



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 3, 2021

New emergency alert and notification system launched for Cowichan region

DUNCAN, BC – The Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD), its partner municipalities and First Nations have launched a new and improved system to send emergency alerts and advisories to residents and visitors to the Cowichan region.

Cowichan Alert is a robust yet easy-to-use platform for ensuring the timely delivery of information to residents, covering everything from fires and floods to road closures. Cowichan Alert is powered by Alertable and is centred around a free app that residents can download on their smartphones, smart devices and home computers. Through the Alertable app, users have the ability to personalize their notifications by type, severity and location, ensuring they are only receiving information that is relevant to them.

“This new system will improve the ability of local governments and emergency agencies in the Cowichan Valley to get critical and timely information into the hands of residents,” said Aaron Stone, Chair of the Cowichan Valley Regional District. “It is our hope that every resident and business owner signs-up so they can stay informed about what’s happening in our communities, avoid dangerous situations and potentially even save lives.”

Cowichan Alert is a tool provided under the regional emergency program service, available to four municipalities, nine electoral areas and all First Nation partners. This means that staff from all partnering local governments and First Nations have the ability to provide alerts and notifications specifically to their residents, as well as send region-wide alerts as required. Residents can sign up for phone, text and email alerts, however phone and text will only be used in life-threatening and imminent emergencies. Residents are encouraged to download the Alertable app to subscribe to the full suite of notifications available.

“Signing up to receive emergency alerts is an essential step in being prepared for an emergency,” said April Diver, Emergency Program Coordinator for the Cowichan Valley Regional District. “Emergency alerts will provide critical information for residents and visitors so they can take action to protect themselves and others in an incident, freeing up valuable time for emergency responders to focus on those who really need help.”

More than 1,000 Canadian communities currently use Alertable, and it has been successfully used in a wide range of emergencies and day-to-day events. During the pandemic, Alertable has been used by local governments for contact tracing, closures, physical distancing reminders, PPE donation drives, community surveys and more.

“Over the past number of years, we have seen an increased need to update information-sharing capabilities during emergencies in our region,” said Al Siebring, Mayor of North Cowichan. “From flooding to windstorms and the ongoing potential for wildfires, it's critical that our residents be



given every opportunity to stay as up to date as possible when emergencies happen. It is important that North Cowichan residents understand that Alertable will not immediately replace our existing e-alert system, but residents are encouraged to sign up for the new system as it's an innovative way to provide seamless integration of notifications across the entire Regional District.”

To sign up for Cowichan Alert and download the Alertable app, go to www.cowichanalert.ca

- 30 -

For more information, please contact:

Kris Schumacher
Manager, Communications & Engagement
250.701.2631
kris.schumacher@cvrd.bc.ca