

Parksville-Qualicum Beach Community Update

Are You Wildfire Ready?

A province wide state of emergency came into effect at midnight, July 20. The state of emergency is in response to ongoing wildfires burning across BC. The province previously declared states of emergencies linked to fires in 2003, 2017 and 2018. The state of emergency was based on the advice of experts and due in part to the significant stretch of dry weather that is forecast. There are currently 299 wildfires burning in the province, 37 of which are highly visible or a threat to public safety.

British Columbia is experiencing an extremely active and catastrophic wildfire season and emergency preparedness officials are encouraging us all to be prepared to protect yourself and your family. Wildfires can spark anywhere at anytime, forcing people to be away from home for an extended period. Vancouver Island has not seen the same devastation from wildfires as many other areas in the province; however, these events along with any natural disaster can happen in our own backyard and without notice.



Wildfires that burn in areas away from houses or infrastructure can have ecological benefits to the landscape; however, those that burn out of control near urban areas can cause devastating damage to homes, businesses, and vital infrastructure. If you live in an area at risk of a wildfire, please refer to the BC Wildfire status [website](#). It is important to take time to get ready; be better prepared by understanding what to do [before](#), [during](#) and [after](#) a wildfire. These links provide information that will help you understand the stages and how you can protect your health and safety.

[Wildfire Preparedness Guide](#) will help you prepare your household, protect your property and understand what to do if there is risk of wildfire.

Campfire Ban in Effect

A campfire ban has been in effect since June 30. Campfires, Category 2 and Category 3 open fires are prohibited throughout the province. Until further notice, all open burning, including campfires, beach fires, and fireworks, are prohibited within the Parksville and Qualicum Beach Fire Protection areas to help prevent human-caused wildfires and protect public safety.

To report a fire:

- Fire emergency (threat to lives and/or property) - 911
- Open fire in the Qualicum Beach Fire Protection Area - 250 752-6232
- Open fire in the Parksville Fire Protection Area - 250 248-3242
- Beach fires - 1877 952-7277 (RAPP line)
- Wildfire reporting - 1 800 663-5555 or *5555 on cell





EMO’s HRVA Document

In 2019, the Regional District of Nanaimo, Town of Qualicum Beach and the City of Parksville partnered to undertake a Hazard, Risk and Vulnerability Analysis (HRVA). The purpose of a HRVA is to “help community leaders make risk-based choices to address vulnerabilities, mitigate hazards and prepare for response and recovery from emergencies” (EMBC, 2004).

Risk assessments, such as HRVAs, are a regulatory requirement of local governments. This HRVA provides a comparison of risks posed to the region across the full spectrum of hazards, including natural, technological, and conflict-related hazards. By providing a view of the relative risks across all hazards, local decision-makers are better able to prioritize risk management and emergency preparedness activities by focusing on the hazards that pose the greatest risk.

Community engagement was a key component of the risk assessment with engagement sessions held to help identify potential hazards, gather perceptions of hazard consequences, and explore local vulnerabilities and resiliency strategies. These sessions also served to strengthen inter-agency relationships and build a shared understanding of risks posed to the region. Engagement participants included representatives from government and non-government agencies, first responders, Indigenous community members, industry stakeholders, neighbouring community members, and subject matter experts.

We have provided a link to the [HRVA](#) on the EMO website. Should you have questions, please email info@emergencycoastside.ca

Voyent Alert!

In the event of an emergency or natural disaster, we can never be too prepared. *Voyent Alert!* is a multi- purpose communication service used to send alerts to residents, businesses and visitors during critical events such as floods, wildfires or other emergencies in the region. The City of Parksville and Town of Qualicum Beach use the notification system for a variety of non-critical notifications specific to each municipality.



Registration for the service is FREE, simple and anonymous.

- For mobile app alerts download and install the *Voyent Alert!* app from the Apple or Google Play app stores.
- For email, text message or voice call alerts register [online](#).

Building Your Emergency Kits – Be Prepared

Having an emergency kit and a grab-and-go bag on hand will help prepare you and your family with the essentials needed in the event a shelter-in-place or evacuation alert or order is issued. Being prepared means having [food](#), [water](#) and other [supplies](#) to last for several days in the event of an emergency.

What’s the difference between an emergency kit and grab-and-go bag?

An **emergency kit** is a collection of tools and supplies which will be used in an emergency to stay at home such as an earthquake, severe storm or hazardous materials spill and should contain everything you need for everyone in your home to stay safe and comfortable for three to seven days.



Grab-and-go bag is a smaller version of your emergency kit that should be carried with you should you need to evacuate during some types of emergencies such as floods, landslides, wildfires and tsunamis where you may not be able to return home or will need to evacuate. Ideally everyone in your home should have their very own customized bag.

Building kits need not be expensive or take a lot of time. Just remember to consider the unique needs of your household, such as including specific items for pets or for seniors.

Check out these videos by [Prepared BC](#)
[How to Build Your Emergency Kit](#)
[What to Pack in Your Grab-and-go Bag.](#)



COVID-19 INFO

We are now in Step 3 of the BC Restart Plan, which sees a return to normal for indoor and outdoor personal gatherings. Should case counts and hospitalization rates continue to decline, Step 4 could come into effect as early as September 7. Info on BC's Restart Plan steps is available [here](#).

Mask or no mask?

Remember! Masks are recommended in indoor public places for everyone 12 and older who are not yet fully vaccinated. Here are things to consider:

- Masks are optional for children ages 2 to 12.
- Children under two years should not wear masks.
- Proof of vaccination does not need to be requested by service providers.
- Some people may choose to continue to wear a mask after they're fully vaccinated and that's okay.



Recreational Travel and COVID-19

Interprovincial recreational travel within Canada is now allowed. This includes travel for vacations, visiting family or friends for social reasons, and recreation activities. Some communities which rely on tourism are eager to welcome returning visitors. While some regions are moving full steam ahead, some are still hesitant to welcome tourists.

Travellers are asked to plan and be respectful while visiting communities, especially smaller and rural travel destinations, as well as Indigenous communities. Please respect local travel advisories. Here are some tips for a safe trip:

- Support small businesses when you can.
- Adhere and respect communicable disease plans.
- Plan before you leave and arrive at your destination prepared.
- Be water wise, many smaller communities have a very limited water supply in the summer months.
- Respect and adhere to the provincial fire ban now in effect.
- Be kind. More travel manners and guidelines to follow during summer trips available [here](#).



Vaccination Program

Everyone 12 years or older can make an appointment to be vaccinated. Register online or phone and your confirmation number will be used to book. Please refer to Island Health's [website](#) for info or phone 1 833 838-2323 to book an appointment.

Resources

[BC Centre for Disease Control](#)

[Island Health](#)

Vaccine registration - 1 833 838-2323; <https://immunizebc.ca/covid-19>

Medical COVID-19 information - 811

GENERAL INFO

From the 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 from 9 am to 4 pm, 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). If you do wish to attend at Town Hall to conduct business, masks are mandatory at this time.

Contact is by these methods:

Email	gbtown@qualicumbeach.com
Phone	250 752-6921
Post	PO Box 130, Qualicum Beach V9K 1S7
Mail Slot	Out front of Town Hall, nearest the fountain (660 Primrose Street)
Website	qualicumbeach.com

From the City of Parksville

The City is aligned with Step 3 of the BC Restart plan and our services have returned to regular pre-COVID hours of operation. 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:

- Entrance to the Parksville Civic and Technology Centre is from Jensen Avenue East only, with a one-way system in place to reduce contacts. Exit is through the cenotaph doors.
- Masks are strongly recommended 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 physical 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 beginning with the September 8 meeting. Meetings are webstreamed from the City's website.
- If sick, stay home and get tested.
- Refer to the City [website](#) and [Let's Talk Parksville](#) for more information.

For more information:

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