



## **Piers Island Emergency Program Report June 2023 to June 2024**

### **The Program**

Every part of British Columbia is mandated to participate in a locally organized emergency response program. The Piers Island Emergency Program (PIEP) is part of the Capital Regional District (CRD) Southern Gulf Islands Area Program and provides services during an island emergency. Its major task is to support the work of the Piers Island Volunteer Fire Department (PIVFD). The PIVFD responds to the emergency site while PIEP members work off site at an Emergency Operations Centre (EOC). If community support is needed Emergency Support Services (ESS) members can set up a Reception Centre (RC). Together the PIVFD and the Emergency Program provide community support and education to help our community be prepared for, be aware of, and respond to emergencies. The preparedness and resiliency of the community depends on the preparedness and resiliency of all community members.

### **The Team**

The Piers Island Emergency Program consists of Emergency Operation and Emergency Support Services team members to provide on island services, as well as two Commissioners that sit on the Southern Gulf Islands Commission that give localized guidance and feedback to the CRD about Emergency Program matters.

Although the people our team did not change this year, some of our titles did. Velvet Warrior and Barb Miodonski are now co-Local Emergency Management Representations (LEMRS) and Sandy Brunham a Deputy LEMR. Gloria Morson is now our Emergency Support Services Coordinator (ESSC) with Mari Warrior stepping up as Deputy ESSC. We have a strong team filling other important roles including Operations with Duty Officers, Communications and Neighbourhood Program coordinators, Kerry Wheeler, Patti LL, and Wynn Lewis, and Emergency Support Services volunteers including Ginny Macoun, Evey Gabille, Uta Bryce, and Judy Brooks. Linda Vanden Berg assists with the Neighbourhood Program telephone tree phoning. In the event of an evacuation, we have evacuation boat operator volunteers who would assist in helping transport community members from docks including: Brian Wheeler, Barry Tate, Rick Schnurr and Allan Warrior. Thank you to all EP volunteers.

### **The Year that Was**

We have had a very busy year. During the July 2023 to June 2024 reporting period, the focus has been on team training and community readiness.

- Team Training:
  - The Emergency Program LEMRs and Fire Chief are invited to attend virtual regional seasonal readiness meetings (in the fall/winter for storms and floods and Spring/Summer for fire season) which us understand our risks and the resources available to us.
  - Southern Gulf Island LEMRs and ESSCs continue to meet monthly with every 2 or 3rd of those meetings in person with CRD Emergency Management facilitating a better understanding of the roles, responsibilities and relationships of each level (CRD, Area and Island). In April, Emergency Program team members from all the islands met in Sidney for a volunteer appreciation event.
  - Our Piers Island team participated in several virtual Justice Institute courses. In many cases, team members did the course together at the firehall which enhanced learning through meaningful discussion. This training included the new Evacuee Registration and Assistance (ERA) tool.
  - The team participated in a number of scenario-based exercises for Duty Officers and practiced set up of the Emergency Operations Centre and Reception Centre.
  - The CRD is putting together a virtual ERA team to support our local communities or where ever needed. Two of our team members have joined this team. Thanks, Barb Miodonski and Mari Warrior. To enhance the effectiveness of this team, the CRD has provided other related training, that many of us not on the ERA team have been able to take advantage of including Accessible Emergency Response (to provide volunteers and staff the knowledge and skills to deliver services to people with both obvious and non-apparent disabilities on an equal basis) and Cultural Perspectives (to foster a deeper understanding of Indigenous relationships in our communities).
- Community Readiness:
  - The Emergency Program hosted an EP table at the annual PIVFD Pancake Breakfast with a focus on CRD Public Alert Notification System (PANS), Alertable sign up and education of family and guests, ERA tool sign up and the value of BC Services card.
  - The Emergency Program is excited about the delivery and placement of an Emergency Supplies Container on Piers Island. Thanks to Abby Brooks for the idea and introduction to Deep Cover School (where the container came from), Wynn Lewis and Mari Warrior for leading the investigation into containers and arranging delivery of it, Steve Thornton for the prep work up at the water tower area for the container, the EP team for the power washing, and the CRD Southern Gulf Islands Emergency Program for the funds. Work has started on planning the contents of the container. Wynn Lewis and Mari Warrior held an initial meeting with a group of islanders to discuss needs and priorities for the content on the container. Thank you to all of the representatives of the PIVFD, Water team, PIEP team and interested islanders that attended: Sandra Brunham, John Hall, Gary Cooney, Gary Peacock, Gerry Kristianson, Burke Stancill, Ming Pawlik, Gloria Morson, Barb Miodonski, and Velvet Warrior.
  - Emergency Preparedness Week featured a week of Quizzes, and a “Reception Centre” open house. Thank you to everyone that was able to participate in our community’s Emergency Preparedness week and picked up the new “Stay Aware & Plan Ahead” fridge magnet (which will hopefully make it easier for islanders and visitors to Sign-Up for

Alertable to get emergency notifications while on Piers and to Know What to Do if an emergency happens here) and the new updated Piers Island Emergency Program brochure (Earthquake/Tsunami procedure added).

- Anything that we can do as individuals and as a community to prevent, mitigate the effects of, and to prepare for potential disasters will help us more effectively respond to and recover from events. If you do not already have a Emergency Program Stay Aware & Plan Ahead fridge magnet and updated Piers Island Emergency Procedures, please pick up at one of our future events or arrange to have them delivered. \
- Response:
  - Luckily, the Emergency Program team has not had to officially activate an Emergency Operations Centre or provide Emergency Support Services. However, the Duty Officer and team were on standby during the various weather events, lightning strike and power outages providing communications to the community, as needed.

