

EXTREME WEATHER SHELTER FOR OCEANSIDE REGION

Parksville, BC: On behalf of the Oceanside Task Force on Homelessness, the City of Parksville is pleased to announce that the Salvation Army will once again operate an extreme weather response shelter for the Oceanside region.

When activated, the extreme weather shelter will be partially funded by BC Housing, the Salvation Army and the Oceanside Task Force on Homelessness. Funding for the shelter is available from November 1, 2011 to March 31, 2012.

Operated by the Salvation Army and housed in the Salvation Army Church at 187 Alberni Highway, Parksville, the shelter will be open from 6 pm until 8 am on nights of inclement or extreme weather only. Clients will be provided with cots, blankets, pillows and an evening meal and breakfast.

In February 2011, the task force received approval from BC Housing to operate an extreme weather shelter for the balance of the cold weather season. The shelter was open for eleven days in February 2011 due to snow and cold temperatures.

The protocol for the Oceanside region extreme weather shelter is standard for extreme weather shelters on the Island. Implementation of the extreme weather response plan will be called when weather conditions are deemed severe enough to present a substantial threat to the life or health of homeless persons. Extreme weather conditions are defined as:

- Temperatures near zero with rainfall that makes it difficult or impossible for homeless people to remain dry
- Sleet/freezing rain
- Snow accumulation
- Sustained high winds
- Temperatures at or below minus 2 Celsius, taking into account wind chill

The Oceanside Task Force on Homelessness was formed in May 2010 by the City of Parksville with representation from many organizations and service providers in the Oceanside region. In May 2011, the task force conducted a census of homeless and at risk homeless people in the Oceanside region. The task force is now co-chaired by Renate Sutherland, executive director of the Society of Organized Services and Major Martin Ketteringham, Salvation Army.

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For more information:

Debbie Tardiff, Communications Officer

250 954-3073