

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Emergency response in progress for industrial fire near corner of TCH and Cedar Road

NORTH OYSTER, BC – Fire departments from communities across the Cowichan Valley and the Regional District of Nanaimo are battling a blaze at an industrial site just south of the Nanaimo Airport.

Over 70 firefighters are on scene battling the fire, located on the property of Schnitzer Steel Canada. The fire is being fueled by contaminated material, including a large pile of tires. The fire is projected to spread to neighbouring private property, and evacuations of the immediate area are imminent.

Groundwater contamination as a result of the fire is a significant concern and highly likely based on current assessments from crews on the ground. Representatives from the BC Ministry of Environment are on scene, as are those from Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA). The Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations groundwater monitoring department has been alerted, and it is anticipated that VIHA will issue a boil water order for properties in the area.

Air quality is also a concern given the contaminated material ablaze, and the public is advised to avoid the area if at all possible.

The Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) has activated its Emergency Operations Centre at Level 1, and staff from the Emergency Management division is coordinating the response and liaising with partner agencies. Further updates will be posted to the CVRD website at www.cvrld.bc.ca as they become available, and on the CVRD Facebook page at www.facebook.com/mycvrd.

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