

Oceanside Emergency Social Services A Great Volunteer Opportunity

Meeting for Potential Volunteers

Thursday March 1, 2012 at 2 pm or 7 pm

Parksville Firehall (Upstairs)

The Emergency Social Services (ESS) program provides short term disaster relief across British Columbia in the event of fires, floods, earthquakes or other emergencies. Oceanside ESS depends on community volunteers to plan and provide for the essential needs of individuals, families and response workers. This may include food, lodging, clothing, emotional support and finding loved ones. The task of planning for disasters requires energy and creativity and depends on the commitment and dedication of many volunteers.

Please consider attending one of the information sessions on March 1, at either 2 pm or 7 pm to find out how you can help in an emergency.

How Can You Help? The Oceanside area needs your help to prepare for emergencies. Oceanside ESS volunteers:

- inform community businesses of the program
- identify and maintain Reception Centres and Group Lodging sites
- recruit and train more volunteers
- complete contact lists and exercise the emergency plan
- inform the public of help available following a disaster

More volunteers are always needed and welcomed. Disaster work offers a unique opportunity to help others when help is needed most. Working in this field challenges volunteers to stretch their own limits and potential. The Oceanside team needs volunteers who:

- have a concern for people affected by disaster, and want to help
- have good communication skills
- are able to respond on short notice
- are flexible and work well as part of a team
- are in good health
- have a sense of adventure

No specific skills are required to become a volunteer. However, skills such as volunteer management, interviewing and second languages are great assets.

What are some of the rewards in ESS?

- **Making a Difference:** You are part of a team that provides lodging, food and a shoulder to lean on when disaster forces people from their homes.
- **Training:** Offered through the Justice Institute and Support Organizations, training includes Reception Centre Operations, Family Reunification, Disaster Child Care and others.
- **Recognition:** Volunteers form the backbone of ESS. Recognition of their efforts may take many forms, including volunteer appreciation events, certificates, awards or letters from local government or provincial government, in addition to expressions of appreciation from peers, community members and those they have helped.
- **Protection:** All ESS volunteers receive Workers' Compensation Board and liability insurance coverage while on assignment.

For further information contact:

Tom Williams, Oceanside Emergency Social Services

oess@shaw.ca

250 954-3411

PO Box 1390, 132 East Jensen Avenue East, Parksville, BC V9P 2H3