 2015, addresses management and decision-making in the Township of Esquimalt when loss events interrupt access to critical resources, including elected and appointed officials, municipal staff, facilities, and information.</p> <p>The Township’s fundamental mission as a responsible public institution includes the continuation of essential services following unfortunate events. Under the <i>Community Charter</i> legislation in British Columbia, the Township of Esquimalt has the authority to provide effective management and delivery of services in a manner that is responsive to community needs.</p> <p>Citizens depend on the municipality to provide numerous services that keep the community running, including the delivery of fire and rescue services, storm water and sewer services, and public information. This Plan supports the continuation of governance and key municipal functions even in the most extreme circumstances.</p>

## Emergency Plans

Departmental Emergency Plans and Procedures

The Emergency plans and Procedures are intended to provide guidance for various circumstances where a pre-planned and rapid response to a specific emergency is required and are department specific.

This procedural framework is learned, practiced and put into operation by all departments before and during an emergency and is the responsibility of all departments to learn and practice the plans and procedures in place.

## Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) Readiness

Continue to test EOC equipment and supplies for optimal response capability

Esquimalt's primary EOC is located Council Chambers. An EOC closet is stocked with function specific bins of equipment and supplies, including position checklists and aids for EOC staff, to ensure prompt set up of the EOC for response to an emergency.

The EOC computers, satellite phone, and radio station equipment adjacent to the EOC are tested on a monthly basis to ensure operational communications with other EOCs in the region as well as Emergency Management British Columbia (EMBC).

Equipment and supplies will be purchased for the secondary EOC site located at the public works with an estimated completion date of late 2017. A tabletop will be conducted to test set up and functionality of the secondary site.

Coordinate emergency stockpile of basic supplies for EOC staff

A supply of seven days worth of food for EOC staff is maintained to ensure that the EOC can remain operational following an emergency.

Staff Preparedness

In 2017 all staff that requires them will be provided a starter emergency kit backpack with resources. This will ensure they have the supplies and plans in place in order to ensure that staff is prepared to respond following an emergency or disaster. Following this roll out, all new employees will receive a starter kit.

Lunch and learn preparedness workshops are offered to staff over the course of the year, and a preparedness module is included in E-Learning.

Emergency program staff also delivers preparedness information to any department that requests it.

Build organizational EM leadership

The Emergency Program continues to work with all Esquimalt Departments to build organizational emergency management leadership at the Township through training opportunities and exercises.

## Exercises and Training

Coordinate emergency management training for staff, volunteers, and partner agencies

EMBC offers a number of courses throughout the year which staff can attend as new or refresher training. These courses are completed in conjunction with in-house training.

In 2016, Council approved a supplementary budget item for development of E-Learning emergency management training. This allows for delivery of emergency management training when it is required and there is no need to wait for courses to be offered. This flexibility also allows for staff to complete training from their workstation with a follow up face to face session to reinforce learning and answer questions. The training modules will be rolled out in late spring.

One component of the training is an element specific to recreation staff and outlines the basic role and function of Emergency Social Services in the Township, and how recreation staff can assist to ensure a better understanding when the two groups need to work together.

The EEP hosted several courses and sent staff to additional off site courses – metrics can be found in previous year period reports.

Coordinate exercises for staff, volunteer and partner agencies

Tabletop interagency exercises are coordinated at least once per year, usually in the form of a tabletop with the Emergency Planning Committee.

The exercise and training focus in 2017 will be Evacuation planning and execution following completion of the Evacuation Plan update. The EEP will provide staff, external agencies, and volunteers with the opportunity to review evacuation resources. All resources and training will be tested during a fall exercise.

Annually, the Township participates in the Great British Columbia ShakeOut, with each department exercising a component of their emergency plans and procedures. In 2016 the focus was communications with a staff safety check in and a mock activation of the EOC.

Provide opportunities for staff members to enhance their emergency management skillset.

Staff members participated in external exercises this year, which offers staff the opportunity to learn from other municipalities and each other. These exercises are often in conjunction with training.

External exercises included: Exercise Coastal Response (Province-wide EMBC exercise), and several with the Department of National Defense.

## Public Safety Lifeline Volunteer Programs

Improve efficiency of Esquimalt emergency response by strengthening response-specific volunteer groups.

### Esquimalt Emergency Social Services (ESS) Team

The Township of Esquimalt Emergency Social Services (ESS) team is made up of a group of 21 dedicated and highly trained volunteers who are responsible for our legislated responsibility to coordinate short-term (up to 72 hours), basic emergency assistance to residents evacuated from their homes due to an emergency or disaster.

Esquimalt ESS Volunteers are responsible for:

- opening and operating Reception Centres to aid people affected by a disaster providing a referral service to place evacuees in local lodging facilities
- providing registration and inquiry information to the Red Cross to help re-unite families
- providing food to victims, volunteers, and workers affected by the emergency
- arranging for distribution of basic clothing to those who require it
- providing personal services, such as counselling, and meeting special needs, as required
- planning for Group Lodging Facilities (shelters), as needed
- maintaining ESS supplies for reception centres or group lodging - the team currently has supply capacity for two reception centres and one group lodging facility
- maintaining facility use agreements for non-Township locations

ESS is supported by the Provincial government through EMBC which provides free training courses to volunteers.

The Esquimalt team meets at least once a month to go over procedures; exercise plans, and participates in regional exercises at least twice per year. All volunteers receive the same type of training so they are able to provide mutual aid to other local authorities when necessary. This has happened on occasion with large apartment fires where an extended response is necessary. Metrics on Team course attendance and callouts can be found in period reports.

### Emergency Radio Communications (ERC) Team

The ERC team is comprised of 7 dedicated amateur (HAM) radio volunteers that meet weekly and practice with the Province and EOCs in the Region, to ensure communications capacity when all other communications modes fail. The Emergency Program is continually investing in infrastructure and equipment upgrades to ensure communications capacity following an emergency.

### Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Program (NEPP)

The NEPP provides emergency preparedness information to the public by attending local events, delivering presentations and seminars, and liaising with community groups. Please see "Public Education" for details.

## Public Education

### Promote emergency preparedness in Esquimalt

#### **Emergency Preparedness (EP) Week**

The Township participates annually during EP week with information sessions for residents and staff, provides volunteers for the Juan de Fuca EP display, and encourages residents to get prepared through social media and contests.

#### **The ShakeZone Quake Cottage**

The EEP hosted the ShakeZone Quake Cottage earthquake simulator that saw other emergency preparedness organizations present with information booths, and an Esquimalt Emergency Preparedness booth staffed with 3 volunteers. The event was a huge success with more than 320 people experiencing a simulated earthquake in the Quake Cottage. The event will take place again in fall of 2017.

#### **Community Events**

Throughout the year the NEPP actively engages with and provides emergency management information to the community. Historically the NEPP has been represented at various events including the Fire Department Open House, the Esquimalt Farmer's Market, the Esquimalt Block Party, Country Grocer Customer Appreciation Day, and other events.

#### **Emergency Preparedness and Information Sessions**

The NEPP provides free emergency preparedness session to any resident group that is interested in having them. Sessions have been provided to various seniors' homes, strata's, church groups, Block Watch groups, parent education nights at schools, and other community groups. The NEPP also puts on scheduled information sessions at the Municipal Hall for families and individuals requiring preparedness information, as well on specific topics such as tsunami or pet preparedness. 2017 saw the delivery of presentations to more than 220 residents.

#### **Neighbourhood Damage Assessment (NDA) Program**

Rolling out in the summer of 2017, residents will have the opportunity to take the NDA program that will help them to identify unsafe conditions in their neighbourhood following an earthquake. The program is based off of the Cowichan Valley Regional District format, and was adjusted to this area through a working group of the Local Government Emergency Program Advisory Commission.

#### **Grade 4 Program**

Annually, staff and NEPP volunteers deliver emergency preparedness presentations to classes at L'Ecole Victor Brodeur and Macaulay elementary schools. In 2016 this was to a total of 145 students. Each student received printed materials to take home as well as an emergency program backpack containing items to start their own grab n go kit.

#### **The Great British Columbia ShakeOut**

The Township participates in this annual drill and encourages residents to get prepared through social media and contests.

## Local Stakeholder Collaboration and Engagement

### Annual Esquimalt Emergency Stakeholder Forum

The Emergency Planning Committee is responsible for coordinating an annual Esquimalt Emergency Stakeholder meeting to ensure that there is a common understanding of the agencies and people that we will work with during and after an emergency. 2016 was the first forum which saw attendance from 40 stakeholders within the community, along with presentations from the Esquimalt Emergency Program, Emergency Management BC, the Victoria Police Department, and Esquimalt Fire Rescue.

## Provincial and Regional Emergency Management Collaborations

### Emergency Management British Columbia (EMBC)

The EEP collaborated and provided input to working groups with EMBC on the refresh and roll out of British Columbia Emergency Management System (BCEMS), Emergency Program Act update and response and recovery financial guidelines update.

### Local Government Emergency Program Advisory Commission (LG EPAC)

The LG EPAC is an advisory commission of the CRD board and meets on a monthly basis to discuss emergency management topics of a regional nature relative to local government, and to collaborate on regional initiatives. It is made up of an emergency representative from each local authority and electoral area in the Region.

EEP staff chairs the Evacuation Planning Working Group which is developing common tools, training, and procedures for use in the Region to ensure consistency in evacuations when mutual aid is required. Staff is a member of the Public Information Working Group which has created a variety of public education tools including a regional emergency preparedness workbook, a regional website, and social media videos. Staff is a member of the Regional Emergency Management Partnership working group that facilitated a new agreement with EMBC – please see below for details.

### Regional Emergency Program Advisory Commission (REPAC)

The REPAC is an advisory commission of the CRD board and meets on a quarterly basis to share emergency management information and to network with other stakeholders in the Region. Staff is Vice-Chair of the Commission and has participated on the Regional Disaster Response Transportation working group, Regional social media working group, and Regional Disaster Recovery.

### Regional Emergency Management Partnership

A MOU for a regional emergency management partnership (REMP) to further encourage and support regional emergency planning initiatives has been signed between the CRD and EMBC, and the strategic plan has been ratified.

### Evacuation Planning Project

The EEP collaborated with 10 emergency managers from comparable jurisdictions in the Province to develop a suite of deliverables including evacuation response kits, evacuation quick reference guide, and public education materials. These deliverables were tested in a multiagency joint exercise in the sea-to-sky corridor, and have been adapted for use the CRD.