

Community Emergency Preparedness Meeting

At the Community Hall February 17, 2018 at 1:00pm

Present: Howie Siemens, Comox Valley Emergency Program Coordinator; George Doerksen, (CVEP) Deputy Coordinator; Scott Goodman, Comox Valley Emergency Radio Coordinator; HIRRA Executive members and about 56 members of the public.

Introductions (Rob McCreary): Rob thanked the Co-op and HIFR for their donations of refreshments. He welcomed the Comox Valley Emergency Program members.

(George): In the event of an earthquake, duck, cover and hold, count 30 seconds after shaking before exiting building. CVRD Emergency Social Services (ESS) program provides support for evacuees in the first 72 hours after an emergency. Currently Hornby does not have an ESS representative.

CVEP has begun a draft evacuation plan for Hornby, but still needs more information. CVEP works with Ground Search/Rescue and Emergency Radio Communications.

Radio (Scott):

Explained that Emergency Radio communications are the “last responders” who are called in when other forms of communications are down. He brought 2 portable radio set-ups that can be deployed in emergencies. Called for volunteers with Amateur Radio Certificate (ham radio). Volunteers could train on-line and contact Scott to sign up. Cheapest radio set-up would be between \$50 and \$200.

In an emergency, public should listen to regular broadcast radio stations.

People can sign up for emergency notifications via cell phones or e-mail through: www.emergencyinfobc.gov.bc.ca

Presentation (George):

Four pillars of Emergency Management: 1. Prevention/mitigation, 2.

Preparation/education, 3. Response to emergency incidents, 4. Recovery/restoration after incidents.

Education is a key component to prevention/mitigation (e.g. securing stoves and appliances, setting up kits, accessing information).

Hornby Evacuation plan: Finalizing the Evacuation Plan for Hornby includes mapping cell phone reception locations, alternative roads and trails, evacuation muster points, community emergency communication protocol, reception centers, other community resources.

Levels of response: Individuals/households, neighbourhoods/organizations, community (HIFR, ESS, HIRRA), local government (CVRD), provincial government (via Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure), Federal government (military).

In an emergency situation, HIFR can make decisions for a tactical evacuation to protect life and can commandeer resources or access properties in order to do so.

Three steps to preparedness: 1. Know the risks, 2. make a plan, 3. make a kit.

Risks: storms, power-outages, forest fire, earthquake.

Plan: practice fire/earthquake drills, meeting spot, out-of-province contact person, cell phone reception spots, propane and electrical turn-off locations.

Kit: grab and go kit, food and water for a week, critical info stored on-line in the cloud.

Questions from public:

Is Hornby actually at risk of earthquake and/or tsunami?

Cascadia Fault off West Coast likely earthquake zone, possibly as high as magnitude 9. About two and a half hours for wave to reach Hornby: not a high risk. Other scenarios (slump or landslide in the Salish Sea) could be more significant for Hornby. Anyone near the shore should move to higher ground after an earthquake if at all possible.

What about people with physical disabilities?

Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Program is important to be prepared to help people with physical or medical issues.

Who is responsible for campers in campgrounds (guests in lodges)?

Managers should check with insurance agents, owners, board and set up emergency plans.

How can prescriptions be stored if aren't able to be refilled until they run out?

May need to pay for additional medicines or set aside a few pills per prescription. CVEP is consulting with doctors on how to ensure medicines are available in emergencies.

How are people notified in a forest fire? Most likely by HIFR auxiliaries, neighbourhood phone tree or possibly CHFR.

Can people refuse to be evacuated? Yes, if adult. Children must be evacuated when ordered to do so. Adults may have to sign a waiver.

When will the Hornby evacuation plan be finished? Currently CVEP is working with Denman on their plan. Hope to work with Hornby next. It will require significant community input to identify resources.

Adjourned: 2:22pm