



News Release

Extended Closure at the Sechelt Aquatic Centre

Sechelt, BC – September 15, 2021— Due to vital work required for the safety of users of the Sechelt Aquatic Centre, pools at the facility will remain closed until early November.

Background & reason for extended closure

The closure is required due to the installation of a linear heat detection system that will provide additional fire protection for the building. Issues with the sprinkler system at the facility were discovered earlier this year and were the subject of a [report to the SCRD Board in February 2021](#). While performing maintenance work on the fire sprinkler system, a contractor located microbiologic corrosion in the pipes for the system. An example of this is below.



[At a June 10 SCRD Board](#) meeting, staff presented options to replace the fire sprinkler system. The SCRD Board opted for a phased approach which included the installation of a temporary linear heat detection system as soon as possible, followed by a phased installation of a replacement sprinkler system for the facility in 2022 and 2023.

The linear heat detection system will provide additional fire protection for the facility and will consist of cabling that runs through the facility that can detect changes in heat, ultimately setting off an alarm should a certain temperature be reached.

Due to the corrosion to the sprinkler system piping, it is unknown if the sprinkler system currently in place would respond adequately in an emergency situation, so the linear heat detection system will be integral to safety within the facility.

Why now?

Since the SCRD Board approved a phased approach in June, staff have followed the required procurement process and have recently secured a contractor to complete the work. Supplies have been ordered and work will begin as soon as they are received.

Unfortunately, the timing to secure a qualified contractor and the annual maintenance closure did not align and the work could not be completed at that time. The facility remained closed following the annual maintenance period due to the SCRD's Stage 4 Water Conservation Regulations as directed by [the SCRD's Emergency Operations Centre](#).

Swimming lessons and regular swim times

Recognizing that the closure creates a hardship for our user groups, hours have been extended at the Gibsons and District Aquatic Centre. The Pender Harbour Aquatic and Fitness Centre is also open to recreation users and swimming lessons are offered at both Facilities. Hours for both of these recreation facilities can be found [here on the SCRD Website](#).

Should work proceed on schedule, swimming lessons at the Sechelt Aquatic Centre are expected to begin immediately following the pool reopening in early November. Revised schedules for these lessons and information on how to book will be shared extensively on social media, local media and through the SCRD's website.

Other activities at the Sechelt Aquatic Centre

The weight room / fitness centre will remain open until the linear heat detection system needs to be installed in these areas. At that time, these areas will also close, although it is expected that the closure will only be a week in length. Once the work has started and we are able to confirm project timelines, we will communicate additional information about weight room / fitness room closures and also the anticipated reopening date.

The SCRD has undertaken additional measures to ensure the safety of those using the facility at this time. This has included regular updates with the Sechelt Fire Department and the use of a staff member conducting fire watch. This staff member conducts hourly patrols, checking every room in the facility and also does a walk around of the exterior of the facility.

"We understand the importance of the Sechelt Aquatic Centre to residents in our community and we share your frustration with this extended closure," says Shelley Gagnon, SCRD General Manager of Community Services. "Our staff have worked on every possible scenario to try to minimize the length of time for this closure and we are appreciative of our community's patience as we work to get this vital project completed."

Stay tuned to the [SCRD on Facebook](#) and the [SCRD Website](#) for further updates on this work.

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