



## News Release

### Cooling Centres and Heat Response Plan

Sechelt, BC – July 25, 2022— With high temperatures on the way, the Sunshine Coast Regional District (SCRD) has activated a heat response plan to help our community get prepared and stay cool in the coming days. The SCRD is also asking residents to be mindful of their water use in the coming days to ensure that SCRD infrastructure can meet the demands of the community. Information and advice are all outlined below.

#### Cooling Centres

Beginning at 3 p.m. today and lasting until end of day Friday, the SCRD will open cooling centres. These cooling centres will have a space to sit and get out of the sun. Hours and locations are below.

Gibsons & Area Community Centre – 700 Park Road - [Map](#)

The cooling centre will be located in the main lobby area.

Available 6 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Sechelt Aquatic Centre – 5500 Shorncliffe Avenue - [Map](#)

The cooling centre will be located in the swimming pool viewing area.

Available 6 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Further information on other areas to stay cool in the heat can be found here on the [B.C. Provincial Government website](#) and include shopping malls, libraries and shaded green spaces. At this link you can also find information on how to prepare your home for heat.

“We’re asking residents to take some time today, read the advice provided by the SCRD on our website and on social media and get prepared for the heat,” says Nancy Hughes, SCRD Emergency Coordinator. “We encourage those who need to cool off to make use of the cooling centres and importantly, please check in on neighbours and friends during the week to ensure they have a plan to stay cool.”

#### Heat Related Illnesses

Vancouver Coastal Health has prepared some excellent resources to help identify those at higher risk of heat related illnesses along with information on the signs / symptoms of heat related illnesses. Some of this information is included below. Visit the [Vancouver Coastal Health website](#) for further information.

#### Signs of heat exhaustion include:

- Heavy Sweating
- Dizziness
- Nausea or Vomiting
- Rapid Breathing & Heartbeat
- Headache
- Difficulty Concentrating
- Muscle Cramps
- Extreme Thirst
- New Skin Rash
- Dark Urine & Decreased Urination

Anyone with signs of heat exhaustion should move to a cool space, drink water, and apply cool water to large areas of the skin (cool bath, shower or wet their clothes). Take these steps right away because heat exhaustion can quickly develop into heat stroke, which is a medical emergency.

Signs of heat stroke include:

- High Body Temperature
- Fainting or Drowsiness
- Confusion
- Lack of Coordination
- Very Hot and Red Skin

Heat stroke is a medical emergency. Seek medical attention immediately at an emergency room or urgent care centre. Call 911 if necessary. While waiting for help, cool the person right away by moving them to a cool space if possible, and apply cool water to large areas of the skin (cool bath, shower or wet their clothes).

Protecting yourself and others

- Spending time in a cool space and drinking plenty of water is the best way to prevent heat-related illnesses
- Seek cooler indoor and outdoor spaces (i.e. a local community center, library or mall)
- Use water to cool off by taking a cool shower or putting a part of your body in a cool bath
- Wear a wet shirt or apply damp towels to your skin to cool down
- Drink plenty of water and other liquids to stay hydrated
- Wear loose fitting and light-coloured breathable clothing
- Limit activity, especially during the hottest hours of the day (generally 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. in B.C.)
- Close windows and pull indoor/outdoor shades/blinds around 10 a.m. to trap the cooler air inside and block the sun
- Open windows and doors around 10 p.m. to let the cooler overnight air in (check the outdoor temperature is indeed lower than indoors)
- Use multiple fans strategically to help move cooler air into the home overnight
- Use exhaust fans, usually located in kitchens and bathrooms, to move warmer indoor air to the outside, and open windows to pull in cooler outdoor air overnight
- If you have air conditioning be sure to turn it on
- Monitor indoor temperatures for yourself and those you are checking on
- Watch for symptoms of heat exhaustion and heat stroke

## **Water Use**

During the major heat event last summer, SCRD water infrastructure, including the vital water treatment plant for the Chapman Water System were at capacity. With Stage 2 Water Conservation Regulations on the way this coming Thursday (July 28), residents are asked to be mindful of their water use, both inside and outside the home in the coming days. Tips on how to conserve water can be found [here on the SCRD Website](#).

Stay up to date with information from the SCRD at [www.scrd.ca/alerts](http://www.scrd.ca/alerts)

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