

## Parksville-Qualicum Beach Community Update

So far this month, the west coast of BC has seen its share of rain and wind with the prediction of more storms to come. Windstorms generally seem to be stronger and as we saw recently, an extremely rare tornado near UBC which seems to indicate more extreme weather for our region.

So, all this begs the question, are you prepared for winter storms and power outages? BC Hydro PowerSmart recently released the results of a survey conducted across BC showing how preparedness for storm-related power outages varies across the province. This report is worth a skim – some interesting facts as well as solutions and checklists to be better prepared for what may well be a challenging storm season ahead.

- Vancouver Islanders are a close second (to those living in Lower Mainland) in preparation, with 58 per cent reporting taking steps to prepare for outages, and 53 per cent having an emergency kit.
- However, just 22 per cent of Vancouver Islanders think their region is the most prepared overall for storm-related outages.

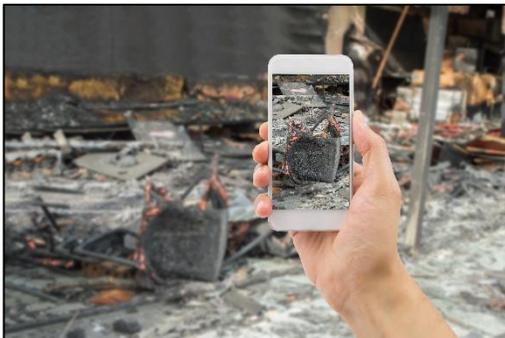
### Ready, set, storm

How preparedness for storm-related power outages vary across BC



The survey also included some stats about our reliance on mobile phones.

- During a storm-related power outage, 65% of Vancouver Islanders said it was important or very important to have access to their cellular phone.
- Although the report doesn't provide stats for us Islanders, it does say that 13% of Lower Mainlanders would rather go without their partner for a day during a power outage than their cellphone. Seriously...



### **Communicating In An Emergency**

After a disaster you will want to confirm your family and friends are safe. It may be difficult to make phone calls because of the damage to infrastructure and the sheer volume of people calls.

Try text messaging on your mobile phone. A text message may get through even when the voice component of the cellular network is congested. Short text messages are sent via the cell-site control channel, which is always available, rather than over the limited number of voice channels available for telephone calls.

Making use of email and social media sites are also part of a good emergency communication plan. You can predefine who you want to contact with your status. In recent disasters, these methods have proven to be excellent ways to communicate.

### **Before an Emergency**

The use of "out of area" contacts is another effective way to communicate. Although local phone systems may be tied-up after a disaster, long distance circuits are often unaffected and can be used effectively to check on your loved ones.

- Ask a relative or friend who lives out-of-province to be your out-of-area contact. This person will be your "message board" after an emergency or disaster.
- Print and complete an out-of-area contact card with your contact's name and phone number for each family member to carry in their wallet, purse or backpack. Obtain two contacts if possible.
- Put your "out of area" contact number in your mobile phone contact list as well. The stress of a disaster event may make it difficult to remember routine phone numbers.
- Tell your family and friends who live outside BC to call your "out of area" contact to share information about you and your family after a disaster. This will help to relieve some of the congestion on the local telephone system.

### **After an Emergency**

- You may not hear from anyone within the first several hours following a disaster. It could take up to 24 hours or longer for a family member to get access to a phone line.
- When it is safe to do so, try contacting loved ones via text message or email to report in where you are and where you plan to be.
- If able, call your out-of-area contact and report in. Find out if other family members have checked in. Indicate when you will try calling again. Keep your calls short.

### **Stay Connected Online**

For those active on social media, in addition to EMO, you may wish to consider following these organizations on Facebook. Next month we will share the best emergency Twitter accounts to follow.



@EmergencyInfoBC  
@DestinationBC  
@BCGovWildfireInfo  
@PreparedBC  
@Get\_Prepared  
@DriveBC  
@RoadSafetyBC  
@CDCofBC  
@ECCCWeatherBC  
@BCForestFireInf

### **We Remember, November 11**



## Town of Qualicum Beach

Town Hall is open to the public with full services. Hours of operation are Monday to Friday, 9 am to 4 pm (except statutory holidays).

Although the office is open, residents are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the other payment options including payment through your financial institution; mail a cheque; or drop off a cheque at Town Hall drop box (location below). During utility billing, for online or telephone banking payments, select “Qualicum Beach, Town of - Utilities” as the payee and enter your account number. Please contact your branch if you require assistance. If you do wish to visit Town Hall to conduct business, masks are mandatory while in the building.

- Email [qbtown@qualicumbeach.com](mailto:qbtown@qualicumbeach.com)
- Phone 250 752-6921
- Post PO Box 130, Qualicum Beach V9K 1S7
- Mail Slot Out front of Town Hall, nearest the fountain
- [Website](#)

## City of Parksville

City Hall is open to the public from 8 am to 4 pm and our operations department is open 8 am to 4 pm and closed noon to 1 pm. Information for the public when visiting:

- Entrance to the Parksville Civic and Technology Centre is from Jensen Avenue East only.
- Masks are mandatory while in the building.
- Staff may elect to meet with the public either in-person or virtually and in-person meetings will comply with protocols on distancing and masks.
- For now, access to the Vancouver Island Library continues to be the outside entrance, east parking lot.
- Main floor washrooms are open for public use.
- The public is welcome to attend Council meetings in-person; however, attendance is limited. Meetings are webstreamed, live and archived, from the City’s [website](#).
- If sick, please stay home.
- Refer to the City [website](#) and [Let’s Talk Parksville](#) for more information.

[BC Centre for Disease Control  
Island Health](#)

[Vaccine info](#) - 1 833 838-2323

Medical COVID-19 information - 811

[Proof of vaccination info](#)

### For more information:

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[emergencyoceanside.ca](http://emergencyoceanside.ca)

