



Avoid the Flurry - Prepare for Snow Now

Date: Friday, November 19, 2010

For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC — Environment Canada predicts that we are heading into a La Niña year, which brings colder temperatures and above-normal snowfall. La Niñas occur when the ocean near the equator is cooler than usual. With a snowfall warning of 5 to 10 cm of snow and wind overnight, now is the time to prepare.

City of Victoria Public Works staff will be monitoring weather forecast and tracking sites as well as pavement temperature sensors. Prior to a snowfall, the City's anti-icing truck will be sent out to apply a layer of "brine" (salt and water) on major Victoria roads, starting with hills and bridges. When the snow starts falling, City trucks will begin de-icing and ploughing. Crews will also start to clear "first priority" sidewalks, which include downtown transit stops and wheelchair ramps, and sidewalks fronting City properties downtown.

Residents and businesses are reminded that under the *Streets and Traffic Bylaw*, they are required to clear snow and ice from sidewalks in front of their property **by 10 a.m. each day**. Victoria citizens are encouraged to make arrangements with neighbours in advance to clear each other's sidewalks in the event they are away from home or work when it snows. Please remember the elderly or disabled, who will appreciate the assistance with snow removal.

Those who do not comply with the Bylaw may face a fine of \$150 per ticketed offence (per day) and a ticket can be issued up to six months after an offence has occurred. With over 450 kilometres of sidewalks in Victoria, it would be too costly for City taxpayers to take on the entire task of removing ice and snow.

Snow clearing tools for Victoria businesses and households should include shovels, sand, and environmentally sensitive ice melt products to remove snow and ice from sidewalks and driveways.

Now is also the time to refresh an emergency kit with a working flashlight, radio, new batteries, and candles and matches, and to have plenty of food, essential medicine and extra blankets on hand. The City's *Recipes for Disaster* list the supplies residents and businesses need to cope for a minimum of three days in the event of a heavy snowfall or power outage. To view the recipes online, visit: www.PrepareVictoria.ca

Snow clearing fact sheets available on the City of Victoria website and at City Hall, explain the roles and responsibilities of residents and businesses when it snows, how the City prepares for snow and prioritizes snow clearing, its "green" ice removal practices, and helpful snow shovelling and safe driving tips. For more information, visit: www.victoria.ca/snowclearing

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