



Sanitary Sewer Smoke Testing to Begin Tomorrow

Date: Monday, August 11, 2008

For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC — The City of Victoria is advising residents and businesses located downtown and in the Burnside and Fairfield neighbourhoods, not to be alarmed should they see smoke coming out of their roof pipes over the next five weeks. The smoke is part of an evaluation program to determine whether surface rainwater or groundwater is entering the City's sanitary sewer system.

Known as smoke testing, it involves blowing a non-toxic, visible mist, similar to that used in movies, into sewer pipes to identify and locate any possible breaks, defects or improper connections. As the smoke travels through the sanitary sewer system, it is forced through any openings, allowing field crews to observe and record the smoke as it exits the system. These exit points indicate where repairs and improvements are needed. The smoke typically appears from rooftop sewer vents, downspouts, catch basins or yard drains.

Reducing surface and ground water from entering the sanitary sewer system helps to diminish the possibility of sewer backups during heavy rainfalls from mains that are not intended to carry these water sources. Smoke testing is a safe, efficient and cost effective way to identify and locate breaks, leaves no residue and is not a fire hazard. The City recently conducted smoke testing in 2005 and 2006, and the process has been used industry-wide for the last 20 years.

Starting tomorrow, Superior City Services Ltd. and Videotech Pipe Services Ltd. of Surrey, BC, will begin to smoke test parts of the sanitary sewer system in the Burnside area, followed by downtown and then Fairfield. Weather permitting, the smoke testing will be completed within the next five weeks.

Minimal disruption to the travelling public can be expected during the work period and every effort will be made to keep residents and businesses in these areas informed. Emergency services have also been notified of the work.

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For More Information:

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