

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 1, 2023

Cowichan Community Centre to serve as emergency warming centre for winter 2023/2024

DUNCAN, BC – The Cowichan Community Centre (CCC) has been designated as the regional emergency warming centre for the upcoming winter season as an emergency response measure to cold winter temperatures.

The Heritage Hall, located on the second floor of the Cowichan Community Centre (CCC) in the Municipality of North Cowichan, will serve as the warming centre space as required between December 1, 2023 and March 31, 2024. The Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) Board of Directors made the decision, related to Bill 31 of the Disaster and Emergency Management Act of BC, as a means to support the unhoused population in the Cowichan region during extreme weather conditions.

The emergency warming centre will be activated when temperatures fall to 2 degrees Celsius or below, coupled with adverse weather conditions such as high wind, rain, or snow. This scenario occurred on 24 occasions during the 2022/2023 winter season. Lookout Housing and Health Society will be contracted to manage the Heritage Hall emergency warming centre, and are recognized as an experienced emergency shelter operator. When activated, the centre is anticipated to be open for 12 hours overnight, with operating hours to be determined.

The CVRD will be cancelling all other use of the Heritage Hall between December 1, 2023 and March 31, 2024. The CVRD will issue public notice in advance of activating the emergency warming centre for the first time, including the hours of operation, anticipated duration, and any other pertinent information related to its operation. The CVRD and Emergency Management Cowichan will also continue to work with community partners to find a more suitable, dedicated location to provide this necessary emergency response measure.

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