

MEDIA RELEASE

City of Williams Lake



For Immediate Release

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450 Mart Street
Williams Lake, BC
V2G 1N3

City Implements Heat Alert Response Protocol

The City of Williams Lake has developed and implemented a heat alert protocol to respond to heat warnings and heat emergencies in the region.

The protocol allows the City to share information from its partners and to educate and inform residents on how they can best prepare for and react to heat warnings and extreme heat events.

Under the Province's *Emergency Program Act*, the City is required to prepare and plan for local emergency events. B.C.'s heat alert response coordination is led by Province's Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness, Environment and Climate Change Canada and BC Public Health.

When a heat warning or extreme heat event is issued by Environment and Climate Change Canada, the City will activate its heat alert response protocol.

This will include ensuring indoor cooling spaces are open and available, promoting neighbourhood wellbeing checks and sharing important information from BC heat alert and response system messaging prior to, during and after activations through the City's social media channels, website and in the community.

"The City of Williams Lake is working with community partners to actively prepare for extreme heat events," said Dave Dickson, Director of Emergency Support Services.

"By working together and staying prepared, Williams Lake residents can beat the heat and enjoy a safe summer season. A small act of kindness or a simple check-in on a neighbour can make all the difference in someone's well-being during extreme heat events."

Williams Lake is a part of the Central Interior region included in Environment and Climate Change Canada's BC Heat Alert and Response System (BC HARS), developed following the heat dome event in 2021.

In Williams Lake, a heat warning is issued when the daytime high temperature is forecast to be 29C or greater and the nighttime low temperature does not drop below 14C for two or more days in a row. An extreme heat emergency notification means temperatures have reached dangerously high levels and the risk to public health is very high.

The Cariboo Memorial Recreation Complex will be available as the City's official site for an indoor cooling centre when a heat warning has been issued. The CMRC will be open to residents and can provide cooling relief daily until 8 pm.

City staff at the CMRC can also provide answers to common questions such as how to prepare your home and yourself prior to a heat warning or extreme heat event, health check tips to identify heat-related illness, cooling and relief options in the community and what to do in the event of a heat emergency. If you have any questions, or require assistance, call the CMRC at 250-398-7665. In the event of an emergency, residents are asked to call 9-1-1.

Other considerations for cooling include the Seniors Activity Centre, Cariboo Community Church, Salvation Army, retail outlets and restaurants.

Residents can also stay informed by signing up for the City's Everbridge Alert system at:
<https://www.williamslake.ca/999/Emergency-Notification-System>

For tips on how to stay safe and cool during a heat warning or extreme heat event visit
<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2021PSSG0043-001226> or visit the City's Heat Alert Response website at
<https://www.williamslake.ca/1003/Heat-Alert-Response-Protocol>.

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