



A QUARTERLY COMMUNITY SAFETY UPDATE FROM YOUR LECA EMC

Community Safety - *Our number one priority*

Dear LECA Members,

It's been a long haul wading our way through COVID-19. However, as we've all been waiting for, there appears to be light at the end of the tunnel, as infection numbers begin to decline, and restrictions (hopefully) will begin to be lifted. In light of all this, it's important that we all stick together and stay the course, abide by Provincial Health guidelines, and continue to keep our community safe.

We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank our team from the LECA FireSmart program: Jim Dubois, Al Rozek, Linda Smith, Bill Crum, Jim Grayston, Travis Szepesi and Michael Arding. We extend a huge "Thank You" to them, for their endless hours of volunteer work and dedication to our FireSmart Program.

► EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

As an introduction, the LECA Board has created a new Committee dedicated to our Communities safety. This committee will encompass the current FireSmart group, each Block Watch Group in our area and emergency preparedness. We have held our first meeting and all agree that this is an important element to our community safety.

Being prepared and acting on it requires some willing and able-bodied persons who would like to sign up to be trained in basic wildland fire suppression, evacuations and being a first responder in times of emergencies.

We will be putting together two Quick Response Teams of up to 7 people each who will be trained on all the duties mentioned above and in times of emergencies called to the initial response to a forest fire and any other emergency duties in keeping our community safe. Training will come from Vernon Fire Rescue and Search and Rescue.

If this is something you could commit to and you are a LECA member, please send your email contact information to: rborisenko@vernon.ca

He will send you an application and a brief job description of the duties.

Unlike last year at this time, we have not experienced a significant amount of rainfall. The current forest fire rating for our region is moderate, but this can very easily shift to high if we don't get some substantial precipitation in the near future. Forest fuels are dry, resulting in an increased risk of fires starting easily.

For further information or to access the BC Forest Fire information dashboard:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/wildfire-status>

To report a wildfire or irresponsible wildfire risk behaviour, please call 1-800-663-5555 or *5555 from a cell phone.

The official BC Wildfire Service mobile app is now available. This app provides real-time wildfire information and an interactive map, that can be customized to display a variety of fire-related data. Download the app at:

<https://www.vernon.ca/homes-building/fire-safety/emergency-management/wildfires?pl=x4fh4b94aa47f47a46y46m46h4dc46d4di46z00>

► BEING PREPARED

We encourage all residents to think about their personal evacuation plans in the event of a fire evacuation alert or order. Ensure your checklists are in place and your “Grab and Go Kit” or “Evacuation Kit” is reviewed and ready.

3 Steps Household Preparedness

1. Know the risks

Vernon provides information on fire: <https://www.vernon.ca/homes-building/fire-safety/fire-prevention> and wildfire: <https://www.vernon.ca/homes-building/fire-safety/emergency-management/wildfires>

2. Make a plan

A well thought out emergency plan communicated with everyone in your household can save time during an emergency, everyone will know what to do, where to call and how to stay safe if an emergency were to happen. Make sure to review the plan with each member of your household and involve them in the planning process. Keep a copy of this plan in an easy to find and easy to remember place. If you have out-of-

town visitors staying with you during wildfire season – tell them about your plan!

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/embc/preparedbc/preparedbc-guides/preparedbc_household_plan.pdf

3. Take action today

Print this household plan. Fill out the Emergency Contact Information Cards with the out-of-area contact and meeting places (outside of your area of town) that your household will plan to meet up (a friend's house, a school parking lot, a workplace, etc.). Provide a card to everyone in the household to keep in their wallet/purse/school bag/glovebox etc.

Information and a great video on “Preparing a Family Emergency Kit” can be found at: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/preparedbc/build-an-emergency-kit-and-grab-and-go-bag>

Act today if you do not have your grab and go bag organized by starting a list of the important items that you would need to grab if you were home and had a few minutes notice to evacuate. The list may include: eye glasses, medications, cell phone & charger, hearing aids, insurance policies, important documents/photos (paper or flash drive), purse/wallet, keepsakes

► NEIGHBOURHOOD PREPAREDNESS

Neighbourhoods can often be the first level of support for people in large emergencies. Knowing your neighbours is an important step in household emergency planning.

- Get to know each other before you may need their help during an emergency – Be Part of a Block Watch
- Exchange ideas about each other's strengths and resources to cope with the emergency
- Collaborate on plans, including arrangements for alternate transportation needs, supports for pets that may be home alone when disaster strikes, and communication of emergency information

To learn more about neighbourhood emergency preparedness visit: [PreparedBC: Neighbourhood Preparedness Guide](#)

► NATIONAL ALERT READY SYSTEM

In May 2021, provincial and territorial emergency officials across Canada, with the exception of Nunavut, Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, the Northwest Territories and Alberta, conducted tests of the National Public Alert System (NPAS) known as Alert Ready.

This is part of a biannual test of the national Alert Ready system, which was launched in B.C. on April 6, 2018. This testing is designed to assess the system's readiness for an actual emergency and identify any adjustments that need to be made.

Public Emergency Alerting Services Inc. (PEASI) conducted an online survey after the testing asking the Canadian public to provide feedback on alerts received, including test alerts of the Alert Ready System.

Results of the survey can be viewed here:

<https://peasi.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/PEASI-Survey-Report-Alert-Ready-Test-May-5-2021.pdf>

► FIRESMART

If you are Fire Smarting your yard, please don't forget to total up the time spent and send it in to the FireSmart Committee. Those hours will be added to the total time spent on Fire Smarting our community, and will help us maintain our FireSmart Community designation.

If you would like a member of the FireSmart Committee to visit your property and provide you with some feedback and tips on how to FireSmart your property, please contact: rborisenko@vernon.ca

Regan will put you in touch with the FireSmart Champion in your area. The responsibilities are to assist in FireSmart events and planning.

Home Owners:

FireSmart BC partnered with several Art Knapp locations to launch the new FireSmart BC Landscaping Guide. The FireSmart BC Landscaping Guide is meant to help British Columbians make informed choices about how to manage their lawns and gardens to increase resilience to wildfire on their properties. The guide recommends species, property layout, and plant care practices that reduce risk to communities from a variety of hazards.

FireSmart BC Landscaping Guide: https://firesmartbc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/FireSmartBC_LandscapingGuide_Web_v2.pdf

FireSmart BC Check out FireSmart BC's amazing resources online:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/firesmartbc/>

Website: www.FireSmartbc.ca



BC Wildfire Mobile App Now Available: The official BC Wildfire Service mobile app is now available, providing real-time wild-fire information and an interactive map that users can customize to display a variety of fire related data. It is free to download in the App Store and Google Play.

For further details about the BC Wildfire Service mobile app, refer to the online reference guide: <http://ow.ly/dZkr30qDdfM>

Fire Danger Rating Information See the signs or hear about it on the radio and wonder what it means?

Fire Danger Rating	
Status	Description
Low	Fires may start easily and spread quickly but there will be minimal involvement of deeper fuel layers or larger fuels.
Moderate	Forest fuels are drying and there is an increased risk of surface fires starting. Carry out any forest activities with caution.
High	Forest fuels are very dry and the fire risk is serious. New fires may start easily, burn vigorously, and challenge fire suppression efforts. Open burning and industrial activities may be restricted.
Extreme	Extremely dry forest fuels and the fire risk is very serious. New fires will start easily, spread rapidly, and challenge fire suppression efforts. Open burning, industrial activities and campfires may be restricted.



WeatherCan app to receive weather alert notifications as well as latest forecasts. More info: <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/weather-general-tools-resources/weathercan.html>

► **BLOCK WATCH (BW)**

The LECA Block Watch community continues to grow. There is currently 1 Certified Block Watch neighbourhood in LECA. We would like to see each of our Strata’s and freehold areas become a Block Watch.

Information regarding our Block Watch program can be found on the LECA website at: https://www.leca-vernon.ca/uploads/1/2/5/4/125496776/block_watch_faqs_2020.pdf

If you want to start a Block Watch in your strata please contact Regan Borisenko at rborisenko@vernon.ca

► DIRECT COMMUNICATION

To better serve all our LECA members the local representatives will be around in each of your areas to collect your contact information so that we may send these quarterly newsletters directly to our LECA members. This is all voluntary, however, in cases of emergency we would be in a better position to make sure you get the information you need as quickly as possible. The Emergency Management Committee is here to serve and provide education and awareness training to all LECA members. Stay tuned for our first “Emergency Preparedness” course via zoom.

► BEAR WISE

The LECA EMC would like to advise about a variety of wild animals that can be seen within our community. Cougars have been seen in past years, and there have been several recent sightings of bears in the area.

As we move into the summer months and are hiking and walking the trails, be aware that bears are now fully out of hibernation and foraging the area for food. To avoid confrontations with bears and draw them further into the community, please follow the bear wise information.

- Limit bird feeders
- Safely store garbage
- Don't leave pet food outside
- Be aware of your surroundings
- Hike in groups
- Talk, make noise, and carry a safety whistle, bear spray or horn

Please review these excellent resources from the BC Conservation Foundation on Bears:

<https://wildsafebc.com/species/black-bear/?pl=x4fh4b94aa47f47a46y46m46h4dc46d4di46z00>

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/plants-animals-and-ecosystems/conservation-officer-service/whoswhobears.pdf>

If you have suggestions or feedback for the continued success of the Emergency Management Committee, please forward them to rborisenko@telus.net

Sincerely,

Your LECA Emergency Management Committee (LECAEMC)

Jim Dubois - 40 Kestrel Place; Al Rozek - Peregrine Point (Condo's); Linda Smith - Peregrine Point (Condo's) Bill Crum – 30 Phoenix Estates; Mike Arding - Scenic Ridge; Travis Szepesi - Freehold; Regan Borisenko – 47 Phoenix Estates; Jim Grayston