

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT TO COUNCIL
ON
2022 HEAT ALERT RESPONSE PLAN

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with details of the City's response plan for heat warning, air quality, and extreme heat events during summer 2022.

COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN

This report supports Council's strategic priorities and areas of focus regarding:

- **Governance and Accountability**
 - Community Engagement: We are committed to engaging and connecting with Kamloops residents and stakeholders.
 - External Relationships: We understand the importance of maintaining and improving key relationships.
- **Livability**
 - Healthy Community: We foster an environment that supports and promotes healthy living through recreation, community, and social connection.
 - Inclusivity: We are committed to supporting inclusivity, diversity, and accessibility in our community.
 - Safety: We recognize the importance of a safe and secure community.
- **Vibrant Economy**
 - Partnerships: We continue to nurture partnerships with key agencies and organizations.
- **Environmental Leadership**
 - Climate Action: We enhance the City's resiliency and capacity for mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

SUMMARY

The BC Coroners Service directly attributed 595 deaths in British Columbia to the extreme heat event that occurred in late June and early July 2021. The Province is piloting a provincial heat alert response system in 2022. The BC heat alert response system pilot includes criteria and triggers for activation; activation protocol; and key messaging and recommended actions for local authorities and Indigenous communities for pre-season (i.e. prior to the summer season), during heat warnings and extreme heat emergencies, and post extreme heat events. Emergency Management BC, Environment and Climate Change Canada, and BC Public Health will lead the BC heat alert response system coordination efforts. The City will share the BC heat alert response system messaging when the activation criteria are met, provide indoor and outdoor cooling and heat relief spaces, and encourage neighbour health checks to support community resiliency.

RECOMMENDATION:

For Council information only.

SUPPORTING COUNCIL AND CORPORATE DIRECTION

- May 31, 2022, Council Meeting - Notice of Motion regarding a community-specific response to heat and air quality

DISCUSSION**Criteria for Activation**

Under the BC heat alert response system protocol, Kamloops falls under the “southeast” region of the province. The criteria for a heat warning (alert level one) to be issued in the southeast region is a 35-18-35 forecast, which means a daytime high greater than or equal to 35°C and an overnight low greater than or equal to 18°C forecast for two consecutive days. These events are considered a moderate public health risk and are projected to occur one to three times per summer season.

An extreme heat emergency (alert level two) is issued when the heat warning criteria has been met and the forecast indicates that daily highs will substantively increase day-over-day for three or more consecutive days. Extreme heat events are projected to occur one to two times per decade and are considered to pose a very high public health risk. The BC heat alert response system pilot includes key messages and recommended actions for prior to the summer season, for during heat warnings and extreme heat emergencies, and for after extreme heat events.

City Activation Protocol

The City will activate a heat alert response protocol when a heat warning is issued by Environment and Climate Change Canada. This will include activating indoor and outdoor cooling spaces; promoting neighbour health checks; and sharing the BC heat alert response system messaging prior to, during, and after activations.

Indoor Cooling Sites

Subject to volunteer recruitment efforts and staff availability, the City’s intent is to open and staff indoor cooling sites and ensure drinking water is available 12:00–8:00 pm daily during heat alert response activations. The staffing capacity challenges the City will face relate primarily to the City’s role as a host community in coordinating emergency support services during emergency response events. Depending on the scale of the event, City staff may be involved in various roles supporting emergency response efforts and may have limited ability to staff an indoor cooling site. The intent will be to staff the following three indoor cooling sites in order of priority:

- Sandman Centre concourse
- Parkview Activity Centre (closed on Sundays and at 6:00 pm on Fridays)
- Valleyview Community Hall (closed on Sundays)

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City staff are also engaging the faith community with the intent of identifying other potential neighbourhood cooling spaces. The City would include the activated faith community spaces (that choose to participate in the heat alert response) in public communications regarding the City's heat alert response.

Outdoor Cooling Sites

The City will provide the following heat relief options in outdoor locations during heat alert response activations:

- waterparks open 10:00 am–8:00 pm daily at Albert McGowan Park, McDonald Park, Riverside Park (once it has reopened), and Westsyde Centennial Park and the wading pool at Prince Charles Park
- drinking fountains with potable water in the following parks:
 - Cowan Park
 - Juniper Park
 - McArthur Island Park
 - Overlander Park
 - Pioneer Park
 - Riverside Park
 - Schubert Park Lookout
 - Tournament Capital Ranch
 - Prince Charles Park
 - Aberdeen Hills Park
- washrooms with potable water to fill water bottles in the following parks and open 8:00 am to dusk daily:
 - Riverside Park
 - Singh Bowl
 - Dallas Park
 - Hillside Stadium
 - McArthur Island Park
 - Tournament Capital Ranch

The City has utilized temporary misting stations in City parks during past heat events; however, these temporary options have been subject to vandalism. The City also has two mobile water stations; however, these are already scheduled for use at events in City parks throughout the summer. The City is exploring the potential for more durable and/or permanent misting options and drinking fountains, which could be located in City parks that lack cooling options and are in areas of highest need, as identified through heat vulnerability mapping provided by Interior Health. New washrooms with potable water are being added in Riverside Park and Overlander Park. The City is also exploring the feasibility of additional water bottle refill connections in existing City washrooms.

Neighbour Health Checks

New for 2022, the City will promote neighbour health checks wherein during heat events, residents will be encouraged to check in on their neighbours who may have heat sensitivity due to their age or pre-existing health conditions, who may live in housing without air conditioning, and/or who may be vulnerable to heat for other reasons. The City is engaging Interior Health for

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key messaging to help residents doing neighbour health checks identify signs of heat distress and take appropriate action as and where needed. City staff will work with the city's neighbourhood associations to share the key messaging and promote this initiative through their networks and social media channels. The key messaging will also be included in the City's public heat alert response communications.

Transportation

Heat alert and response planning literature recommends availability of public transit in areas of the community that are more vulnerable to higher temperatures. Public transit is currently available in areas of moderate to very high overall heat vulnerability in Kamloops identified in Interior Health's heat vulnerability mapping. As part of the City's heat alert response protocol, City staff are also engaging community partners to identify additional accessible transportation options that are flexible, responsive, and needs based and that can accommodate seniors, people with diverse needs, and other people who may be isolated in their homes. The City would include any identified additional accessible transportation options in public communications regarding the City's heat alert response and in the key messaging for the neighbour health checks.

People Experiencing Homelessness

During heat events, the City's Community Service Officers will coordinate outreach and response efforts for people experiencing homelessness with other street outreach programs in community. This will include handing out bottled water to people experiencing homelessness, coordinating transportation to shelters through the Envision shuttle program, looking for signs of heat distress, and taking other appropriate action as needed. As in extreme cold weather events, the shelter system will also expand and respond during extreme heat events.

Air Quality Events

In terms of air quality events due to wildfire smoke, the City will share applicable messaging from and as directed by the appropriate health authorities (i.e. BC heat alert response system, BC Centre for Disease Control, Medical Health Officers, etc.), with targeted messaging when the Air Quality Health Index reaches specific risk categories. This may include recommendations to modify outdoor exercise or exercise indoors; to use a portable air cleaner in homes and places of work (if possible); to visit cleaner air spaces, including shopping malls or the City's indoor cooling sites (if open); and/or to wear a well-fitted N95 respirator if available.

Next Steps

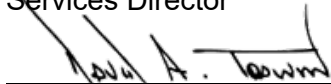
Through the BC heat alert response system process, the City will continue to engage with government agencies, Indigenous organizations, and community partners to ensure efforts and messaging are coordinated. The City will also continue to work with Interior Health and other community partners to prepare for and implement City-specific heat alert response protocol as noted above.

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

The City will share the BC heat alert response system messaging and other applicable messaging from the appropriate health authorities when activation criteria are met. The City will utilize various tactics, as applicable, to share information on available indoor and outdoor cooling sites and to promote and encourage neighbour health checks.



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