

March 20, 2017

Neighbours helping neighbours – Emergency preparation team recruiting volunteers

Learn more about emergency communications via amateur radio and the Campbell River Emergency Social Support Services team during two open house information sessions this month.

“During a major community emergency, the demand for assistance could overwhelm the ability of emergency responders to attend to everyone immediately. In such a case, being personally prepared for an emergency is vital, and having volunteers available is a critical part of helping community members deal with an emergency situation,” says regional emergency program coordinator Shaun Koopman.

Campbell River Emergency Communications Team open house information session: 7 to 7:45 p.m., Thurs. March 23, Dogwood Rm, Strathcona Gardens, 225 S. Dogwood St.

“Although our communications systems are among the world's most extensive and dependable, emergencies and disasters can put a strain on them or bring them down completely. A vital component of emergency response is an organized team of reliable ham radio operators who are familiar with emergency protocols and the incident command system,” Koopman explains. *“Also, the team is an active social network that focuses on learning and having fun when it's not deployed to support an incident.”*

People interested in volunteering for emergency communications will receive funded training in areas such as first aid, rapid damage assessment, emergency service communications station management and emergency operations centres.

Campbell River Emergency Social Support Services Team open house information session: 7 to 8 p.m., Wed. March 29, Search and Rescue Hall, 261 Larwood Rd.

“This team of trained volunteers helps evacuees in an emergency – with everything from food, clothing and shelter, to information, family reunification and emotional support,” says Kathryn Alexander, co-director of the team. *“We're always looking for more volunteers of all ages and abilities to be the ‘heart’ of emergency response.”*

The training for volunteers is provided through the Province under Emergency Management British Columbia, and all volunteers receive free training.

For more information regarding these free information sessions, please contact Shaun Koopman, regional emergency program coordinator via email to skoopman@strathconard.ca or call the Campbell River Emergency Support Services team at 250-923-0359.

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