

**Green Sheet #63**  
**qathet Regional District**  
**ELECTORAL AREA 'A' NEWSLETTER**  
**for March 2020**  
**from Patrick Brabazon, Director**

This newsletter is being sent to all residents of *Electoral Area A* of the qathet Regional District. At the end of this newsletter you will find my telephone number and my e-mail address. I welcome your comments.

***Did I Say 9-1-1?***

You have probably heard of *Next Generation 9-1-1*. Well, when 9-1-1 technology was created 50 years ago it was designed for analog wireline phones. Now landlines are being used less and less these days [me too] & 88 per cent of Canadians have at least one cell phone. Simply put, call 9-1-1 from a landline and the dispatcher knows where you are. Call from a cell phone and they have no idea where you are until you tell them. Panicky? Sure. Now the change is underway. qRD is part of the North Island 9-1-1 system and we are participating in the changeover. This is not simple and the technological requirements have pushed the time-frame out to 2023 for completion. But between now and then you will see incremental improvements such as texting to 9-1-1 perhaps by next year.

***Get the message out***

It is frustrating to plan for a community event or announcement and lack the means to get the word out to everyone. The Lund Community Society has asked the qRD to help with this issue by installing community notice boards. I expect that you will see community notice boards erected adjacent to four post boxes from Southview Road north into Lund. This will allow community groups to post notices of public interest on a regional district facility without fear that they will be removed as is what happens now on mail boxes.

***A bus to . . .***

Paratransit is the service that qRD operates in Electoral Areas A, B, C and D as well as the Sechelt Indian Government District. These 15 passenger buses serve us well given the less than frequent schedule we have. This schedule is not as frequent as we would like because the majority of the costs are borne by B.C. Transit through our agreement with them. Each year we try to negotiate increased service and this year we have gained a new run for Area A. The new schedule, coming this summer, will allow a passenger to get on a bus in Lund, take a transfer in Powell River and be dropped off at Saltery Bay. However, the decline in bus service between Powell River and Vancouver has greatly exacerbated the situation. We are discussing how to employ our Paratransit service to fill the gap. At the very least, improving transit to the lower mainland will involve the qRD, Sunshine Coast Regional District, B.C. Transit, B.C. Ferries, and . . . Stay tuned.

***Pandemic***

Yes it is. With the declaration of the World Health Organization and the declaration of a state of emergency by British Columbia it is no longer in doubt. Fortunately it still appears that the local risk of catching the COVID-19 virus remains low. That said, all levels of government have a role to play in mitigating the risk as do individuals.

I'll start with this Regional District. qathet Regional District (qRD) operations are continuing but both the main office and the maintenance facility are closed to the public. You can call the former at 604-485-2260 or the latter at 604-487-1380 or email to [administration@qathet.ca](mailto:administration@qathet.ca) or [operations@qathet.ca](mailto:operations@qathet.ca). qRD staff will be there to provide you with the answers you require. While advisory and other select committees are not meeting, the Board and standing committees [Committee of the Whole, Planning, and Finance] will continue. However, it will not be "business as usual." We are moving meetings to other venues to provide more room for social distancing and it may be necessary to limit the number of people attending. qRD properties managed by other organizations have been asked to curtail or cease their activities for the time being. Thus you will find the Lund Community Centre closed. Chief Jim Brown has advised that he has cancelled all non-essential Northside Volunteer Fire Department activities, including training, until further notice to ensure fire department adherence to social distancing directives from the Ministry of Health.

The following are recommended and ordered actions to help keep our community safe:

<p><b>Those who are sick need to self-isolate for 14 days.</b> (ANY cold or flu-like symptoms OR contact with COVID +)</p>	<p><b>If you must leave your house, keep your distance.</b> ((6ft) and try not to touch your face after touching public surfaces)</p>
<p><b>International travellers MUST self-isolate for 14 days</b> (from ANY country, even if you have NO symptoms)</p>	<p><b>Wash your hands (and phone!) regularly.</b> (especially after you touch public surfaces and before you eat or prepare food)</p>
<p><b>Stay at home as much as possible.</b> (except for essential workers, to get important supplies, and to relax or recreate in open outdoor areas)</p>	<p><b>Be kind to your family and neighbours.</b> Don't raid store shelves. Everyone needs help right now. We all have vulnerable friends, family, and neighbours - reach out to them (by phone) and ask how they're doing and help if you can safely.</p>

All of the above actions are consistent with the recommendations of the Ministry of Health, the Provincial Health Officer, and Health Emergency Management BC. These agencies have ensured that Ryan Thoms, qRD's Manager of Emergency Services is fully informed. Regional District Chairs now receive a weekly briefing from the Ministries as well. For all 9-1-1 calls for emergency medical concerns, if the caller indicates any flu-like symptoms then dispatch will advise the fire department (and BC Ambulance) en route so the responders can take precautionary measures to limit their exposures.

As in any emergency the critical need is for timely and accurate information. The media is carrying the daily updates provided by the Provincial Health Officer but you can also go to the Ministry at <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca> or call toll free to 8-1-1 if you have a specific question. The important thing is to get straight, accurate, information when you need it. Staff are available to answer any questions.