

# Perspectives

A REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO PUBLICATION

## Reduce Your Risk of Wildfire This Summer

In BC, on average, close to half of all wildfires are caused by human activity. If you live in or near a forested area, sooner or later you may have to contend with the spread of a wildfire. The best protection against loss, damage or injury due to wildfire is prevention. The more you eliminate the things that can lead a wildfire to your home, the more likely your home will survive. Try these simple steps for evaluating your home ignition zone and making it a deterrent to the progress of the fire:

Clear any buildup of pine or evergreen needles and leaves from the base of the house and any connecting structures which could otherwise ignite the home's siding

Create a 3 meter fire free (non-combustible) area on all sides of your home

Clear trees and shrubs of dead material and keep them pruned. Space trees and shrubs far enough apart to slow the spread of an approaching wildfire.

Plant deciduous trees and shrubs, rather than evergreens close to your home. Evergreens burn fiercely! Plants that shed leaves annually burn more slowly.

Plant native wildflowers and fire-resistant plants. Open lawn areas, rock gardens and xeriscapes serve as fire breaks around your home.

Wide driveways, non-flammable walkways and other pathways can slow or stop the spread of wildfire

'Limb up' trees around the house by removing lower limbs that are within 2.5 meters of the ground and trim limbs overhanging the house

Store firewood well away from your house, especially during fire season

Clear gutters of leaves and debris

Ensure that chimneys for all wood burning appliances are screened to prevent escape of live embers

Use metal flashing at all connection points of structures, such as wooden fences attached to the house

meeting place should an evacuation be called while separated. Prepare to evacuate disabled persons and children. Relocate large pets and livestock to a safe area immediately if possible. Try to arrange accommodations for your family in the event of an evacuation. If necessary emergency lodging will be provided to those evacuees needing short term accommodation.

**Evacuation Order:** An Order will only be issued in response to imminent potential loss of life or injury. You will be notified through door-to-door contact by RCMP and Search and Rescue members, by radio, television, social media and, if time permits, print media.

**What To Do When An Order Is Issued:** Gather up your personal/family emergency kit and proceed quickly and calmly to the nearest evacuation site which will be detailed in the Evacuation Order. Report to the Reception Centre and register with Emergency Social Services volunteers. This will allow for communication with friends and family who may be very concerned about your whereabouts and safety. Keep a flashlight and a portable radio with you at all times and follow the evacuation instructions provided in the Evacuation Order. Ensure you haven't forgotten a necessity, as travel may be one-way only out of your area to allow for emergency vehicle access. The RCMP enforce the Evacuation Order to ensure people leave the area of danger and they also control re-entry for safety and security reasons.

**Evacuation Rescind:** When the emergency is under control and the hazard/emergency zone is declared safe, a Rescind of the Evacuation Order is issued. In many situations the population may be advised that although they are being allowed to return to their homes, the risk may reoccur and the potential for the reinstatement of the Evacuation Order remains.

**BE SAFE. BE PROACTIVE. BE READY.**

## BY TAKING THESE PROACTIVE STEPS YOU REDUCE YOUR RISK BY CREATING DEFENSIBLE SPACE AROUND YOUR HOME.

While residents and visitors have a part to play in preventing wildfires, it is important to understand what to do in case of a wildfire evacuation. Listen for emergency information about evacuation stages on the radio or television, or check the RDN's website ([www.rdn.bc.ca](http://www.rdn.bc.ca)) or social media pages:

**Evacuation Alert:** This is a notification of danger in your area. Evacuation Alerts are issued to advise the at-risk population of the potential for loss of life from a hazard and that they should be prepared to evacuate.

**What To Do When An Alert Is Issued:** Gather essential items like medications, eyeglasses, valuable papers, immediate care needs for dependents, etc. Make items available for immediate access for a quick departure. If you need transportation, the alert notification will advise how to make arrangements. Know the location of all family members and determine a planned



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[www.rdn.bc.ca](http://www.rdn.bc.ca)

## Wastewater Services Update

Wastewater treatment is essential to protect the health of our region. The Greater Nanaimo Pollution Control Centre (GNPCC) treats wastewater from approximately 93,000 people in the City of Nanaimo, parts of the District of Lantzville and from Snuneymuxw First Nation lands. GNPCC currently provides chemically-enhanced primary treatment before it is discharged to the Strait of Georgia. Primary treatment uses large settling tanks and gravity to remove suspended solids, fats, oils, and grease.

Secondary treatment introduces beneficial bacteria which consume suspended solids and results in a cleaner effluent. Secondary treatment is also the minimum standard required by new federal regulations.

Expansions and upgrades are underway at GNPCC to provide secondary treatment, increase capacity to meet demand, replace ageing infrastructure, and improve effluent quality. The upgrades will also meet legislated commitments in the RDN's Liquid Waste Management Plan (LWMP).

Geotechnical investigations, preliminary site preparation works and 60% engineering design for the GNPCC upgrade and secondary treatment projects are complete. At this milestone, we have an updated schedule and cost estimate. The updated schedule anticipates project completion in 2019 (original completion

You can improve the quality of water by keeping pollutants out of the sewers. Such items include:

Flushable Wipes

Cooking Grease

Prescription Medications

Paints, oils and chemicals

date was estimated by the end of 2018). The schedule change is largely a result of the geotechnical investigations that identified liquefiable soils in the project area. As a result, up to six months of ground improvements (pile driving) are necessary.

The current cost estimate for the secondary treatment scope of work identified in the 2014 LWMP is \$67.5 million (the LWMP estimate in 2012 dollars was \$62 million). The change is primarily due to inflation, the decrease in value of the Canadian dollar, and the costs of additional ground improvements. In total, the RDN has budgeted approximately \$80 million in capital projects at GNPCC over the next four years. About 50% of the costs will facilitate growth and will be funded with Development Cost Charges (DCCs), monies collected from land developers as new buildings are added to the service area to offset the cost of adding capacity. The remaining 50% will be funded through

tax requisition. The RDN continues to apply for federal and provincial grants to minimize the need for taxation and borrowing and to reduce the amount required from DCCs.

Construction is scheduled to begin early 2017 and should be complete in 2019.

For more information on this project, please visit our website at [www.rdn.bc.ca/gnpcc](http://www.rdn.bc.ca/gnpcc) or contact the Wastewater Services Department at [rcu@rdn.bc.ca](mailto:rcu@rdn.bc.ca) or 250-390-6560 (250-954-3792 in District 69).

## GNPCC Outfall

The GNPCC's 2,000m long marine outfall has been replaced. The outfall was fabricated on Snaw-Naw-As land in cooperation with Snaw-Naw-As First Nation. At the end of June, the pipe was floated to Hammond Bay and then sunk into place on the ocean floor.



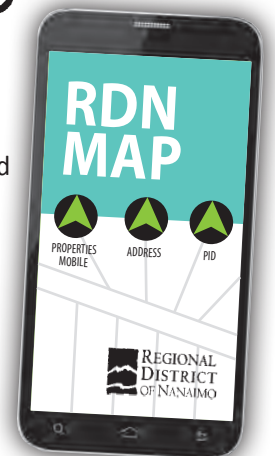
For more information on this project, please visit our website at [www.rdn.bc.ca/gnpcc](http://www.rdn.bc.ca/gnpcc) or contact the Wastewater Services Department at [rcu@rdn.bc.ca](mailto:rcu@rdn.bc.ca) or 250-390-6560 (250-954-3792 in District 69).

## Landfill Construction Projects

After more than a decade of planning, several important construction projects are now underway at the Cedar Regional Landfill. Construction of the North Berm will provide stability in case of a significant seismic event in the area and will expand capacity, extending the life of the landfill to approximately 2041. This construction has necessitated the relocation of the current office and shop. The construction site near the scale-house and Cedar Road will be the new location of a modular office. Further down the site haul road, along the eastern property line, a maintenance shop is being constructed which will remain and service the site post-closure.

DID YOU KNOW?

RDNMAP is now available for mobile devices. Designed to work on Android and iOS, the app can be used to search for properties in the Electoral Areas by Address and Property ID (PID). The map displays properties, addresses, roads, Land Use Zones, Agricultural Land Reserve and Jurisdiction Boundaries. It can also show assessment values, legal description, and RDN services. Tools within the map can also be applied to measure distance, area and determine coordinates.



For more information, visit [www.rdn.bc.ca/gis](http://www.rdn.bc.ca/gis).



## Area 'H' Official Community Plan Review

The Official Community Plan (OCP) review and update for Electoral Area 'H' is now well underway. An OCP describes a long-term vision for the future and a course of action to achieve it. Objectives and policies in the OCP guide land use, servicing, and physical, social and economic changes in the community over the long term.



The project kicked off with a survey in January, a community meeting in February, and a call for volunteers for a Working Group to further explore issues and opportunities identified by the community. An open house on June 22 reported back on what was said by community members so far, and gathered feedback to confirm direction for updates to the OCP.

The June 22 open house was also the kick off for a discussion about an Active Transportation Plan for Area 'H'. The OCP will include a plan that will identify how to make it safer and easier for people to walk and cycle in their communities.

Attending public meetings is only one way to participate in the OCP review. You can also stop by the Bowser office located upstairs at Magnolia Court (6996 Island Highway West in Bowser) and speak with a planner. Hours are Tuesdays from 9:15 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. If you are part of a group or organization that would like to provide input, we can also attend your meeting, or schedule a special meeting just with you.

For more information on the project and to complete the Active Transportation Plan survey and interactive WikiMap, visit [www.rdn.bc.ca/areahocp](http://www.rdn.bc.ca/areahocp).

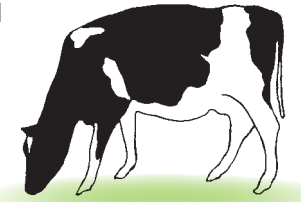
## Parks Update

The construction of the E&N trail is currently underway. The trail along the Alberni Line of the E&N track will run a total of 7 km from Springwood Park in Parksville to Coombs. The first stage of construction includes clearing the trail which has started at the Coombs end. Construction will wrap up by the end of the year.



## Agriculture Bylaw Update

Following community engagement that took place during the summer and fall of 2015 and in response to positive community feedback, draft bylaws were developed that include new or amended agriculture zones that would apply to land in the Agricultural Land Reserve and new or amended general regulations and definitions related to agriculture, farm use and the keeping of animals. The purpose of the zoning changes is to better support farming and improve consistency with provincial regulations.



Public Hearings for the proposed bylaws were held in April 2016. On May 24, 2016, the Regional District of Nanaimo Board gave 3rd reading to zoning amendment Bylaws "500.402, 2016" and "1285.26, 2016". The new zoning changes could be in place as early as the end of June.

To learn more about the proposed bylaw amendments, visit [www.growingourfuture.ca](http://www.growingourfuture.ca).

## Illegal Dumping

The RDN is joining forces with Nanaimo and District Crime Stoppers, Island Timberlands and TimberWest to crack down on illegal dumping across the region. Combined, the RDN, Island Timberlands and TimberWest spend more than \$200,000 each year combatting illegal dumping. This includes paying for cleanup, staff time, and waived fees at the landfill.

Representatives of Island Timberlands and TimberWest will meet with RDN Bylaw Enforcement monthly to share information on dump sites, individuals involved in illegal dumping and anonymous tips received through Crime Stoppers. Nanaimo and District Crime Stoppers will provide rewards for anonymous tips that lead to identifying those responsible for committing a crime, including illegal dumping.



If you see someone committing a crime, including illegal dumping,

CALL 1-800-222-8477, TEXT 274637  
WITH THE KEYWORD "NANAIMO"  
OR SUBMIT YOUR TIP ONLINE AT  
[WWW.NANAIMOCRIMESTOPPERS.COM](http://WWW.NANAIMOCRIMESTOPPERS.COM).

You can also report illegal dumping to the Report All Poachers and Polluters (RAPP) line at 1-877-952-7277.

**ILLEGAL DUMPING IS A CRIME.**

DWWP Update

Drinking Water and Watershed Protection

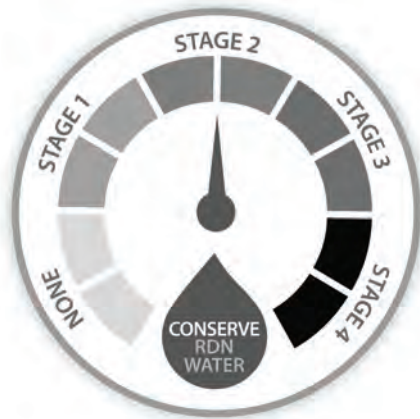
Watering Restrictions

The spring was unseasonably warm and dry, leading into a summer that is forecasted to be warmer and drier than normal.

With the arrival of summer, outdoor watering restrictions have been implemented for conservation, by several water providers in the region. Please see [www.teamwatersmart.ca](http://www.teamwatersmart.ca) for the most up-to-date watering restriction information for where you live. This year, watering restriction definitions have been harmonized across the region, but each water provider can select if/when they implement each Stage.

Generally, the restrictions target automated sprinkler systems with the most room for improved efficiency – aerial spray (rotors, popups) – and limit their use to certain days and times. Drip irrigation and hand-watering are exempt from restrictions, as are veggie gardens, which can be watered any time.

EVERY DROP COUNTS!



Water Saver Contest

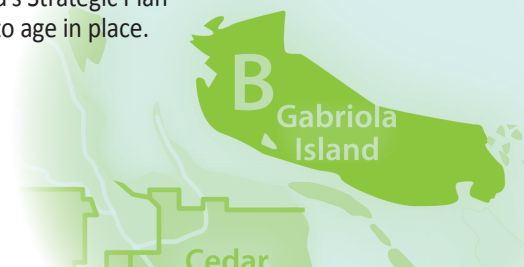
To encourage the positive efforts of residents in our region who are water-conscious, Team WaterSmart is giving out attractive yard signs to recognize “Water Smart Yards”. This could be a lovely native plant or xeriscape garden or a golden lawn. If you see a water smart yard in your community (or you have one yourself) email [watersmart@rdn.bc.ca](mailto:watersmart@rdn.bc.ca) to nominate you or your neighbour and enter you both into a weekly prize draw, plus a grand prize draw for a rain barrel!



Transit Update

Taxi

The new Taxi Saver Service on Gabriola Island is now up and running, providing assistance to residents who are persons with disabilities or seniors with low incomes. The service is outside of the BC Transit system and is unique in the province. It's administered by People for a Healthy Community, a local non-profit society, and meets the goals of the RDN Board's Strategic Plan by enabling residents to age in place.



GERTIE

Gabriola's Environmentally Responsible Trans-Island Express (GERTIE) is now receiving RDN funds through a contribution agreement. In February, Area 'B' residents voted in favour of a RDN contribution towards the transit service. Bylaw No. 1734 – “Gabriola Island Transit Contribution Service Establishment Bylaw” has been adopted and each year, the RDN will contribute \$130,000 to the largely volunteer-run public transit. These funds mean GERTIE will now be an established bus service and the bus drivers will be paid instead of volunteer.

