



City of Maple Ridge News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Evacuation Order Rescinded at St. Anne Camp

Maple Ridge, BC: The Fire Evacuation Order at the St. Anne Camp site will come to an end on Monday, March 11 at 12:00 pm.

I would like to acknowledge the excellent work done by our Fire, Bylaws and Parks Departments; their staff that have done an extraordinary job making this site safe for camp occupants and the surrounding neighbourhood. I also want to thank the Ridge Meadows RCMP for their work to keep the peace through some difficult situations,” said Mayor Morden. “We have a plan in place to allow verified occupants of the site to return. This plan ensures that the site remains safe for the people in and around the area and reflects the terms of the BC Supreme Court Order issued on February 8. We will continue to explore ways to ensure that social support systems are in place to see the camp come to an end.”

Since the Evacuation was completed on Saturday, March 2, City staff removed another 35 propane tanks (in addition to the estimated 100 propane tanks removed on February 23), over 800 cubic yards of fire related debris, combustibles and numerous other ignition sources and accelerants. Furthermore, existing shelters and structures have successfully been moved back from the perimeter fencing to create safe buffer areas.

BC Housing is in the process of restoring power to the washroom and shower facility and installing the heating system for the warming tent.

A site Safety Plan has been developed for the site to ensure continued safety for people in the camp and surrounding neighbourhood. Key elements of that plan are:

- 1) The site perimeter has been secured and there will be 24-hour security monitoring people entering the site and the site perimeter.
- 2) The site can only be accessed by verified camp occupants, their legal counsel and outreach workers working on behalf of Provincial Government agencies. This verification

mechanism will enable the City to work with BC Housing on ensuring that the registered occupants have applied for housing and social support services.

- 3) New arrivals will be prohibited from occupying the site.
- 4) Regular inspections will be done by the City's Bylaws Department.
- 5) No propane, gasoline, aerosol paint cans or other ignition sources or accelerants will be allowed on the site. Security patrols will report any violations to the Bylaws Department for immediate action.
- 6) No construction materials will be allowed on the site. No new solid structures will be allowed.
- 7) As verified occupants are connected with housing and support services their camp spaces will be cleared and the size of the encampment will continue to be scaled to a smaller footprint.

The site Safety Plan reflects the authority granted as part of the BC Supreme Court Order issued on February 8.

Since the camp was initiated in 2017, numerous occupants have been housed. The City is working with BC Housing and the Province to connect the remaining verified occupants with housing and support services to see the camp come to an end.