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Earthquake warning signs to go up in key community locations

If it knocks you down, go to high ground – that’s the message on new signs being installed in five popular locations that could be flooded after a major earthquake in Campbell River.

The sign features a warning message, a map showing the potential flood zone, evacuation routes and a QR code to scan for an online map. One sign will be installed at Dick Murphy Park, Robert Ostler Park and the Canyon View Trail. Two signs will be installed at Spirit Square.

“Emergency preparedness, planning, collaboration and communication are fundamental pillars of emergency management,” says Ron Neufeld, deputy city manager for Campbell River.

“Disaster signage plays a critical role in promoting safety and preventing injuries.”

“Providing information about the post-earthquake risk in areas at lower elevation in Campbell River will help guide people to a safe location, which will reduce the risk of injury or fatality following a major earthquake,” says Shaun Koopman, protective services coordinator for the Strathcona Regional District.

The Strathcona Emergency Program also has laminated and chloroplast versions of the signs available for local businesses and organizations, including a multi-language version of the map.

“It’s a priority to accommodate people who need important disaster information, and we do our best to reduce any language barrier,” Koopman adds.

In recognition of local First Nations, the sign’s headline is translated into Lik’wala.

“It’s wonderful to see the Lik’wala language featured so prominently in this sign,” said Chris Roberts, Chief of the Wei Wai Kum First Nation. *“I appreciate the support for our work to preserve and promote the traditional language of the Leqwiltokw people.”*

“The City and Strathcona Regional District appreciate our close partnership with B.C. Hydro that supports these types of projects and community benefits,” adds Mayor Andy Adams.

“Since 2014 we have been working closely with the City and SRD on the interim downstream risks should a major earthquake hit the area and potentially put two of our upstream dams at risk of failure,” said BC Hydro’s Stephen Watson. *“It’s about continued community awareness of this risk and these signs will help achieve that goal. As we have communicated, we have plans to seismically upgrade the John Hart Dam, beginning as early as 2021, so that it can withstand a 1-in-10,000 year earthquake. We also have a large dam safety capital project planned at Strathcona Dam.”*

Sign design work was arranged by Strathcona Regional District and completed by Jasper Taberner, a local student pursuing graphic design.

Want an earthquake warning sign for your organization? Please contact Shaun Koopman via email to skoopman@srd.ca or by telephone (250-830-6702).

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