



Parks Staff Hard at Work Assembling Trademark Baskets

Date: Tuesday, May 19, 2009

For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC — City of Victoria Parks Staff are hard at work assembling 100 hanging flower baskets a day in time for them to be hung on downtown lampposts starting Monday, June 8, 2009. Over 1,600 hanging baskets are made each year with plants that are grown at the Beacon Hill Park nursery.

Media is invited to visit the Beacon Hill greenhouses tomorrow to see how Victoria's trademark hanging baskets are made.

What: Media Opportunity – Assembly of Victoria's Hanging Baskets
When: Wednesday, May 20, 2009, from 10 a.m. – noon
Where: Beacon Hill Park Maintenance Yard Greenhouses, at the end of Nursery Road

Media is asked to check in at the Beacon Hill Park Maintenance Yard Office upon arrival.

Basket construction begins at the end of April by a six-person crew. Nine different varieties of plants are used to make the traditional Victoria sun basket, and a total of 25 plants are featured in each. Once the baskets are made, they remain in the greenhouses for one week before being moved outside. When fully grown, the baskets can weigh over 20 kilograms (approximately 45 pounds).

Shade baskets are a recent addition. As the City's boulevard trees grew larger and cast more shade, it became apparent that an alternative to the traditional sun basket was needed. Nursery staff decided to try Impatiens baskets with Rhodochiton as a trailing plant. Trials continue today as new Impatiens varieties become available. Shade baskets have now expanded into locations where sun baskets would never have reached their full potential.

Installed in early June, Victoria's hanging baskets remain on lampposts until mid-September. After removal, the hardware is dismantled for reuse and the plant material is composted.

The placement of flower baskets on Victoria lampposts every June has signaled the start of summer for over 70 years. First introduced to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the City's incorporation in 1937, Victoria's hanging baskets are a trademark, recognized around the world.

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