

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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UPDATE: Spread of fire in North Oyster contained, groundwater contamination remains a threat to surrounding properties

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

Approximately 50 firefighters from over 8 departments remain on scene battling the fire on the property of Schnitzer Steel Canada. Fire crews are presently gaining control of the fire that is being fueled by contaminated material, including a tire pile that continues to burn down. The threat of the fire exposure to adjacent properties and structures is lessening as wind speed and direction have improved favourably since the fire began.

Groundwater contamination as a result of firefighting efforts remains a significant concern. The Representatives from the BC Ministry of Environment are on scene, Vancouver Island Health Authority, and the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations groundwater monitoring department are on scene and coordinating their respective responses. Residents of North Oyster, Cedar and the Town of Ladysmith are asked to avoid water use as emergency crews draw on reservoirs to fight the fire.

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

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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